

THE VOICE

Vol 30 Issue 30 2022-08-05

Minds We Meet

Interviewing Students Like You

Course Exam

It Returns! Starting with SOCI 305

Embracing Body Neutrality

Beyond Body Positivity

Plus:

It's Time To Act

*The Study Dude: Essay Editing
and much more!*



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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

It's Time to Act

Karl Low



I was going to gush today about the return of our much missed “Course Exam” column, by a new writer who, if her first submission is any indication, has a solid idea of the kind of things students need to know beyond just the syllabus, but unfortunately, something much more important has come up.

If you haven't already seen the [video by Athabasca University president, Peter Scott](#), it's time to go do so. Now.

The gist of it is that the province has provided universities with their new “performance based metrics” on which they receive funding. One of the “performance” metrics given to AU is that they increase staffing in the rural town of Athabasca University. This despite the fact that rehousing these staff will cost the university significant amounts of money and provide absolutely zero benefit to students.

If the university doesn't do this, it will cost them a significant amount of money as the government with-holds funding from the university.

Either way, the university will be out a significant amount of money, and that's money that could have been used to help provide more programs or more staff able to work at a distance and so be able to get your calls and concerns answered more quickly. But hey, what's your education compared to a few votes, right?

That's why it's time to act. If you're an Albertan, even if you've already graduated, please [call your MLA](#), you can search by your postal code, and ask why they want Athabasca University to take money away from providing education to students. Maybe point out that they already only provide around 26% of the funding to AU, less than most supposedly “private” schools receive, and ask them why they want even less of that money actually going to students who help drive Alberta's economy forward.

Once you're done that, ask them to forward you on to the Minister of Advanced Education, or contact his office yourself at (780)427-5777, and politely ask why they are demanding Athabasca University spend Alberta advanced education money to rehouse staff rather than provide you with an education. Consider pointing out that this will be remembered come voting day. You will likely get little more than runaround from that call, but they'll log you as a concerned citizen. Then try calling some of the numbers on this [list of the deputy minister's office](#) with the same concerns. This is especially important if you happen to live in the Athabasca region.

If you're not from Alberta, it's more difficult, as, let's be honest, you really don't matter to the UCP at all, but you could contact your own MLA and ask if they'd contact Minister Nicolaides at the above listed number to ask why they want to damage your own education. I doubt the minister has any sense of shame left, but it's worth the effort.

This is a blatant attempt by the UCP to grab votes in one small area, no matter how many people it hurts, forcing the use of taxpayer dollars to do it. But if we don't tell them that it's unacceptable, that it will have consequences on voting day, then there's no reason beyond personal morality for them to ever stop. Does anybody here really think the government minister has that in any capacity?

Bah. I'm disgusted. Enjoy the read!

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

MINDS WE MEET



The Voice Magazine recently had a chance to chat with James Purdy (he/him) from Calgary, Alberta, currently enrolled in the Bachelor of Commerce program.

On a personal note, James was “born and raised in Calgary, Alberta, to Irish immigrant parents who escaped The Troubles of Northern Ireland in the late 70s to find a better life for their children.” He explained that the family “moved around a little bit throughout the city and ended up in Chestermere, just east of Calgary for high school.” Currently, James is “living in south-east Calgary with [his] wife and two children, explaining, “I have been working for a fortune 100 company since 2015 in a management role while I try to find a work/life/school balance.”

Like many AU students, James is a lifelong learner. “Back in 2004 I graduated from SAIT in Calgary with an associate degree in business administration and decided that was enough for me at the time. It wasn’t until 2015 that I decided I wanted to get my bachelor’s degree and I found

Athabasca had some great options that were going to work with what I was looking for. I first enrolled in the Bachelor of Management program (3 year) and graduated in 2021. Once graduated I flipped that into enrolling in the Bachelor of Commerce program where I currently am. I expect to graduate in the spring of 2023 with an eye on the MBA program right after that. I am not sure what I will do once I finish my post-secondary education. I have found that I enjoy learning and I hope to leverage the skills I have learned into a promotion at work,” he stated.

He credited his wife as having the greatest influence on his desire to learn. “She has two degrees from the University of Saskatchewan, I want to get two degrees and an MBA so that if we disagree, I can say that I am smarter than her (tongue in cheek of course!) That, and I want to develop business skills so I can take on more responsibility and make more money”

When asked for how he best studies, James stated, “Routine!” He continued, “I found early on (with the support of my family) that a routine schedule of three nights a week works best for me. My wife puts the kids to bed on these nights, which helps me get some uninterrupted work in. I also travel a lot for work so when I am in hotels, I find I can get a lot done. That and some motivation with peanut butter M&M's help.”

As for advice for potential students? “Besides how hard this was going to be? My advice to new/prospective students is to keep with it because it is worth it. You are looking and enrolled for a reason when you started, and you need to keep that thought alive. I got some advice a while ago from a mentor of mine that taught me about hard work. When we can face a challenge and complete difficult tasks, it makes us better at what we do. That has always stuck with me. If you can do hard things now, just imagine what you will be capable of after you graduate.”

When not studying, James likes to spend time with family when he's not working on school. He continued, "Kids grow up so fast that it's important to be engaged as much as possible. If I do get some free time to myself, I like to cycle. My favorite ride is highway 1A from Banff to Castle Junction. It's a beautiful ride that just seems to melt the stress away for me."

