

# THE VOICE

## MAGAZINE

Vol 11 Issue 32  
August 6, 2003

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# THE VOICE

Aug 06, 2003

Volume 11, Issue 32

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The VOICE wants your **FICTION**

Write:  
voice@ausu.org  
for information.



We love to hear from you! Send your letters to [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org), and please indicate if we may publish your letter in the Voice.

Life is either a daring adventure or nothing. Security does not exist in nature, nor do the children of men as a whole experience it. Avoiding danger is no safer in the long run than exposure.

-- Helen Keller

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## THE VOICE

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**THE VOICE ONLINE:**  
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## EDITORIAL PAGES

### THIS WEEK

**AU NOW CONTRIBUTING TO SCHOLARSHIP NEWS** - Each month, the AU Awards Office will be forwarding The Voice a list of the scholarships with upcoming deadlines so that you can make sure to get your applications in time. See Scholarship News for the first instalment of this list...

**NATURE NOTES** - Devious and clever mimics in the animal and plant worlds...

**FOREST FIRES** - Those who fight on the front lines are not the only ones affected by fire's devastation...

**THERE IS NO 'I' IN 'TEAM'** - Succeeding in the competitive world of high tech requires teamwork and recognition of each member's strengths and weaknesses...

**PROFILES!** - Another Graduate Profile from Sandra Moore, and a current student profile too...

### AUSU Survey on Tuition Deregulation at AU.

AU has asked the Alberta government for exemption from the cap which dictates how much tuition can be raised each year. So far, AU has not released a statement explaining the need for this change, but has communicated several reasons for this request to the Students' Union.

AUSU has created a small survey to assess student opinions on the move toward deregulated tuition for AU. You can access the survey, and read more information on this topic, here:

<http://www.ausu.org/tuitionsurvey/index.php>

All AU students are urged to voice their opinion on this very important matter.

### NEW AU Calendar reviewed:

The 2003/04 AU Calendar is here. Print versions are available by request from the AU information center and for pickup at the Edmonton and Calgary learning centers, and a new version of the online calendar is now live.

This year, the online calendar has been completely redesigned by the AU website and calendar teams. The new format, which can be viewed at <http://www.athabascau.ca/calendar/03/index.html>, features a new, streamlined look, and simpler up-front navigation than the old one, which relied on pull-down style menus. The calendar team feel that this design will be more functional, and that students will find it much easier to locate the information that they need.

Students will also notice that the calendar now specifies that it is the 'undergraduate' version. Section 4 still features highlights of the grad programs, but in-depth grad program information is only available online at this time. This streamlined format ensures that students find only the information that they

need, and do not have to wade through pages of grad information that is not relevant to their programs.

The calendar redesign is part of a much larger project, which includes the new Public Affairs Web design, and the upcoming UPortal interface, which will allow students greater access to their own registry and course data. AU web designers are hoping that students will provide feedback on the new calendar, so that future design updates can be planned to better address student needs. On the front page of the calendar web site, you will find a link to send an email comment to the Calendar Coordinator, and you are encouraged to do so.

Your feedback can also help with an upcoming AU project - the redesign of the course syllabi pages, which will be given a "new template synonymous with Calendar, so students won't leave that environment, unless they choose to, once they're in it," according to calendar designer Eve Comrie.

If students have any ideas about how the current syllabi pages can be improved, they may comment to Eve directly via the link on the Calendar page, or they may send comments to Tamra Ross Low ([trosslow@ausu.org](mailto:trosslow@ausu.org)), chair of the Academic Committee, which is currently researching students' satisfaction with the syllabi pages.

Now, on to the review of the new calendar:

The first item that most of you will be looking for is the updated tuition and fees page. I'll provide an overview of the bad news here, but there is little I can do to soften the blow.

Effective September 1, 2003, new students will pay a one-time, initial application fee of \$60 (up from \$50), a change of program fee of \$50 (the same as before), and an extension fee of \$127 (up from \$118).

The fee for a 3 credit course will be \$541 in total, if you are an Alberta student, and \$930 for a six credit course, while other Canadian students will pay \$596 and \$985 respectively - the latter amount having been raised by only \$1 due to the reduction of the out of province fee.

These are significant increases, especially when compared to the rates just a few years ago. In 1999/2000, Albertans paid \$404 and \$711 for 3 and 6 credit courses respectively, and only \$70 for an extension. However, given the trend toward high yearly increases and AU's current bid to be exempted from the Alberta tuition increase cap (see <http://www.ausu.org/tuitionsurvey/index.php> to fill out a short survey on tuition deregulation), we may be looking back at these rates in a few years and wishing for a return of the good-old days.

On a better note, the multiple exam fee, parchment replacement fee, an withdrawal processing fee remain the same, while the transcript fee has been hiked by 50% to \$15.

Another obvious item of interest in the new calendar is the updated list of available courses. The online calendar is updated whenever a new course is added, but only once per year does AU release a full print calendar including all courses. Unfortunately, there is no quick and easy way to pick out the new courses in the print calendar, so you'll have to browse the whole list to see what's new. Up until this year, AU sent out a twice-yearly newsletter called AU World which included information on new and upcoming courses - information that is sorely missed by students. Fortunately, a few tutors have submitted new course information to the students' union, and you can find information on two new courses in the most recent AUSU news, online at: <http://www.ausu.org/ausunews/index.php>

The online calendar now has a link specifically for new courses, which you'll find on the top of the undergraduate courses page, and which can be accessed directly here: <http://www.athabascau.ca/html/syllabi/new/newcourses.htm>. The list currently features 19 new courses for 2003, but the list also includes courses that were new for previous years, back to 2000. Interestingly, at least one course on the online new courses list is not in the new print calendar, so it's well worth checking this list!

Accessing course information from the new site is fairly simple, and the links are easy to follow right from the front page. It does require quite a few 'clicks' to get to the course page, however, and the final course search page opens up in a new window from where you started. I suspect this may be streamlined once the redesign is complete, but at this time, when you click on "Courses and Programs" from the front page, you have to select three more links to get to the Course Search page, and one more to get to the course list. If you are like me, and you very frequently get on the site to look up course information, this is a little unwieldy. The extra navigation is due in part to the fact that the Courses and Programs link now takes you through the online calendar front page, rather than directly in to courses. This may be of benefit to newer students, who are often unaware that the entire calendar is available online. The Calendar index pages also have helpful information 'bytes' which may be of interest to newer students. For example, the title page for the Courses section includes information on Start Dates, Availability, and Challenge for Credit.

Speaking of course availability, a common complaint of students has been that they find it too hard to locate information on which courses are available, which are on hiatus, and which ones are being updated. In particular, I've heard many complaints from students who enrolled in a course, only to find out that it was being updated soon after. In this case, most students would prefer to wait and take the newer version once it is available.

To partially address this problem, the calendar's Undergraduate Courses page has a link for Course Availability which takes students to a page where they can search courses in any subject and see which ones are open, which are under revision, and which ones can only be taken by students of certain collaborative institutions or which have other special entrance requirements. Unfortunately, the lists do not appear to indicate which courses will be revised in the near future, so it is recommended that you contact the course coordinator if you are concerned about this.

Course coordinators, course professors, and academic coordinators, are another issue, however. There are still many references in the syllabi and the calendar to these phantom figures. When you wish to challenge for credit, or you want to take a course that requires the permission of the professor, you are advised to contact the professor directly for further information. If you want to know more about a course's assignment structure, or you have a concern about your tutor, you are also referred to the course professor. In fact, most AU course Student Manual's make reference to the course professor as the person to contact if you have any questions that cannot be addressed by your tutor.

It sounds simple enough, but unfortunately there is no information on the website indicating who the course professors are. They are not listed in the syllabi [even of the project courses, which require contacting the program head], nor are they listed on the Academic Center web pages. You can find out on the center websites who the head of a department is, but that person is not necessarily the professor for all of the courses in that subject.



I've also tried using the online AskAU automated response system to find out who the professors/coordinators are, but the response has been that I should telephone the information center for more information. In fact, this is the most common reason that I call the information center.

If other students feel that course professor/course coordinator/academic coordinator (I hope they settle on a common title for these people soon!) information should be available online, let me know and I'll forward this request to the team working on the syllabi.

This small omission aside, the new calendar is much nicer to look at, and has been designed with actual student usage in mind. Instead of being a passive information source - where students must wade through a sea of information, seeking the answers they require - this new format attempts to deliver the most relevant and commonly needed information directly to the student as they browse each section of the calendar. Links for more information are provided within these front-page info bytes, which can help students locate information that would otherwise be deeply imbedded within the calendar's many web pages. If students take a little time to skim the front pages of each section, they may find that they can locate what they are looking for with a minimum amount of time spent reading through irrelevant material.

This new design uses the power of the web to help students target their reading and get answers fast. In the past, I have very much favoured the print version of the calendar to the online one. Only time will tell, but I may end up using this online version much more frequently now that the new design is in place.

## ARCHIVES ONLINE

The Voice archives project continues...

PDF format archives for almost all of the Voice issues from 2001 are now online. These issues are not yet available in html [web site] format, but will be in the coming months. The PDF archives for 2002 will be online shortly.

