

THE VOICE

Vol 27 Issue 20 2019-05-24

Minds We Meet

Interviewing Students Like You!

The Last Student Standing

Combat DE Isolation with Convocation

Unemployment

An Existential Crisis: How to Cope

Plus:

Course Under Review

Council Connection

and much more!



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



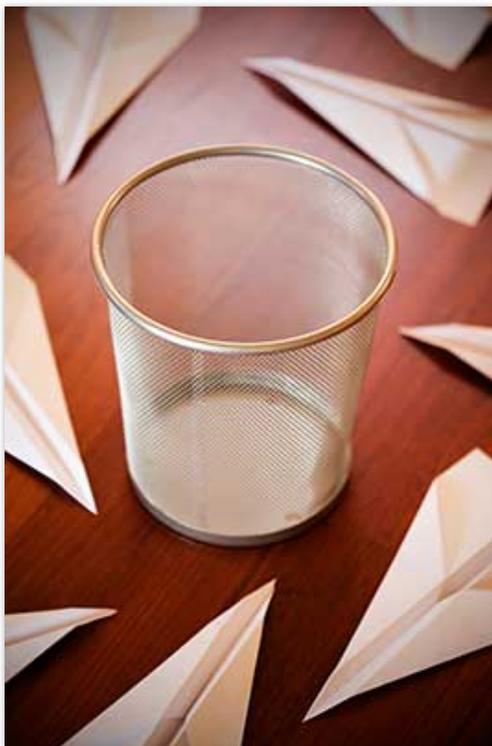
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Hey! Did you know the Voice Magazine has a [Facebook page](#)?

No kidding! We also do the [twitter](#) thing once in a while if you're into that.

Editorial When “Friendly” Isn’t

Karl Low



This week, I got a sudden lesson in just how much modern technology has us locked in. And because of that, I over-estimated my own ability to overcome a computer failure based on previous failures. All of which is basically my excuse for getting this article and the full PDF up so late.

Of course, if you’re one of the students who grabs the issue on Monday, you’re wondering what I’m talking about, so here’s a quick recap for those of you who don’t follow [our facebook page](#).

Last week, AUSU had some computer issues which brought their website down for a couple of days. Apparently in sympathy, or perhaps in solidarity, my own computer decided that it, too, would have a bit of a failure. I had rebooted the computer for a standard update and was greeted with a screen saying that the computer had tried to repair a problem it encountered on bootup and failed, and perhaps I should reset it or remove the update. However, it turned out that both actions were unwilling to complete until the computer had undergone an auto-repair sequence, which it couldn’t complete until it had reset, and around and around we went.

Fortunately, I have enough backup equipment that I can cobble together an issue of *The Voice Magazine*, at least for the web, without my regular machine. So in it went to the shop while I continued putting the website version together.

Friday morning, I got the machine back again. The shop had had to install a brand new copy of Windows, but I knew all the Voice data was safe on a separate drive, so I was unworried. Then I tried to actually be productive.

It turns out, this type of failure would have been much easier to recover from several years ago, before they started to make computers so “friendly.” Back then, I’d simply sign in, download or reinstall my software from disc, and away we go. But who has a disc anymore? Fine. I can download it. You know, using that password that I haven’t remembered for the last six years because the computer automatically remembers it for me. Okay, I can just reset my password, because all I need to do that is to get into my email account and ... oh. This could be a problem.

I had autologins for just about everything, as it turns out. And in these days of identity theft, proving that I’m who I say I am has become a complicated affair.

Of course, as you can see, it all worked out, eventually. I’ve learned some lessons about password management, and was extremely grateful that AUSU and I had had the foresight to arrange the emergency plans that we had.

Meanwhile, you got a great issue out on Friday on the web, with our feature interview with Ontario student Crystal Bailey, an examination of the necessity of convocation in the Fly on the Wall, some strategies to cope with unemployment from our own Wanda Waterman, plus a Chazz Bravado take on the Trade Wars, course reviews, advice, scholarships, events, and more.

So, while I finally take some time to destress, enjoy the read!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karl".

MINDS WE MEET



Crystal Bailey is 41 years old and living in Belleville, Ontario with her two children. She works full-time in public accounting and hopes to complete an undergrad which will then allow her to complete the Chartered Accountant program. This is Crystal's story.

Can you give us a little bit of background information about yourself? Who are you? Where do you live, where do you come from?

I live in Belleville, Ontario with my two children who are thirteen and ten years old. I am originally from the States but have been living in Canada since 1999. I work full-time for a public accounting firm and balance being a single mom, student, employee, and friend somehow.

Where did you live in the States? Why did you make the move to Canada? Do you like it?

I am originally from Florida which is where I met my husband (now ex-husband). He is Canadian so I followed him to the great North! I am so incredibly happy living in Canada and raising my children here. I find the people and the culture so much more accepting and pleasant in nature. I miss my family in the States, but a visit to Florida solves that.

Describe the path that led you to AU. What was it that made you realize you wanted to go back to school, and what pushed you into the program you have signed up for?

I completed my Accounting Diploma in 2018 through Durham College and accepted a position within an accounting firm. I realized that I would like to keep going to obtain my undergrad to allow myself the opportunity possibly continue to complete my Chartered Accountant designation.

What do you do like to do when you are not studying?

When I am not studying, I am usually doing something with my kids. We go to the ski hill, walks at the conservation areas, skating on the bay, beach days; really anything outside. I enjoy quiet time on the couch cuddled with a blanket and Netflix just as much too!

What are your plans for this education once you finish? How does it fit in with where you want to go?

Once I complete my undergrad it will allow me to apply for the Chartered Accountant program. This is a path that will provide me the most opportunity for a better career.

Who in your life had the greatest influence on your desire to learn?

My kids had the greatest influence on me. I never want them to think it's too late to do something important to them. I am 41 years old and changing careers to make a better life and be happier. Anything is possible!

Any advice for people who think they're too old to go (back) to school?

You are never too old to do anything in life you want to do. It's amazing what we can accomplish in our lives when we dig deep and find our passions. The satisfaction of accomplishment is so overwhelming at any age, but at 41 my smile is filled with a greater understanding and appreciation for what I have done and how far I have come. The only limitation on our future is the one we place on ourselves.

Describe your experience with online learning at AU so far. What do you like? Dislike?

Online learning has been the most adaptive to my busy, hectic and surprising life. I can fit it in wherever, whenever. I do find that I occasionally feel disconnected from others and miss out on the collective student experience. The AU app helps with that; however, sometimes it would be nice to be able to look at a fellow student and ask if they understood something I missed.

At what point did you waver the most about continuing your schooling? What caused it and what got you through it?

There is usually a point in the course load where I feel overwhelmed and that I am not prepared for the exams. This is usually when I question what the heck I am doing! I always push through the stress and fear to come through the other side and this is what I remind myself of.

What is your most memorable AU course so far, and why?

Corporate Communication (CMNS380) was the most memorable because it pushed me very far outside my comfort level. I am a numbers person and found it hard to write essays. The tutor helped me with all my questions, and I had lots of them! I passed the course successfully!

Could you briefly provide an overview of CMNS 380? Was it difficult? How were the assignments and tests? Would you recommend the course to students?

CMNS 380 (Corporate Communication) was a challenging course for me as an accounting major. However, the assigned tutor was an amazing life source for me. She was so helpful in my ability to succeed in the course. Once I reached out to her, she was able to assist me in the areas that were not my strengths. Overall, the course was challenging, but definitely doable! I would recommend the course to students; however, I would include the disclaimer to those with math-based brains to be prepared to challenge your brain and get ready for writing!

What have you given up to go to AU that you regret the most? Was it worth it?

I have given up free time to just relax. That is the hardest part of balancing work and school. It will be worth it when I receive my undergraduate's degree!

