

THE VOICE

Vol 27 Issue 34 2019-08-30

Minds We Meet

Interviewing Students Like You!

Porkpie Hat

A View of Haida Gwaii

Struggling Student Rants

The Great Emergency

Plus:

You're Already Rich

How Was Your Summer?

and much more!



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



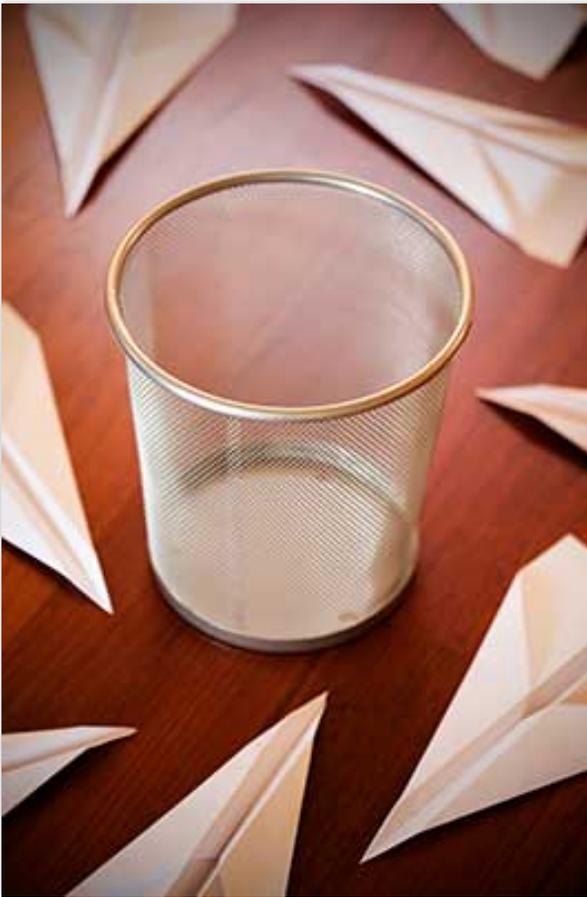
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Editorial So Long Summer

Karl Low



An august end to August, I find this issue, to me, really brings the feel of Autumn to it. Even if we're not quite there, having articles like Jason Sullivan's exploration of how simple questions can unmask philosophical considerations of the self, or Darjeeling Jones' look at Haida Gwaii in northern BC and the sense of connection that place brings strikes me as reflective of the beginning of fall. Similarly, the Struggling Student Rants returns with Angela Pappas exploring the idea of an emergency fund, why you need one, and how even you can create one.

All of these seem to connect for me in the sense of reflection or reverie you might get as you watch a sunset. The ending of the day signalling a moment to pause and prepare for the day that comes next.

For our feature article, we interview a student, Stephanie Ball, who was profoundly affected by her time as a youth-in-care, and now wants to use those experiences, and her AU studies, to put her in a position to help other youth who may be in precarious straights, by working as a probation officer.

What's interesting about her interview, to me, is her pet peeve is something that I instantly agree with, and

something that AU should see if they can find solutions to. As a spoiler, it's about the lack of information that AU presents to students about exams. It's well known that many students suffer exam anxiety, and I'd personally wager that at AU this is higher than at other institutions, for a number of reasons. For instance, AU students may be returning after a long absence, the prospect of an exam can be daunting. Also, I would guess that more students going to AU have anxiety issues than may be the norm at brick and mortar institutions. After all, the notion of being able to take a fully accredited degree without having to confront the masses of people at a traditional university makes AU extremely appealing to those who have difficulty in those situations.

Yet despite these, AU often provides less information about its exams, or even the exam situations than most other universities. ProctorU is a great step forward in this regard, allowing students much more control over the environment they must take an exam in, but Stephanie has a point that it can often be difficult to get information about the exam itself.

So be sure to read her interview, and while you're at it, don't miss out on the rest of the issue, including the news, scholarships, events (that's right, we have some events again!), and advice on various things such as shopping, diet, and relationships and even on how to approach the fact that you're already rich, you just don't know it.

Enjoy the read!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karl', written in a cursive style.

MINDS WE MEET



Stephanie Ball is currently in her last semester of the Criminal Justice program at Athabasca University. She hopes to eventually be a probation officer. Recently, she took some time to chat with us at The Voice Magazine.

Can you give us a little bit of background information about yourself?

My name is Stephanie, I am 26 years old, and I am from Victoria, British Columbia. I am a student with disabilities and a former youth-in-care.

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

I am enrolled in the Criminal Justice program at AU completing my last semester. I am hoping to use my degree to acquire a Probation Officer position.

I really have enjoyed my program and the flexibility it has given me to work full-time throughout my whole program. I have also really enjoyed the specialized classes such as sex crimes and intelligence analysis that are not offered at other universities.

Could you describe the path that led you to Athabasca University? 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?

I was attending a local college and really struggling to attend classes and balance my crazy work schedule. At the time, I was working 24-hour shifts at a group home and would often be called in last minute or need to stay longer if there was no coverage. This meant I was missing a lot of class. I also had health issues and my disability (deaf in one ear) which made learning in a big classroom more difficult. Twice I became frustrated and took breaks from school. I believe I found AU's Criminal Justice program while browsing online and felt like I had found a solution.

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

The best advice I would give a new student is to sign up for one or two classes and see if this style of learning is right for you. Time management and motivation can be really difficult for some students. But for others, they thrive in such a flexible environment.

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

I have to admit, other than working and studying I haven't made much time to do any of the activities I enjoy doing. However, I am a Harry Potter nerd and often have movie marathons to de-stress!

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

My plans for after graduation are to pursue a Probation officer position. My passion is working with high-risk youth in the criminal justice system. So, I hope to have experience working with both youth and adults. Eventually, I would like to affect change in government policy as I move to more senior positions.

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

I have an amazing support system who have always been so supportive and inspired me to achieve my learning goals. My family, my foster parents, friends, high school teachers and principles, social workers, co-workers and other working professionals.

But I feel the greatest inspiration for me has been being a former youth-in-care and sharing experiences with other former youth-in-care who have struggled to complete their high school education, never mind their post-secondary goals. I feel that I have been given the opportunity to be able to graduate with a bachelors and hope to inspire and support other youth in care and former youth in care to achieve their goals.