He also let *The Voice Magazine* know about a particular book that has made an impact on his life, namely *The Endurance* by Caroline Alexander. "It is a nonfiction book about the explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton and his crew as they try to become the first explorers to cross Antarctica on foot in 1921. It describes friendship, preservice, and most of all how to survive through significant adversity when your back is up against the wall, he explained."

As for his experience with online learning so far? "I like this question a lot and I could probably write a full essay on it. So far, it has been the challenge of independent learning and the experiences that I have made along the way. It has been difficult at times, but I have been able to keep my head up and move forward no matter what University has thrown at me. What I like is the pace at which I have been able to work on my degree and slowly work towards its completion. I believe I share the same dislike as most at any university: why it takes so long to mark assignments and tests!"

His most memorable course has been ACCT 335: Cost Analysis, although, unfortunately, his experience was not positive. "This course is hard, poorly set up, and I hate accounting. Kind of a triple threat for me. It's the only class I have ever looked at and thought that the bare minimum of 50% will be acceptable for me just so I can get through it," he explained.

As for communications with course tutors? "I feel most tutors want to engage and help. The issue at hand is how long it takes to engage with them. I am not a patient person, so I need to talk to someone right away, but I don't have the luxury of waiting, so, more often than not, I am using YouTube to figure something out."

When asked what he would do as the new president of AU, James stated, "I would be doubling down on the online format with online lectures. This is being done at other major universities across North America and it seems to be the way online learning is going post-covid. There is so much opportunity to have uploaded lectures for classes that can help with learning. I see this as the biggest opportunity for AU. That and faster access to tutors would be a benefit. There is so much knowledge to gain from them, but it can take too long to get connected."

On a final note, James added that "[t]his year [he] had the pleasure of competing for AU with three like-minded students in the Alberta CPA challenge and the Alberta Deans Business Case Challenge – winning the Dean's business case!" He continued, "I ended up getting 3 credits at the 400 level and a nice chunk of prize money for winning as well. I can't believe more people don't sign up for this as it looks great on a resume and the opportunity to network and test your knowledge was such a fantastic experience."

Best of luck James!

At times, in an online learning environment, it can feel like you are all alone, but across the nation and around the globe, students just like you are also pursuing their Athabasca University (AU) studies! Each week, *The Voice Magazine* will be bringing you some of these stories. If you would like to be featured next, do not hesitate to get in touch!

Natalia Iwanek (she/they) is currently completing her Bachelor of Arts in English with a minor in Political Science at Athabasca University.



Embracing Body Neutrality An Alternative to Body Positivity

Jessica Young



Most of you have probably heard of the term body positivity—one of social media’s favourite buzzwords. The body positivity movement began as a way to challenge unrealistic feminine beauty standards, and eventually shifted to the well-known message of today: “all bodies are beautiful.” While everyone may have a slightly different perspective of what body positivity means to them, the main idea is loving your body (and whatever “flaws” you perceive) just the way it is.

The body positivity movement is behind the recent uptick of “real” models in the media, brands embracing inclusivity in their sizing, shade ranges, and advertising, as well as the massive amount of content online of people supposedly embracing their insecurities. The movement has also begun important conversations surrounding what inclusivity really means—not only including white cis women of different shapes and sizes, but disabled bodies, people of all racial backgrounds, gender identities, and the 2SLGBTQA+ community.

But the body positivity movement isn’t all positive. Some people feel the movement promotes obesity, while some people, including Lizzo, criticize the movement for being co-opted by women who already fit society’s beauty standards, further marginalizing fat bodies. Others criticize the body positivity movement for being too positive, to the point of being unrealistic and unattainable for many people. These critics compare body positivity to toxic positivity—that being happy with the way your body looks all the time is impossible and trying to keep up this constantly positive perspective can result in feeling worse about yourself.

That’s where body neutrality comes in.

Body neutrality is the concept of *respecting* your body as the vessel that carries you through life—even if you don’t necessarily love the way it looks. Body neutrality promotes the radical idea that you don’t need to think about the physical appearance of your body at all. Instead, you can focus on thinking about keeping your body healthy and strong so it can continue to support you through your life. You can do this by eating foods that nourish your body, staying active, getting adequate rest, taking care of your skin, and whatever else your body may need to function to the best of its ability. Practicing body neutrality means acknowledging that your value as a human being and your happiness is not tied to the way you look, and that your body is only a small part of the total person.

Many people recovering from eating disorders praise the benefits of the body neutrality approach for their relationship with their body and food. On the other hand, critics of the body neutrality approach say that the movement may be ableist, suggesting that the sentiment that people should be grateful for what their bodies do for them erases disability and chronic illness.

In the end, the relationship with your body is an extremely personal journey, so choose what feels right for you.



Course Exam: SOCI 305 (Sociology of Crime)**Olivia Shepherd**

Explore legal elements, the explanations of crime, sociological theories, and more in SOCI 305: Sociology and Crime. Sociology 305 is a three-credit arts or social sciences course with no prerequisites and includes a challenge for credit option.

In SOCI 305, students learn a wide range of topics related to crime: legal principles, sociological approaches to crime such as social inequalities, social movements and economic factors, measurements of crime and the theoretical explanations of the crime drop, and policy considerations.