How do you find communications with your course tutors?

My first few courses I did not understand that level of communication that was available with them. Once I knew that I could ask them anything, it made my courses so much easier. I do wish that the reply time could sometimes be quicker; however, I know that I am not the only one asking for help!

What is your pet peeve if you have one?

A pet peeve I suppose would be not having a collective school body that starts the course the same time and works through the same time for personal referencing and help. However, this is the online format and I am adapting.

What famous person, past or present, would you like to have lunch with, and why?

There really isn't a famous person that I would be overly eager to have lunch with. I think famous to me would be my dad. He passed away in 2003 and I would love to have lunch with him and ask him the million questions that I never got to ask him and listen to all his stories one more time!

Describe the proudest moment in your life.

Proudest moment of my life was walking across the stage last year with my children watching as I received my Diploma.

What's one thing that most wouldn't suspect of you?

I tend to come across as confident; however, I am the least confident person you will meet. I always believe that I am doing something incorrectly or different from how others would do it.

What is the most valuable lesson you have learned in life?

Never give up. It is never too late, and you can achieve anything you want in life with hard work and determination.

Have you traveled? Where has life taken you so far?

I am originally from the States and travel back to Florida and Michigan regularly to see family. My biggest life trip was to Greece in 2007 with a friend. It was a trip of a lifetime that led me through Athens and several of the islands.

What (non-AU) book are you reading now?

My non-AU book reading usually consists of children's books as I read with my daughter! Peter Pan is on the go at the moment.

Are you binge watching any TV shows? If so, what do you like most about it? Who would you recommend it to?

I absolutely love Travellers and Lucifer. When I have free time these are the two shows that I watch. They are intriguing and keep you engaged. You can miss a week or two and easily catch back up to where you were. Anyone who enjoys mystery, suspense with a bit of humour would enjoy these.

Brittany Daigle is 22 years old and completing her BSc in Computing Science & Information Systems with AU from Toronto, Ontario.



Last Student in the Classroom, Last Tree in the Forest Convocation as the Cure for the Isolation of Distance Education

Jason Sullivan



What if someone threw a party and nobody came? Convocation is our party and we can cry if we want to, but not it won't be from loneliness. I skipped my high school grad to pick up an extra shift of work but I've always been grateful that I had the foresight to attend my AU convocation. Distance education can be an isolating experience, but, when we finally reach our goal, there's few more joyous occasions than standing on that stage in full regalia and being honoured with a degree. As a current MAIS student I anticipate a future trip back up to the tail-kicking town of Athabasca that sits

along a noble river of the same name.

Just imagine, though, a classroom bereft of every last occupant except for a single pupil: you. The setting sun is shining through the windows and casting long shadows between the rows of empty desks. Only the hum of the janitor's vacuum can be heard somewhere down the hall; outside a chorus of crickets are tuning up their leg-pipes for another dusky recital. Distance education can almost seem like being left behind in school as others misunderstand what we are learning and are dubious or sceptical about what we are going to do with that nebulous degree we're seeking. After all, we were functional adults already, so why go back to school like younger people. It all can appear a bit unnatural and backwards. Yet, as the proverbial final students in class, we can find joyful solace at convocation as we realize that we are far from alone. Students of every age and background receive degrees from AU and are bonded by the fact of their success and the knowledge that their accomplishment is something that no one can ever take away from them.

Convocation is our time to be recognized and to feel prideful; many people say they'll go back to school someday and complete their degree but we few stand alone as putting our academic ability where our imaginative mouth is. In that moment on stage we also realize our unique position in society. So much of schooling is a social product, memorable most for interactions with teachers and students that are of a less-than purely academic nature. In contrast, so much of our success at AU has been about the solitary grinding act of cracking those textbooks day after day. It's a life of perpetual homework which can be a blessing in terms of not commuting to class but a curse when we'd like to have a friend to swap thoughts with. Like Sandra Bullock battling her demons in desperate cosmic isolation during the movie *Gravity*, or like Sylvester Stallone shadow boxing with sides of beef on tender-hooks during the classic film *Rocky*, the essence of our academic success has been about our own motivational prowess and intellectual capacity to endure. Others have helped us in ways we can never repay, to be sure, but the iron core of our journey has been a story of solitary fortitude.

Like a Tree Without a Forest, an AU degree is an Exercise in Noble Endurance

Parallel to our life outcome as degree-receiving attendants at convocation—and even those who aren't graduating can benefit greatly from the foretaste of future success convocation provides—another image comes to mind. It's one of a lonely old Douglas Fir tree on Vancouver Island and

is the topic of a renowned book by Harley Rustad. *Big Lonely Doug* won the CBC best non-fiction for 2018 award and, as someone whose day job is in reforestation while he continues as an AU student, I found its prose comparable to the journey of Athabasca life.

In his tale of a tree given reprieve from sawblades, Rustad illustrates, both intentionally and perhaps unwittingly, two key aspects of life and flourishing as an AU student: separation from the vicissitudes and minutiae of daily social life and the inevitable and ineffable nature of our being embedded in culture itself. Left without its original *chthonic* surroundings the tree is an archetype of solitary strength and, given the human reality of its authors' circumstances as a forestry worker, the book is largely about the culture wars associated with the conservation of nature and the realities of industry. Rustad details the machismo and bravado of old school lumberjacks, "men who stalked the forests of British Columbia in search of big timber ... fallers, who lived and breathed the bush, without glamour or glory ... (such that) companies capitalized on their Machismo" (Rustad, 66). Likewise, he notes the desire of environmental groups to balance the needs of job-creation with the needs of species preservation. As AU students we are never far from our socio-political environment, embedded in culture itself, and yet, in the splendid isolation of our studies, likewise separated from the vicissitudes and minutiae of daily social life, we interact with course materials almost as though we are the only one in the world. After all, we're often the only student in the room when those great eureka moments of learning occur!

Our Own Cause and Consequence of Our Success

If a tree falls in a forest it makes a sound, unless one thinks like a *solipsist*, but if an AU student skips a study date with themselves there will be nobody there to feel guilt but the guilty party! I've been there and it can be like being lost in the woods like Little Red Riding Hood with a book satchel. And if I don't get back on track with my time management things can get awfully dark. Being a good student, then, is about managing priorities. Our natural learning environment may seem like a classroom to others but at AU we stand academically alone. To succeed we may have to overcome the tendency to seek help from peers; we're a classroom of one, after all, and a trip to study hall may not be an option.

AU-thentic Events **Upcoming AU Related Events**

Nursing and Health Studies Library Orientation

Sat, May 25, 11:00 am to 12:30 pm MDT
Online
Hosted by AU Library
library.athabasca.ca/orientations.html
No pre-registration necessary

MBA Info Session - Saskatoon

Mon, May 27, 4:30 to 5:30 pm CST
Delta Bessborough, 601 Spadina Cres,
Saskatoon SK
In person
Hosted by AU Faculty of Business
business.athabasca.ca/event-details/mba-information-session-saskatoon-052019/
Register online at above link

Undergrad Program Orientation for New Students

Tues, May 28, 5:00 to 6:00 pm MDT
Online
Hosted by AU Faculty of Business
business.athabasca.ca/event-details/business-undergraduate-new-students-information-session-may28-2019/
Register online at above link

Nukskahtowin Name Change Ceremony

Wed, May 29, 9:30 am to 1:00 pm MDT
Athabasca University, Academic Research
Centre, Main Floor, 1 University Dr,
Athabasca AB
In person and online
Hosted by AU
news.athabasca.ca/events/nukskahtowin-name-change-ceremony/
RVSP online at above link
All events are free unless otherwise specified

Paralleling this struggle between the collective nature of classrooms and the individual nature of AU studies, Rustad discusses the twists and turns of activist opposition to clear cutting vis a vis the industrial desire to maintain shifts at their mills. He notes activist actions that range from spiking trees (to thwart chainsaws), to chaining themselves to the trees, to building and occupying treehouses to protect the trees. Rustad pillories the glorification of “romantic scenes of a logger hiking through a forest and felling a large Sitka spruce with his chainsaw” (Rustad, 106) while painting a picture of professional idealists fighting the system while painting a comfortable lifestyle for themselves. At times he falls into the trap of stereotyping both sides, and not necessarily imagining an economic solution that will allow workers to feed their families and burrowing owls to build their homes. We too can be the Norman Rockwell painting of a stereotyped and isolated scholar. However, a short trip to the local community college may be the cure for our academic struggle and AU itself has great resources for students to meet up on social media. Convocation taught me just how many other students there are!