What has your experience with online learning been like? What do you like and dislike?

I have loved online learning so far! I am able to do schoolwork from my laptop and even my cellphone. I am able to write papers at work or study for an exam on the plane. It has allowed me the flexibility I need. Further, with my disability I would often miss important information during lectures, however, the online format ensures I do not.

Have you ever waived about continuing your schooling? What pushed you to go through with it?

I had a lot of family conflicts and the loss of my grandfather in 2011. It took quite a toll on me and made me question my ability to finish school. It took me years to have the confidence in myself that I was able to complete classes. In fact, my best grades were once I left college and started my bachelor's at AU. School really is a mental game more then it is an intellectual one. If you don't believe you have achieved a certain mark, you are not likely to succeed. I believe my support system and reaching out to counsellors and school advisors helped me through difficult times in my education.

What's your favorite AU course that you have taken so far, and why?

My favorite course would have to be CRJS 370 (Youth Justice). I really enjoyed the course content and was able to include my personal and professional experience in the assignments. I have enjoyed all the AU CRJS courses and feel that the courses offered in this program are far more specialized then other university programs offer.

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

You definitely give up the social aspect off your college and university experience. I went to college, so I was able to enjoy some of those years. You do need to weigh the cost and benefits of each style of learning and which is most important to you.

How do you find communications with your course tutors?

I have not been one to communicate often with my tutors unless I have a question or problem. However, I do wish that tutors would be more helpful with giving us guidance for the exams, as my professors in class settings do.

What's your pet peeve if you have one?

My pet peeve is the exams for sure. Some of our exams are between thirty and fifty percent. We often go into them having little or no idea about the style of the exam (multiple, choice, long answer) or whether the exam is specific or broad in nature. Many tutors are unhelpful and say

they do not mark the exams and are unaware of the content. In college or university on campus classes, it is common for professors to give some hints or direction for the exams. Especially when an exam is worth fifty percent and a student can fail a class even if they have one hundred percent in the course assignments, I think it is only fair give more help to students and ease their exam anxiety.

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

Oprah and J.K Rowling. Both are such inspiring and powerful women who have done amazing things with their success.

Could you describe one thing that distinguishes you from most other people?

Being a former youth in care has set me apart from most people sitting in the same room as me.

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

That everyone has struggles, insecurities and trauma in their lives that they have to overcome. Everyone should feel loved, supported, and able to achieve their dreams.

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

I have been to Mexico, Hawaii, Seattle and Florida.

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

My favorite place would have to be Hawaii. It so rich and culture and such a relaxing place to slow down and enjoy your time there.

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

The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho. I do not want to give away the plot, but it is an amazing story about the meaning of life.

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



Unearthing classic articles from previous issues of The Voice Magazine.

The Labour Day Weekend is upon us. Our featured articles take different perspectives on the 3-day break.

Putting the labour in Labour Day. Gregory Ryan recaps his experience pounding out a novel during the annual 3-Day Novel Contest. "I examined my main protagonist Jim. He must die, I decided. I returned to the keyboard and murdered him." Too Precious to be Forgotten, September 15, 2006.

September is the new January. Former Voice editor Christina M. Frey posits that September 1st works better for new-year's resolutions. "Since it stands on the border between the relaxed pace of summer and the productivity of fall, September is the perfect time to evaluate where we're at." Editorial—Happy New Year, September 3, 2010.

The Struggling Student Rants The Great Emergency

Angela Pappas



Life emergencies happen. We have all dealt with Murphy's Law—if anything can go wrong, it will—at one point in time. A furnace that breaks down in the middle of a prairie winter is bound to happen once in your lifetime. A vandal slashing all four tires of your car, in a highly condensed, populated area such as Toronto, should not be a surprise event. These emergencies don't give you time to adjust your budget. They demand funds immediately. These things can also easily cost thousands of dollars and push your mental health over the edge if you're in a tight financial spot or have other stressors to deal with. In the past, my "emergency funds" were my credit cards or line of credit. That's how my parents handled finances, so that's the tactic they passed down to me. I would cover the emergency using my credit, and eventually pay it back twofold with all the

interest charges and fees. I don't blame them, they didn't know better and they worked with what they had; they winged it. In the age of the Internet, however, we all should know better.

Having the necessary cash set aside to handle life shouldn't just be something handy to have when something goes seriously wrong. An emergency fund will (i) save your butt in your time of greatest need; (ii) really, really, really reduce your stress levels, especially if you're dealing with anxiety issues ([Ain, Iwry & Newville, 2018](#)); and (iii) keep your ship from sinking in the storm. If you're struggling to pay off everyday bills, it can be tough to have money just sit in your bank account untouched. I've been there and felt the same. Nevertheless, my family is a living example of how having this money set aside can save the day and keep you away from the loan sharks when Murphy drops by unannounced, whether it's just for a short visit, or a long-term stay. You see, Murphy is a social butterfly; he likes to visit all sorts of folks, both wealthy and struggling. Having an emergency fund is the equivalent of paying for Murphy's bus-ride out of town, so he doesn't become a permanent resident sleeping on your couch.

Many financial experts, including the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada ([FCAC](#)), recommend three to six-month household expenses set aside, for your emergency fund. This way, in the event of a major misfortune such as suddenly getting let-go at work, you won't have to worry about going bankrupt (2017). Rather than stressing about bills, you will have the luxury of taking your time to find a great job, rather than having to pick up as many shifts as you can at McDonald's. When I first read this, I rolled my eyes and thought these people need to get off their high horse and see what reality for us villagers is truly like. However, this vision of a future filled with peace of mind tweaked my curiosity, so I looked into it a bit more. Three to six months' expenses can seem like a lot of money for most. But if you've been money-savvy from the start, and already have this amount set aside, you don't need to keep reading this.

However, for those struggling to pay for AU tuition and feed the kids simultaneously, this amount can seem impossible. It could take years to save this amount up. That's where the mini emergency fund comes in—a smaller amount set aside for the sole purpose of fending off Murphy. Start with a realistic goal, such as \$1,000-\$2,000. If this amount also sounds daunting, break it up into six months or six pay periods. It won't seem as overwhelming. The mini emergency fund also teaches the art of patience and letting your money simply sit there, without spending it. While this money sits there, you may be thinking it's not serving a purpose. Do you think the same applies to your antivirus software or your car insurance?