Who Should Take This Course and Why

Lovers of criminal sociological theory unite—Athabasca University has the perfect course for you. Mr. Gordon Drever has been teaching the ‘Sociology of Crime’ at AU for over twenty years, alongside a similar course (Crime and Deviance) at Northern Lakes College. If his twenty-plus years of teaching experience isn’t enough, he’s also been a consultant to the Crown as well as consulting with police in crimes involving a sectarian religious context. He has a confession to make though, stating, “My academic training and research work has been in anthropology.” (He really has his bases covered!) His experience in the realm of anthropology fieldwork gave him some understanding of the comprehension of crime due to cases that unfolded during his time in rural Mexico.

Mr. Drever enjoys seeing students with a background in the field, such as police officers, corrections officers, and social workers, but don’t fret if you don’t have a background in these areas, just bring an interest in the sociology of crime and you’re sure to enjoy this course.

Course, Assignments, and Exam Details

This course is split into ten units, covering a vast array of materials and knowledge. Alongside the e-text (students may also purchase a physical textbook at an additional cost, linked in the course outline), each unit includes a study guide. The guides provide an exceptional amount of information including the unit objectives and written “lectures.” Between the textbook and the course material, students will have no issue accessing the required information-plus exciting additional information for those who love to go above and beyond in their learning. The ten units cover The Rule of Law, The Legal Elements of Crime, Measuring Crime, The Crime Drop and Enterprise of Criminology, Explaining Crime, Realist Theories, Relativistic Theories, Understanding ‘mere murder’, Murder Extraordinaire, and Policy Considerations. Students will also find additional readings linked at the end of each unit section. This course may be heavy on the reading, but the information is incredibly interesting for lovers of criminal theories. Dare I say, you may even want to read more beyond what is provided.

SOCI 305 includes two assignments, a mid-course quiz, and a final exam. The first assignment is a research proposal worth 10% of the final grade, and the second is the research paper, worth 25% of the final grade. The research options in the course assignment are endless, so long as it correlates to some aspect of sociology and crime. The first assignment is listed as due after unit three, and the second following unit seven. As for the mid-course quiz, students will find this after unit six. It’s a 60-question multiple choice quiz that covers units 1-6 and is worth 35% of the final grade. Lastly, the final examination. Worth 30% of the final grade, the final exam is written

and students will have a list of questions to prepare. It's split into two parts: Part A presents 4 of 12 possible questions, and students write their answers to two of these four in approximately 800-1200 words. Part B includes 14 possible questions to prepare from where four will be presented on the exam, and two must be answered in 350-600 words. To pass the course, students must achieve a 60% on the final exam, and a 60% overall grade for the course.

Course Advice

“Even though the topic list and requirements for the research papers are written in generic terms, there are always opportunities to bring in your personal experience and knowledge (not to be confused with opinion). If a student has an interest in the field which does not quite match the assigned topics: no problem, just ask.” If you can use personal experience, Mr. Drever can gauge your familiarity with the sociological framework—plus he says he finds these interesting!

From the perspective of a past student, start working on your final exam preparation early. Between the study guide and textbook, students will have no problem answering the questions on the provided list.



Unconditional Love for Every Soul

Marie Well



We all travel a lonely path at times. It's part of learning life lessons, I believe. But there is always a way through the thick forest. I think there is a way to find your true home, which can only be found in unconditional love. Even if you're on the street and left for dead, unconditionally love.

The revenge stories in the movies are myths. They never bring happy endings, as happy endings stem from unconditional love, not hate. Despite this, I believe God can use any situation for his purposes. And if we give unconditional love to all, we are guaranteed to fulfill that purpose.

If you are in a war-torn country, unconditionally love. That way, you'll preserve your soul to its highest form. Even if people attack you, consider doing as Jesus said and turn the other cheek. Give the enemy unconditional love instead, forgiving with every fiber of your being. Only

then can the soul have the best opportunity to flourish. If you live by the sword, you die by the sword.

A Buddhist monk might think our enemies have a karmic bond that we are meant to work out in this lifetime. Given this, I believe the only solution to any past karmic disruption is to give unconditional love to everyone, especially our adversaries who do us extreme harm. Any other solution falls short of what we're meant to achieve in this lifetime.

There is an urgency to unconditionally love the people closest to us, like family, friends--and even enemies. But this extends to people we merely pass by in our daily travels. Everyone who comes into our life and everyone we pass by is meant for us to unconditionally love. Never have an unkind intention toward another being--only unconditional love and a selfless forgiveness.

One tiny negative thought toward another being can cause a tornado of damage, but one loving thought can build paradise.

If someone is suffering, always take the time to draw forth unconditional love and a prayer for that soul, whether that person is a friend or foe. I believe every moment of empathy must be filled with unconditional love and a bias toward prioritizing other people's perspective over our own. Empathy helps everyone grow.

Every mistake we make is a moment for us to develop inner beauty. Therefore, treat our mistakes with unconditional love, as God can use any error for his purpose.

I believe there are angels all around us. They can be human friends, pets, or other entities. They are here to guide all of our hurts toward the realm of pure, unconditional love. And every pain, every act of survival, must embrace the light. We must release every fear that beholds us in favor of unconditional love.