Convocation Challenges Stereotypes

We may appear to ourselves as dull dweebs perpetually bent, Cratchet-like, over our textbooks, but that all ends at convocation—where we find out that we're pretty normal students. If not dorks, we might feel like flighty dropouts clinging to academic realms as away of hiding out from real life. In any case, a trip to convocation (for ourselves or others) would quickly allay our fantasies and set us straight about how real, and really admirable, our studies and student lifestyle are. A lot of folks can't even stick to a budget let alone take on a distance education course; we have lots to be proud of!

This AU stuff is real, maybe even more real than at other universities where the average age of attendance suggests a lesser degree of adulthood and responsibility. Next, we'll dig deeper into the stereotypical narratives of graduations and convocations and consider imagery of their nature as invariably a lens of propaganda as well as a means of glorifying job well done.

References

- Rustad, H. (2018). *Big Lonely Doug*. Vancouver: Walrus Books, House of Anansi Press.
 Rustad, H. (2018). 'CBC Best Canadian Non-Fiction of 2018'. Harley Rustad: Writer, Editor. Retrieved from <https://www.harleyrustad.com/books/big-lonely-doug>

Jason Hazel-rah Sullivan is a Masters of Integrated Studies student who loves engaging in discourse while working in the sunny orchards and forests of the Okanagan.

More AU-thentic Events

MBA Info Session - Winnipeg

Wed, May 29, 12:00 to 1:30 pm CDT
 Delta Winnipeg, 350 St Mary Ave,
 Winnipeg MB

In person

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business
business.athabasca.ca/event-details/mba-information-session-winnipeg-052019/
 Register online at above link

BComm/CPA Info Session

Wed, May 29, 5:00 to 6:00 pm MDT
 Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business
business.athabasca.ca/event-details/bcomm-cpa-information-session-11/
 Register online at above link

Business Undergrad Info Session

Thurs, May 30, 12:00 to 1:00 pm MDT
 Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business
business.athabasca.ca/event-details/business-undergraduate-information-session-14/
 Register online at above link

Quebec Meet & Greet

Fri, May 31, 5:30 to 8:00 pm EDT
 Boston Pizza Quebec, 179 Promenade du
 Portage, Gatineau QC

In person

Hosted by AUSU

www.ausu.org/event/quebec-meet-greet/
 Email services@ausu.org to RSVP

All events are free unless otherwise specified



An Existential Crisis Called Unemployment And How to Cope

Wanda Waterman



“I had never considered that you might miss a job like you missed a limb — a constant, reflexive thing. I hadn’t thought, as well as the obvious fears about money, and your future, losing your job would make you feel inadequate, and a bit useless. That it would be harder to get up in the morning than when you were rudely shocked into consciousness by the alarm. That you might miss the people you worked with, no matter how little you had in common with them.”

-Jojo Moyes, from the novel *Me Before You*

An existential crisis is typically a life event so destabilizing that it causes you to question the meaning of life, or at least your own life, identity, and personal worth. Such events might include a mid-life crisis, a divorce, the unexpected loss of a loved one, the loss of a job, or even, though perhaps to a lesser extent, an unwanted period of unemployment.

Since I’m talking to students, you’re all probably more sophisticated about the employment scene right now than me, who hasn’t had a “real” job since 2002. But as a digital nomad of the creative class I consider myself rather an expert on how to cope with fluctuating revenue, second guessing, and job searches that keep coming up empty.

So why might we call unemployment an existential crisis? Just a few reasons:

You don’t always see it coming. Even when you do see it coming you might have no idea how to respond.

Whether it is or not, it feels like rejection. You may wonder if you have any useful role in society. Your workplace may have felt like a family to you, and now that’s gone. You may need to change identities, e.g. from a student to a worker, from a worker to an unemployed person, from a worker in one field to a worker in another field, from someone who made a six-figure salary to one who makes five figures. All of this adjusting takes a great deal of mental and emotional energy.

North Americans of Northern European descent who are forced to stay with or move back in with their parents will face a social stigma and feel that they haven’t really grown up (just a little something extra to add to the identity crisis).

As a student you may have an even heavier load to carry. If you’re leaving school you might also be leaving behind an irreplaceable group of friends and a lifestyle that can never be repeated. Your identity also must now go through a series of shifts, from student to job seeker to employed, responsible adult.

You may have no savings left to you, and no credit, and you don't yet qualify for employment insurance. Besides that, you've probably already squeezed dry everyone who might have been able to help you out financially.

So how do you get through unemployment with your sense of self and your sanity intact, at least until you find a job? Just a few suggestions:

1. Talk to someone about it. Don't look for advice, just seek out a good listener so you can talk your way through it. Sometimes solutions will come to you just as you're laying the problem out for someone else.
2. Stay focused. This doesn't mean chasing your tail in circles, mulling over how hard life is and what a loser you must be. It means knowing what you want and concentrating your efforts on achieving it. My grandfather used to say to unemployed family members, "You do have a job; your job is to find a job!" Keep your chin up, keep your stick on the ice, and git'er done.
3. The job hunt itself should not take 40 hours a week. Yay! Now get out there in your spare time and do those amazing things you won't be able to do when that job comes along with its potential to suck all the joy out of your life. I'm not talking idle pleasures here; rather, now's your chance to do some volunteer work, join that band, learn a new language, or take up horticulture. Who knows? You might be able to find—or even create—a job out of your passion.
4. Keep in mind that you are not your work. You are a precious manifestation of a great mystery. Now live like you believe that.

Uncertainty and a lack of resources often act as catalysts for positive change; an unknown future at times seems to draw good things into it. The world is full of success stories that start out with someone standing over the black pit of an unknown future. Do you suppose Don Cherry, Susan Boyle, Colonel Sanders, and J.K. Rowling would have achieved so much had they never endured long periods of unemployment? The world is your oyster; go make a pearl.

Wanda also writes the blog [The Mindful Bard: The Care and Feeding of the Creative Self](#).



Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: Lift Parts Express Scholarship

Sponsored by: Lift Parts Express

Deadline: June 30, 2019

Potential payout: \$500

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be between the ages of 16 and 21, be attending school in the fall of 2019, be a resident of Canada or the U.S., and have GPA or 3.0 or greater.

What's required: An online application form, including an essay (no word limit) outlining your expectations for school and beyond.