## Coming Soon

The Voice will soon announce a writing contest for all AU students. The prize will be substantial, and we're looking forward to lot of great submissions. Watch this space for details to come soon.

## Fiction Wanted

The Voice fiction feature has become popular, but submissions have been slow. Send us your best fiction today, and it might become our next feature.

## Attention Budding Writers

The Voice needs some new voices. We know you have plenty to say, so why not get paid for it. Send us a writing sample or article for submission and you might be published in an upcoming issue. It's fun, it's easy, and it pays. Contact [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org) for more details.

## Link of interest

Students interested in learning about conferences, job openings, internships, and other student opportunities should check out the Outside Opportunities page on the AUSU website, located at: <http://www.ausu.org/opportunities/index.php>

## AUSU STUDENT GIFT PACKS NOW AVAILABLE



AUSU students can now order their student gift packs, free courtesy of your students' union.

The packs are filled with AUSU logo items to help you study, relax, and learn more about AUSU.

Contact [ausu@ausu.org](mailto:ausu@ausu.org) to order your gift pack today!

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## SURVEY ON STUDENT BARRIERS TO E-LEARNING



This survey seeks to determine student attitudes toward taking courses online. AU currently offers several online courses, although most are still delivered through the use of print materials. Whether you have taken an online course or not, your input on this important survey is valuable.

This message is for anyone who believes barriers exist to learning at a distance. Even if you have never taken a course online, or even if your organization is not presently involved in distance learning, please read on!

The obstacles students face appear to depend upon several things, including the stage or level of experience that the individual learner has developed regarding distance education. Therefore, research involving persons who are currently learning online and those who have never taken an online course is needed. (In fact, it has been especially difficult to gather information from students who have never studied online.)

We invite your assistance in further data gathering by completing the survey located at:  
[http://www.umbc.edu/oit/phonetree/student\\_barrier/survey.html](http://www.umbc.edu/oit/phonetree/student_barrier/survey.html)

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CAUS represents university students across Alberta. Visit the CAUS and the Tuition CAUSE websites to learn more about what CAUS is doing to keep Alberta tuitions affordable.

CAUS: <http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/caus/alpha/>  
Tuition Cause: <http://tc.su.ualberta.ca/>

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# NATURE NOTES:

from the backyard to the biosphere

## Flattery is out, mimicry is in

By Zoe Dalton

We all know about having a favourite star, and wanting to look just like him or her. The hair, the clothes, the body, the *look*: we want it all. And why? Well, in evolutionary terms, we (the mimics) want the receiver (hot date?) to think that we are just like the model (take your pick). It's an evolutionarily adaptive strategy to adopt the traits that do well in one's species. Again drawing on the work of evolutionary theorists, it is believed that such traits allow us to thrive and succeed, and to reproduce, giving us our chance to pass on those great genes to our little ones. But what if (in our minds, anyway) we don't really have great genes – what if we're just mimicking those who do by looking, acting, or even smelling like them? Starts to give you the idea of why ads make use of super gorgeous, successful-seeming people, doesn't it? Why else would we buy this perfume or that shirt if we weren't inspired by the fantasy that they may somehow make us look like that model in the ads?

Well, let's not feel too cheap and gullible: humans are not the only ones that like to be copycats. Nature provides many examples of organisms that have taken on some trait of another species so as to capitalize on the image the model (the original) has in the receiver's (in many cases, predator's) eyes. There are several types of mimicry, and organisms as diverse as insects, plants, birds and mammals make use of the benefits copying provides.

The most easily understood type of copying is known as Batesian mimicry. Named after the scientist who discovered the pattern, Batesian mimicry is characterized by a poorly-defended mimic looking like, behaving the same way as, or in some other way copying the traits of a well-defended model. In such a case, the mimic gains by the fact that predators know to avoid animals with the given traits. Examples of Batesian mimicry are numerous, but the trait is most commonly seen in insects. Defenseless flies and beetles can be found that are excellent replicas of stinging bees and wasps; tasty butterflies exist that are for all intents and purposes identical to poisonous model species. And insects are not the only ones to capitalize on predators' dislike for unpalatable species. A whole mimicry ring exists around the highly poisonous coral snake: its bright warning colours are effective in deterring predation, making clear the reason that its colour patterns are mimicked by several other species of snakes.

Another type of mimicry is a little less intuitively adaptive. Mullerian mimicry is a form of copying in which both the mimic and the model are, in fact, unpalatable, or unpleasant to eat. There is less deception and trickery involved in this type of mimicry, and the mimics are not in this case just along for a free ride. Rather, species making use of this type of similarity between groups capitalize on the fact that the learning process of a predator will impact minimally on any one species, as individuals lost to a predator's early education in palatability will be distributed among the mimicry groups.

Not all mimicry has to do with predator-prey relationships. In some of the most interesting cases, mimicry is about gaining entry into the secret society of other species. One example of such incursion into other species' domains is that of the beetle which, disguised as an ant, is able to gain food, shelter and protection by fooling ant colony

members into believing that it is the genuine article, worthy of full entry into the colony. Other animals that make use of such sneaky tactics are the cowbird and the cuckoo. The epitome of what some may call a lazy parent, the female of these species lays her eggs in the nests of other birds – birds which lay nearly identical-looking eggs to her own. The parents of the latter species end up doing the incubating and raising work of the cowbird or the cuckoo, leaving these lucky moms with a painless child-rearing experience. In the world of conservation biology, the use of such a strategy is known as nest parasitism, and has been found to have important negative effects on the host species. If the parasite species' eggs and young are larger than those of the host, the host parents may abandon the smaller of the clutch (in reality, their own young) in favour of raising what seem to be the healthier, more robust of their nest occupants. Such are some of the downsides of mimicry.

Interestingly enough, plants can also factor into the mimicry equation. Some species, such as certain nutrient-deficient bog plants, mimic the odour of rotting carrion to entice hungry insects. Once lured close enough to the plant's opening, the hapless insects will find themselves sliding down the slippery slope of the plant's digestive system, right on into its stomach. The plant gets a nutrient-rich meal and, unfortunately for the fly, serves to demonstrate quite nicely the adaptive benefits of mimicry. Such tactics are aptly termed aggressive mimicry.

But not all plant-related mimicry is so ill-intentioned. On the contrary, many plants lure butterflies or other insects to them not for culinary purposes, but rather to aid in reproduction. By mimicking salient traits of a pollinator's mate, for example, a plant can lure to its pollen-producing parts a mate-searching insect, and thus take advantage of the insect's pollen collection, dispersal and distribution services. To keep the pollinator coming back, the plant usually provides the insect with a tasty treat of some sort.

Finally, the tables can be turned in the plant-insect relationship. Some insects have evolved so as to mimic the traits of important plants in their habitat. Stick insects are a prime example, and have developed to such a degree that they are almost invisible when on their host plants. But appearance is not the only way in which animals such as these mimic plants. Certain animals, such as stick insects and grass snakes, have developed the behavioural trait of swaying so as to mimic the movement of plants in their habitat, and fool predators into believing that their movement is nothing more than that of a plant's waving on a windy day. Of course, such mimicking patterns are more commonly referred to as camouflage, and camouflage techniques are not confined to prey species. The coat patterns or movement strategies of many predator species help them to blend into, be camouflaged by, or, in other words, to mimic their surroundings.

There, then: as we sit around at this time of year in our bathing suits, closing our eyes and picturing the body below our heads to be just like that model's on TV, we can rest assured that we are not alone in the natural world in trying to capitalize on other's good features. Mimicry is everywhere, and while it is not always the most honest way to go, we've seen here that it certainly can be useful!

*Check out any good biology text for an introduction to mimicry, its variations, and its evolutionary significance. Specific examples are easy to find by just typing "mimicry" into a search engine. It's worth looking around for pictures: these copycats can be not only deceiving, but downright impossible to distinguish from the real thing...*

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*Zoe Dalton is a graduate of York University's environmental science program, and is currently enjoying working towards a Master of Arts in Integrated Studies with Athabasca U. She can be reached for comments or questions at [zk\\_dalton@hotmail.com](mailto:zk_dalton@hotmail.com).*

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Tonight I had a near-death experience. Well, it was not really near-death, but it sure felt like it.

It happened at around 7:00 P.M. My daughter and her companion have purchased a mobile home in a large trailer park in the city. It's a "fixer-upper" and I spent the day with her, working to bring it to habitable condition. When she first told me she had bought a trailer at that location, my mind immediately went back to July 31, 1987. On that afternoon, a tornado ripped through Edmonton, killing 27 people. Among the hardest hit were the residents of this particular trailer park,

where 15 lost their lives and many homes were destroyed.

At the time I was living within just a few miles of the tornado's path, and happened to be at the mall nearby, shopping with my two oldest daughters, when the tornado passed. While in one of the shops, we heard on the radio that a tornado had hit south Edmonton, near where my younger two daughters were spending the afternoon with their grandmother. In a panic I called to ensure that they were safe, then we headed towards the mall doors with all the other shoppers to gaze at the sky, shocked and horrified, as the tornado passed by. It was a very strange greenish-blue-black hue, something I had never before seen in my life, an awful, sickening colour that sent shivers down my back, something I hope to never see again. We all stood in the huge glass doors at the mall entrance and watched in awe and fascination, sharing a mutual terror of the unknown as the tornado passed. Edmonton had never before experienced a tornado.