So, don't think of your pain and hurt when your soul is crushed. Instead, think of the inner beauty of the perpetrator(s). Celebrate their goodness, and most importantly, give them your unconditional love. And no longer view them as perpetrators but as friends. I believe there is goodness in every soul, for we are all essentially pure love.

So, love every being. Care about every being. Most of all, love all others, even if they don't return the love. But do keep yourself safe unless you intend your sacrifice to be in line with Christ's crucifixion in the name of love. After all, we must prioritize others' happiness over our own to truly love unconditionally.

The Marriage Foundation says we only feel love when we give it. That's because when we receive it, we have filters that prevent much, if not all, of the love from reaching us. But when we give unconditional love, there is no upper limit to how much love we can feel.

If you don't know how to unconditionally love, start by saying aloud and with all your heart, "I love ..." and fill in the blanks with every single name that comes to mind. I believe every thought toward another being—toward all human beings—must be filled with the sentiment of "I care deeply about your welfare."

Once you do that, start reading all kinds of religious texts, self-help books, books about saints, and books on near-death experiences. These will help enlighten you on the wisdom needed to flourish with unconditional love. But to start, just feel that love with no barriers. It's simple to do but oh so powerful.

Showing a little bit of compassion is better than showing none. Showing a lot of heart is better than showing a little. But the ultimate and very achievable state is showing nothing but unconditional love to everyone. Many "enlightened" people have realized this state. That enlightened state will bring you to your most genuine essence, pure love.

Unconditional love is the only real solution to any struggle. So, unconditionally love everyone to discover your true essence. When you love others, you also love yourself. After all, you are love!

AU-thentic Events Upcoming AU Related Events

AUSUnights Virtual Student Social

Thur, Aug 11, 5:00 to 6:00 pm MDT

Online via Zoom

Hosted by AUSU

www.ausu.org/event/ausunights-virtual-student-social-15/

RSVP through above link.

All events are free unless otherwise noted.



Homemade is Better The Empress Gin and Tonic

Chef Corey



Gin and tonic is undoubtedly an easy enough drink to make, and I doubt we need a recipe to make one. This simple recipe requires only three ingredients: One ounce of gin, one slice of lime, and five ounces of soda. But this article is more to be a review of a particular type of gin: Empress Gin.

Empress 1908 got its name from the Empress Hotel in Victoria. The gin was inspired by their handcrafted tea ([Empress 1908 Gin, 2022](#)). Most gin I've seen is clear, but Empress Gin is a beautiful shade of indigo. To achieve this colour, the distillery uses butterfly pea blossoms. The gin is smooth with notes of a typical dry gin and some citrus. They use traditional ingredients in their gin, such as juniper berries, coriander and rose petals. They also add non-traditional ingredients like butterfly pea blossom, empress tea, grapefruit peels, cinnamon, and ginger

root. These flavours come together to make a uniquely colourful and smooth spirit.

The first time I tried this gin was at home with my spouse during COVID restrictions. I went to the local liquor store and grabbed a few bottles of various items: some wine, whiskey, beer, and Empress 1908. I remember making the first G&T with it. The colour of the gin turned from indigo to a light purple. The first sip had me sold again. I was already intrigued by the colour, but the taste was fascinating. I will also admit that this gin is moderately priced in the places I've seen it thus far, but it is not cheap. Be prepared to spend a little more on this one. You'll enjoy it, though!



Homemade is Better Gin and Tonic



Ingredients:

- 1 oz Empress 1908 gin
- 5 oz tonic water
- One slice of lime

Directions:

- 1) Grab a cocktail glass (it must be at least a five-ounce glass).
- 2) Add a few ice cubes.
- 3) Pour in the gin.
- 4) Add the tonic.
- 5) Garnish with lime.
- 6) Enjoy!

Corey Wren is a student at AU's school of business management and a stay-at-home-parent of three who graduated from NAIT's culinary arts program in 2007.



Fly on the Wall

Education as a Happiness Machine



Jason Sullivan

To learn is to know, or so the theory goes. We add information to our minds and develop processes to accentuate our knowledge acquisition skills. Yet, the internet provides multiple answers to many of the same questions; you need only decide your point of view in advance and have it confirmed if you want to just satisfy ego. Like disciplinary silos, such as sociology or environmental science, each refracting reality through a set of epistemological assumptions about the way of the world and how to understand life, the internet leads us to live in times that transcend the idea of merely going to school to receive answers. Answers nowadays are produced through interaction; priorities change as history unfolds.

When a goal is known beforehand knowledge tends to fit expectation; *come what may* is a different method of inquiry from *give me what I want*. Indoctrination has always been part of education even in times when the facade of certainty has fallen away. AU uniquely positions us to tailor our education to fit our lifestyle needs while also providing us with some certainty in a flowing sea of social media flux. To expect education to produce a happier, more fulfilled, version of ourselves might, however, be a tall order. At best we can only gain deeper insights and more reasonable perspectives on the world and our place in it.