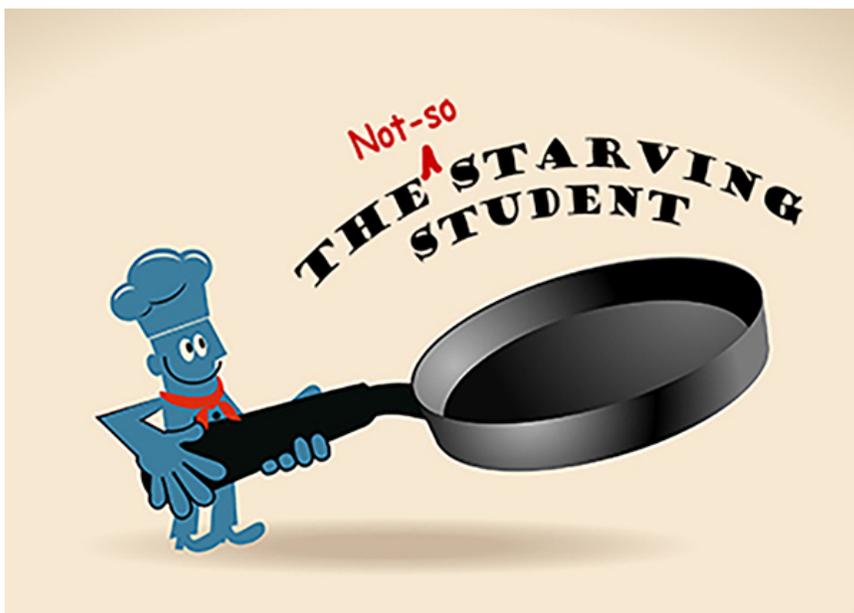
Tips: Browse through the [previous years' winners](#) for inspiration.

Where to get info: forkliftpartsarizona.com/forkliftparts.php#



The Not-So Starving Student Four Vancouver Must Eats

Xin Xu



Last week I showcased some one-of-a-kind food items from the West Coast ranging from souplless ramen to roasted eggplants. This week, my tour through Vancouver continues as I feature the must-eats from Vancouver. Given its geographic location near the Pacific Ocean, Vancouver offers some of the freshest and most varied seafood selections from across Canada. Regardless of your taste preferences, Vancouver has a place that will satisfy those cravings. From wandering through downtown Vancouver to neighborhoods surrounding the city like Burnaby and Richmond, I created a list of top must-try food in

Vancouver. Adventurous AU students who are looking for a taste of the West Coast can enjoy the best of what Vancouver has to offer.

Ramen

Given the dynamic Japanese community in British Columbia, ramen is an iconic contemporary fare featuring char siu along with a variety of toppings. In a previous article, I covered the history of ramen and its popularity across North America. Ramen in Vancouver was different for a few reasons. For one, along a hipster street such as Robson Street to the North of the city you can find ramen on nearly every block. Because of such abundance, the price of ramen is also more affordable compared to that of Alberta (a \$5 difference!). This means students can chow down on more bowls of ramen and try flavors they're less accustomed to.



Sushi/Sashimi

Sushi in this coastal city range from lower tier all-you-can-eats to premium a-la-carte selections. For myself, I tried two different sushi restaurants each with its unique touch. Toshi Sushi is a petite sushi joint tucked away on a small street. However, on a windy day I stumbled across the location packed with sushi connoisseurs. The line was outside the door and I was informed of a 45 minute wait. Inside, the dining area was pleasant and cozy. I had tried some of the freshest sushi for a very affordable price. Unlike sushi or sashimi in Alberta, the variety was incredible.

Bubble tea

Given the large Eastern Asian population in Richmond, bubble tea locations are as widespread as coffee shops. Rather than your standard bubble tea choices, you might find some novelty options such as this Yakult bubble tea. Yakult is a yogurt flavored drink with a unmistakable, tangy, Italian-soda like flavor. Moreover, many bubble tea locations also offer boardgames, cozy decor that invites guests to stay longer than the time it takes to make the beverage.



Dim Sum

Since dim sum originated in the Southern Chinese province of Guangdong, many of the tapa-like dishes feature fresh seafood such as shrimp, cuttlefish and fish eggs. Having tried dim sum all across Canada, I can safely say that my favorite dim sum locations are in B.C. Additionally, some items such as durian pastries are a unique find only in exclusive dim sum locations. Some of the most authentic dim sum locations are found in Richmond where a high density of Southern Chinese population.

Xin Xu is a post-graduate health-science AU student, aspiring clinician, globe-trotter, parrot-breeder and tea-connoisseur



Unearthing classic articles from previous issues of The Voice Magazine.

Saturday, May 25 is both Towel Day and Geek Pride Day, which naturally reminds us of the greater writer, Douglas Adams, and his seminal work *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*.

Fry reads what Adams wrote. Writer and former Voice editor S.D. Livingston opines that writers should stick to what they do best, and leave author readings to performance professionals "Writers grab our attention and transport us to other world...it's a rare author indeed who can bring that skill to a live performance." [Write Stuff—Silent Treatment](#), April 29, 2011.

For all you hoopy froods. Barbara Lehtiniemi gives the geeks their due in honour of their day. "Somewhere in the maturity process, many people lose their capacity for wonder. Geeks don't. They never stop wondering, 'Why?' They never stop asking, 'How?' and, 'What if?'" [It's All Geek to Me](#), May 23, 2014.

Women of Interest

Roberta “Bobbi” Gibb

Barb Godin



Roberta Louise “Bobbie” Gibb is the first woman to complete the Boston Marathon during the pre-sanctioned era, which included the years 1966 to 1971. She was not officially recognized at that time, as women were viewed as not being physically able to compete in events longer than one and a half miles. This did not deter Gibb from her goal. On the morning of the Boston Marathon in 1966, Bobbi borrowed her brother’s Bermuda shorts and pulled a blue hooded sweatshirt over her head. She hid in the bushes and, after the starting gun fired, she joined in the race about mid way. When the men became aware she was a woman, they were very supportive. Also when the crowds lining the streets realized she was a woman, they cheered her on. Gibb finished the race ahead of two thirds of the runners and the Governor of Massachusetts, was at the finish line to shake her hand. As a result of this courageous act, Bobbi Gibb was significant in changing wide held beliefs about women’s capabilities, and she has been celebrated for triggering the second wave of the women’s

movement.

Bobbi Gibb was born November 2, 1942 in Cambridge Massachusetts. She was a wearer of many hats. Gibb received her Bachelor of Science in 1969, with a major in philosophy and a minor in mathematics, but stated she was refused entrance into medical school because of her gender. In 1974 Gibb changed her path and entered the New England School of Law and was admitted to the Massachusetts Bar in 1978. At this time Bobbi Gibb was married and raising a family while practicing law.

Gibb is also an artist and writer. She sculpted the bronze figurines which were given to the top three women marathoners at the US Olympic trials in 1984. It was not until 1996 that the Boston Athletic Association finally recognized Gibb as the pre-sanctioned era women’s winner in 1966, 1967 and 1968. In honor of Bobbi Gibb’s run over 50 years ago, she is working on sculpting a life-size statue of a female runner that will be placed on the Boston Marathon course. Fund raising for this project is ongoing. Gibb continues to write on a wide variety of topics and has recently written her memoir “Wind in the Fire: A Personal Journey.”

At the present time Gibb is working at the Cecil B. Day Neuromuscular Laboratory, finding causes and hopefully cures of many neurodegenerative diseases, specifically Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS). She has received many honors and awards, which are listed at the following website: <https://sports.jrank.org/pages/1629/Gibb-Bobbi-Awards-Accomplishments.html>

Barbara Godin is a graduate of AU and writes the “Dear Barb” column. She lives in London, Ontario with her husband, and two dogs. She can be reached on twitter @BarbGod



Porkpie Hat

Jussie Smollett and the Age of Outrage

Darjeeling Jones



“Baby Isn't there such a sweet, sad irony to the sorry shenanigans of Jussie Smollett? Apparently in hopes of furthering his career, sweetening his contract deal, and winning public sympathy and support, the poor schmo allegedly conspired to fake a hate crime against himself. Of course, since the whole ill-conceived shitshow has blown up in his face, he has toasted his career, and become a target for mockery, derision, and public outrage of a blowtorch-like intensity. I can't help but feel empathy for him.

