

THE VOICE

Vol 27 Issue 29 2019-07-19

Minds We Meet

Interviewing Students Like You!

The Fit Student

Eat Healthy on a Tight Budget

Fly on the Wall

Enlightenment Through Danger

Plus:

Principles, Vision, and Life Planning

Women of Interest

and much more!



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The Voice Magazine

www.voicemagazine.org
301 Energy Square
10109 – 106 ST NW
Edmonton AB
T5J 3L7

Email

voice@voicemagazine.org

Publisher

AU Students' Union

Editor-In-Chief

Jodi Campbell

Managing Editor

Karl Low

Regular Contributors

Barb Godin,
Carla Knipe, Barbara
Lehtiniemi, Jason Sullivan,
Wanda Waterman, Xin Xu,
and others

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presented here are those
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



We love to hear from you!
Send your questions and comments to voicemagazine.org,
and please indicate if we may publish your letter!

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 Food for Thought

Karl Low



The two main political parties on the federal scene in Canada are obviously the Liberals and Conservatives. With a federal election on the horizon, everything and everything can become a campaign issue. Including the Canada Food Guide. You know what that is, it's that thing you saw posters of when you were in Grade School, often showing a little pyramid of different colors, supposedly telling you how to eat, how much dairy, how much meat, etc, to have a healthy diet.

Of course, as grade school students, we had next to no control over what we ate, and by the time we got to the age where we did, the idea of basing your meals off of a poster in your grade 3 classroom would have been ludicrous to even suggest.

Yet, for some reason, this thing has become an issue. Conservative Party leader Andrew Scheer started this go-round when asked by a dairy farmer about the new food guide, and what he thinks. The new guide, you see, does not have a prominent role for milk to play. It suggests drinking water as the main drink.

Mr. Scheer promptly began speaking about how the development of the food guide was biased and done

with little to no consultation. Mr. Trudeau has since responded that there were a couple of rounds of consultation, and then Health Canada did further consideration with health experts, and that Mr. Scheer is “going to war” with the food guide like the Conservative Party did with the long form census.

It should be noted that dieticians and nutritionists are generally looking at the revamped guide as an improvement over the old one, which some felt was too much influenced in its development by various lobby groups, including the dairy industry.

From there, a brouhaha has emerged about what level of industry involvement is appropriate, is Mr. Scheer simply catering to private profits over public health, or is Mr. Trudeau following some sort of new age, feel-good ideology over public health. Some commenters breathlessly point out that there's a vast conspiracy against beef and dairy, others pointing out that the beef and dairy industries are their own vast conspiracy, and, as is the nature of the internet, commenters being outraged that the government might dare tell them how to eat in the first place. And the outraged that other people are outraged at advice that might be useful for some.

Lost in all this, however, has been any discussion about the actual contents of the food guide.

And this is what bothers me. No, I don't actually know what's in the new food guide, I haven't looked at it beyond a superficial level. And I don't care that much either. What bothers me,

however, is that we've developed into a society where we're spending more time arguing about the argument itself rather than simply examining the source and seeing if it makes any sense.

This sort of ties into this week's Voice Magazine, where we have a couple of articles urging us to dig deeper into ourselves and our studies. Whether it's the Fly on the Wall that is looking at how your studies might be akin to dangerous exploration, but worth the risk anyway, or like in Wanda Waterman's article on developing both principles and a vision to get you to where you want to be.

For our feature, we interview a student who's gone from military life to working as a vet with her own shelter and is hoping to move up to helping humans in the future.

Plus, advice on how to eat frugally in ways you may not have thought of before. It may be useful to you, but it doesn't sound very appealing to me (pun intended, and you'll get it when you get there.)

We also have a look at Traditional Chinese Medicine, an examination of a woman who was part of the Dutch Resistance movement, and quite probably an assassin, and, of course, events, scholarships, a rundown of social media and more!

Enjoy the read!



Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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

AthaU Facebook Group

Sonika is looking toward an MD degree following AU and was wondering about AU Psych acceptance and MCAT assistance, and while not a lot of definitive information came from it, she found some contacts that may help her in future.

Phil 252 has claimed yet another student, as Lisa struggles to wrap her brain around it, but this time some helpful advice came out about finding podcasts and sources other than AU to help explain the material. She notes some success this way (AU should note this too!)

Other posts include checking if your exam was received, pointers for the HLST 201 exam, PSYC 304 general information requests, and how to get accepted into an MA of counselling without the two years experience.

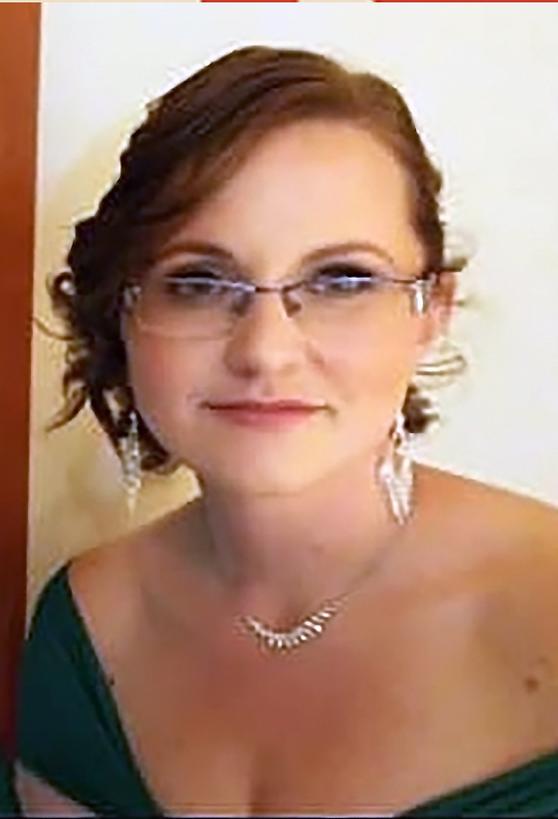
Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: Stay ahead of the curve! 4 Habits of People Trying to Learn New Skills: <https://bit.ly/2LtQjdt> #ThursdayThoughts

@austudentsunion tweets: Check out the latest Episode of AUSU Open Mic! Our exec team discuss AUSU's birthday as well as some great summer study tips. Plus, get an Athabasca University history lesson from your VPEX!