If you're having a hard time cutting corners to come up with this amount, find a way. Do whatever it takes to put this amount together—babysitting for friends and family; selling your long-forgotten clothes that are now spilling out of your closet; or picking up extra shifts at work. When there's a will, there's a way. Throw every extra dollar you can find into this project, whether it's five dollars or fifty. Look at your budget and figure out what you can eliminate for a while, such as the \$8.00 daily Starbucks. Buy your Starbucks one day a week and bring coffee to work with you for the remaining days. This way, you won't feel like you are making any big sacrifices. Take advantage of every opportunity to get your first mini emergency fund going. Separate, small, automatic deposits from your pay will go unnoticed and add up before you realize it. It doesn't have to be a large amount; it can be something as simple as \$5.00 per pay period. Come tax refund time, skip going on your annual cruise and throw that money into your emergency fund instead. It will be a one-time sacrifice, which you may regret for a short time; however, you will be thankful once you complete your mission and can breathe a big sigh of relief.

This mini-emergency fund isn't solely about the \$1,000. We all know this won't get you far if a real emergency hits. It's about getting through any obstacles life throws at you. It's about moving past that amount and aiming for more. Before you realize it, you will have \$2,000 set aside, and, eventually, even the full-recommended six months' expenses may even suddenly show up. It's about the start and learning how to be responsible with what you earn. Because if you struggle to leave these small amounts untouched for what truly matters you will struggle financially, even if you win the lottery jackpot. An emergency will come up, sooner or later, and you will be thanking yourself for setting this fund up, despite any setbacks. Suddenly this money won't seem so useless. Just make sure it's an actual emergency. Don't mistake an emergency for a convenience, or something you failed to plan for. Christmas and back-to-school shopping are not emergencies; they come around every August and December and should have been in your budget. If they weren't in the past, add them in now. Unless life throws you a real curve-ball, and we all know what those look like, do not touch your emergency fund – grow it!

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Angela Pappas is a part-time AU Certificate student who enjoys learning and discussing anything personal finance and personal development related.



Porkpie Hat A View of Haida Gwaii

Darjeeling Jones



Like all our fellow travelers, our journey is too long, our journey is too brief. We are immortal and god-like, filling up the universe; we are tiny and fragile, our lives as flickering and insubstantial as sparks from a campfire. We carry our burdens across barren lands beneath what must be a thousand years of waxing and waning moons. And yet, we have barely taken a step or two across the dunes of time, and our footprints are erased by some capricious wind. My friend, our journey is completely unique, exactly the same as everybody else's.

On the west coast, we follow coastal nomads along the silk roads of the soul. We collect seashells, tattoos, experiences, heartbreak, and addictions. We drink warm beer, we play in punk bands, we engage in important rituals and unsafe practises. On Haida Gwaii we watch an albino raven eating three black beetles, brilliant as opals. On Saltspring Island we fill rusted buckets with blackberries and clams. In Victoria's Chinatown, we stand in a doorway, sharing a kiss and eating duck beneath a sky filled with paper lanterns and a lucky blue dragon. There is the smell of rain and sulphur smoke, shreds of firecracker casings

falling like bright red snow. It seems so easy in that moment to swear we will never be apart.

In Vancouver, we collect degrees, paycheques, false friends, and laughable illusions about our own importance. We travel so far, so fast, by car, motorcycle, train, jet, bus, bicycle, and palanquin, dutifully sending home postcards with pictures of temples and elephants, planetariums and cathedrals. We undertake mortgages and affairs; we study finances and languages; we deepen our understanding of insincerity and betrayal.

As with all travelers, we lose many things along the way. There is so much stuff to keep track of, and we are always so distracted. The world of full of shiny things falling down upon, filling our pockets, blinding us like a blizzard of sequins. Later on—much too late—we realize how little some of the things we manage to hold onto are really worth, and how valuable are many of the things we've lost.

In Yellowknife, on the night we part, the aurora borealis is filling the sky with wonder, and an Irish bar band is playing a drunken version of "Like a Virgin." We eat our final meal in silence. I understand how much you hate me in this moment; perhaps it's the only thing we still have in common. Back in our hotel room, you fall asleep to the hum of the air conditioner and mosquitos, with Gabriel Garcia Marquez's 'One Hundred Years of Solitude' resting on your chest.

Many years later, and half a world away, you come to me once again, this time in a dream. Your face has regained the gentleness that I had stolen from you so long ago. You speak to me in yet another new language that you've learned, and even though I don't understand a word of it, I

know exactly what you mean. You're drunk with beauty. You're calm, but you're excited. You are telling me about some places you have been, and other places you have plans to go. You're going back to university, working on a master's thesis related to navigating by the harmonic resonances of the moon. You promise you will come back some day and teach the skill to me. That way, you say, we can both chart a course towards redemption, in opposite directions, together and apart.



Brittany Daigle

Course Exam

AU courses, up close

Course Exam

Brittany Daigle

ACCT 356 (Strategic and Competitive Analysis) is a three-credit upper-level accounting course that provides students with an intermediate level coverage of managerial accounting concepts and the use of managerial accounting tools for strategic planning, measurement, and analysis. Students will develop an understanding of the role of management accounting information in building and managing a company's strategies—whether a for-profit or non-profit organization. There are no prerequisites for this course, however, MKTG 396 (Introduction to Marketing) is recommended. ACCT 356 is not available for challenge.

Strategic and Competitive Analysis is made up of nine lessons, three assignments weighing fifteen percent, and a final examination worth fifty-five percent. The nine lessons within this course cover several interesting topics such as sustainability, revenue, customer profitability analysis, budgetary control, risk management, and much more. To receive credit for ACCT 356, students must achieve a composite course grade of at least "D" (fifty percent) and a grade of at least fifty percent on the final examination. The examination for this course will be written in traditional pen and paper format.

Students that are planning to transfer this course to a Chartered Professional Accountant designation are advised that they will be required to achieve a grade higher than the minimum passing grade. See the CPA Requirements for details.