About a half hour later, the rain and wind had slowed enough that we could leave the mall, and we waded through ankle-deep water to get to our car, eager to get home, sick with worry. In the car we heard the news on the radio about the trailer park devastation. I had friends living there. A few minutes later we arrived at home, and shortly after, the sun started to shine, birds were singing, and the sky was calm. It was so bizarre to see this complete weather change. I drove over to a friend's place nearby to inquire about those in the trailer park, but there was no news. I did not know it at the time, but the tornado had also ripped up houses only a few blocks away from where we lived.

On the radio we were warned that the storm could return, and that we should remain in our basements and stay prepared. It was not until much later that night that we learned the extent of the devastation, and the horrific loss the residents of the trailer park had experienced.

This was the first thought that came to my mind when I learned that my daughter would now be living there. But it was a freak incident in 1987, a first for Edmonton, so it seemed unreasonable to worry.

Edmonton had been having a bit of a heat wave, but the day dawned dreary and rainy. As my daughter and I worked in the trailer, at times the rain came down in sheets, creating huge deposits of water throughout the trailer park streets. We had worked all afternoon, then left to run some errands. After returning at about 5 PM, we started filling holes in walls, scraping floors, vacuuming, bleaching and disinfecting. Our plan was to work late and get at least one room completely painted.

She was up on a ladder filling holes in the wall and I was cleaning windows, when there was a huge flash of light and a sudden violent explosion above us. I had never heard anything so loud or so near. The trailer shook, and we both leapt to our feet, hearts racing. My first thought was that an airplane from the nearby air base must

have exploded overhead, and I panicked, wondering where we could run to for safety before the debris fell onto the trailer and killed us. We were confused and ran for the door. All I could think of was, "we are going to die, something is going to crash into this trailer and blow us up."

Her dog was in a panic, running back and forth at the doorway. She tried to calm him and I ran outside to look into the sky. A neighbour across the street stood in her doorway as well, and she told me it had come from the north. At that point I realized it was a lightning strike. My daughter confirmed that the boom had been accompanied by a brilliant flash of lightning, and commented that if you count in seconds the delay between the flash and the sound of lightning to determine the distance - then this one must have been directly overhead because they had occurred simultaneously. Neither of us had ever experienced anything like it, and it took us both several minutes to calm down.

All I could think about was - what if it had been a plane? What if that lightning strike had hit our trailer? What if it was another tornado? How would you run? Where would you escape to?

The next lightning flash was followed by thunder several seconds later, so we knew the storm had passed on. But we wondered, what had been hit nearby? Surely an explosion of that nature must have caused some damage? It wasn't long before we found out.

Almost 15 minutes later, we heard the sounds of sirens nearby. We commented on the tardy response, but it confirmed our expectations that something must have been hit. Another 15 minutes passed by and a neighbour approached our door. We wondered whether they were looking to meet the new neighbours - but he advised that the lightning strike had hit a gas line and we were all being evacuated.

Memories of the 1986 tornado again filled my head as we grabbed our personal belongings and ran for our cars. My first fear was that turning the ignition might spark an explosion, and I breathed a sigh of relief when this did not occur. There are only two exits from the trailer park and one is closed for construction. So the line ups to get out were lengthy and slow. I was ahead of my daughter and her friend, and I nervously watched for them in my rear-view mirror, terrified, not knowing what potential disaster could yet ensue. We only knew that a gas line had been hit by lightning, and I envisioned a massive explosion of the trailer park.

As we inched through the maze of streets, residents in their cars trying to escape in the pouring rain, I kept looking in my rear view mirror watching for my daughter's car. Suddenly she was at my door...she had run ahead in the traffic jam to talk with me. We inched forward a few more blocks together as we discussed what to do. We really wanted to get the painting of the trailer done, since she had a moving deadline to meet, but there was no way of knowing what this evacuation was all about and just how much danger we were really in.

We neared the exit and she returned to her car, and we gratefully sped out of there, feeling safe from whatever unknown danger remained back there in the trailer park.

Several hours later, on the evening news, we learned that the city had restored services and that residents had been allowed to return. The following morning it was explained that the lightning strike had entered the main gas feed line for the trailer park, causing an immediate gas leak for trailers nearby, and creating the potential for an explosion that could have blown up every trailer in the park.

I returned later that day to continue helping my daughter paint and clean her trailer. But the fear and the shock of hearing that lightning strike directly above will never leave me.

There is a joke on the internet - what do rednecks and tornados have in common? Both eventually end up in trailer parks. I hope for my daughter's sake that this is just a joke. Tonight's experience, however, was way too close.

# AU Profiles:

Student: Barbara Godin

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**What province and city/town do you live in?**

London, Ontario, Canada

**Do you have a family/ kids/ pets?**

My husband and I have a large dog, "Rusty" and a small cat "Boots". I am the grandmother of four year old twins, Madison and Zachary. They are the love of my life.

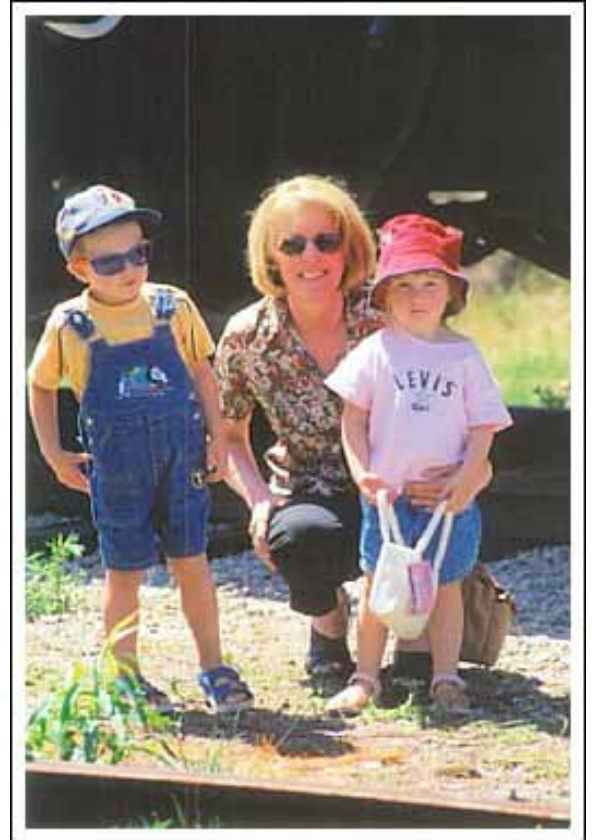
**What are your hobbies / interests/ activities/ etc.?**

My husband and I enjoy camping in our pop up camper. Although every time we go camping it rains. It is so bad that people I work with ask me what weeks I am taking for holidays, so they can schedule their holidays at opposite times.

As well, my husband and I enjoy going on hikes with Rusty.

**Can you tell us about the AU Courses you are taking at the moment, or a favourite course?**

I am just about to begin my fourth course at Athabasca, "Alternative Health." I have thoroughly enjoyed all my courses, as I believe I am a lifelong learner.



**How long have you been a student (and where)?**

I began working on my B.A in 1994 at the University of Waterloo. However due to time constraints, I was finding it difficult to complete a course in the allotted time. Consequently I was thrilled when I discovered Athabasca, with their six month time period to complete a course. I transferred my credits and even gained a few for a college diploma I received in 1983 from Fanshawe College. I am hoping to finish in three years and go on to my Master's in English.

**What do you think of your courses/ the AU experience/ distance education?**

I am having a great time with distance education and I love the courses Athabasca offers. As well I appreciate the fact they are geared towards a more mature student. I never was good at bibliographies, as far as having all my i's dotted and punctuation exactly as required.

**Do you work? What do you do?**

I work for the Catholic Marriage Tribunal transcribing tapes. I work 18 hours a week at home and 12 hours a week at work. I also baby-sit my grandchildren two days a week.



**What are your future goals?**

My hope is to open my own editing business, and also do some freelance writing. As well I have a rough draft of my autobiography to work on in my spare time.

**Do you have any advice or words of wisdom for other students?**

Stick with it, "knowledge really is power."

**Anything else we should know? Funny stories about the dog eating your laptop/ praise for AU, a friend or a tutor?**

While working at my computer, my dog Rusty sits at my feet. However a few times she has had to move rather quickly when I pushed back my chair, (which is on rollers), and I forgot she was there. OUCH!

Thanks Barbara! Best of luck with your degree, and your future masters program.

*Have you been profiled in the Voice? If not, contact [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org) and share your story with AU students!*



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# THERE IS NO 'I' IN 'TEAM'

*Shahzadi Bhatti*



In this fast paced working environment, a business needs full team effort and cooperation from all its employees. Thus, for any business to succeed, teamwork and collaboration are extremely essential tools to utilize in day-to-day work life. Today's businesses need to find new manners to promote and reward information sharing and collaboration. "Collaboration is fundamental because it gets to the notion of participation, which is necessary to understanding" (Regan & O'Connor, 2002, p.44). To succeed in the twentieth century, companies need to enforce teamwork in order to create shared understandings and trust of each other.