MINDS WE MEET



Alekzandrah Sparks currently lives on a farm in Vancouver Island and is enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Human Health major at Athabasca University with a goal of going to medical school and she secretly wants at least three PhD's. This is her 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?

My name is Alekzandrah Sparks and I was born in Fredericton, New Brunswick. My father was in the military and as such, my family moved every 18 months to 4 years. The last posting, I had with my family was in Manitoba, but it was too cold for me to want to stay! I moved back to Vancouver Island and have settled onto a farm in Duncan.

What program are you in? Do you like your program?

I am currently enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Human Health major at Athabasca University and I really like my program!

What type of farm do you live on and what type of farming do you do?

I live on a three acre produce growing, child rearing farm!

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've signed up for?

Ever since I was a child, I wanted to be a doctor. Unfortunately, I grew up in extreme poverty. I went to high school in a very dangerous area of town and it did not leave me with a good feeling about school. After I graduated, I took a few programs to further my education but nothing that was more than two years long. I started working as a vet technician and opened my own small animal rescue. When I met my future partner, he inspired me to go forth and get the education and dream job I've always wanted. With the animal rescue, I still didn't have any money, though, so Athabasca appealed to me because I could take one class at a time while I continue to work full-time and keep my shelter open.

You opened a small animal rescue? Could you tell me a bit about that? What type of animals do you rescue?

While working in a vet office I noticed a terrible trend; if someone didn't spend much money on purchasing an animal, they're not likely to spend much money on a vet bill. So many pets are just discarded. Either the owners release them (sudden death), take them home to die without treatment (slow death), or euthanize them even though they are treatable. I couldn't take it. I started having owners surrender these animals. I would fix them up and re-home them! Usually

it was only small “cheap” pets; hamsters, rabbits, guinea pigs, etc. I have rescued chinchillas, puppies, kittens, and even a snake. Now, I take in mostly rabbits. Vancouver Island has a terrible Hemorrhagic fever affecting domestic rabbits and it can be quite difficult to relocate them (the SPCA and other shelters are not accepting them).

Any advice for people who are on the fence about going back to school?

I say do it! Go back to school, make some friends, expand your knowledge, and get a great job! AU is amazing for accommodating even the fullest of schedules.

What do you do like to do when you're not studying? Any hobbies?

When I'm not studying, I'm working, playing with my young children, farming, rescuing animals, or working out.

What are your plans for this education once you finish? What would be your dream job?

I would really like to go to medical school once I finished my undergraduate. I have always wanted to be a doctor.

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

Overall AU is the best fit for me. I can learn at my own pace which means when life gets busy school can be paused, something not available in a traditional institution. I don't think I have any dislikes. I seldomly need help with my studies so independent learning really works for me.

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

Just after I started with AU (one class in to be exact), I was unsure if I could follow through with an entire degree program. Money and time were the things that made me waver. Money was the largest hinderance preventing me from going back to school. It is still a contributing factor to the pace at which I do my classes but honestly, one class at a time it will get done one way or another. As for time, if something is important you just make it work.

What's your favorite AU course that you have taken so far, and why? Would you recommend the course to others?

Microbiology! I loved the lab component, I loved the textbook, and I loved the knowledge gained during this course. For people I know that are scientifically minded, I would recommend this class.

Which microbiology course was it? You explain the course a bit? What did you learn?

I took Bio 325. The course described sources of disease whether bacteria, virus, prion, etc. The course highlighted immunology and pathogenicity. In the lab component, I learned how to isolate and cultivate microorganisms. It was very fulfilling.

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

I have given up time with my kids which I think is my biggest regret. At this point I think it's worth it, but only time will tell.

How do you find communications with your course tutors?

Communication with my course tutors has been decent. I don't often have to ask questions, so I don't think I'm a very good gauge at answering this question. When I first started with AU, marks were back very quickly whereas now they seem to take at least 10 days.

What's your biggest pet peeve, if you have one?

People who don't pick up their dog poop!

Describe the proudest moment in your life.

When my daughter was born. Throughout my pregnancy I had planned a homebirth but had been told by many people that it was dangerous and risky. At 42 weeks she was born at home without complication or pain medication. She was beautiful and healthy, and it just confirmed that we were both stronger than everyone thought we were.

Describe one thing that distinguishes you from most other people.

I love doing homework and I can't stop. Even after this undergraduate degree I will probably take another degree and then another and another. I secretly want to have at least three PhD's.

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

To love your life. Cherish every minute you have because you never know when I love when will leave you for their next life. You can't get that time back.

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

I have travelled a bit, but I don't really enjoy it. I think it's because I moved so much as a child. I've been to Europe and the United States.

Out of the places you have been to, which was your favorite and why?

Of the places I've been to so far, home is my favourite because I'm surrounded by love.

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

Bahaha! Read for leisure, you're so funny! Currently I am reading a collection of fancy Nancy stories to my children. It's about a little girl who likes to dress fancy. If you have small kids, I recommend it, it's pretty cute.

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



Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: Haywood Hunt 2019 Scholarship Program

Sponsored by: Haywood Hunt & Associates Inc

Deadline: August 31, 2019

Potential payout: \$1000

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be Canadian citizens, permanent residents, or have some other legal standing to study in Canada, and must be accepted or enrolled at a Canadian college or university for the 2018-2019 school year.

What's required: An email with contact and school info, along with a 500-1000 word blog or forum post expressing your top five ideas about "Private investigation agencies can assist businesses in combating fraud in the workplace."

Tips: For inspiration, check out last year's [winning essay](#).

Where to get info: www.haywoodhunt.ca/scholarship.html



The Fit Student

How to Eat Healthy on a Tight Budget

Marie Well



What should you do when your belly grows?

I interviewed with two social justice warriors days ago. And I needed the job. Badly. We were meeting at a restaurant. I wondered, “Would they buy dinner?” Earlier that day, for the first time, I ate banana peels. Without those peels, I’d have had no energy to work out later in the gym.