Eve Daneva transferred to Athabasca University in November of 2018 and is currently enrolled in the Bachelor of Commerce program. She provides a bit of an introduction, stating "Hello! My name is Eve and I transferred to Athabasca University after completing a three-year college diploma. I am now working on obtaining the last few credits toward my bachelors before moving on to CPA certification. I am currently working at a small local accounting firm here in Barrie, Ontario, with my main work revolving around corporate NTRs, corporate tax returns, some bookkeeping, and personal tax return preparation. I work full-time in between AU semesters and part-time during semesters."

When asked to explain ACCT 356 to students, she states "This course provides coverage of intermediate managerial accounting concepts, building on ACCT 355 (Cost Analysis), however it

a lot more theoretical in nature. It covers internal planning in a business and how to achieve optimal costs, improve performance, and stay on top of competition.”

Eve provides some insight into the structure of the course, explaining “The course grade is built on two assignments (15% each), three discussion posts (5% each), and a paper final (55%). Assignments were around four to five questions each, some case based requiring written answers and others calculation based. Assignments are not hard if you read the textbook and go through the end of chapter exercises. The final is made up entirely of both quantitative and qualitative questions similar to those on the assignments (no multiple choice). For studying purposes, I recommend going through the assignments and making sure you can complete those without referring to any formulas and theory from the text as no formula sheet is provided.”

Eve says that she would recommend ACCT 356 to other students, stating “I really enjoyed ACCT356 and enjoy managerial accounting in general, so this course was interesting for me. I did not find anything overly difficult. Some quantitative problems took some time to wrap my head around, but nothing too complex.”

As for any tips and tricks for completing this course, she states “Study off the assignments for the final exam and make sure you have all formulas memorized, especially all ratios (turnover formulas, ROA, ROE, etc). A formula sheet is NOT provided! Also, for the forum discussions, make sure you cite sources and in text reference each one otherwise you will not get full marks. [Edspira](#) has some helpful videos on managerial accounting to help with this course.”

When asked how communications with her tutors have been, she explains “No issues with communication, but then again, I did not really contact anyone throughout the course because material was very straightforward. The exams, assignments, and discussions were graded fairly and in a very quick and timely manner.”

Whether ACCT 356 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 strategic and competitive analysis.

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: Montem Health and Wellness Scholarship

Sponsored by: Montem Outdoor Gear

Deadline: September 30, 2019

Potential payout: \$1500

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be currently enrolled at high school, college, university, or trade school

What's required: An email with contact, school info, and proof of student status, along with a 500-1000 word essay promoting a healthy lifestyle during school years and beyond.

Tips: Read the eligibility criteria carefully.

Where to get info: montemlife.com/scholarship/



Relax—You're Already Rich

Wanda Waterman



As a student you may not be rich in the conventional sense, but it's certain you've got an opinion on the following question: *Do I want to get rich, and, if so, what am I willing to do to get there?*

The short answer? Don't sweat it, because you're already rich.

Let me explain.

Who are the rich?

If you were to ask anyone on the street who the rich people are you'd get a range of answers that probably includes the following:

1. The rich are those who don't have to work for their money because their money works for them.
2. The rich don't have to worry about losing their jobs, as they have enough to support themselves during unemployment. They don't have to fret about failing in business for the same reason, and also because their extra dough increases the likelihood that their businesses will eventually succeed. They can take a bunch of risks in the hopes that one success will cover all the failures
3. The rich don't have to look at price tags. If they want something, they simply buy it.
4. The rich are trendsetters because everyone wants to be like them.
5. The rich are different from you and me.
6. The rich are big givers, rewarding those who are nice to them.
7. The rich own and control most of the world's resources.

It's all poppycock

All of these beliefs are poppycock (as honest rich folks will attest), generated by people who have no idea how the other half (or the upper one percent) lives. It's time for a little reality check.

People with a lot of money are able to live off the interest that their money accumulates by virtue of there being so much of that money and the fact that it's just sitting around. But the same can be said for farmers; they plant the seeds, they put the bulls and cows together in the same meadow, they make comfy houses for their chickens, and they live off of what grows under their care. Farmers have to work hard to make sure their capital produces enough resources to live on, while the rich have the option to spend their days yachting. But there are farmers who've mastered the art of working just enough to enjoy the fruits of their labour, and there are rich people who dash around like headless chickens from one new deal, venture, or broker to another.

Sure, if the farmer fails there's no bread on the table, but if the rich entrepreneur fails the money they lose is just gravy anyway. However, labour history and recent events show that rich people will fight twice as hard for their gravy as the poor will fight for their bread.

To assume that the rich reject "petty price-tagging" as Mr. Burns from *The Simpsons* put it, is another popular misconception. The rich people we see conspicuously throwing around money

are, you can be sure, on the declining end of the wealth curve. They've lost their heads, and it's only a matter of time before they end up like the Addams family. Those who stay rich count every penny and live so as to attract as little attention as possible. Their money is safer that way.

The belief that the rich are trendsetters ignores the fact that the rich have always found inspiration for their style from bohemians, artists, designers, and yes, from the poor, for whom necessity has always been the mother of invention. Sophia Loren began her career by winning a beauty contest wearing a dress made from a curtain. It's the poor who come up with the ideas and the rich who bring them to the public eye.

As for the idea that the "the rich are different from you and me," a statement falsely attributed to F. Scott Fitzgerald, there really is no better answer than that falsely attributed to Ernest Hemingway: "Yes — they have more money."

True, there's something to be said for the distinctions in style, accent, and comportment that old money provides, and the respect given to old money usually stems from such accoutrements. Gaining wealth changes things, and losing wealth changes things again. But in the end money doesn't dictate degrees of virtue, intelligence, creativity, or beauty. Take a look at the world's richest folks and you'll see what I mean.

Speaking of virtue, let's pick up the question of charity. We look to the rich to give big chunks of money to reduce the terrible suffering in the world. Bill and Melinda Gates and their ilk are to be highly commended for their charitable work and for encouraging other rich folks to give more. But considering that the poor give a higher percentage of their incomes away than do the rich, and considering that there are far more poor than rich on this planet, *and* considering that the poor are more conscious of the needs and suffering of others by virtue of their station in life, we have to ask: *How much do the rich really give?*

Do the one percent really control it all?