After graduating from college in Digital Media Technical Production, my friend and I decided to start our own home-based digital media business. In a partnership business, we must work well as a team and collaborate with each other and also with our clients on a regular basis. We have also been sub-contracting work from bigger companies.

In my opinion, collaboration is extremely significant for us to run our business smoothly. We need to have a good working relationship and be able to understand each other to be productive in our work. After working together for nearly a year, we have come to realize each other's weaknesses and strengths. For example, I am more optimistic than my partner. When we are assigned a new project, we go over the details and she becomes nervous at times and I find it my job to be positive and encourage her that we can undertake this project. On the other hand, my partner has more stamina to stay patient. When we are stressing to meet deadlines or having a hard time dealing with some clients, my partner stays calm during such situations and helps me stay calm as well as I tend to get tempered and lose patience easily. Hence, she can work better under pressure compared to myself. These are merely two examples of how we help each other with our weaknesses and collaborate in our work.

It is essential to collaborate effectively so all individuals working on a project are well informed and energized to carry out their tasks. Every time we begin a new project, we sit down together and brainstorm ideas. For instance, if designing a logo, we work on all the sketches, thumbnails, etc. and share ideas and critique each other's work. Then, we both sit down together and design the elements on a computer. Unlike other companies, we work together on each project, side by side, and share ideas and suggestions constantly. To date, we have not quarreled about anything at work and surprisingly, we work great as a team. I believe we have a good mix of characteristics that when brought together, it makes us a strong company. Even our clients notice the way we work and are surprised to see how well we get along.

Hence, "the ultimate goal is for work teams to identify and develop the best ideas from throughout an organization and act with the same unity of purpose and focus that a single, well-motivated person would bring to bear in a situation" (ibid, p.45). I believe that if there is no teamwork, a company cannot succeed. Today's competitive high-tech world needs strong and motivated individuals who are confident in their work. Only such individuals can succeed and reach higher levels of accomplishment in the digital media businesses. We, as a company, have set both short-term and long-term goals. Hopefully, when we grow big as an organization, we will hire people who work at the same pace and share the same mind frame as us. After all, there is no 'I' in team.

**Source:**

Regan, Elizabeth A. and O'Connor, Bridget N. (2002) *End-User Information Systems: Implementing individual and work group technologies- Second Edition*” Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ, 2002. Pages 1-75.

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Shahzadi Bhatti is a Digital Media Artist who is currently enrolled in Athabasca University's Bachelor's of Professional Arts program to complete her degree. She lives in Toronto, Ontario and enjoys writing, watching -horror films, and traveling.

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**This week, more AU students Sound Off on AU's request to be removed from the Alberta Government's tuition cap. The Voice will continue to offer coverage on this controversial subject as more becomes known. AU has not released an official statement on their position so far. If you have a comment on this subject, send it to [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org) - please indicate if we may print your comment.**

**You may also voice your opinion on this topic by filling out AUSU's very short survey on the matter, available here: <http://www.ausu.org/tuitionsurvey/index.php>**

Hello,

Let me introduce myself. I am a 3rd year Commerce Student that was in the process of switching from the U of S to Athabasca. Yes, I have run into trouble transferring my credits over (to the tune of 15 credit units) but I had decided that Athabasca was still worth it. Once you add in the extra fees to pay for someone to watch myself write an exam (about \$70 each class) and consider that I can not buy used text books for these classes, the U of S is cheaper. When I only have 19 (3 credit classes) to take at the U of S or 24 (3 credit classes) to take if I finish through Athabasca, the threat of the tuition cap being removed, has taken Athabasca off the viable option list.

With my financial situation, I do not qualify for any student loan and I do not want to incur any more student debt than I already owe (\$12,000), the U of S is also a better choice as I can pay off my tuition over the year (with some interest) instead of paying for it all up front which I can not afford to do.

If Athabasca is lucky, I may switch to visiting student status and possibly take one or two classes instead of taking the 24 classes that I had planned.

**Robin H.**

Re: AU's application for deregulation of the tuition cap:

I plan on faxing Dominique Abrioux tomorrow to express my concerns. Tuition increases will restrict access

and will hinder my success in university level studies. It's bad enough that I have to work full-time while attending university but the already inflated cost of tuition prohibits returning to school as a full-time student.

AU's website says it all -

### **Breaking Down Barriers**

*"Athabasca University makes it possible for people to earn a university education regardless of where they live or work, or their commitments to careers or families. The University strives to remove the barriers of time, space, past educational experience, and, to a great degree, level of income."*

<http://www.athabascau.ca/main/intro.htm>

### **Mission Statement, 2002**

*"Athabasca University, Canada's Open University, is dedicated to the removal of barriers that restrict access to, and success in, university-level studies and to increasing equality of educational opportunity for adult learners worldwide."*

*"We are committed to excellence in teaching, research and scholarship, and to being of service to the general public."*

<http://www.athabascau.ca/main/mission.htm>

I believe that exemption from the tuition cap will move affordable, equal, open education into the realm of the rich. Unregulated tuition caps will lead to university education joining the other deregulated public services in becoming wildly expensive and out of reach for the average Canadian. Not only do I want to complete a university education, so does my son. AU has been a leader in ensuring that university education remains accessible to all Canadians. AU has met only part of its mandate by successfully removing the barriers to education caused by distance. To remain Canada's Open University, AU should focus on removing barriers to education by keeping tuition rates capped and affordable for all Canadians.

**Teresa Neuman**  
**Ottawa, Ontario**

**You may also voice your opinion on this topic by filling out AUSU's very short survey on the matter, available here:**

<http://www.ausu.org/tuitionsurvey/index.php>


**To sound off on this, or any other topic, write [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org).**

**Make sure to indicate if we can print your comments.**

**Walter Gretzky, Stroke Survivor**

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Sudden loss of vision,  
particularly in one eye, or  
double vision

**HEADACHE**  
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and unusual headache

**DIZZINESS**  
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## AUSU THIS MONTH

### SURVEY ON AU's PROPOSED REMOVAL FROM THE TUITION CAP

#### *How do you feel about AU being removed from the tuition cap?*

Athabasca University, like other universities and colleges in the province, currently falls under Alberta's tuition fee policy that enforces a ceiling on allowable tuition increases. **AU has asked the Alberta government for exemption from the tuition fee policy.** If passed, tuition increases for undergraduate courses at AU will no longer be regulated by specific government controls.

To find out how students feel about this proposed change, AUSU has placed a short survey on the AUSU web site at: <http://www.ausu.org/tuitionsurvey/index.php>. More information can also be found on this page.

To learn more about this issue, students are encouraged to visit the AUSU discussion forums [accessible from the "Message Forums" link on the AUSU front page] and to browse the past several issues of The Voice.

Please take a minute to fill out this simple survey, to ensure that the students' union is representing you.



### CHAT WITH AUSU ONLINE

If you have a question for AUSU, or would like to get to know your council, drop by the chat-room [accessible through the 'Message Forums' option on the AUSU home page [www.ausu.org](http://www.ausu.org). You will need an AUSU web site account.] during one of our chat times and talk live with AUSU council members or your Voice editor. **All times are MST**

Wednesday, August 13	7:30 PM	Councillor, Sandra
Sunday, August 31	3:00 PM	Sandra

**More chat times to be posted soon...**

### NEW FEATURED TUTOR ON THE AUSU WEB SITE

**Audrey O'Brien**

*French Language and Literature*

Audrey O'Brien has been working as a tutor of French language and literature courses at Athabasca university since 1997 and on August 1st will begin a full time position as Academic Coordinator...

Read more at: <http://www.ausu.org/tutor/index.php>



### AUSU COMMITTEE SEEKS MEMBERS

**AUSU Committees are looking for student members who can volunteer just a few hours a month to answer email or attend teleconferences. Anyone who wants to become involved with AUSU Student Council can gain great experience and insight through committee work.**

**The External Committee**, chaired by Shirley Barg, needs representatives from Atlantic Canada, Saskatchewan, and Northern Canada. Contact Shirley at [sbarg@ausu.org](mailto:sbarg@ausu.org) if you would like to get involved, and help improve services to AU students in your area.



# Forest Fires: 2003

*Wayne E. Benedict*

BC Premier Gordon Campbell has ordered a provincial state of emergency to free-up resources in order to fight the province's massive forest-fire problems. As of Saturday August 2, 2003, there were 352 active fires burning in the province, bringing the year-total to 1120 fires which have, so far, consumed 59422 hectares of BC's forests (1). Forests are not the only things being consumed by flames in BC; communities across BC's interior have lost dozens of homes, businesses and major employers (saw-mills). According to the CBC, "the town of Barriere lost 25 houses, four businesses and its major employer – the local sawmill" and "60 homes in Louis Creek were destroyed, along with the community's sawmill" (2). Approximately 10000 people have been ordered to evacuate their homes and many of the province's highways are closed due to the fires.