I sat down with the interviewers at the outdoor patio of a restaurant. After some light chitchat, one interviewer said, “What’s your view on the ultimate veggie burger?”

“Fake meat,” I said, “Highly processed. Like sausage and deli cuts. Sooner or later, it’ll make you sick with chronic disease.”

“Diabetes?” he asked, laughing.

I nodded.

His lips tightened, “I eat ultimate burgers every day. I’m vegetarian.”

“I used to be vegetarian. Six years,” I said.

He then smiled, sighed, and shrugged his shoulders. “I’m on the road most of the time,” he said. “In six months on the road, I gained thirty pounds.” He patted his stomach as his eyes widened.

“Stay away from restaurants,” I warned, “All that sugar, fat, and salt.”

“But I don’t have time to prep meals,” he argued.

“Eat raw,” I said.

“Like veggies?” he asked.

“Raw fruits and veggies, uncooked organic steel cut oats, almond butter, organic nuts and seeds,” I said.

“But I have a nut allergy,” he replied.

“Then eat organic avocados,” I said.

He leaned back in his chair, his eyes squinting.

“Here’s how to eat organic,” I blurted, “but on a budget ...”. My voice tapered off.

After an awkward pause, he said, “We make six figure salaries here. But, I’m curious, how do you eat organic on a budget?”

I hesitated, and then shyly said, “Buy organic bananas and eat the peels. Two meals in one.”

The social justice warriors stared at me. A long silence passed and then the lean social justice warrior spoke up, “People will eat anything when they’re hungry.”

I nodded.

He added, “It’s hard to work freelance when you’ve got an empty stomach.”

Oh oh! “But banana peels are rich in nutrition. B6 and B12. Potassium. In other parts of the world, people eat banana peels,” I explained.

The faces of the social justice warriors soured.

The lean warrior looked upward, as if doing some mental calculations, and then piped up, “We’ll pay you an extra hour for that assignment. But for now, eat. Our treat. Would you like a side of yam fries?”

“Deep fried yam fries?” I said. “I’m better off with the banana peel.”

The moral? Never disclose to an employer you eat banana peels. But if you do, hope you do so to social justice warriors.

But social warrior or not, if you’ve got a hungry belly, here are my best hacks for how to eat healthy on a tight budget:

Eat peels of certain organic fruits. Eat the peels of kiwis, bananas, mangoes, lemons, oranges, and watermelon. But make sure they’re organic. If you can’t find the organic version of the fruit, then wash the nonorganic peels in a mix of apple cider and water. That’ll sponge off pesky pesticides.

Buy natural, unsalted peanut butter. You need your fats. I stopped buying almond butter (too expensive). Instead, I stock up on peanut butter. The peanut butter doesn’t provide nearly the health benefits of almond butter, but when you’re pinched for cash, peanut butter goes down fine.

Buy wild salmon but divide the can into two or three meals. Wild salmon (with the bones) gives you plenty of protein and heaps of calcium. Plus, students gain from brain benefits of omega-3’s.

Buy veggies that come capped with leafy greens. Beets come with greens, as do radishes, cauliflower, and garden carrots. If you buy these items, make a meal out of the leafy greens. Some stores offer beets with beet greens at lower prices than regular beets. Can’t beat cheap beets.

Buy organic steel cut oats from bulk bins. If you buy bulk-bin organic steel cut oats, soak them in a cup of organic milk or kefir milk overnight. No need to cook. I eat organic oats without soaking them. Great jaw workout. Fills the stomach.

Buy flaxseed. For just under \$4, you can buy a month’s worth of brain-healthy omega-3 vitamins. I buy organic flaxseed. A cheap way to fill up on brain healthy fats.

Buy frozen berries in bulk boxes. My nutritionist says frozen berries get picked at the peak of ripeness, so frozen rivals fresh for nutritional value. I buy frozen cultivated blueberries, but frozen wild blueberries brim with greater antioxidants. Just be sure to buy in bulk.

Drink only water. Toss the coffees, teas, pops, and juice—especially the pops and juice, unless your juicing from fresh fruits and vegetables. Water fills the belly; cola wages war. And say no to Starbucks. Some Starbucks offer free hot or cold water. That’s all I drink.

And finally, we come to banana peels. I say, “Vegetarians, tame your taste buds to love ‘em!” Banana peels offer vitamins missing from a meatless diet: “Banana peel is eaten in many part of the world, though [it’s] not very common in the West,’ Flores said, ‘It contains high amounts of vitamin B6 and B12, as well as magnesium and potassium. It also contains some fiber and protein.’ ... Banana peels also have ‘various bioactive compounds like polyphenols, carotenoids and others.”

Ultimate veggie burger? I’ll stick with the peel.



Fly on the Wall Enlightenment Through Danger

Jason Sullivan



The production of enlightened wisdom is not a matter of putting our names to a simple sign up sheet. The methods we choose yield results proper to their context. The devils we dance with, and classes we register in, make us who we are. To face the unknown and the danger it entails is part of accomplishing our education goals. Margaret and Pierre Trudeau each illustrate this in their life's drama and philosophical ruminations. Upon catching sight of Fidel Castro on the tarmac in Havana, Margaret Trudeau noted “I was immediately mesmerized by what I saw: a tall man, with incredibly beautiful eyes, and a wild,

almost fanatical, look which made him physically very attractive” (Trudeau, 196). The dark woods might signal danger, but Fidel appeared to her as the allure of unknown potential.

Like each person's way of facing adversity and picking obstacles to demonstrate to themselves their prowess, each AU course has its own methods. I'll never forget the harrowing yet uncannily streamlined nature of the PSYCH 289 exam: a busload of multiple choice questions on a computer with the invigilator hanging out watchfully while taking notes of his own for a paper on Faust. The means by which we seek understanding and knowledge, not to mention the ways we achieve success at that lovable bugaboo of book-learning, affects the outcomes we'll derive. Encounters with unknown knowledge contain treacherous dangers and maybe that helps explain why there was such a hullabaloo about Pierre and Margaret's visits to Fidel Castro. He represented the dark and dangerous Other that veered toward danger while also fanning hopes of a future possible utopia. A romantic combination, to be sure, and not unlike going back to school to work for that long-desired degree.