Now let's consider the most important misconception — that the rich control nearly everything because they can afford to pay for it. Considering, for example, that money is being used in some cases to grant salaries and employment benefits to employees, which item of exchange has the greater value, the money or the labour? Any economist will tell you that in a capitalist society the labour has the greater value, and that if that weren't the case capitalism wouldn't work. Since the employee manifests the commodity of higher value, doesn't that prove that the employee is intrinsically richer than the boss? And that the whole system hinges on how willing workers are to sell their labour?

Now let's extend that same idea to things like creative work. The writer is richer than the publisher, being the repository of talent and ideas. The artist is richer than the art buyer, being the source of the images. The at-home social assistance recipient parent is richer than the government because they're the source of knowledge and services no government could afford to provide to their children. And finally, the student is richer than the university because it's the student who blesses the world with the knowledge the university provides and who hence justifies the university's existence.

You have nothing to strive for. Whether you're a worker, a member of the creative class, an entrepreneur, or a struggling student, you're already rich. You possess in your very being and among your creations the very thing that someone with too much money is willing to pay for.

If you also happen to have a lot of money, you have my sympathy.

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



Fly on the Wall

How Was Your Summer?

Jason Sullivan



Timeless Questions Assessed in the Timelessness Of Ourselves

Fill in the blank quiz questions can be a breeze or a bummer. Like multiple choice, they leave little margin for error or ambiguity. There seems to be no room to elaborate or hedge one's bets by fluffing up an answer to cover as much terrain as feels right. So, with that in mind, inevitably and with a sigh, we at AU are faced with the classic query: how was your summer?

Of course, summer's not over yet. One of the greatest joys of distance education is that even in a grouped study setting we can still go outside and play on our own schedule. At AU we truly own our schooling; it's our studies and our time. Summer still beckons as the days get a bit shorter; some great adventures remain to be had. Sometimes we become entangled in daily affairs to our detriment and particularly at our peril lest summer vanish into an ether of vague regret. As Henry David Thoreau famously stated: "the mass of (people) lead lives of quiet desperation" (Thoreau, 1854). Yuck! Luckily, some late-summer fun can limber us up for acquiescence to autumn's inevitability.

Tao Now While Summer Remains

Here the Chinese Taoist school of philosophy springs to mind; its sages remind us that, like a late-blooming flower, we bloom in our own time and where we're planted. Years ago (but yesterday in a cosmic sense) I was introduced to this philosophy of capturing the moment in a course titled "East Meets West".

Taoism teaches enjoyment rather than rumination. Moments pass and there is only one 'now' and a single 'today'. The key is to realize opportunities when they arise. Chuang Tzu summarizes this need to seize our desires and not be carried away from them:

"Great understanding is broad and unhurried; little understanding is cramped and busy. Great words are clear and limpid; little words are shrill and quarrelsome. In sleep, men's spirits go visiting; in waking hours, their bodies hustle. With everything they meet they become entangled. Day after day they use their minds in strife, sometimes grandiose, sometimes sly, sometimes petty. Their little fears are mean and tremble; their great fears are stunned and overwhelming. They bound off like an arrow or a crossbow pellet, certain that they are the arbiters of right and wrong. They cling to their position as though they had sworn before the gods, sure that they are holding on to victory. They fade like fall and winter – such is the way they dwindle day by day. They drown in what they do – you cannot make them turn back." (Chuang Tzu, 2016)

Such can be the existential considerations when facing a simple question about our past couple of months.

In terms of Chuang Tzu's concern with others, we at AU may happily recall that “we” are not “they”; we're no stultified zombies willing away the sunset of summer in dark, Dorito-laced, basements of the mind. We AU scholars are the cream of the academic crop when it comes to getting things done regardless of the season. On these waning summer days, this time of year calls for, if anything, a looser reign over our productive predilections. If a late summer's evening captures our attention this is a time to cast aside our corporeal studies and enter the rapture of summer fun—before it's too late!

To Ask a Question is to Answer It

We can displace answering the question about how our summer was, and its consideration in terms of the past tense, but no avoidance tactic will hold out against the trudging march of time itself. Summer may be what we make of it, and how we make the last days and weeks count, but to truly account for how it was *for us* requires some sort of methodology.

Or does it? Our human minds think in terms of systems leading to pronouncements. Sure, we could give an off the cuff answer that our summer was “fine” or “fun” but, honestly, that's not very intellectually stimulating. And schooling, especially when we aren't herded into 2:00 pm classrooms at a brick and mortar institution on a sweltering afternoon, can always be fun so long as it doesn't preclude that funnest season of all: summer! The question of summer becomes one where seriousness, such as how many memories we count or how many goals we achieved, meets the inexorable draw of intangibles that leave us with a truly sublime flavour on our palette.

Edmund Husserl noted that we are meaning-making machines whose end game is one of outcomes: “Reason allows for no differentiation into 'theoretical', 'practical', 'aesthetic'...being human is teleological being and an ought-to-be” (Husserl in Derrida, 36). What matters most to each of us includes our studies but also our favourite activities; summer is not a catch-all phrase implying certain priorities at the expense of others. Summer is what we make of it in a way that nests with our true desires and goals. The key to a good time, then, is to know what we really enjoy and go out and do it. Me, I like to snorkel in Okanagan Lake, but for many peers the prospect of sharing space with fish and lakeweed is downright abhorrent. As opportunities dwindle, it pays to know what we really want from our ephemeral moments of play.

Taking the Longinus View

Answering the question of how was summer, runs the risks expressed by first Century C.E. philosopher Longinus:

“The characteristic, then, of bombast is that it transcends the Sublime : but there is another fault diametrically opposed to grandeur : this is called puerility, and it is the failing of feeble and narrow minds, — indeed, the most ignoble of all vices in writing. By puerility we mean a pedantic habit of mind, which by over-elaboration ends in frigidity. Slips of this sort are made by those who, aiming at brilliancy, polish, and especially attractiveness, are landed in paltriness and silly affectation. Closely associated with this is a third sort of vice, in dealing with the passions, which Theodoras used to call false sentiment, meaning by that an ill-timed and empty display of emotion, where no emotion is called for, or of greater emotion than the situation warrants. Thus, we often see an author hurried by the tumult of his mind into tedious displays of mere personal feeling which has no connection with the subject. Yet how justly ridiculous must an author appear, whose most violent transports leave his readers quite cold!” (Longinus, 1st century)

As with Kant's concern with obsessive reasoning that leads to vacillation between poles of arid rationality while never allowing space for one's heartfelt feelings, Longinus doesn't want us to express ourselves without feeling passion to match. And, like in the Taoist school, our authentic sentiments submit neither to words or reasoning. Words point the way but feeling is their guide. Such mystery is what makes summer fun so unique; it can't merely be planned for, it has to be experienced on its own whimsical terms. Thus, in a sense, to ask the question about one's summer is to answer it; it's passing is implied such that a shallow and dry (or frigid) response comes to the fore with ease. The question becomes rote, or a fill in the blank bureaucracy lacking meaning. Who can describe their passion in a few words and simultaneously feel its draw?