The world of 2022 may not be so different from a few decades ago. Even before the internet was in vogue, absolute from ambiguity was a tough nut to crack. Knowing something and standing

pat about it has always been problematic; the tendency of learning and life is to flow onward. Several decades ago, Jean Baudrillard followed up his 1981 epic *Simulation and Simulacra* by claiming that “all we can do is simulate the orgy, simulate liberation...all the goals of liberation are already behind us...The logic of viral dispersal in networks is no longer a logic of value; neither, therefore, is it a logic of equivalence.” (Baudrillard, 4-5). Post modern society implies that every assertion about truth is hollow, susceptible to the whims of change over time. Would we even be happier, though, if life invoked certain guarantees? Happiness, after all, is a static and stolid state that requires a lack of pleasure for its perspective to make sense; who can tell how they feel without comparing states of feeling?

Philosopher Robert Nozick in the 1970s had suggested that, given a choice, we’d find pleasant certainties hollow if they were made permanent; given the opportunity to take a pill guaranteeing a happy life, free from annoyances like disappointing academic marks or failed romantic relationships, we’d be better off to choose an authentic existence including calamities and pitfalls. “We want to have a genuine relationship with reality, not live a fictional life that only *feels* real” (Buscicchi, online).

As recently as 2017, deep into our current era of virtual reality headgear and nebulous online interactions with strangers, “Frank Hindriks and Ivan Douven asked experimental subjects if they would be willing to take, for the rest of their life, a pill with no side-effects that would provide them with almost exclusively pleasant experiences” (online). Only 53% agreed that they’d make the leap into a reality free of difficulty. Apparently, the tendency for many is to prefer reality with its bumps and twists over a smooth ride. Athabasca can provide a happy diversion to life’s little nuisances by providing our brains with a window onto a wide and different world, one that diverges from our own and provides perspective on what, to us, a good life means. Our textbooks allow mental openings onto other ways of being and thinking, almost like entering an alternate reality.

There’s a reason why putting one’s thinking cap on and imagining oneself as a psychologist or a businessperson for the purposes of succeeding in a course is only a temporary experience. Nothing we learn can be universally applicable to all circumstances, and maybe that’s a key theme to university studies. As with permanent happiness, learning isn’t something we do and then move on from. Education is a process, a state of mind. Learning when to apply our studies to life and how to translate our inquisitive essence to diverse situations is part of what allows us to grow our minds throughout life. Context is crucial to both happiness and the value of education.

No amount of study will make life perfect but there can never be too many ideas in our heads. Innovation comes with AU studies because we have to take our coursework into ordinary life and see how it fits—or doesn’t. As our minds evolve with academic inputs there’s a circulation of realities, good and bad, that go into making us who we are. Baudrillard aptly claimed that “with the benefit of a little hindsight, we may say that the unavoidable goal of all liberation is to foster and provision circulatory networks” (Baudrillard, 4). Sifting, sorting, and organizing are skills as crucial as an attention span, and rather than involving a series of rote answers they are flexible and dynamic tools applicable regardless of context.

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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.



Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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



AthaU Facebook Group

When tutor's tutor. A discussion thread started by a student seeking outside tutorial assistance prompts a tangential discussion about the role of AU tutors and what help students can expect from them.

Discord

Location location location. A link to a media report of AB pressuring AU to stay in Athabasca, sparks a conversation about what this might mean for students if AB follows through on threatened funding cuts.

reddit

Build a better exam platform. A student's itemized observations about deficiencies in the MuchLearning exam platform attracts in-depth and wide-ranging responses.

Twitter

@aulibarchives tweets: "Which resources can you use for your presentations and papers? Have a look at our Open Access Resources Guide: <https://libguides.athabascau.ca/openaccess#openaccess> #creativecommons #AULibrary."

Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: Storwell's Foster Children Bursary Program

Sponsored by: Storwell

Deadline: September 1, 2022

Potential payout: \$2000

Eligibility restriction: Each applicant must have been a foster child with an official Canadian or U.S. foster care program, be 24 years of age or less at time of application, be a Canadian or U.S. citizen or permanent resident, and be a full-time student at a recognized post-secondary institution or vocational college in Canada or U.S. as of September.

What's required: An online application including personal and academic info, detailed financial info, community service and work info, summary of personal goals, proof of residency or citizenship, a recent academic transcript, and a reference name and contact number.

Tips: Most application fields are marked with an asterisk and must be completed.

Where to get info: www.storwell.com/bursary-application



Beyond Literary Landscapes The Gothic Novel

Natalia Iwanek



From my early beginnings as a young introvert, the public library has always been a bit of a refuge. Years later, not much has changed, albeit with an additional affinity for endless hours spent scouring second-hand bookstores to add to my ever-growing “to-read” pile.

From one bookworm to another, this column will be underscoring and outlining various literary genres, authors, and recent reads and can serve as an introduction for those unfamiliar with these works, as a refresher for long-time aficionados, and maybe as an inspiration for readers to share their own suggested topics.

Who

This week, we have an introduction to the Gothic Novel genre, a reminder of some of the genre’s classics, and as an inspiration for further reading.

Some leading figures of the Gothic Novel include Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, Emily Brontë, and Thomas Hardy. Other authors include Bram Stoker.

What

The Gothic Novel can be defined as “European Romantic pseudomedieval fiction having a prevailing atmosphere of mystery and terror.” Although popularized in the 1790s, it has been revived over the years.

Some examples of Gothic Novel characteristics include haunted castles and homes, monsters, ghosts, a suspenseful atmosphere, nightmares, terrifying weather and settings, moody protagonists, and death.