Don't misunderstand me, what Mr. Smollett did was unconscionable. Not because of the dishonesty aspect, though, because that's just de rigueur for media celebrity types; crafting disingenuous presentations of their looks, personalities, and narratives is their very stock-in-trade. And of course they are aided in that sleight of hand by publicists, agents, advertising agencies, public relations firms, and a host of other professional perception fabricators. Nope, we live in a relativistic, post-truth age, so being scandalized by spin is just a bit like being shocked to find there's gambling going on in Rick's American Cafe. I would argue, as well, that each of us is doing much the same on a smaller, personal scale. We are all carefully curating and constructing an image to present to others, a projection of ourselves we hope will win us whatever it is we most desire: financial success, acceptance, belonging, love, respect.

What *is* unforgivable about Mr. Smollett's fiasco is the fact that, by choosing the particular lie that he did, he ended up causing so much hurt for others who have actually been the victims of racially motivated violence--something that is real, widespread, and devastating. Furthermore, the nature of his fabrication undermines the efforts of those who are trying to eradicate racialized violence, as well as providing fodder and talking points to bigots and apologists who are convinced themselves, and want to convince others, that the whole thing is just a liberal conspiracy.

Even so, I feel empathy for him, and recoil at the atomic bomb of vitriol and schadenfreude that's been detonated above his head. I feel sorry for him, because he happened to do what he did at precisely the wrong point in time. It seems to me the current zeitgeist is a turbulent thunderhead of anger and resentment, building up a deadly charge, ready to unleash itself upon any hapless transgressors below. Society is pissed off. Politically, economically, environmentally, our troubles are many, and sadly our distractions are few, and mostly problematic. Unlike previous generations, the current age is one fraught with guilt related to so many of the things that provide comfort and solace. The very food we eat is problematic; eating meat and dairy is devastating to the environment; eating seafood depletes the oceans. If we fly to Paris or drive to the cottage, we may as well be pouring bottles of bleach into a stream. Even our entertainment morally divisive. If we watch a film, listen to music, read a book, or walk through an art gallery, we are forever engaged in debates about wokeness, cultural appropriation, the moral transgressions of the works'

creators. We are no longer allowed to simply enjoy a Woody Allen film, or paintings by Gauguin or Picasso. Perhaps it's no wonder, then, that one of the very few socially acceptable pleasures left open to us is the sweet tang of moral indignation as, like self-righteous digital piranhas, we swarm and savage the flesh of those who have been designated as acceptable culprits.

I don't for a second doubt Mr. Smollett's guilt. But surely he's paid a high enough price for what he did, considering his life and career is now on the skids. Do we really need to keep coming after him, news cycle after news cycle, meme upon meme? I mean, in the end, what was he most guilty of? Thoughtlessness, greed, and stupidity. I don't know about you, but I've been guilty of all three numerous times. I hope I never have to pay so high a price.



The Fit Student What if You were Health Minister?

Marie Well



Wouldn't you love to gain a political science major—and become the next Health Minister? AU students seem to excel at politics. AU's very own Jason Nixon went from AUSU presidency to Alberta's Minister of Environment and Parks. What an opportunity to make change! But maybe politics isn't your thing. Maybe you'd prefer to get perks—without even trying—simply due to deregulation or policies put in place.

If I got assigned as Health Minister, I'd give you those perks. How? To start, I'd give tax holidays to organic farmers so that students and low-income folks could afford them. No-one should suffer four years of studies fueled by Mac and Cheese. Pet Fido might beg for Mac, but I pity the folks cleaning the noodle poopies.

And if you go to both AU and a physical university, I wouldn't force-feed you fast foods. Instead, I'd mandate university concession stands stock up on organic fruits, veggies, nuts, and seeds. No salt. No roasting. Fresh and raw. Just like an A student after an MCAT exam.

And if you're in your eighties getting your first university degree, I'd mandate that seniors' homes serve organic foods and get equipped with gyms. Happy hours don't rid you of toxins, but super sets do. And aging healthily makes for happy decades, not tipsy hours.

I'd make sure you students with chronic diseases get supports, not just pills and go-nowhere diagnostics. And then I'd have a panel of people with chronic illnesses put forth policy. My last doctor smoked, had a paunch, and had a heart attack. Yet, he had more health know-how than most politicians. Meanwhile, some of the sickest patients run triathlons and eat strict diets. And they turn their lives around. So, doctor, politician, or patient—take your pick for who sets policy.

Today I saw a documentary that says autism can be reversed through an organic and non-GMO diet. Supposedly, GMO (genetically modified crops) are built to resist pesticides. But sadly, super

weeds and super bugs have since sprouted that survive pesticides. Thus, these super weeds and super bugs now need super doses of pesticides. It's like lighting term papers on fire to avoid the F's.

As a health minister, I'd also give tax holidays to farmers who cultivated diverse crops and diverse breeds of beasts on single fields. Monocrops (that host just one crop) destroy soil quality and force reliance on pesticides and artificial fertilizers. But free-range animals do favors by fertilizing soil with feces. This organic fertilization bolsters the good bacteria and enzymes in the soil. Even diluted urine fertilizes soil. Urine also acts as an ingredient in many medications. No black magic turns potties to pills and potties to plants.

But you're a student, right? You might study at AU remotely from a farm, or you might have nothing to do with farming. Either way, consider growing organics. And if you get feisty, build a greenhouse. I phoned a grocery chain, and the assistant manager said local (organic) farmers can call head office to apply to stock crops in the stores. The crops would need to meet certain health standards. But what better way to pay for your degree(s) *and* ditch the Mac and Cheese?

During exams, students' faces break out, students' stress levels skyrocket, and students' noses drip and plug. Students need more than instant noodles to suffer stressful tests. We instead need degrees in Poli-Sci.

So, what would you wish to change if you were Health Minister?



Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

Following What's Hot around AU's Social Media Sites.



AthaU Facebook Group

Sheena asks for recommendations for a humanities course to fulfill degree requirements; this touches off a discussion on the value of breadth requirements in undergrad programs. Kayla seeks input on what the terms "quiz" and "assignment" pertain to on course syllabi. Angela needs help choosing a course she can complete in two months; of her short list, LGST 369 emerges as the winner.

Other posts include study techniques, AU labour unrest, monthly graduation deadlines, and courses CMIS 351, FNCE 370, and PSYC 356.

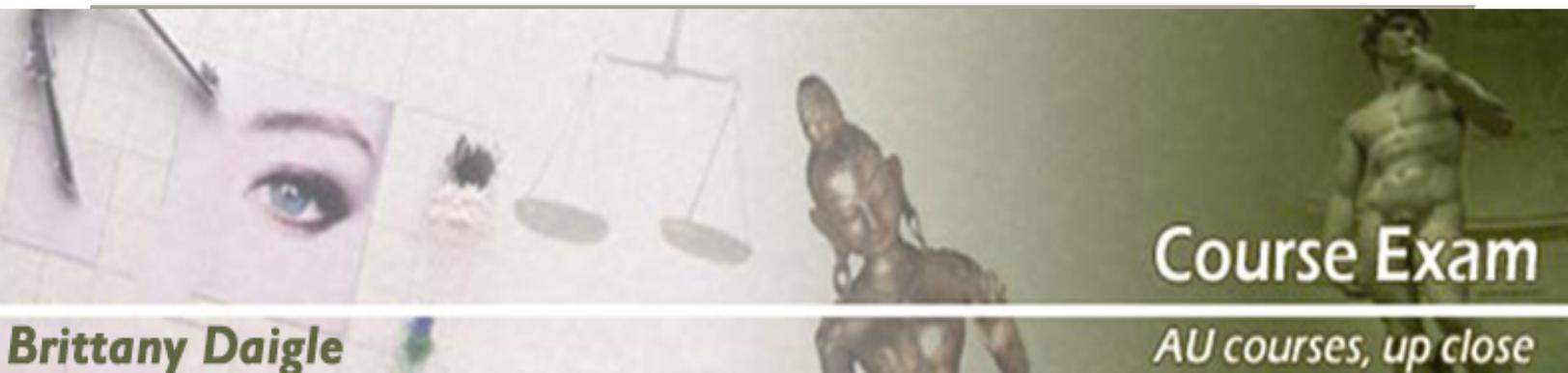
Twitter

@austudentsunion tweets: "AUSU's Open Mic has a new podcast episode! Check out "Time Travel 201 with AUSU Execs" at <https://bit.ly/2QeepbG>. Also available on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, and Pocket Casts."