Perhaps it pays to ponder summer in advance of its conclusion, that we may better advance our interests in the name of a good time. Longinus asserts: "of all these five conditions of the Sublime the most important is the first, that is, a certain lofty cast of mind" (ibid.). A lofty cast of mind seems necessary to capture the most out of summer's waning weeks. With naked simplicity, natural as a well-attended beach scene, we may imagine the essence of summer *for us* and thus discover our imagination describing a scene transcendent of both time and place. Maybe it's a Norman Rockwell painting, or maybe a George Seurat, or maybe a toddlers scribble (isn't scribbling creativity distilled to its frantic essence?) but whatever we envision about summer goes beyond words and into visuals.

Portraits of Potential

But can our indescribable essence of summer be true; does a picture really represent something or merely portray a narrow view while leaving out legions of facts? Here we turn to Joseph Sen who recently noted the difference between truth and the true. The true connotes a series of facts and realities that, even when taken in combination, are by nature incapable of representing the entirety of a situation. For instance, an AU essay may be late according to your tutors deadline, or to one of your own making, and yet the term 'late' covers both. And that term might ignore your difficult emotional condition as you consider the ephemeral nature of summer and seasonality itself. This jumble of true facts overrides the truth, truth which contains more than mere accounting practices can tally. Sen explains:

"We have a tendency to identify the true (facts) with truth (an ideal). What we know to be true are facts taken individually. Cumulatively, we may assume that these make up the "truth". But they certainly do not if by truth we mean conclusive, unsurpassable knowledge, subject neither to revision nor expansion" (Sen, 2019).

A simple question about the quality of our summer becomes a murky series of data points that, taken together, present a cloudy picture. Facts demand interpretation and only stand alone thanks to an existing edifice of preconceptions and that old bugaboo: common sense. Take the fact that a person went camping a half dozen times over the summer. Without knowing the condition of their minds in regard to the act of camping we have no objective clue as to whether

AU-thentic Event Upcoming AU Related Events

Presenting Your Work at a Conference

Thurs, Sept 5, 2:00 to 3:30 pm MDT

Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Graduate Studies

www.eventbrite.ca/e/fgs-presents-writing-an-abstract-for-a-conference-tickets-60827897880

Register online at above link

All events are free unless otherwise specified

these events were in truth a pleasurable thing for them or not. Maybe camping was forced, as it were, and each time the experience was an ordeal in endurance and an exercise in spouse appeasement. We can only know another person's state by asking them directly and that often yields contradictory, yet mutually true, facts. The bigger the picture, the greater its complexity.

Sen illustrates: "We get nearer the truth by seeing a situation from as many perspectives as possible. The more perspectives we can gain, the more our tendency moves away from judgement to understanding. Consider an example. Why do other people sometimes seem to be less free than we ourselves are? Maybe this perception is the source of a lot of problems as it can tie in with seeing others as more like objects than we take ourselves to be. It may require an effort but we can imagine other people as equally free. This involves understanding a perspective other than the one we may be immediately given" (ibid).

Far from being at the behest of fungible time and variable place, we are each at AU living a unique experience academically as well as personally. Categories do us a disservice if they limit the scope of our understanding of ourselves or our studies; a biased professor (professing faith in one viewpoint and presenting it as the unvarnished truth) can do our learning damage and that is one reason AU is great: solitary critical thinking is the essence of our junction between learning true facts and acquiring truth about the world we apprehend scholastically. Our tutors guide from a distance rather than lead directly; it's up to us to make sense of the course material in our own world. To understand ourselves or others we have to gain a comprehension of perspectives and the variables implied therein.

Cycles and Seasons Held Together by the Loop of Learning

Perhaps we enjoyed our summer thus far but are equally or incommensurately excited to hit autumnal activities. Here in the Okanagan, the Hallowe'en supply store will be opening any day, for instance. Summer never stands alone so much as in a perpetual unfolding in regards both to the past, and our past expectations of the vanishing present, and to the future. As a dialectic process any answer we give as to the nature of our summer also contains a kernel of opposition; "true dialectic is the inner and progressive transition of one explanation into another, in course of which it becomes manifest that the explanations of the understanding are one-sided and narrowly limited, this meaning that each of them contains its own negation" (Hegel summarized by Ruhle, 105). To enjoy our summer is to enjoy it as the future potential within the abstract momentary; summer is there if we want it and the future is now!

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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.



The Fit Student

No Student Should Suffer Ramen Noodles

Marie Well



Are you a student eating ramen noodles? Worse, do you have an autoimmune disease or health condition—while eating ramen noodles? Stop now!

My goal is to get you as healthy as you've ever dreamed possible, but on a budget. And I've discovered a way to get you an extra boost from your organic buy. This time, it's not by eating peels or carrot tops—and definitely not by eating ramen noodles. No. This time it's by sprouting your organics.

Author R. J. Ruppenthal asks, “Would you like to grow some of your own food this year? Indoors? With no sunlight or soil? At any time of the year and at all times of the year? Sprouts allow you to do all that and more” (location 31 of 892, 3%). He also says, “Sprouts can provide you with the power-packed nutrition your body needs at a fraction of the price of store-bought food” (location 31 of 892, 3%). In fact, “sprouts ... often have higher concentrations of nutrients and beneficial compounds than mature plants do” (p. 1 of 31, 9%),

For example, “after grains are soaked in water then strained and left at room temperature in the dark, their reproductive system kicks in, and they begin to sprout and ferment. This fermentation process is what breaks down the proteins and sugars ... and releases the probiotics that are indigenous to the grains. ... The liquid becomes probiotic rich, and is known as rejuvalac” (<https://ohmyveggies.com/how-to-sprout-grains/>). I'm all in for free homegrown healthy probiotics. Store bought probiotics cost a fortune.