Some well-known Gothic Novels include Shelley’s *Frankenstein*, Brontë’s *Wuthering Heights*, and Hardy’s *Tess of the d’Urbervilles*.

Other novels include Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* and Edgar Allan Poe’s *The Fall of the House of Usher*.

For students who would like to read a similar genre to the Gothic Novel, they may also enjoy Horror and Mystery works.

Where

Many of these works take place in the United Kingdom, including England, as well as Romania.

When

Many of these works take place during the 18 and 19th-centuries.

Why

These works may be of interest to readers who would like to know more about the origins and subsequent revivals of the Gothic Novel, as well as its relation to the horror and mystery genres. They may also interest readers who enjoy mystery, suspense, and the supernatural.

How

AU’s wide range of diverse courses make it easy to study this topic in depth. Courses related to the Gothic Novel are available in a variety of disciplines, including one’s that may fit into your

Degree Works. (Always check with a counsellor to see if these particular courses fulfill your personal graduation requirements!)

AU students interested in learning more about this topic may consider ENGL 395: The Nineteenth-Century English Novel, a senior-level, six-credit course, which “introduces the student to some of the major English novels of the nineteenth century.” The current course revision includes Shelley’s *Frankenstein*, Brontë’s *Wuthering Heights*, and Hardy’s *Tess of the d’Urbervilles*.

Students can also consider ENGL 491: Directed Studies in Literature, a senior-level, three-credit course, which allows for “an extended research and writing project under the direction of a professor.” Note that this course requires several prerequisites, including ENGL 211: Prose Forms and ENGL 212: Poetry and Plays, two senior-level (300/400) ENGL courses, and professor approval. Happy reading!

Natalia Iwanek (she/they) is currently completing her Bachelor of Arts in English with a minor in Political Science at Athabasca University.



The Study Dude Academic Essay Editing Tips

Marie Well



Your edits to your essay are critical to achieving an A+ grade. Many professors will not give A's if the paper has spelling or grammatical errors, so the key to getting A's is to hand in polished documents.

With that said, here are ways to edit for an error-free paper.

Allot ample time for editing your paper. Give yourself a minimum of ten days to edit your essay. For instance, after you write your essay, spend at least three days reading it and marking errors in structure, grammar, or spelling. Emphasize getting the format correct at this stage, ensuring everything is in a logical sequence.

After that, put the paper aside for another three days to get a fresh look at it. Edit again. Then wait two days before re-editing. And then edit again on the next day. Two days before you hand it in, do a final check. It should be polished at this stage, but if it isn't, make the edits and recheck it. Keep making edits and checking until you go through the paper at least twice, spotting no errors.

Get A Second Opinion. If you can afford it, subscribe to an editing service like Grammarly or Scribendi or something else you can find with a quick search on the web. Essays need to be flawless to get an A+, and your best chance of achieving this is through extensive self-editing coupled with another set of eyes, either real or machine, taking a look. I use Grammarly and its interface allows you to upload your essay and choose editing features for academics, after which instant recommendations will be made. These recommendations include spelling and grammar corrections. In the process, you'll hopefully learn how to self-correct errors you have been unaware of.

Print out your essay. Printing your paper offers an easier way to spot errors and make ink edits. For instance, you can number all your paragraphs in ink and put brackets around a section with

the words "Move to after paragraph number eight." Use ink for structural, grammatical, and spelling errors. Once you've inked up your paper, make the changes on your computer.

Edit your essay backward. Reading your article backward helps you spot errors. That's because it takes more focus to read backward. Moreover, it'll help detect glaring spelling or grammatical errors.

Read your essay aloud. This is an excellent means of ensuring your piece has flow or rhythm. If you find a tongue twister, rewrite the sentence, so it doesn't sound so choppy. If you run out of breath while reading a sentence, this means the sentence is too long and needs a pause.

Prune back long sentences. Try to turn a very long sentence into two or more sentences.

When reworking long sentences, keep the main subject and verb tightly tucked together. For instance, avoid saying, "The professor, who was an adherent of a questionable political framework and an advocate of insect burgers despite his own reservations with eating bugs, claimed the economics argument was faulty." Instead, say, "The professor claimed the economics argument was faulty. Despite his reservations about eating bugs, he was an adherent of a questionable political framework and an advocate of insect burgers.

Keep paragraphs short. Aim to have three to five sentences per paragraph. If the sentences exceed this amount, find a logical place to break them up with a paragraph indent.

Use variations of sentence lengths. Grammarly will signal three short sentences in a row as "Monotonous." Similarly, three very long sentences are confusing. So, change the sentence structure: a short sentence with a long sentence, perhaps followed by a sentence starting with a subordinate clause.

Use variations of words. Try not to have the same word reappear too often in a paragraph. In other words, vary it. For instance, don't say "Also" three sentences in a row. Instead, vary it with "Also," "As well," and "Additionally." Common words like "and" and "the" are okay to repeat.

Cut out unnecessary adjectives and adverbs. Adjectives and adverbs can usually be removed, and the word they modify can be strengthened. For instance, instead of "Very beautiful," write, "Breathtaking."

Don't get obfuscated. Try not to use technical jargon or long words to show your language ability. Instead, aim for clarity. If the big word adds clarity (making your sentence easier to understand), use it. Also, if a big word is more concise than two smaller ones, then opt for the big word.