@AU_Press tweets: "Have you talked to your kids about their legal rights? Find the answers in THE LAW IS (NOT) FOR KIDS. Available as a free download. [http://aupress.ca/index.php/books/120281 ...](http://aupress.ca/index.php/books/120281...)"

Youtube

Gear up for Convocation 2019 with a newly-posted video from AU featuring 2018 grad, Nathan Sack: Best Part About Graduating?



Course Exam

AU courses, up close

Brittany Daigle

Course Exam

Brittany Daigle

MUSI 268 / HUMN 268 (Classical Music: A Historical Introduction) is a three-credit introductory music course that aims to review the fundamental elements of music as art in Western civilization. Students will first get a good grasp of the key elements of music. It is important to become comfortable with the meaning and use of the musical vocabulary that is introduced in this course. There are no prerequisites for MUSI 268 / HUMN 268 and there is a Challenge for Credit option if students are interested.

Students should note that MUSI 268 is a cross-listed course, meaning that it is a course that is also listed under a different discipline as HUMN 268. MUSI 268 may not be taken for credit by students who have obtained credit for HUMN 268 or HUMN 269.

Classical Music: A Historical Introduction is divided into fifteen units, with fifteen discussion board postings worth a total of fifteen percent, fifteen self-tests totalling fifteen percent, one short essay worth twenty percent, one long essay that weighs twenty-five percent, and a final examination weighing twenty-five percent. The fifteen units within this course cover a large amount of information including late romanticism, medieval music, music in the renaissance era, opera in the nineteenth century, the classical period, musical nationalism, and so much more. In order for students to receive credit for MUSI 268 / HUMN 268, you must complete and submit all of the five components listed above. Also, students must achieve a course composite mark of at least a “D” which is equivalent to fifty percent, and obtain a minimum of fifty per cent on the final examination.

Dr. Kevin Whittingham has been the tutor for MUSI 268 / HUMN 268 since its opening and has been with Athabasca University for decades. Alongside this course, he tutors MUSI 267 (Sound and Sense: Listening to Music), HIST 201 / HUMN 201 (Western Thought and Culture I: Before the Reformation), HIST 312 / HUMN 312 (Ancient Rome), HIST 313 / HUMN 313 / RELS 313 (Early Christians), and HIST 404 (Historical Foundations of Modern Science). He provides a brief introduction, stating “I have a master’s degree in humanities and a doctoral degree in musicology.”

Furthermore, as stated in his biography, “In long service as a tutor, Kevin has had experience in a wide range of courses in history, humanities, and music. He has contributed to the development of MUSI 267, HUMN 268 and 269, HIST/MUSI 310, and HUMN/CLST/MUSI 412. He is a member of The British Music Society, The English Poetry and Song Society, The Housman Society, and The International Association for Word and Music Studies. His published articles concentrate on vocal music, and he is currently researching the early twentieth-century British contralto Clara Butt.”

When asked to describe the course to students, he states “The course begins with a review of the fundamentals of Western art music and its vocabulary. It covers the period from Gregorian chant to the late twentieth century.”

As for the structure of the course, Dr. Whittingham states “The course is online. It requires extensive reading and listening, two essay assignments, forum posts, self-tests, and one invigilated exam.”

He provides some advice for MUSI 268 / HUMN 268 students, stating that to be successful in the course “they must have the commitment to follow a suggested study schedule. Students should also contact their tutor about each essay assignment when you they are about to start it. Make sure to apply any feedback that you received on the first essay to the second.”

Dr. Kevin Whittingham recommends this course to any “Students with an interest in ‘classical’ music.”

As for what he believes students will take away from MUSI 268 / HUMN 268, he states “An overview of the history of Western art music and familiarity with its sounds.”

When asked to describe which aspects of the course seem to be the most difficult for students, he explains that students may have difficulties with the necessary “Online library research and critical reading of secondary sources. Also, parts of the exam require short answers to specific questions. Students need to be aware that focused reading of the course materials and memorization are necessary.”

Whether MUSI 268 / HUMN 268 is a degree or program requirement of yours, or if the topics or musical genre that is discussed above is of interest to you, this course will have you learning a lot of interesting material surrounding the subject of classical music. If you would like to get in contact with Dr. Kevin Whittingham, his email is kevinw@athabascau.ca.

Brittany Daigle is 22 years old and completing her BSc in Computing Science & Information Systems with AU from Toronto, Ontario.



The Course Review

English 302—Introduction to Canadian Literature

Carla Knipe



The Department of English at Athabasca University is proud to launch a completely revised Introduction to Canadian Literature course. This course covers the history and themes of Canadian Literature from its beginnings up until the present, and covers works in a variety of genres, including prose, poetry, non-fiction, and more. The course will also introduce students to many Canadian writers, both well-known and not-as-well-known. But Canada’s literature will also be a lens through which Canada’s history and

culture are viewed, from Confederation up to the present day.

Even though this course is labelled as an introduction, it is placed at the senior level, which means that students require ENGL211 or 212 or an equivalent before enrolling. There is a lot of close reading of texts as well as supplementary material, and literary concepts such as theme, form, irony, and point of view will be applied to analyzing the works. The scope of the course makes it a six-credit course, meaning that students will have up to one year to complete it. There are four assignments that students must complete and submit, plus a final exam worth 40% of the final grade.

I interviewed English professor Paul Huebener about the revised course, and he provided some candid answers about why it is worth choosing for AU Humanities students.

First of all, why should AU students study Canadian literature?

Canada has produced incredible works of literature, and the field is growing rapidly, so a course like this can guide students through some really compelling readings. At the same time, literature is a window into larger forms of cultural politics and meaning. What are the ways that we might define the nation and its narratives and concerns through time? Whose voices are heard or silenced?

Why did this revision come about? What did you decide to include and exclude with this revision, and how did the English Department undertake the task of that revision? Was it a difficult process?

It's a lot of fun, and also a big responsibility, to create a course that surveys the long view of Canadian literature all the way from early European exploration narratives to twenty-first century fiction and poetry. Sonia Atwal and Virginia Gillese, our longstanding course tutors, had some wide-ranging conversations with me, and we selected some famous texts and some lesser-known ones, written by authors from settler backgrounds as well as minority immigrant writers and Indigenous authors.

There are some big themes covered in this course. Even though this is a six-credit course, do you think that it covers the themes well enough, or do you feel it still only just scratches the surface of what is out there?

The nature of a survey course is that it introduces students to the complexity of the field and helps them develop a critical literacy through selected readings. No single course can comprehensively cover an entire area of study, but a measure of our success will be if we can make students fall in love with the field, opening the door to further discoveries.

Of course, there are the superstars of the Canadian literary canon who everyone has heard about, such as Margaret Atwood, Michael Ondaatje, Farley Mowat, and Lucy Maud Montgomery. But who are some of the Canadian writers you feel are doing some fantastic work but don't really get the press that the "superstars" do?