But I don't cook. I once had such bad anxiety that I feared charring the kitchen walls. So, I soak my organic steel cut oats overnight rather than boil them. And by morning, the oats taste fluffy and edible. But my grocery store ran out of steel cut oats. So, I bought organic quinoa instead. Overnight, I soaked half a cup of quinoa with a cup of water. To my shock, the next morning, the quinoa sprouted. And the water turned pink (with probiotics). Well, maybe I have a green thumb, I thought. And I bet you do, too.

While raw sprouts contain good bacteria (probiotics), they can also host bad bacteria. So cook them first. Cooking your sprouted grains and beans prevents foodborne bacteria. Yet, author Ruppenthal says, “You can include raw beans and grains in your diet also, but only if you sprout them first” (p. 3 of 31, 13%). Further to that, he says, “Sprouting is the most reliable way to prepare grains and beans for raw consumption. Once sprouted, these foods are easier for the body to digest and can make up an important part of your diet” (p.1 of 31, 6%). I say, do your research before eating raw sprouts. I'm staying clear of uncooked sprouted beans. I think you should

avoid them, too: “Bean sprouts consumed raw or lightly cooked are most likely to carry ... bacteria, so thoroughly cooking them should remove disease-causing microbes.”

But it seems tricky and time consuming to sprout your grains and beans, right? Not at all! Yesterday, I found this [video](#) that makes sprouting easy. You simply soak your quinoa, garbanzos, or lentils in a bowl filled with water overnight. In the morning, you rinse them, put them back in the (empty) bowl, and cover the bowl with a paper towel. Leave them there for a day or two, spraying or rinsing them twice each day. After that, they might be ready for the belly or the fridge. Best to eat them right away.

But “most sprouts take 3-10 days, depending on which kind of seed you use and at what stage of maturity you harvest the sprouts. For example, you can eat sprouted grains in just 3-4 days, but it will take 7-10 days for the same grains to turn into wheatgrass” (p. 3 of 31, 16%). “Sprouting beans is particularly easy and takes just 2-4 days. Black beans, kidney beans, pinto beans, white beans, adzuki beans, cowpeas, black-eyed peas, garbanzos, peas, and lentils are just some of the legumes you can sprout” (p. 11 of 31, 40%). And “smaller seeded grains like quinoa, amaranth, and millet can be sprouted also Quinoa ... germinates quickly (within 24 hours)” (p. 15 of 31, 50%).

And “as long as you are using raw grains—meaning grains that have not been processed, heat treated, or roasted—you can sprout them! ... You can also sprout legumes, seeds, and nuts!” (<https://ohmyveggies.com/how-to-sprout-grains/>).

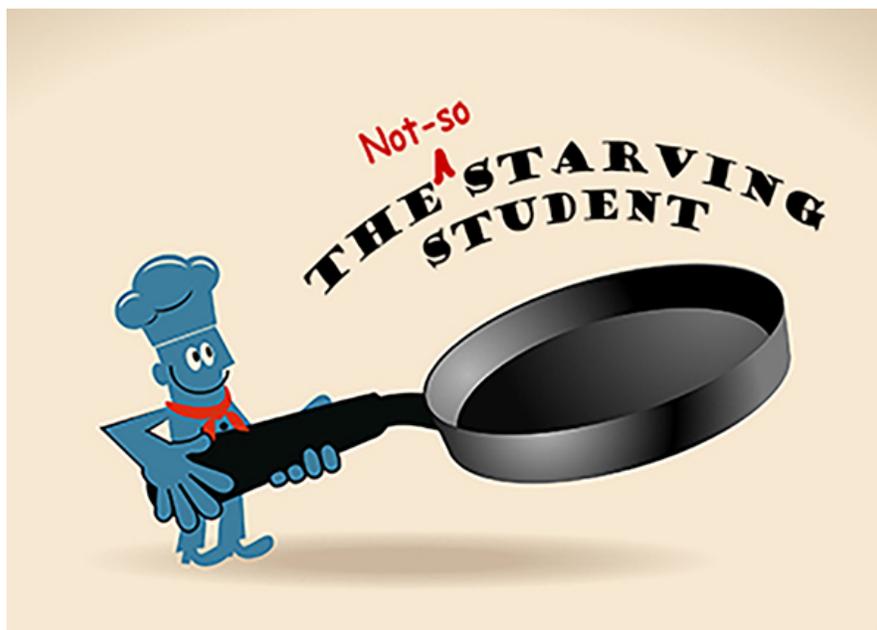
As a student, you have the right to eat healthy on a budget. After all, no student needs to suffer ramen noodles. And don't try sprouting a ramen noodle. It's already dead.

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The Not-So Starving Student Four Reasons to Shop at an Ethnic Grocery Store

Xin Xu



Ethnic grocery stores hold gems that adventurous foodies would be thrilled to explore. Recently I had the opportunity to visit a local ethnic grocery store chain known as H-mart that specializes in retailing South Korean food. Some ethnic grocery stores are like supermarkets, featuring imported products from fresh veggies and fruit to packaged non-perishables such as special flavors of instant noodles not produced in North America. Living in Edmonton, I was fortunate to have had the opportunity of visiting an Italian, Chinese, and Korean supermarkets. While travelling to the United

States, I also had the chance to visit a grocery store with imported foods from the Philippines. So, what is special about ethnic grocery stores?

Explore a different culture

While we all crave for a lengthy vacation abroad to fully experience a new culture, AU students don't always have the time or resources required to do so. One way to safely immerse yourself in a new culture (besides attending cultural festivities) is to explore a new ethnic enclave. Often, these enclaves are packed with gems such as grocery stores, restaurants, and activity hubs. The grocery stores may feature unique items with unfamiliar names that can open new doors of knowledge. For example, while exploring the grocery market that catered to Filipino individuals, I discovered "Pandan", a tropical plant used to flavor many Filipino snacks.



Expand your recipes

For students looking for cooking inspiration from new cuisines, ethnic grocery stores can be a great place to start. To help the grocery stores better market their products, many stores will have samples of their featured product, allowing adventurous foodies to discover new meal preparation options. The H-Mart I recently visited also had a food court with various menu options from Korean Fried Chicken to Bulgogi, a traditional Korean stir-fry beef dish. And at the Italian Centre store, I had the chance to try various authentic aged meats and cheeses cured by local Italian immigrants.