Thousands of BC residents who are not directly affected by the flames are suffering indirectly as a result of them. As of Saturday August 2, 2003, BC Hydro reported 1720 residences without power due to the fires (3); however, the CBC reports that "[one] fire has caused a power outage to 8,000 people over a massive area" (4). Details are sketchy and often conflicting, as reporting agencies are having difficulty obtaining prompt, reliable facts from an area isolated by flames. The CBC also reports that "Telus is sending out crews to start restoring phone lines to about 5,000 customers who have lost service because of the fires" (4). Estimates vary from days to weeks before power/phone service may be restored. Meanwhile, the fires continue to burn and threaten to devour more public resources and private assets.



My mother, who lives in McBride, approximately 250 kilometers north of Barriere, is presently without power, but is lucky enough to live on the side of the street that still has phone service. Yesterday my father returned to his home in Penny, located about 110 kilometers west of McBride, only to find a BC (5) crew loading firefighting equipment into a net for helicopter long-line into a fire that was burning in the mountains north of his home. It seems that most residents of BC are being affected by this year's fire season—either directly or indirectly.

I have a unique insight into forest fires and fighting them. Those of you who have previously

read my column will know that I was a member of the Northern Initial Helicopter Attack Crews (NIFAC) division of the BC Ministry of Forests from 1984-87. There are several kinds of Initial Attack Crews (6), and NIFAC was (and is) a Helitack crew. "Helitack crews have access to a helicopter and are trained in hover exit. They are deployed to remote locations that are difficult to reach by truck" (6). Watching these fires on the news reawakens my desire for those days and reaffirms the respect that I have for those who continue to fight the

flames. The work can be gruelling and exhausting in the most extreme and dangerous conditions; or it can be monotonous, horribly boring, and repetitive—waiting for a fire-call that never comes or mopping up the remnants of a smouldering moss-mound.

I made several life-long friendships during my years as a firefighter, and many of those friends remain in the service of the Ministry of Forests to this day. Some are out there right now battling flames to save people and property; others have advanced to the point where they coordinate logistics provincially. I respect them, wish I could be there with them, and hope that they will soon prevail over the massive challenges that they are presently facing.



To learn more about forest fires and those who fight them, visit the CBC News' in-depth look at “Fighting Fires”, or the BC Ministry of Forests Protection Branch website.

#### Table of Pictures:

- Picture 1: Jeff Mackenzie spotting (front) while Wayne Benedict lowers chainsaw equipment from hovering helicopter in 1986.
- Picture 2: Wayne Benedict spotting (front) while Paul Prendergast (presently overall supervisor of NIFAC) unbuckles to deplane from hovering helicopter in 1987. Pilot is unknown. Rick Horne is silhouetted behind Paul.
- Picture 3: Wayne Benedict spotting Bell 205A-17 helitanker in 1987.

#### References:

- (1) <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/pScripts/Protect/WildfireNews/index.asp?Page=Statistics>
- (2) [http://vancouver.cbc.ca/regional/servlet/View?filename=bc\\_fires\\_eleven20030802](http://vancouver.cbc.ca/regional/servlet/View?filename=bc_fires_eleven20030802)
- (3) <http://www.bchydro.com/bch-cgi/outage/outage.cgi?selDistrict=South+Interior&disp>
- (4) [http://vancouver.cbc.ca/regional/servlet/View?filename=bc\\_fires\\_eleven20030802](http://vancouver.cbc.ca/regional/servlet/View?filename=bc_fires_eleven20030802)
- (5) <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/protect/crews/rapattack.htm>
- (6) <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/protect/crews/initial.htm>

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Wayne E. Benedict is a Locomotive Engineer at BC Rail and President of the National, Automobile, Aerospace, Transportation and General Workers Union of Canada (CAW) Local 110. He is working toward his Bachelor of Human Resources and Labour Relations at Athabasca University.

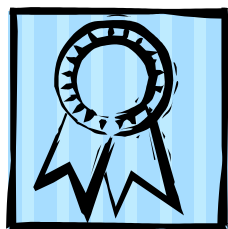
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**T-Shirts all in the wash?**

**Buy a new one, from AUSU**







# AU Convocation Awards List - 2003

## Congratulations recipients!

### GRADUATE AWARDS

**Susan Keen**

AUGC Scholarship - Master of Arts - Integrated Studies - \$500

**Therese Rocolle**

AUGC Scholarship - Master of Business Administration - \$500

**George Hart**

AUGC Scholarship - Master of Distance Education - \$500

**Shirley Marlene Bell**

AUGC Scholarship - Master of Health Studies - \$500

**Deborah Johnston**

AUGC Scholarship - Master of Nursing - \$500

**Julie Hesketh**

Advanced Graduate Diploma in Advanced Nursing Practices Scholarship - \$500

**Heather Stewart**

Advanced Graduate Diploma in Distance Education (Technology) Scholarship - \$500

**Glen Horn**

Advanced Graduate Diploma in Management Scholarship - \$500

**Shirley Marlene Bell**

**Governor General's Gold Medal**

### UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS

**Ramona DeRose**

AUGC Scholarship - Bachelor of Administration - \$500

**Margaret Davidson**

AUGC Scholarship - Bachelor of Arts - \$500

**Katherine Wiens**

AUGC Scholarship - Bachelor of Commerce - \$500

**Christina Patrick**

AUGC Scholarship - Bachelor of General Studies - Arts and Sciences - \$500

**Janet Richard**

AUGC Scholarship - Bachelor of Nursing - \$500

**Donna Cushman**

AUGC Scholarship - Bachelor of Professional Arts - \$500

**Sandra MacIsaac**

AUGC Scholarship - Bachelor of Science - \$500

**Jeff Dutton**

AUGC Scholarship - Bachelor of Science in Computing Information Systems - \$500

**Randy Thurber**

University Certificate in Computers and Information Systems Scholarship - \$200

**Terry Lockhart**

University Certificate in Accounting Scholarship - \$200

**Gwendolyn Frantik**

University Certificate in Administration Scholarship - \$200

**Jebun Chowdhury**

University Certificate in Computers and Management Information Systems Scholarship - \$200

**Diana Hyndman**

University Certificate in Counselling Women Scholarship - \$200

**Catherine Lepage**

University Certificate in French Language Proficiency Scholarship - \$200

**Errol Benedict**

University Certificate in Industrial Relations & Human Resources Scholarship - \$200

**Joanne Sommers**

University Certificate in Labour Relations Scholarship - \$200

**Shannon Kirscht**

University Diploma in Arts Scholarship - \$200

**Mercedes Rose**

University Diploma in Inclusive Education Scholarship - \$200

**Christina Marie Patrick**

**Governor General's Silver Medal**



Even the ones underwater. This giant kelp forest off the coast of B.C. is more diverse than a rainforest. Sadly, it's not protected from the harmful practices of industry. In fact, 99.99% of Canada's waters are unprotected. When will Canada start protecting our oceans? With your help, we'll get Ottawa to act now. Call 1.800.26.PANDA.



# AU Profiles:

Sandra Moore spoke with Erin at AU convocation...

## AU GRADUATE PROFILE OF ERIN WARDLAW

**AGE:** 23

**LIVES IN:** Lethbridge, Alberta

**TRAVEL TIME TO ATHABASCA:** 7 hour drive

**PROGRAM COMPLETED:** Bachelor Of Arts - Psychology

**YEARS IT TOOK TO COMPLETE:** 4

**FAVORITE COURSE:** PSYC 343 – Issues & Strategies in Counselling Women and PSYC 406 – Introduction to Theories of Counselling and Psychotherapy

**LEAST FAVORITE COURSE:** MATH 215 - Statistics

**FAVORITE TUTOR:** Penny Hayduk & Carole Benner

**HIGHEST FINAL GRADE:** 96

**LOWEST FINAL GRADE:** 70



Erin, along with her husband Cody and her parents (who were all very proud of Erin), was another one of the recent graduates I accosted in the AUSU sponsored breakfast tent during convocation. Erin stated that she loved the AU experience, she excelled in all her classes and enjoyed AU much more than her traditional university experience.

Erin was one of the few people I met at convocation who actually completed their degree in four years, all while raising two children and working part-time. Erin thinks that obtaining this AU degree is "awesome." She feels really proud and accomplished, but is also very happy to be done. She now plans on pursuing Graduate Studies with the Master of Counseling Program offered through AU.

Erin encourages other student to be organized and also encourages them to brave the drive to AU when it is their turn to graduate because convocation is such a wonderful experience!

**Congratulations Erin Wardlaw, BA!**

**Look for more grad profiles in upcoming Voice issues. If you are an AU grad and you were not interviewed on convocation day, contact [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org) to be a part of AU profiles. As always, we are seeking undergrads, tutors and staff for profiles as well.**



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### AU Misses Opportunity

The Honourable Dr. Lyle Oberg, Minister of Alberta Learning will be taking a trip to Vietnam for a leadership summit in the field of post-secondary education. Dr. Oberg will be participating in a seminar on how government works and collaborates with post-secondary institutions.

Travelling with Dr. Oberg are:

Dr. Paul Byrne, President, Grant MacEwan College;

Dr. Sam Shaw, President, Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT);

Dr. Ralph Weeks, President, Medicine Hat College;

Dr. Jim Frideres, Associate Vice President Academic, University of Calgary; and David Rea, Project Manager, Northern Alberta Institute of Technology.