Aim for an active voice. Avoid the "be" verb: to be, are, is, were, was, etcetera if the verb makes the sentence passive. A passive voice has a subject that does not perform the action. An example of a passive voice is "Jill was hugged." The actor who did the hugging is missing. An active voice would say, "Jack hugged Jill."

With that said, it's okay to use a "be" verb if it links to an adjective, but substituting the "be" verb for a punchier verb works best.

Ensure your title and introduction are catchy. A catchy title and introduction can be a play on words, best achieved with an idiom such as "The sky is the limit" for a math paper on infinite limits. Buy a book on idioms to get a head start on this strategy. You can then begin your essay with a shocking statistic, a surprising quote, a compelling anecdote (story), a thought-provoking question, or some other unexpected element.

Structure your essay smartly. Place your first and third strongest arguments in the first two spots in your paper and your second strongest argument at the very end. Then place your weakest

argument just before your final one. Better still, delete your most inadequate arguments if you're way over the word count.

But prioritize a logical sequence of arguments, of course.

Support your citations. Make sure every claim you express can be supported by your sources. And make sure all your citations are correctly done according to your assigned style guide, such as APA, MLA, Chicago Manual of Style, and so forth. (For each class, you'll be assigned a style guide or given a choice of style guides.)

Ensure you have ideally three citations for every paragraph. Each argument might take at least one paragraph, sometimes multiple paragraphs. Each paragraph should ideally have three citations to support or build on its claim. You can get away with two citations, but three builds a stronger argument.

So, suppose a paragraph has only one citation. In that case, your role in editing should be to search the library system for research articles on that specific topic. Then find, within those articles, at least one other citation to add mass to that paragraph.

Consider Avoiding "I." Instead of injecting yourself into the paper with words such as "I believe" or "I say," distance yourself. In other words, say instead "It can be argued that," or "It can be said that." But be sure to support these claims with citations from the literature. However, pay attention to the guidelines of your class or professor for this, as it is becoming more accepted to use the personal pronouns, especially where it allows you to avoid more wordy passive constructions.

Now you have some guidelines for editing your essay. But for this to truly work, you'll need to start researching your paper as soon as possible, on the first day it's assigned ideally. If you don't have ten days to do edits, then do multiple edits over several days. And to get you're A+, never opt to start your paper the night before it's due.



Unearthing classic articles from previous issues of *The Voice* Magazine

One thing we notice many AU students are interested in, is other AU students! Over the years, *The Voice* has featured hundreds of AU students, along with their interests and goals, struggles and successes.

A grandmother goes back to school. Almost 20 years ago, *The Voice* interviewed student Taleathahh-Rae Livingstone, from Medicine Hat AB. "I began very slowly with Athabasca in 1996 taking a course here and there, and switching credentials twice! I was testing the waters to see if I could learn, if I would enjoy learning, and if I could stick with learning." [AU Profiles – Student: Taleathahh-Rae Livingstone](#), December 4, 2002.

Transitioning from in-person to online learning. *The Voice's* current student profile series, "Minds We Meet", debuted in 2014 with Ontario student John MacPherson. "It was a strange transition going from the lecture hall to completely online. At first it was a bit of a struggle staying on top of it. No professors to push; it was all up to me." [Minds We Meet – Students Like You: Interviewing John MacPherson](#), September 5, 2014.

If you're a current AU student, we'd like to feature you in an upcoming "Minds We Meet"! Contact us at voice@voicemagazine.org (or use our [contact form](#)) and we'll connect you with one of our friendly interviewers.



Dear
Barb

Barbara Godin

Bully for You

Dear Barb:

I am the mother of two girls, aged 12 and 13. They have always done well in school and had a lot of friends until this past year. They both became the target of bullies and now they are having all kinds of anxiety about going back to school in the Fall.

My girls have not been physically assaulted, but they have been verbally attacked and humiliated in public. I am unsure what caused this initially. I know that when my younger girl began being bullied the older one defended her, so that probably resulted in the older one being bullied as well. My younger girl does have some gender identity issues which may have contributed to her not fitting in and becoming a target of the bullies.

I am not sure what I can do as a parent to help my children. I have spoken to the principal and he assured me the school will put a stop to it, which they have not been able to do yet. Can you offer suggestions on what I can do to prevent this from happening again in the next school year?

Thank you, Christine.

Hello Christine:

Bullying is defined as an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening. The causes of it are unimportant, as it simply shouldn't happen regardless.

I am so sorry to hear your children are experiencing this terrible form of abuse. The consequences of bullying can include shyness, stomach aches, panic attacks, nightmares just to name a few. Bullying can also impact the individuals who are witnessing it, as they feel bad for the person being bullied, but fear for their own safety if they become involved. If children are allowed to get away with bullying behaviour, they often will continue this behavior into adulthood and may include other forms of abusive conduct and aggression. So, you're right to be concerned.