Special deals

While imported foods may be pricier than locally produced ones, occasionally special deals will be offered that students can take advantage of. Particularly for seafood lovers, many ethnic grocery stores have fresh seafood in rows upon rows of fish tanks. Frequently, the seafood, including fish and crustaceans, have special prices that can mean a more affordable way of purchasing it.

Ask local experts

One of my favorite things to do at ethnic grocery stores is to ask locals about their favorite recipes and products. Being part of a multicultural country, we have access to many cultures and people. Often you'll come to learn of hidden gems from the staff or even other shoppers. While shopping at the Italian centre store, I consulted a staff member about their favorite pickled items and I was recommended a pickled jar of artichoke hearts. Despite the strangeness of the suggestion, I was thankful to have tried the item and fall in love with it.

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



Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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

AthaU Facebook Group

A hot thread about whether exam invigilation fees are, or are not, claimable along with tuition fees for income tax; Kendra saves the day with some excellent information. Tomi asks how many courses make a student full-time; "three" is the most popular response.

Other posts include a trio of perennial topics covering easy credits, AU service standards, and delays in marking, and what to do after bombing an exam.

reddit

A post asks about transfer credits; something many AU students have experience with! Other posts include questions about courses COMP 400, HADM 339, and HIST 200.

Twitter

@austudentsunion tweets: "Did you know that most students charged with Academic Misconduct did not realize they had done anything wrong? Make sure you know the rules, and don't risk the heavy penalties from plagiarism. Check out the recorded AU Academic Integrity Webinar at <https://adobe.ly/2HjgZK5>."

@AU Press tweets: "A woman who pours 'all the darkness within her' into a coffee mug, age slipping out of a body 'like a tree shedding its bark,' outbursts evoking 'the smell of burnt chilies' — these are but a few of the striking images in SPARK OF LIGHT. <http://aupress.ca/index.php/books/120262> #WITMonth #ReadWIT."





Dear
Barb

Barbara Godin

The Green Eyed Monster

Dear Barb:

I know guys don't usually read advice columns, but I do occasionally read yours. I would like your opinion on a situation I'm in right now. My girlfriend and I have been dating for one year and we have a lot of fun together when we are alone. As soon as we get together with other friends though, she becomes jealous and possessive. She accuses me of checking out the other girls and paying more attention to them than to her. For the first few months of our relationship she wasn't like that, but now it's constant. At first, I was flattered and thought she really cared for me. But now it has become ridiculous. Even when we are walking through the mall together, she accuses me of looking at other women. It's very frustrating because I am in love with her. It's almost easier not to associate with anyone, but I don't want to lose all my friends. A couple of my buddies told me I am better off without her and that there must be something wrong with her. What do you think, why would someone be so jealous? I could understand if I gave her reason to be jealous, but I don't. I'm totally committed to her. Thanks for your help, Scott.

Hey Scott:

I little bit of jealousy in a relationship is normal and healthy, but this seems to be overboard and destructive. You were clear in saying that you were not providing a reason for your girlfriend to feel this way, so obviously it is an irrational reaction. Jealousy is a response to a person's

own insecurity not necessarily the conduct of the other party. First let's look at the reasons for jealousy. Jealousy erupts from a fear of loss and insecurity. Your girlfriend may have had some losses in her childhood that became aroused when she entered into a relationship with you. Most likely she fears losing you, but what she's doing may end up accomplishing exactly what she doesn't want. Also if a person's needs aren't being met in a relationship, they may feel threatened and insecure. There are things you can do to help to reduce your girlfriend's feelings of jealousy. It is important to make her feel appreciated, loved and important to you, which will help her to feel more secure within the relationship. Another thing you can do, is tell her how her jealousy makes you feel. Perhaps she doesn't realize how you feel. Once you have done everything you can to reassure her, it's up to her to make changes within herself. If she is not able to do this, she may have to seek counseling, as this will only continue with her next relationship. You seem like a very caring boyfriend, best of luck in the future.

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
Lardy Cakes

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

- **Aug 31:** [Deadline to apply for course extension for Oct](#)
- **Sep 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Oct 1](#)
- **Sep 15:** AUSU Get out the Vote Campaign Launches!
- **Sep 19:** [AUSU Council Meeting](#)
- **Sep 15:** [Oct degree requirements deadline](#)
- **Sept 30:** [Deadline to apply for course extension for Nov](#)

Academic Integrity Special Feature

Many AU students who are accused of plagiarism or cheating do not even realize they had done so or did not expect the severe consequences.

Plagiarism and cheating are [Academic Misconduct](#) offences that are taken very seriously. There can be severe penalties, ranging from a reduced or rejected grade to being suspended or expelled from the University.

Make sure you know what cheating and plagiarism are, and how to avoid them!

What is Plagiarism?

Plagiarism happens when you **submit or present someone else's ideas or passages as your own**, without properly citing your source. Plagiarism can happen in various ways:

- Using ideas or wording from another source without acknowledging where they came from.
- Not using quotation marks if using someone else's words, even if you cite a source.
- Borrowing or purchasing papers to pass off as your own.
- Submitting your own work for more than one course without permission of the instructor(s).

What is Cheating?

You may not realize that **if you share your work with others or post it online, you are cheating** and you may be suspended from University. Cheating can include:

- Sharing papers or exams online.
- Communicating content of exams to others.
- Leaving exams exposed to view or looking at other's exam papers.
- Fabricating facts in assignments or labs.
- Using course materials during exams when it is prohibited.

Learn more about plagiarism and cheating on the AU website [here](#).

How to Avoid Academic Misconduct:

- Use your own words when writing papers or exams.
- If you use an idea from another person, cite the source even if you are paraphrasing.
- If you use the exact phrase of another person, put it in quotation marks and cite the source.
- Follow the specific "style guide" or "citation guide" for each of your courses.
- Do not share your exams or papers with others.

For more info on how to avoid academic misconduct, visit the AU website [here](#).

**Note: Info in this article is taken from Athabasca University website as linked above.*

Want to know more? Check out AU's Academic Honesty webinar online [here](#).



AUSU Career Resources

Looking for a new job or career?

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



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