According to Dr. Shaw, their task is apparently to "assist and lead the creation of a national plan to address the challenges of educational decentralization in Vietnam."

Athabasca University students will notice that AU is conspicuously absent from this list, despite being one of the best candidates to enable such educational decentralization, despite being an institution that desperately needs to collaborate with the government due to its unique nature, and despite being an institution that is able to work well using considerably less government funding than the counterparts that are taking this trip – something presumably important for Vietnam.

The only conclusion is that AU is so disconnected from Alberta Government operations that they either did not know about this opportunity to not only expand, but to make an impression with the Learning Minister directly, or worse, chose not to attend.

So while Athabasca University complains about not getting enough funding from Alberta Learning, they seem to be taking no steps to remedy the situation either. Then again, why should they, as they also seemed to be convinced that the pockets of students are deep enough to handle their funding woes.

I could understand AU turning to the students for more money, or seeking to be removed from the tuition cap, if they had exhausted other options. I would not appreciate it, but I could at least understand it. Yet things like this convince me that Athabasca University hasn't even begun to explore all the current options, to say nothing of looking for new ways. Instead what we see is evidence of Athabasca University's supposed "Students First" policy. In this case, it means the students are the first ones they look to take more money from.

### Competition Heating up for AU

The New Brunswick government was pleased to announce that the Department of Education and the Université de Moncton have received national awards from the Canadian Association for Distance Education (CADE) for their online courses.

While the awards are based partially on increasing enrolment (and having just started, it is easy for enrollment to increase quickly) this should be a wake-up call for Athabasca University. The world is slowly coming to grips with the idea of education at a distance, and if other universities can do it better than AU can, Athabasca University can expect to start losing students.

In an institution that depends so heavily on student tuitions for to operate, (and is looking to increase this dependence) this could signal a death knell. On the other hand, it might encourage them to lower tuitions as well.

## Putting out Fires

In Alberta, it's wildfires. In Ontario it was SARS. In both cases, it was an emergency. Yet while the Alberta Government has a policy of preventative measures for wildfires, the Ontario government had nothing in place for a crisis in health-care. In fact, health-care budgets had been drastically cut in the conservatives' never-ending focus to cut taxes and balance the bottom line.

So now, when the Ontario Government has to put 620 million dollars into the health care system to deal with the effects that the SARS crisis had, we can only wonder how much less that would have been if the system had simply been funded adequately to begin with. If nurses hadn't been stretched to the breaking point already, would many of them have quit in the midst of the crisis? Would it have been able to spread as much as it did, and would the Ontario Government have had to pay 138 million into a Tourism and Economic Recovery Plan?

Hopefully these types of occurrences will remind them that a crisis can occur in any field, and that it is far more expensive to put out a fire that's underway rather than prevent one from happening. Hopefully they'll put this knowledge to work in the context of education and see that an upcoming shortage of professors would be much cheaper to deal with now, by providing the funding to that more students would go on to become professors, rather than when the wages required to keep a professor in the country go through the roof.

---

*A native Calgarian, Karl is perpetually nearing the completion of his Bachelor of Arts with a Major in Information Studies. He also works for the Computer Sciences Virtual Helpdesk for Athabasca University and plans to eventually go on to tutor and obtain his Master's Degree.*

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**Are you an artist?**

**AUSU supports  
the arts!**

AUSU is interested in purchasing original works of art from students for promotional purposes. These promotions may include: gifts from AUSU to graduates at convocation, tokens of appreciation for volunteers, special presentations, etc.

The works of art must:

- be created by an AU student
- have a value range \$0-\$500
- be accessible or easily transportable to Alberta

If you are an artist of any kind who creates a product you feel we would be able to use for such a purpose, contact:

Debbie Jabbour  
[djabbour@ausu.org].

Supply a description of the object, a picture if you have it, and its market value.





## WICKED STEPMOTHER (1989) Film Review

By Laura Seymour

"That was a very odd film."

I'd like to say *Wicked Stepmother* is bad but it's not. I'd like to say that I loved it but I didn't. It has a peculiar set of characteristics that make this film worth taking a look at.

First, it has screen legend Bette Davis, post-stroke and I believe post-mastectomy, playing the new step mom. She is beyond thin and makes *Ally McBeal*'s Calista Flockhart look chubby. Despite these physical side effects she is an incredible trouser. I'm not sure I would have the personal confidence to be seen on camera with half only my face working well and an obvious limp.

Starring alongside Davis is Richard Moll of *Night Court* TV fame, who provides the only true comic performance in the show. He plays a buffoon private detective who goes so far as to have a statue of the Maltese Falcon on his desk. His work as a detective hits a pinnacle when the wicked witch's "daughter" comes out to get him all rattled. He chops the house's hedge to pieces in echo of her crazed seduction as she moves toward him. Barbara Carrera and Richard must have had some serious fun with that scene!

*Happy Days* TV show star Tom Bosley does a straight-faced comedy routine as a local cop, while former *Hart to Hart* houseman Lionel Stander comes in as the new family's father. Then there is stunning James Bond beauty Barbara Carrera doing an odd "daughter of" role. But the catch is she's not really the daughter. Do I have you confused yet?

The film begins as Tom is called out to a complaint. He finds several people shrunken down and "trapped" inside a shoebox. These people are alive and well but speaking in pixie voices. Nowadays we see films with shrunken people with more realistic, smaller caliber voices, but back then if you shrank your voice turned silly.

Anyway, these people file a complaint and explain that this old woman shrunk them by magic. They describe her in detail and the search is on. But the old lady / witch has disappeared. As the hilarious "old lady line-up" draws to a close in an attempt to ID the wicked old witch, Tom tries to put the shrunken people back into their protective shoebox, but he is perplexed as to how to do it, while pixie voices complain, "don't squish us!!" So, in frustration, Tom tips the chair they're on and holds the shoebox below it!! His delivery is excellent.

Many comic sight gags are in the film. I wish I could show you some of them and how well they work. In one, a reference is made over how the witch looks familiar. "But where I have I seen her?" mom wonders to herself. Just at that moment, in the background on a Los Angeles mural are screen legends – including, of course, our star Bette Davis. These sight gags sometimes take a bit of knowledge of Hollywood history, as in the crack about the new family's dead mother. They then cut to a picture of Bette Davis' Hollywood film rival Joan Crawford on the table as the dead mother!

The biggest laugh goes to the mom and Barbara Carrera, when Bette calls in the Bond beauty and throws a bucket of cold water on her. As she does this, Barbara immediately goes into a classic *Wizard of Oz* "I'm



melting – I'm melting!," performance. She sobers instantly and snaps, "This is reality, not MGM!" Of course the big laugh is, it IS an MGM film.

Back to the plot, we find the new wicked stepmother is cooking meat by the ton for her husband and new family who happen to be hard-core vegetarians.

Some of the film is utterly overdone. The mom has a cat allergy and the witch, of course, has a "familiar" as all witches do. A cat. The cat however is too heavily used as a plot point and the mom's performance is too tight and phony.

Watch for a cameo performance from "almost-impossible-to-recognize" *Entertainment Tonight* TV show host Bob Goen.

Our big favorite in the film is the decision for the mom to learn witchcraft to outsmart the witch and she conjures up the spell by saying a dramatic, "Spell of spells do your stuff!" ACK! Great delivery when you watch it.

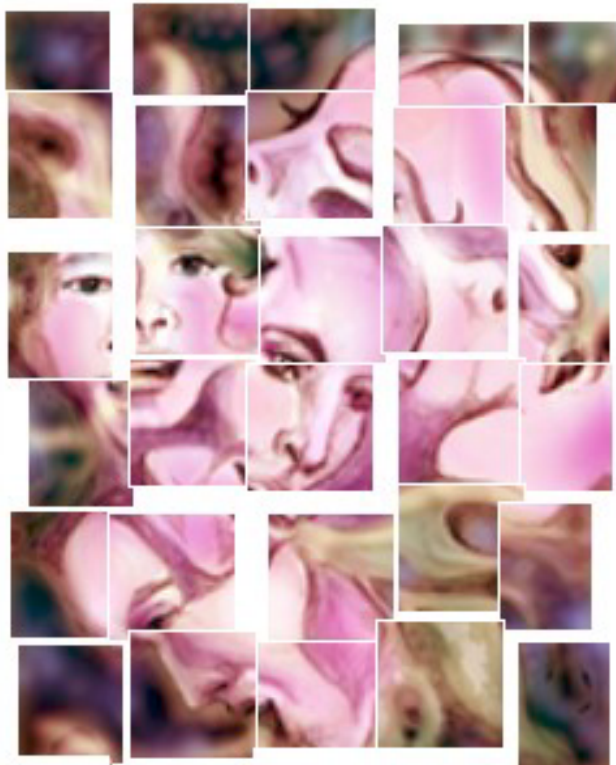
The number one thing I hate is the dreadful 1980s computer graphics -- really awful quality.

This is a 92-minute film and worth seeing for some Hollywood trivia, good in jokes and seeing some nonsense – so long as you aren't looking for genius, you're fine.