Margaret Trudeau's Adventure

In her 1979 autobiography *Beyond Reason*, which I serendipitously discovered next to a dumpster in the Spring of 2005 whilst living in the hippie haven of Nelson, BC, Margaret claims that Castro said told her the following:

“You know,” he said to me in his silken English, “my eyes are not very strong, so every day to make them stronger I force myself to look at the sun. I find it very hard. But do you know what I find harder? That is to look into the blue of your eyes.”

Castro is a ridiculously romantic man and obviously worships women” she concludes (Trudeau, 1979, p. 200).

Upon their departure, Margaret states that “I was tearful. Pierre teased me. “I'm glad you're still with me, I thought you would ask for asylum” (Trudeau, 201). As at the end of a gruelling but captivating journey, her trip to Cuba had taken her to the brink of that gulf separating nations and people during the Cold War. We at AU are perpetually exploring new cliffs of danger as we advance our learning objectives. Yet it helps to have fun along the way and, even in a makeshift boat in the yard, philosophy may prevail. Stopping for a proverbial paddle can provide new perspectives as can the minds of young children.

Taking Stock: Philosophical Conclusions, Cataracts, Waterfalls and Doldrums

Pierre and Margaret Trudeau had many adventures, and this led them to draw interesting philosophical conclusions about life. For we AU students, Pierre's interest in canoeing is redolent with metaphors for our own tricky journeys through distance education. The terrain we pass through is metaphorical underbrush, but the outcome is the same: we become new people as we grow on our journey. At root our education is virtual in a way that past iterations of our life in school never was.

It wasn't always this way; once it was less than virtual. Correspondence students once traversed an even darker and more difficult abyss. Years ago, I was on a thrift store expedition in the beloved, Podunk town of Princeton, BC, and in my forays, I discovered a treasure; an early 1970s cassette tape of an AU course in biology. The tape covered a unit about forestry around the world. Taking the back-road home, Highway 40, between Princeton and Summerland, I plopped the tape in my deck and was pleased to learn all about Finnish forestry taxonomy and how its based on the lichens, mosses, and lycopodium of Scandinavia. Turns out, these teensy forest underlings are the key to understanding different forest types. The conifer overstory is similar everywhere in that part of the world so the little organisms are what indicate difference. Often it is the little things that matter most.

In his soul-searching canoe trips Pierre relates that process of discovery. By rekindling our taste for learning we, too, enter uncharted regions of opportunity. As students our intellectual environment may be, well, lacking in traditional markers like other students or professorial contact, but that doesn't mean the porridge we find makes the day we'll have. We have much in common with Trudeau's ascetic, isolated, self: our academic realm seems superficially sparse but, while our dress shirts aren't starched, our inner realms flourish in the natural growth of learning.

The Real World, that Ghostly Ether that Beckons Bonily

True wisdom knows the limits of truth; that is, wisdom allows for great, seemingly flat-earth plains of possibility rather than resonating a dull thud of right and wrong all across the gong show of societal discourse. We can allow other views to exist if we are truly solid in our own; rarely do lives depend solely on ideas, as Pierre points out. And, when we face real physical challenges, or real moral dangers rather than the type based on myopic misunderstanding, we emerge on the

other side of the rapids in what might be termed a state of grace. Deranged and over-studied grace, perhaps. But grace nevertheless.

AU provides perspectives gleaned from being away from our ordinary life; each new course, each hour of studying, is an invitation to new philosophical breakthroughs. Besides study breaks in an imaginary canoe, AU in some ways is the canoe that we ride past perils and epiphanies. Pierre illustrates: “that principle of logic which states that valid conclusions do not generally follow from false premises. Now, in a canoe, where these premises are based on nature in its original state (rather than on books, ideas and habits of uncertain value), the mind conforms to that higher wisdom which we call natural philosophy; later, that healthy methodology and acquired humility will be useful in confronting mystical and spiritual questions” (Trudeau, 1944)

Being an AU student is like taking ourselves out back to the wilderness to find new passion for learning; we cannot emerge unscathed, but we can arrive triumphant. And, although wherever we go is still where we are, we are never quite the same once we've caught the glint of the eye of the rising sun of our eloquent future selves.

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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.



Vision, Principles, and Your Life Plan

Wanda Waterman



“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

- American Declaration of Independence

“When we allow freedom to ring—when we let it ring from every city and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and

sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, ‘Free at last, Free at last, Great God a-mighty, We are free at last.’”

- Martin Luther King, “I Have a Dream . . .” 1963

You're taking courses. You're balancing your education with other obligations such as work or raising a family. Your education is part of the construction of your future. But is your life plan based on principles or vision?

Both, hopefully. For example, the choice to study health sciences might be based on the principles that it's good to serve your community and that it's wise to seek a career with good chances of employment. It might also be based on a *vision* of yourself as a healer, living a comfortable life while dedicating your energies to reducing suffering in the world. Understanding the balance of principles and vision in your own mind might hold surprising benefits for the success of your endeavors.

The first of the above two quotations, from the Declaration of Independence, is a statement of principles. It lays out a group of fundamental laws in clear, logical, abstract terms. Sadly, in direct contrast with its shining ideals, this statement of principles was followed by generations of slavery, ethnic genocide, and gross economic injustice.

The second quotation, from King's famous speech, is a statement of vision. It describes a different world, a world in which the principles listed in the Declaration are fleshed out by means of the imagination. The social context of this second quotation, written nearly two hundred years later, was not much better, but this statement of vision catalyzed a wave of nonviolent activism that was spectacularly successful at instigating the positive social change that the Declaration's principles had anticipated.

For the human race to save itself from itself we need both principles and vision. The Civil Rights Movement, a response to systemic racism in American society, repeatedly harkened back to the principles outlined in the Declaration of Independence. King even referred to the Declaration as a promissory note, the inheritance of every American to come, but that, even in the sixties', was still likened to a bounced check. Without vision, principles are dead.