A great question! The canon of Canadian literature is always expanding. Emily St. John Mandel has received a lot of attention recently with her post-apocalyptic novel *Station Eleven*. Madeleine Thien has become a major figure in recent years; we've assigned one of her short stories. Our students will also read a story from the First World War era by Jessie Georgina Sime. She's not very well known, but her work illuminates the changes taking place at that time, particularly with respect to the shifting social roles of women. We've also assigned a play by Kevin Loring, who is the first artistic director for Indigenous Theatre at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa, and some bizarre poetry by Christian Bök, who has been implanting sonnets into the DNA of bacteria.

Besides this course, how can AU students find out more about the Canadian literary scene and what is out there without feeling intimidated and even if they aren't English majors?

Canadian literature is a priority in our English program. We offer courses in Indigenous Literature in Canada, Comparative Canadian Literature, and Canadian Drama. Students can also develop special research projects on topics of their choice. For students who are new to literary studies, our introductory courses English 211 and English 212 include some Canadian texts as well.

Traditionally, Canadian literature has dealt with themes of wilderness and geography and settlement. Where do you feel the trajectory of Canadian literature is going, in light of the issues and changes to society that Canada is facing in modern times?

Like the nation, Canadian literature has been going through big changes in ways that are both exciting and alarming. Canadian novels are being celebrated internationally as great works, even while the Canadian literature industry has been caught up in controversies linked to settler colonialism and the #MeToo movement. Meanwhile, an increasing number of texts are examining our responses to ecological crisis and climate change. We're a long way from the old settler narratives about survival in the desolate wilderness, though we need to keep examining those stories as well. By the time students reach the end of this course, they will be developing their own analyses of current works in the field. Ideal students will be the ones who go on to teach *us* where the field is going.

So if you want a course that challenges your perceptions and ideas about how Canada is viewed, but invites your own ideas into the conversation, then English 302: Introduction to Canadian Literature will do just that.

Carla is an AU student who lives and writes in Calgary, Alberta. Say "hi" to her on Twitter @LunchBuster.



The Study Dude Grow Your Brains

Marie Well



Grow your brains for higher grades. Gray matter gains ground when you read, meditate, listen to music, do yoga, and exercise. Who said Snoop Dog doesn't make for A students?

So, read daily. Fiction can boost your vocabulary, but nonfiction can groom your skills. "Reading is not just a pastime to entertain yourself and stimulate your imagination; it is also an effective exercise for the brain to aid in faster learning" (Vang, p. 10 of 57, 13%). More than your eyeballs get workouts when reading.

This past week, I found an online bookstore called Abebooks.com. This bookstore sells used textbooks for prices like \$3 plus shipping. I had my heart set on an Amazon textbook priced at

\$160, but I found the same book on Abebooks.com for \$3. But it takes over twenty days to ship. Super cheap but with a ship hitch.

Reading textbooks—or most any other book—fuels the brain. “Reading also improves blood flow to the brain, which means more oxygen is carried to it for higher functioning. As you read, the nerve cells in your brain regenerate faster” (Vang, p. 10 of 57, 13%). That’s why you get “test head.” Test head strikes post-exam, when you stagger out the exam room dizzy. That’s also called blood rush to the brain.

Like reading, meditation gives rushes to the brain—feel-good rushes. I used to meditate during anxiety attacks, but that turned to me associating meditation with anxiety. So, I foolishly fear meditation. However, “psychologists say that deep meditation reduces the secretion of the stress hormone cortisol, and instead, increases the secretion of dopamine and serotonin, two feel-good hormones that control mood and other biological functions” (Vang, p. 15 of 57, 19%). Thus, fearing meditation seems as foolish as screaming at the sight of salad.

Like reading and meditation, music also aids the brain. While my friend’s elderly mother was dying, we played a classical music CD for her. And now that classical CD brings memories of this dear woman. Classical music does more than skip the heartbeat; it also “has been discovered to increase intelligence ... especially among kids ... According to experts, music stimulates the brain to release various hormones that aid the brain into thinking clearer and processing information faster, and at the same time, smoothen out the mood to make you more emotionally stable” (Vang, p. 16 of 57, 22%). Yes, Bach’s got your back, come test time.

But why do musicians seem to churn out their best music while they are young—music which they play on stage decades later? Well, maybe their youthful creative bursts have to do with healthier, younger brains. But fit older musicians—and students—might also have an edge: “Gyms offer a variety of exercises, and that is exactly what your brain needs to produce more BDNF or brain – derived neurotrophic factor – a hormone that stimulates the growth and repair of brain cells” (Vang, p. 22 of 57, 32%). So, when brain cells burst, bulk ‘em up with a bench press.

Yoga boosts brain power, too. And while I love yoga, martial arts are my favorite past-time; it’s yoga on steroids. I seem to shrug off slow-moving sports. Baseball bores me but hockey or soccer gets my heartbeat pumping. As for yoga, “Bikram yoga, a yoga done in a heated room, is still mental but is more physical. Bhramari pranayama, on the other hand, is a type of yoga that is more mental but still requires physical accuracy” (p. 16 of 57, 24%). I prefer Bikram yoga—it gives a double whammy sweat.

But why exercise? Dr. Amen (at 5:40 in his clip) said that your brain shrinks as you gain weight. But the good news? “20 minutes of running increases the size of your brain by 20%. That can be translated to 20% improvement in speed of memorization, recalling, and response” (Vang, p. 24 of 57, 33%). I think it should say “20 minutes a day.” Nonetheless, I just finished two hours of training. So, I bet my brains will soon need a second head.

Unlike exercise, Phillip Vang suggests that TV makes us stupid. I stopped watching TV when I turned fifteen. But I returned to watching TV when I turned 24, which stirred deep-rooted guilt. So, I ditched TV once and for all. But ever since I got Amazon Prime, I watch health documentaries nonstop. Do documentaries count as mental massaging or mental dodging? “As a matter of fact, your body burns more calories when sleeping than when watching TV ... As a

result (of watching TV), your brain becomes less active, which makes learning more difficult” (Vang, p. 27 of 57, 38%). So, fluff your pillows whenever your fingers twitch to switch on the TV.

Well, if listening to Snoop Dog doesn't sound like the best way to get an A, then read his biography, dance to his jingles, or meditate on how he made it famous. Either way, it sounds like you'll grow your brains and get higher grades.

References

Vang, Phillip. (2014). *31 Steps to Learn Smarter*. E-book.



Council Connection May 9, 2019 Meeting

Carla Knipe



The May 2019 AUSU meeting was the shortest one in a while, but that doesn't mean that the AUSU Council were any less busy.

The meeting got underway on time at 6:30 PM, and the initial protocols—the motions to move and adopt last month's minutes and this month's agenda—were unanimous.

There were no action items to discuss this month, as Council has caught up with them for now. The meeting then moved to this month's discussion items. VPFA Natasha Donohue reviewed the discussion from last month's meeting regarding the policy of Council Governance Meeting Attendance.

This meeting is the first one without the input from Governance and Advocacy Coordinator Emmanuel Barker, but the rest

of AUSU Council carried on his work of editing and refining this policy. Councillor Alice Lamu requested further clarification about the attendance at the Council retreat, which President Simmons provided. He said that if someone misses both days, that would technically be two absences, but they would be counted as one. If a councillor attended most of those days, attendance will be amended accordingly. He said that overall patterns of attendance during the yearly term would be looked at, but if a councillor fails to participate in eighty percent of a council term, then the disciplinary procedure would be automatically triggered. All of council were happy with the policy, and the motion was carried unanimously.

The next motion was to approve the updated copy of Councillor Responsibilities and Honoraria. With this review, the policy did not change much from the existing policy, and the AUSU Executive did not want an extensive review at this time. There were no questions from the rest of Council and the motion was unanimously approved. This led into the next motion, to approve the updated copy of Policy Council Governance Email Voting. This policy references the AUSU

absence policy, but it is not a huge revision from the existing policy. There were no comments from the rest of council, and the motion was carried unanimously.