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*Laura Seymour first published herself, at age 8. She has since gone on to publish a cookbook for the medical condition Candida. She is working toward her B.A. (Psyc).*

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**WRITE FOR THE  
VOICE!**

Contact The Voice editor  
at [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org) for  
details on writing for The  
Voice. Provide a sample  
selection of writing  
and preferred genre.



Dear Sandra,

**I'm just about done my studies at AU and I'm not sure what to do next. Should I take a break from school and work, or go on to do my Masters? Do you have any advice for me?**

**Confused in Alberta**

Dear Confused,

As an upcoming university graduate, a variety of options will exist for you. However, your degree won't necessarily tell you what you should do; only you can do that. Going back to work will give you a break from the perils of studying, researching, and writing as well as provide you with some experience in your related field whereas finishing your master's degree will be very useful to your career plan and will not require you to readjust to school after a hiatus ... both options are appealing.

Either one of your choices will involve more decisions; researching careers and employers or schools, conducting a job search or filling out graduate applications. Life and career planning are on-going processes. Nearly 60% of American workers would investigate their career choices more thoroughly than they did initially if they could plan their working lives over (Gladding, 2000).

You need to decide what is right for you at this moment with a self-assessment. What are your goals and needs? Do you want to be settled in your career in five years, ten years? Do you need to work right now to catch up financially? Do you need a Master's degree for what you want to do?

Check out the government of Alberta's career profile section [www.alis.gov.ab.ca/occinfo](http://www.alis.gov.ab.ca/occinfo). Here you can find the educational requirement of various careers along with pays scales.

It ultimately stems down to what you want to do at this time in your life. Make a pros and cons list for both returning to school and entering the workforce. Be honest with your lists and your true choice should be evident.

Reference:

Gladding, S.T. 2000. Counseling: A Comprehensive Profession 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Upper Saddle River: Prentice-Hall Inc.

*Sandra*

***I WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU! TELL ME YOUR TROUBLES. YOUR CONFIDENTIALITY IS ASSURED.***

*This column is for entertainment only. Sandra is not a professional counsellor, but is an AU student who would like to give personal advice about school and life to her peers. Please forward your questions to Sandra care of [smoore@ausu.org](mailto:smoore@ausu.org)*



## **First Jump Course Training – Traditional Instructor Assisted Deployment (IAD)**



Instructor Assisted First Jump training is a traditional approach for most first-time skydivers.

During a 5 to 6 hour ground training program, your Canadian Sport Parachute Association certified instructors will train you in areas of your skydive including equipment and parachute, aircraft procedures, exiting the aircraft, the skydive, canopy control and landing. You will learn enough information about the equipment to feel confident about how it works and how to assess problem situations in the unlikely event that they occur. All your questions will be answered while you have an opportunity to practice what you've learned prior to your skydive.

Once geared up, you will board the aircraft for your flight to 3500 feet with your instructor. On jumprun, the pilot will open the door allowing your instructor to carefully "spot" your exit point. Now, it's up to you! As you climb out of the aircraft, your instructor is right there beside you, ready to deploy your parachute activation system.

**Look up! GO!!!!**

As you arch your body on leaving the aircraft, you will see the plane and your instructor watching as your parachute begins to open. From the sound of rushing wind past your ears, to the peaceful silence of the parachute ride, you hear your heart pounding from the excitement of your first skydive! Within a few more seconds, you'll hear the voice of another instructor strategically positioned at the landing area, as he/she guides you to a safe landing.

Afterwards, you will review your jump on video from our 3 cameras with your instructor who will document the details in your own personal logbook and review your options should you wish to continue with this incredible sport. Your logbook is a record of your accomplishment along with a brief review of the First Jump Course and should be carried with you to this, or any other Drop Zone.

Edmonton Skydive Centre is the leader in First Jump and subsequent training programs since 1970. We use only modern equipment, and safety is our first concern. Our instructors are Certified and Trained by CSPA (Canadian Sport Parachute Association) and 3M NCCP (Coaching association of Canada) .

Courses are usually conducted Saturdays and Sundays throughout the year, with registration at 8:30 am The course starting promptly at 9:00 am. Courses run regardless of weather. Students can expect to jump later the same day (weather permitting). Prepare for your "Ultimate Experience... Your First Skydive!"

See the AUSU Opportunities (<http://www.ausu.org/opportunities/index.php#esc>) page for a sign up sheet and brochure, or visit [www.edmontonskydive.com](http://www.edmontonskydive.com) 780-444-JUMP (5867).



# SCHOLARSHIPS & AWARDS

For scholarships available through the Athabasca University Students' Union, see the AUSU website at [www.ausu.org](http://www.ausu.org)



## Athabasca University Awards and Scholarship Information

The Office of the Registrar would like to advise students of pending deadlines for scholarships and awards:

**Award Name:** Syncrude Aboriginal Scholarship

**Value:** \$2,500

**Program:** Various - see website

**Basic Criteria:** 1st year student preferred but other years may apply

**Application Deadline:** August 31

**Award Name:** Alberta Blue Cross 50th Anniversary Scholarship

**Value:** \$375

**Program:** Bachelor of Nursing

**Basic Criteria:** Highest GPA in last two courses

**Application Deadline:** September 30

**Award Name:** Persons Case Scholarship

**Value:** \$1,000 to \$5,000

**Program:** All programs are eligible

**Basic Criteria:** Female; Full-time; Resident of Alberta

**Application Deadline:** September 30

**Award Name:** Bursary Program for Indigenous Students

**Value:** \$Varies

**Program:** School of Business programs

**Basic Criteria:** Students of Indigenous Heritage

**Application Deadline:** On-going, contact Paulette Windsor at 1-800-788-9042, ext. 6149

For more information on the specific criteria for these awards, please visit our website at:  
<http://www.athabascau.ca/html/depts/registry/studawrd.htm>

Applications for these awards can be obtained by calling the Office of the Registrar at 1-780-675-6705 or by email at [awardsinfo@athabascau.ca](mailto:awardsinfo@athabascau.ca).

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## SPECIAL BURSARIES FOR NORTHERN RESIDENTS

**Value:** \$5,000.00

**DEADLINE:** January 31, 2003

**Administrator:** Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies

**Notes:** Only the current application forms (revised for 2002/2003) will be accepted. Application forms and further information may be obtained from the ACUNS Web site.

**Contact Information:**

Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies  
405 -17 York Street  
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 9J6

Phone: (613) 562-0515

Fax: (613) 562-0533

Web Site: <http://www.cyberus.ca/~acuns/EN/awards.html>

E-mail: [acuns@cyberus.ca](mailto:acuns@cyberus.ca)

## NEWS FROM AU

### AU bids farewell to Alan Davis



*"It was such a laugh to stand up there and show another side of the university, and another side of myself, and to see people really enjoy it." - Alan Davis*

According to Alan Davis, he knew two things for certain that bitterly cold day about eight years ago when he interviewed for the position of Vice-President, Academic at Athabasca University. At the time, he was working as the Director of University Programs at Open Learning Agency in Vancouver, and had, more or less, applied for the job on a lark.

"I think all the signs were that, one, AU wouldn't offer me the job, and two, if they did, I wouldn't take it," he said.

Obviously, he was wrong on both counts. For his own part, it didn't take Davis long to realize Athabasca was where he needed to be.

"By the time I got back and thought about it a little bit," he noted, "I realized what the opportunity was. There was no question, in my experiences in distance ed., that AU has always been the top of the pile. It's a class act. If you're going to work in distance ed. in Canada, AU is the place to be. I knew there was a good opportunity for me in terms of career and growth, and I haven't been wrong. It's been good."

Davis and Athabasca University bid each other a fond farewell, officially, on July 25. As he departs to take up the Vice-President, Academic position at Niagara College in St. Catharines, Ontario, Davis and AU both look back on a period of his career that can only be called exceptional. According to AU president Dominique Abrioux, Athabasca University already misses Davis' energy, and commitment to innovation and to the University's mandate.

"Alan has always focused on improving student access to Athabasca University's services, and that has been such an important element in bringing the university to where it is today," Abrioux said. "My tenure has been defined by the amazing people who work every day to make Athabasca University extraordinary, and Alan has always been the finest example of that."

#### **Appreciates AU's spirit for innovation ...**

Davis has always appreciated Athabasca University's willingness to try new things.

"Athabasca epitomizes everything the system should be trying to do to help people, no matter where they live, what their background is, no matter what their other commitment [sic] are. I think fundamentally, bottom line is we live up to our mission," he said.

"I very much believe in the open concept, the focus on serving students," he continued. "It's a very clear focus. It's about the students. Everybody's committed toward the goals of serving students and removing barriers. There's a lot of freedom here to find innovative ways to achieve that goal."

"It's not only a place that's open for students," he continued, "it's also open for staff to do all kinds of interesting things and innovate, try things out, but generally toward the same goal of trying to improve what we do for students."

During his term at AU, Davis says he's enjoyed his interaction with faculty, and the opportunity to support their research, their creativity, and to link that to the teaching. He is proud of the part he was able to play in the implementation of Prior Learning Assessment, articulation, and the launching of collaborations between



Athabasca University and universities and colleges all over the country. He's also proud of the courses and programs that have been developed during his tenure, such as the one-of-a-kind Master of Counselling program, and the highly unique Master of Arts-Integrated Studies program.