Here are some of the key differences between principles and vision:

1. Principles emerge from the reasoning capacity while vision comes from the imagination.
2. Principles can be organized into ideological systems whereas visions cannot.
3. Principles can be defined and used in legal defenses—hard to do with visions.
4. Principles are rules to be followed while visions are beautiful goals to move toward.
5. Principles are abstract whereas visions use concrete imagery to picture those principles in action.

Think about the principles on which you base your life decisions. It might be helpful to look at your life plan itself and then to try to put into words the principles that underlie your goals. Even better, write them down and revise them until they represent the most succinct and clear version of your principles that you can muster. (Examples of principles might be that it's necessary to be financially independent, that climate change must be reversed, that life is sacred, that honesty is always the best policy, or that we must defend the weak.)

Now draw a picture. (You don't have to know how to draw.) Brainstorm a vision of the life you want (not what you think you should want). Add notes. Make roadmaps. Look up graphics that represent what you really want out of life. Now relate this vision back to your principles to see if they jibe. If your principles and vision don't match, maybe you need to examine yourself a little more deeply; the mismatch may come from a temptation to follow the herd instead of being honest about your own beliefs and desires.

Despite the cheesy nature of many self-help programs that encourage visualization, there's been a measurable success rate for developing visions that bring your principles to life and give you a definite direction. Not surprisingly, knowing more clearly where you want to be actually helps you get there. But visions without principles are doomed to fail for lack of foundation. You need both.

Think of your vision as what your principles will look like once they're put into action. Being inspired by the beauty of that vision will help you make it come about.

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



Course Exam

AU courses, up close

Brittany Daigle

Course Exam

ACCT 250 (Accounting for Managers) is a three-credit introductory accounting course that focuses primarily on how to provide managers with the management information they need for making informed decisions and introduces the role accounting plays in providing reports to external bodies, such as the federal government, banks, and other lenders of money. ACCT 250 emphasizes the importance of using advanced information systems such as the use of accounting software for small businesses and enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems for large companies in managerial accounting and decision making. ACCT 250 has no prerequisites and it has a [Challenge for Credit](#) option if interested.

Brittany Daigle

Accounting for Managers comprises nine lessons, fifteen quizzes weighing three percent each for a total of forty-five percent of your final grade, and a final examination worth fifty-five percent. The nine lessons within the course cover interesting topics such as cost behaviour and analysis, capital investments, capital budgeting, and interpreting financial statements. The final examination for this course must be taken online with an Athabasca University approved exam invigilator at an approved invigilation centre. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the chosen invigilation centre can accommodate online exams. To receive credit for ACCT 250, students must achieve a course composite grade of at least a "D", or fifty percent, and a grade of at least fifty percent on the final examination.

Gerard Baptist began studying at AU in 2018 and is currently enrolled in the Bachelor of Management program. He briefly introduces himself, stating "I'm 38 years old and I'm originally from Edmonton, AB but moved to Calgary back in 1995 and have been in Calgary ever since. I currently work for a company in the oil and gas industry called DistributionNOW. It's a global distributor of products and services in the energy sector. I've been working with them since 2011 and enjoy the company and my day to day job. I also wanted to bring this up as they were and continue to be a big supporter of me pursuing my business degree. In my spare time, which is becoming more and more limited due to our family expansion in the addition of my newest son (2 months old), I enjoy skiing and playing hockey in the winter, golfing in the summer and of

course spending time with my wife of 8 years, my 2-1/2” year old daughter and as I mentioned, my new 2 month old son.”

When asked what he likes or dislikes about the Bachelor of Management program, he states “So far, I’ve really enjoyed the program and the freedom of online learning. It’s given me the opportunity to study when is most convenient. I travel a bit with my work and it’s a huge advantage that I can study, work on assignments, and write online quizzes wherever an internet connection is available. If this wasn’t an option, I don’t know if I would be able to work on completing a business degree. Specifically regarding my program, I’ve enjoyed learning about and exploring some of the financial metrics that our company uses and that you hear about from day to day but don’t always necessarily understand. Even in the first course I took, I found topics and concepts that are discussed daily in my job that I was able to apply a more confident understanding of, almost immediately.”

Gerard explains the course, stating “ACCT 250 focuses on basic management accounting that gives managers the information they need to make important managerial decisions. There are fifteen chapters covering a large number of topics. These include everything from a basic introduction to accounting including accounting terms and verbiage typically used to introducing financial analysis, and working within financial documents including balance sheets, income statements, and company scorecards.”

When asked to explain how the course works, he states “The structure of the course is very straight forward. There are no assignments or a midterm. There are however fifteen quizzes, one for each chapter. These quizzes are extremely involved and do take a lot of time to complete. I probably spent on average anywhere from three to six hours of total time per quiz, which is probably the only issue I had with the course. I feel that the fifteen quizzes worth forty-five percent of your mark, or three percent each, doesn’t equal the time required to complete them. I would think that a quiz where, at a minimum, probably 3 hours is required to complete it, the value of that grade should be worth more. However, I feel fairly ready to write my final examination having spent a lot of time on each quiz and I hope those have prepared me appropriately to write the final exam.”

He continues, “The physical textbook was the other part of the course I found frustrating. I found it to be very well written and helpful when I referred to it, though the course outline and chapters do not follow along with the actual physical textbook. You must refer constantly to the e-text that’s available to make sure you are working on the correct chapter as the physical textbook doesn’t line up with the course outline. In addition, it appears the personnel responsible for compiling the course material have included chapters, mainly for the financial accounting documents, from other text sources. So, while the text was very good, it didn’t include everything for the course. These were available in the e-text but for someone like myself that likes the hard copy of the text, it was a bit frustrating. With this said, and having now completed the course, I found as I worked through the course I relied less and less on the texts available and spent more time utilizing the homework, study tools, and additional documents available in in the “My Accounting Lab” learning platform.”

AU-thentic Events Upcoming AU Related Events

Academic Integrity Webinar

Tuesday, July 23, 5:00 to 6:00 pm MDT
Online

Hosted by AU Library

library.athabasca.ca/orientations.html

No pre-registration necessary

Looking ahead...