Finally, was a motion to approve the updated copy of the Council Changeover policy. Council approved the informal reviews to this policy but the executive noted that if there were any questions, AUSU councillors were invited to reach out to President Simmons.

For the second month in a row, council agreed to move in-camera to discuss a piece of confidential council business. Councillors moved within Zoom to a separate meeting room. When they returned, they held a secret ballot regarding the proposal to remove Julian Teterenko both from council and as a member in good standing for failing to uphold the councillor academic requirements, which require that a Councillor successfully complete at least one AU course each year of their term and be in a course for at least 8 months of each councillor term year. The result of the vote was 5 aye, 6 nay. The motion did not carry.

Council then moved to the discussion of the monthly reports. President Simmons attended numerous committee meetings and more or scheduled in the coming months. A highlight was seeing the swearing-in ceremony of the new Alberta provincial government. He noted that AUSU and AU have already reached out to the new Advanced Education minister and will be helping to relay the importance of AU to the new government. President Simmons is involved with working on some new initiatives to improve the methods of communication between students, AUSU and AU. This possibly includes a new app that may be replacing AUSU's own Ooh La La app, and will hopefully incorporate several of the most requested features AUSU has had about their app, including the ability to access it from a non-mobile device. He was unable to give details about when this might be available for students, however.

Natasha Donahue, VP Finance and Administration, highlighted meetings with various AU Faculty Councils that are in the process of updating AU program offerings. She also attended the second half of the recessed General Faculties Council meeting, which concluded the discussion regarding the Amazon Web Services platform. Attendees learned that the cost of maintaining infrastructure on the cloud represents a significant savings over maintaining physical structures on site.

Meanwhile, Communications Coordinator Donette Kingyens has had a busy month getting ready for AUSU's website launch. She also noted that AUSU has had many Student requests for advocacy and advising, which is great for students to know that they can approach AUSU with issues. She said that AU's Registrar has been really responsive as well.

AUSU's Executive Director Jodi Campbell is pleased to welcome Duncan Wojtaszek as AUSU's new Governance and Advocacy Coordinator. He has worked with Duncan before, and knows that he brings a lot of skills to AUSU. Also, hopefully now that the podcast "AUSU Open Mic" is launched with its second episode, the word will get out and more students will be able to listen in. Find out how to access it through the AUSU website.

With the reports presented, there was no more questions or discussion at the meeting, and it was adjourned at 7:32 PM. The next meeting date and time has yet to be confirmed, but will be held during the Council retreat.

Carla is an AU student who lives and writes in Calgary, Alberta. Say "hi" to her on Twitter @LunchBuster.



Mother's Day Downer

Dear Barb:

I am the oldest of three; my two younger brothers are away at university. Last week they returned for Mother's Day, but one of my brothers refused to see or celebrate Mother's Day with my mom. My mom and him have had issues for a long time, but now he doesn't want to see her at all. My dad has tried to talk to my brother and now they aren't speaking either. My other brother and myself don't understand what the problem is. We always thought my mom was a caring supportive mom. Mother's Day was not happy for my mom, even though she was trying to hide her pain. My brother and I hate to see mom so dejected, but we don't know what to do about it. Mom doesn't know what she did to David, or why he's treating her so terribly. David's behaviour is ruining all our special occasions. I love my brother and want this to end before it's too late. Is there anything I can do to help end this feud? Thanks, Monica.

Hi Monica:

So sorry this has happened to your family. Adult child cut their parents off for many reasons, if there was no abuse or neglect, then the reason usually has more to do with the adult child than it does with the parent. The number one reason why adult children estrange from their parents is because they cannot deal with anxiety and high stress situations. Rather than discuss and face issues, they escape.

If you look back over your brother's pattern of behaviour, it's likely this isn't the first time he has reacted this way. This may have been the longest estrangement and has the strongest impact, as your parents are aging and it is more difficult for them to deal with the loss. There is not a lot you can do, except be supportive of your parents and your brother. Maybe try to get your mother and brother to see a counsellor. It's important that your mother not blame herself. This wasn't her choice; she did not choose to stop seeing your brother. He has to find a way to work this out and your mother has to be receptive to him. Remember that the love is still there, it's just that your brother does not know how to deal with his anxiety, so he chose to do this. If he seeks professional help and likely be able to reconcile with your mother. Unfortunately, your mother's days are probably consumed with wondering what she did wrong and rehashing your brother's upbringing and that is not a healthy way to live. She needs to stop thinking about this and go on with her life. Perhaps you can speak to your family doctor about support groups in your area that may be helpful for your mother. Best of luck, and thanks for writing Monica.

Email your questions to voice@voicemagazine.org. Some submissions may be edited for length or to protect confidentiality; your real name and location will never be printed. This column is for entertainment only. The author is not a professional counsellor and this column is not intended to take the place of professional advice.



Chazz Bravado Trade Wars

Wanda Waterman



Everybody's
griping about
the new trade wars
with China.



But the Chazz Man
always looks
for a silver lining.



The Chinese
are refusing
to buy our
canola oil?



That leaves all
the more canola
for oil wrestling
competitions!



They won't
buy our winter
jackets?



Chicky-poos look
better without
jackets, anyway.



Who knows?
Maybe the trend
will go global!



And baby, if you feel
cold after your oil
wrestling match, you've
got the Chazz Man's
lovin' arms to keep you
warm!

The information on this page is provided by the AU Students' Union. The Voice does not create this content. Contact AUSU at services@ausu.org with any questions about this article.

IMPORTANT DATES

- **May 30:** [Deadline to apply for course extension for July](#)
- **May 31:** [Gatineau Student Meet & Greet](#)
- **June 7-8:** [Athabasca University Convocation](#)
- **Jun 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Jul 1](#)
- **Jun 15:** [AUSU In-Person Council Meeting](#)
- **Jun 15:** [July degree requirements deadline](#)

Student Social in Gatineau, Quebec

AUSU will be hosting an AU Student Social event in **Gatineau, Quebec on May 31!**

Come on out to meet fellow AU students, get to know your students' union executives, and get some free AUSU swag!

When: Friday, May 31

Where: [Boston Pizza Quebec](#)

179 Promenade du Portage
Gatineau, Quebec J8X 2K5 Canada

Help us plan – please RSVP to services@ausu.org or on our [Facebook Event](#).



AUSU Career Resources

Looking for a new job or career?

Want to know when career fairs are happening in your area?

Need to build a new resume or prepare for interviews?

Want to find job search sites for your area?

AUSU's [Career Resource Page](#) can help!



AUSU Executive Transition

AUSU just held an executive by-election in accordance with policy. We are pleased to announce our new Vice President roles!

VP External & Student Affairs: **Natasha Donahue**

Natasha has been on AUSU council and the VP Finance and Administration since 2018. She currently sits on the AU General Faculties Council, 3 AU Faculty Councils, and numerous other committees. Natasha is moving from the VPFA to VPEX role as of May 22, 2019.

VP Finance & Administration: **Brittany Daigle**

Brittany has been on AUSU council since 2018, is a member of the AUSU Member Engagement and Communications Committee, and recently was also elected as the Chair of the AUSU Awards Committee. Brittany is taking on the role of VPFA as of May 22, 2019.

Natasha and Brittany join standing **President Brandon Simmons** to make up the AUSU executive team. We welcome Natasha and Amanda to their new roles, and are looking forward to an exciting year ahead!

We would also like to thank **Melinda Goertz** for her great work as the VP External and Student Affairs during the 2018-2019 council year, and look forward to continuing to work with her on council.

If you have any questions, please email ausu@ausu.org.



CLASSIFIEDS

Classifieds are free for AU students!
Contact voice@voicemagazine.org for more information.

THE VOICE

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