"That's been very exciting," Davis said. "It's been a period of growth and diversification of our programs at the graduate level and the undergraduate level and I've really enjoyed doing that.

"The first two years were just a buzz," he added. "There was loads to do and everything sort of worked out. The place started growing very fast. That's when we developed the whole Canada's Open University agenda and decided to seriously go national. We developed the linkage with Télé-Université, so we were a bilingual system, and that whole image emerged as AU as a national provider, in that first two years."

While Davis notes he'll miss the AU brand of "freedom to innovate," he also says he looks forward to facing the types of constraints and challenges that come with a "brick and mortar" institution.

"With all the freedom to innovate, it is kind of crazy here," he noted, chuckling. "It can be exhilarating, but it's also tiring. I think in Ontario there's going to be a different balance of that. The constraints help you not to get too far out on the limb. There's always a balance, it's just a balance that the balance is going to be slightly different there between what I can do and what I want to do, and what the guidelines are."

### **On the less serious side ...**

Davis, a former chemistry professor, will also miss the social opportunities afforded at Athabasca University, such as the annual golf tournament and the Christmas events. He is well known for his theatrical contributions to Athabasca University and the community of Athabasca, having become a regular in the chemistry science shows for kids staged by AU professor Dietmar Kennepohl, as well as the local readings of the Christmas Carol, and Monty Python tributes.

"It was such a laugh to stand up there and show another side of the university, and another side of myself, and to see people really enjoy it," he said of the Monty Python tribute events offered by AU staff in Athabasca and at conferences. "A lot of people really probably only remember me for that – which is just fine."



Many of Athabasca University's alumni will remember Davis as "the guy in the funny hat who read the bios" at Convocation. Students, staff and guests have all commented on Davis' professionalism and skill as he recited thousands of biographies about the Athabasca University graduates who crossed the stage to receive their parchments each June.

Although, he's passing on any official roles, Davis says he's not quite ready to give up Athabasca University Convocation.

"I'm going to keep suggesting to people I keep coming back for Convocation because there are people graduating over the next few years I'd really like to be here to see," he said. "I'm planning to try and get back to Convocation every so often, because it's just a great event to come to.

"I'll dress up," he added. "People seem to be amused by that. But I'll probably just sit at the back."

If there is one thing Davis won't miss, however, it is all the driving that has come with his position. At least twice a week for the last seven and a half years, Davis has driven back and forth between Edmonton and Athabasca to get to the airport, to attend a meeting, to mediate, or to perform some basic but essential task.

"The University's been very helpful with me to try to enable that," he said, "but it's a big chunk of your time if you go back and forth in a day or two days. Basically four hours is gone. And it's tiring and it's wearing and it's dangerous, and you haven't even done any work yet. I think if there's one thing I'm not going to miss it's getting out onto Highway 2 so often.

"It's hard being so dispersed," he added. "I think it's going to be a major challenge for AU to figure out how it's going to effectively operate with people going back and forth. It's a drain on people, it's a drain on resources, it's a drain on the environment."

He's done what he can to make the best of it, though.

"Sometimes it's productive. It's good thinking time. If you're giving somebody a ride, it's a good time to reconnect with them. Sometimes you can get on the cell phone and catch up on calls. Sometimes I'm literally counting the kilometers and looking at my watch."

Says it's time for a change ...

Davis has come to appreciate the Town of Athabasca's relatively harsh climate, and rugged beauty, and says his experience here has helped him feel like a "real Canadian at last." He will miss the people who have made him feel so at home, here; those who gave him furniture when he first moved, those who invited him to dinner, those who stopped to help when his car broke down by the side of the road. He holds warm memories of the fine AU staff members who have passed on in recent years, individuals such as Lori Oddson, Sue Rowlandson, and very recently, Dave DasGupta.

However, Davis says, it's still time to move on.

"I've been here seven and a half years," he explained. "My term comes up in a few years. It was a combination of thinking about where I'd like to be and what I'd like to do and what my future holds. It was while I was thinking about this that the job came up at Niagara College. It was a convergence of opportunity coming up and the thinking in my own mind of what I was going to do at the end of my time here.

"It wouldn't be good for me (to stay), or for Athabasca. I would have ten years in the same role, and I think AU is due for a change. I think they will do very well in their search for their VPA.

"I'd like to think I was the right person for the institution at the right time," Davis continued, noting he's aware of his own weaknesses, but he's also aware of his strengths.

"I'm not trained in education, the theories, the practices of education and distance education. But I know what I know, and I try to use due process to figure out the rest. I understand how to get the right information and talk to the right people to get the right information. I've been pretty open and friendly. I haven't been too dogmatic or open handed. And I think I've tried to ... (formalize) a lot of stuff that wasn't that well documented or in place before and I think people have appreciated that because I think it leads to transparency in decision-making."

He's looking forward to all the "surprises" he knows he'll find in Ontario, and he's confident he'll find good things too in Ontario's wine region - despite its proximity to Toronto's gritty brown skies.

"The people there seem to be extremely nice," Davis said. "They're very committed to the institution. Many of them started in Toronto and moved out and loved the place and will stay the rest of their lives. There's a real sense that people go to Niagara region and never leave because they just find it's the place they've always wanted to be. You hear that enough times to suggest that maybe that will be true for me, but I have no idea."

# Community Networks Group

## EDMONTON EVENTS

To list an event in any Canadian city in the Voice, contact [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org).

### JOURNALISTS AT RISK: ROUTINE OR AN ISOLATED INCIDENT?

Thursday, August 7, 7:00 p.m.  
Education South Room 129 U. of A.  
Campus

Canadian journalist Zahra Kazemi was recently murdered while in the custody of Iranian security forces. Many Iranians would say her death is not surprising as journalists and intellectuals are routinely harassed, imprisoned and tortured. What is the state of freedom of expression in Iran? What can Canadians do to encourage the protection of human rights?

#### Panelists:

- Dr. Philomena Okeke, Women's Studies Program, University of Alberta
- Jim Farrell, journalist, Edmonton Journal
- A representative of the Iranian community in Edmonton

Organized by the Iranian Social Cultural Association of Edmonton.

For further information contact:  
[iscaoe@hotmail.com](mailto:iscaoe@hotmail.com)

Co-sponsored by the International Centre, University of Alberta.

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# CONFERENCE CONNECTIONS

## Contributed By AU's *The Insider*



- **Distance Teaching & Learning Conference:** - 19th annual - "Working Smarter - Building on Success" - Aug. 13-15, 2003 - Madison, Wisconsin. Details: <http://www.uwex.edu/disted/conference>
- **AU Learning Services Conference** - October 3 & 4, 2003 - Edmonton, Crowne Plaza Chateau Lacombe. Details to follow.

## OTHER CONFERENCES

- **CAPDHHE [Canadian Association for the Prevention of Discrimination and Harassment in Higher Education]** - To be held in Calgary, October 29 - November 1, 2003. <http://www.capdhhe.org/conference2/index.htm>
- **Teaching In A Digital Age** - the impact of new communication technologies on teaching and pedagogy. l'Université de Montréal. <http://profetic.org:16080/coll2003/> [French only]
- **China Conference 2003** - Edinburgh July 2003. China Conference Info welcomes people from the commercial and educational sector involved in E-Learning, Distance Learning, Training, HR, IT Training, Localisation, ICT or Knowledge Management, to this world first international event. China represents the biggest target market for these sectors ever and is still largely untapped.

Entering the Chinese market place is a complex move. This conference provides a forum on exchange of market information not only on product and service requirements, but on specialist market entrance requirements. If you are working in any of these sectors you should seriously consider entering this event in your diary. The conference will be patronised by professionals from, China, the USA, Europe and Australia and represents the largest collective gathering of these specialists centred around the Chinese market ever!

For more information:

<http://www.chinaconferenceinfo.com>

## Summer Symposium on Health Ethics

Wednesday 6 August 2003

The John Dossetor Health Ethics Centre (JDHEC) invites you to attend a one-day symposium on health ethics. This course will offer a series of presentations by JDHEC Faculty that will challenge you to examine and explore the essential place of ethics in health care practice.

### For more information:

Website [www.ualberta.ca/bioethics](http://www.ualberta.ca/bioethics)

Email [Dossetor.Centre@ualberta.ca](mailto:Dossetor.Centre@ualberta.ca)

Phone 780-492-6676

**Know of an educational conference that is not on this list? Contact [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org) with the details and we'll list it in Conference Connections.**





## **CLASSIFIEDS:**

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**Students of AU may print classifieds in The Voice free of charge (maximum three per issue) as long as they are not representing a company or product.**

**Classified ads should be submitted to the editor at [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org) with 'CLASSIFIED AD' listed in the subject title.**

**The Editor reserves the right to refuse any classified advertisement at her discretion. Thank-you.**

## **THE VOICE**

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c/o Athabasca University Students' Union  
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800.788.9041 ext. 3413

**Editor In Chief** Tamra Ross Low

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***THE VOICE ONLINE: [WWW.AUSU.ORG/VOICE](http://WWW.AUSU.ORG/VOICE)***

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