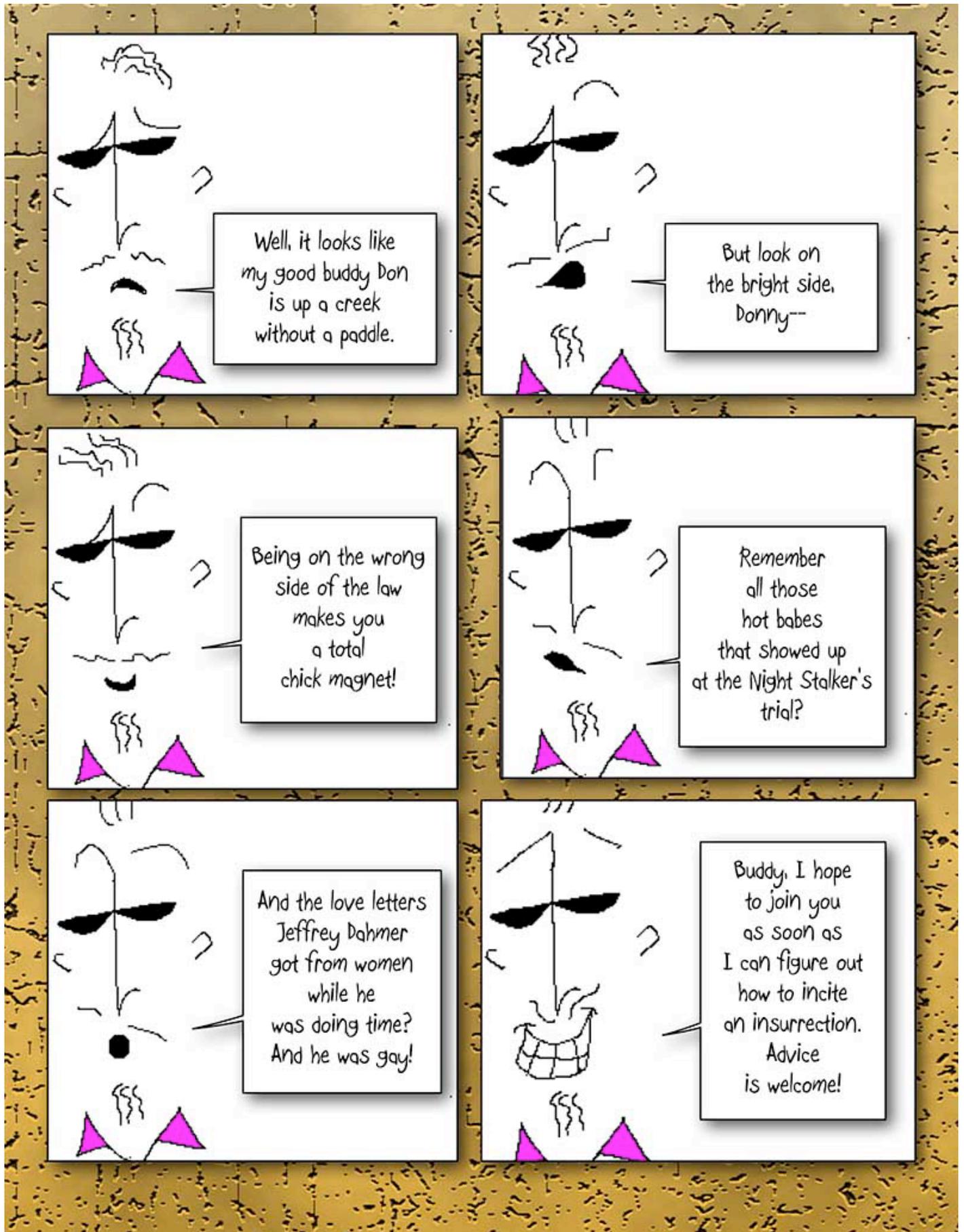
There are programs available for victims of bullying. A widely used prevention program is Olweus Bullying Prevention Program. This program has been implemented in several schools and targets not only the child being bullied, but the bystanders. The program shows the harm and long-term repercussions of being bullied, with the intention of developing empathy. If this is not yet in your children's school perhaps you can be proactive in having it implemented. It has been proven the only way to reduce bullying is through awareness and education. As parents we all need to do our part to prevent this type of behaviour for the sake of our children. Thank you, Christine, for your most important 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.



Chazz Bravado
Outlaw Magnetism

Wanda Waterman



AU SU

UPDATE

COMMUNITY. RESOURCES . SERVICES



Celebrate with us July 11-15th as we turn 30!

We have a fun-filled week planned, including contest giveaways, a special AUSUnights Virtual Student Social: 90s Retro Edition, and an in-person AUSU Birthday Bash with Student Council at Hudsons on Bourbon St. in West Edmonton Mall!

[RSVP to the AUSU Birthday Bash!](#)

Date: July 16th, 2022
Time: 7:00 p.m. MST
Venue: Hudsons
Bourbon Street—WEM
Contact: ausu@ausu.org



Did AU Know?



AU recently announced they are extending their temporary compassionate grading policy until at least Dec. 31, 2022.

The policy, introduced last Aug, supports students whose studies have been disrupted by the pandemic by allowing them to select one course to go unweighted and not included in their GPA, recorded instead as a pass.

Find more on the flexible grading option and how to apply at athabasca.ca.



Provided by

ausu@ausu.org

AU SU Athabasca University Students' Union

Please send us your valuable opinions, feedback, and suggestions. We are committed providing quality content and look forward to hearing from you!

CLASSIFIEDS

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

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