AUSU Annual Members Meeting

Tuesday, August 13, 6:30 to 8:00 pm MDT
Online

Hosted by AUSU

www.ausu.org/event/ausu-annual-members-meeting-3/

No pre-registration required; e-mail governance@ausu.org for meeting package

All events are free unless otherwise specified

When asked if he would recommend the course to other students, he states “I would recommend the course. Although very time consuming and difficult at points, I found the information to be very interesting and applicable to my current job and work responsibilities. As mentioned in the previous question, the most difficult part were the quizzes due to the time required to complete each one. Otherwise, I thoroughly enjoyed the course and would definitely recommend it.”

As for any tips and tricks, he states “The main thing I recommend to help completing this course is, if you can, set aside a certain amount of time per day for this course. You should be able to complete one chapter per week, but this will give you a bit of a buffer in case you either get behind or require slightly more time for a certain chapter. I took a couple weeks on a few chapters. The best link I found is: <https://www.edspira.com/>. This is an amazing website I found, unfortunately, later in the course. It’s totally free and covers numerous topics from this course along with other courses that you are required to take in this program.”

And as for tutors? Gerard states “While I didn’t have to communicate to often with my tutor, I found the few times I had to that she was very prompt in getting back to me. The few times I had to email her, she got back to me usually within a few hours to half a day which was very appreciated. The tutors don’t mark quizzes. The quizzes are completed through the “My Accounting Lab” and are multiple choice, usually consisting of fifteen to twenty questions. The positive to this is being that they are online and multiple choice, meaning that you get your mark back instantly when you hit submit on the quiz. The downfall to this method of working through an online learning portal such as “My Accounting Lab” is that there is no communication or feedback that you might otherwise receive if you were to take the class in a group setting and had to submit certain assignments, quizzes etc. However, that might be the trade off of with online learning. The feedback you get might be the quick responses to the online quizzes.”

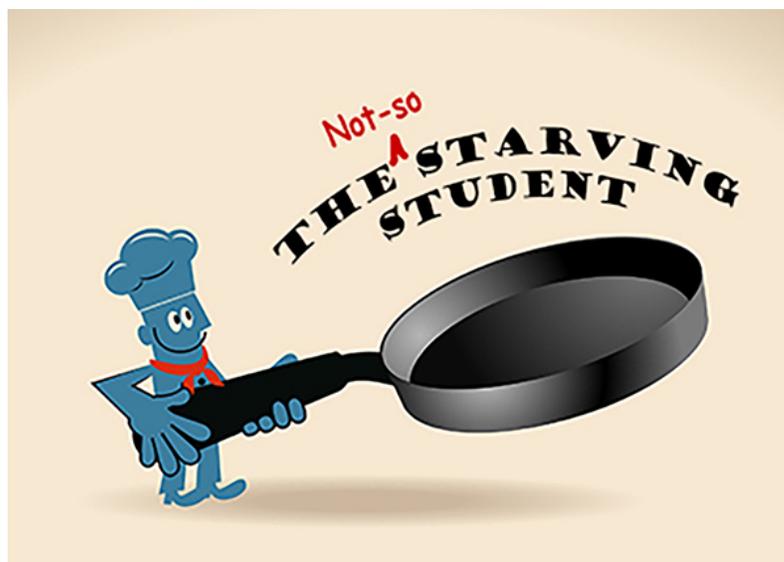
Whether ACCT 250 is a degree or program requirement of yours, or the topics discussed above are of interest to you, this course will have you learning interesting material surrounding the topic of accounting for managers.

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



The Not-So Starving Student Four Things I Learned

Xin Xu

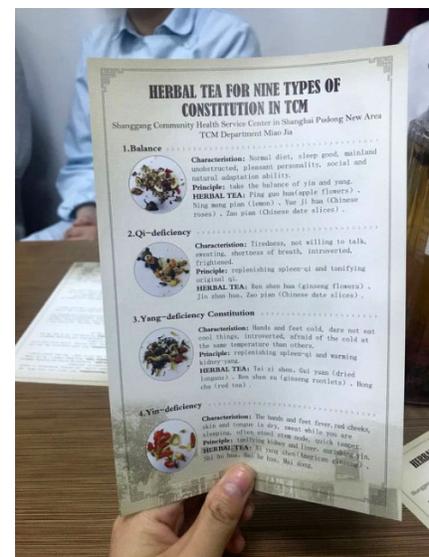


From Traditional Chinese Medicine Tea Sampling

On my recent trip to Shanghai, I had the opportunity to partake in a traditional Chinese Medicine tea sampling experience that included sampling teas that catered to various bodily needs. Unlike other tea sampling events, this one was also culturally enriching, as I learned about various tea mixtures, their histories, and the underlying principles of Chinese Medicine.

Seeking Balance

One of the most unique pieces of this experience included an introduction to types of teas and their medicinal properties. One central focus of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) is establishing a balance between the Yin and Yang properties. For example, individuals who are more heavily exposed to a certain element such as dampness might seek to drink herbs with elements of dryness to help improve their health. (Tang et al., 2013) Based on this principle and individual needs, specific types of herbal teas can be prepared accordingly. The idea of balance resonates with my personal philosophy in seeking balance in all aspects of life. For example, in nutrition, seeking to eat portioned servings of protein, carbohydrates, and veggies can help restore our daily energy needs.



Every part of the body is connected

Taking part in the tea ceremony, the TCM expert spoke of connectivity in the body through an anatomical model of the body connected by pressure points. The pressure points indicate that by injuring or disturbing the balance in one part will also influence other parts as well. The phenomenon reminded me of a sternum injury from a tennis tournament that also caused a series of impacts on my breathing and heart rate. Furthermore, this idea also highlights the interconnectivity between the mind and body and how mindfulness has played a key role in relaxation techniques, particularly for students who oftentimes experience a heightened level of stress.

Our body has the capacity to heal itself

Another central message I learned during the tea ceremony was the natural tendency for our bodies to heal themselves. Occasionally while recovering from an illness I would feel an overwhelming impatience to recover and not give my body adequate time to heal. Despite not possessing a detailed understanding of the immune system, traditional Chinese therapists emphasize the value of enabling the body to recover. The purpose of certain herbs and practices such as acupuncture is to provoke the body's ability to recover.

Multiple variables impact our health

Rather than using a one-size-fits-all approach to health, TCM values the individual's unique response to various external elements. Perhaps one way to view health is to think of the multiple root causes of an event rather than a single causation factor. For example, poor health is a culmination of various root causes such as poor nutrition, lifestyle choices and external stressors.

References

Tang, Weici, and Gerhard Eisenbrand. *Chinese drugs of plant origin: chemistry, pharmacology, and use in traditional and modern medicine*. Springer Science & Business Media, 2013.

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



Women of Interest

Truus Menger-Oversteegen

Barb Godin



Truus Menger-Oversteegen was a Dutch painter and sculptor who was honored for her anti-Nazi, Dutch resistance activities (along with her sister Freddie and a third woman, Hannie Schaft) during the Second World War.

Oversteegen was born August 29, 1923, in the city of Haarlem in the Netherlands. She and her younger sister were born to a single, working class mother, who belonged to the communist party. At the onset of the war in Europe, Oversteegen's mother brought Jewish refugees into their home. She was adamant in teaching her daughters the importance of fighting injustice. The sisters grew up distributing leaflets and undergrounds newspapers for the resistance.

When Truus and her sister were only 16 and 14 they began actively working for the resistance. Their activities were dangerous, as at times the girls would lure Nazi officers into the woods where they would be shot and killed by the

resistance. Eventually the girls would participate in these assassinations. Their youth worked in their favor, as no one would suspect these two innocent looking girls of being part of the resistance movement. Neither Truus nor her sister have ever revealed how many assassinations they took part in, when asked, Freddie would say they were soldiers and soldiers don't tell. As a result, not a lot is known about how these acts were played out. Other activities the sisters participated in include working in emergency hospitals, blowing up railway lines and locating hiding spots for Jewish refugees and their children. By the time the war ended, the Germans were offering 50,000 guilders for the capture of the girls.

In November 1945 Truus married and had four children. Throughout her life she was a guest speaker at many universities and colleges, speaking about war, anti-Semitism, acceptance and tolerance. In May, 1967, Truus Oversteegen was recognized by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations, an honorific used by the State of Israel to describe non-Jews who risked their lives during the Holocaust to save Jews from extermination by the Nazis.

On April 15, 2014, Prime Minister of the Netherlands, Mark Rutte, awarded Truus Menger-Oversteegen and her sister Freddie Oversteegen the Mobilisation War Cross. Menger-Oversteegen's book was published in 1982. "Not then, Not now, Not ever" is a memoir about her experiences during the war. Truus Oversteegen passed away at the age of 92 on July 2, 2016. Her sister is currently residing in the Netherlands. The sisters are the focus of a Dutch TV documentary, "Two Sisters in the Resistance."

You can find more information about their adventures at [Girlboss](#).

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 @BarbGodin



The Study Dude

Meditate for a Winning Mindset

Marie Well



Meditation can not only boost your grades but also invite you to feel the greatest freedom and deepest awakening imaginable.

I've adopted a winning mindset. I'm on my first week of changing my mind from a "me" focus to a "you" focus. I've instantly rid myself of almost all grudges. I've replaced my grudges with love. And I've tasted a spiritual awakening like never before.

The book that kickstarted my quest for the winning mindset is *Lessons for a Happy Marriage*. I took the

marriage advice in the book and applied it to all relationship—and all tasks. And I cross my fingers, hoping the book will speak to you, too.

Now I aim to work hard at giving unconditional love until it becomes a habit. I aim to hone a focus on others, not self.

And just two days ago, a job interview went so well that the employer beamed at me, saying I had everything he wanted. He just has four more interviews to go. In other past interviews, I gave up before entering the door. Thus, I didn't stand a chance.

My goal is to give 110% to a company. In fact, my goal is to give 110% to everyone and everything. I want to find a way to give that 110% to you, too.

But trust me on this: with this winning mindset, I've had success. I've turned failing relationships around within a day. I've forged stronger friendships. I've given my true love his wish of 110% positive energy. And that's exactly what he gives back. To my surprise, that's what they all seem to be giving back.

As for you, you could apply the winning mindset to your studies, family, career, health, dreams. It's all within your reach.

But today I stumbled. I couldn't focus on feeling love for all others and all tasks. Instead, my mind leapt from one thought to another, and I grew riddled with worries. I tried rationalizing my worries away so I could refocus on love. But nothing seemed to work.

I wondered, "Is my goal of giving 110% every day even realistic?"

And that's when my boyfriend sent me an article on the benefits of meditation. Looking back over the past week, I realized I'd been meditating most days but tapered off. And I felt worse once the meditation stopped. So, I sat down and meditated for ten minutes. And the focus returned.

Ah, meditation. Meditating feels like exercise for the brain. And it's free. I combine three different styles of meditation: (1) deep breaths, in through the nose, out through the mouth; (2) holding breath for as long as possible; and (3) single nostril breathing.

But what matters most at this moment, is how meditation can (and very likely will) help you.

First, meditation may boost your GPA. Forbes indicates that “one recent study found that just a couple of weeks of meditation training helped people’s focus and memory during the verbal reasoning section of the GRE. In fact, the increase in score was equivalent to 16 percentile points, which is nothing to sneeze at.” So, meditate your way to a perfect GPA.

But meditation does more than strengthen your grades. Meditation will also reduce your susceptibility toward stress and depression. Cold showers do that, too. But Forbe’s says meditation’s “effects rival antidepressants for depression, anxiety.” Meditation or medication? I tried both meditation and medication for anxiety, but luckily, single nostril breathing doesn’t come with side effects.

On top of all that, meditation lessens tendencies toward “monkey mind”. Monkey mind is when your thoughts leap from one thought to the next, when you struggle to focus. According to Forbes, “Since mind-wandering is typically associated with being less happy, ruminating, and worrying about the past and future, it’s the goal for many people to dial it down. Several studies have shown that meditation, through its quieting effect ... appears to do just this.” So, meditate for a calm, focused headspace.

Not only do you get less monkey mind but also a better memory center. Meditation is also suggested to grow you a bigger hippocampus. The hippocampus plays a central role in memory retention. And who doesn’t rely on memories come exam time? Forbes says, “Eight weeks of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) was found to increase cortical thickness in the hippocampus, which governs learning and memory...”. So, you’ll have a better tool—a thicker hippocampus—to memorize with come exam time.

But my favorite benefit of meditation revolves around an “other” focus. That means, less me, more others. As Forbes says, “Meditation reduces activity in the brain’s ‘me center’.” Focusing on self can lead to suffering but focusing on others with empathy and nonjudgement brings peace. The greatest freedom—and greatest spiritual awakening—I have ever found came from a focus on others.

If that’s not enough to convince you to meditate, take heart from the elite military: the special forces. According to the New York Times,

The paper, in the journal Progress in Brain Research, reported that the troops who went through a monthlong training regimen that included daily practice in mindful breathing and focus techniques were better able to discern key information under chaotic circumstances and experienced increases in working memory function. The soldiers also reported making fewer cognitive errors than service members who did not use mindfulness.

Leave the shaky gun hand and crazy monkey mind behind. Use meditation to help you get the perfect GPA. But dwell on how that GPA will help others. That way, you’ll taste the greatest freedom and sweetest awakening imaginable.



Texting, Texting, 1-2-3

Dear Barb:

I'm wondering about the rules of texting. I have some friends that I text and they get back to me right away, but others that take days. I personally feel it is rude for someone not to answer a text; it would be the same as not answering a voice mail or email. Often text replies are made up of abbreviations and are really difficult to interpret, like "u" instead of "you." I find this annoying, why can't someone take the time to answer in complete sentences. Another thing that really bugs me is when I have a family gathering or friends for a BBQ and everybody is on their phones texting or checking emails. Really can't they wait until after dinner? The worst is when I am texting someone, not during dinner of course, but we get into a long conversation and, all of a sudden, they stop texting and I'm left hanging. I don't know whether I should send another text, or just assume the conversation is finished. If I send another text right away, I think I will appear desperate or needy. Finally, is it okay to text while you are having a conversation with someone. I do that sometimes, but only if I have to. If someone texts while I am trying to have a conversation with them I am left feeling that our conversation is not very important to them. What do you think, am I just overreacting and making a big deal out of this? Thanks, Cheryl.

Hi Cheryl:

Texting is a fairly new way of communicating, and, for people who are uncomfortable talking on the phone, it is a great way to keep in touch. However there are rules that should be followed. Many situations depend on who you are with and how comfortable they are with you texting while in their company. Loosely followed texting etiquette rules can be found at Grammarly. As well, here are some brief tips to follow. Do not text and drive, ever! It's always a good idea to send a text when you know you are going to be late for an event. Know when to call someone, as opposed to texting, as some things need to be said over the phone, or in person. Know when to put your phone away. For example if you are visiting your parents, or grandparents, leave the phone in your purse or pocket. If you are on a date and spending most of it on your phone, it may be a short lived date. Take time to write your texts and read them over before sending. Always respond when someone sends you a text, even a one word answer indicates the text has been received. Lastly, make sure you are texting the right person, there is nothing worse than sending a text to the wrong person. You may be overreacting a bit Cheryl, but this is a new way of communication and the kinks have to be worked out. Thanks for your letter.

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.



Poet Maeve
Poems and Potatoes

Wanda Waterman



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

- **NOTE:** No Council Meeting in July
- **July 31:** [Deadline to apply for course extension for Sept](#)
- **Aug 8:** AUSU Student Social in Calgary (details to come!)
- **Aug 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Sep 1](#)
- **Aug 13:** [AUSU Annual Members Meeting](#)
- **Aug 15:** [Sept degree requirements deadline](#)

Annual Members' Meeting

AUSU is holding its **Annual Members Meeting on August 13, 2019**, in accordance with AUSU [bylaws](#).

What is a Members' Meeting?

The Members' Meeting is held annually to present information about the operations, management, and activities of the student's union and council to the membership, and to hear the membership's concerns and opinions.

How do I attend the Member's Meeting?

When: Tuesday, August 13, 2019 at 6:30pm MDT

Where: Zoom Video Conference

- [Click here](#) to join the meeting
- Meeting ID: 506 859 636
- To connect by phone, +1 647 558 0588 (Canada) or find your local number [here](#).

The meeting agenda will be posted online [here](#) a week prior to the meeting. For the complete package, email governance@ausu.org.

All members are welcome! It's a great opportunity to find out more about your AU Students' Union and provide feedback to your elected representatives!

Find out more on our website [here](#).



Your AUSU Executives!

Your AUSU executives gathered from across Canada this week for a 2-day whirlwind working session!

The agenda included meeting with AU VP University Relations Kristine Williamson and with the AUGSA team (AU Grad Students' Association) team, workplans, budget review, advocacy planning, podcast recordings, team building, and more!



Left to right: AUSU VPEX Natasha Donahue, President Brandon Simmons, and VPFA Brittany Daigle.

Want to see more pictures of your AU Students' Union?

Follow us on Instagram! [@austudentsunion](#)

New AUSU Podcast Episode

Check out the latest episode of AUSU Open Mic! Our executive team discusses AUSU's recent birthday as well as some great summer study tips. Plus, get an Athabasca University history lesson from your VPEX.



Episode 9: [AUSU's 27th Birthday & Summer Study Tips](#)

Also available for free on [Spotify](#), [Apple Podcasts](#), [Google Podcasts](#), and [Pocket Casts](#) (search "AUSU Podcast").

CLASSIFIEDS

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

THE VOICE

301 Energy Square - 10109 – 106 St NW - Edmonton AB - T5J 3L7
Ph: 855.497.7003

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Editor-In-Chief Jodi Campbell
Managing Editor Karl Low

Regular Columnists Barb Godin, Carla Knipe, Barbara Lehtiniemi,
Jason Sullivan, Wanda Waterman, Xin Xu and others!

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