

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Vol 18 Iss 48 2010-12-03

Gone in a Flash

Recite to remember

MUFA Matters

The fat you need

Final Word

The exam code

*Plus: In Conversation With,
From Where I Sit, Cruiscin Lan,
and much more . . .*



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www.voicemagazine.org

1213, 10011 109th
Street NW
Edmonton AB
T5J 3S8

800.788.9041 ext. 2905

Email

voice@voicemagazine.org

Publisher

AU Students' Union

Editor-In-Chief

Tamra Ross

Managing Editor

Christina M. Frey

Regular Contributors

Hazel Anaka

John Buhler

S.D. Livingston

Jason Sullivan

Wanda Waterman St.

Louis

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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



STUDY SPACE

Christina M. Frey

Crunch Time



December's begun. This time of year, we're all pulled so many ways: shopping, work, Christmas parties, events at the kids' schools, volunteering, and the need to make the holidays more spiritual than stressful are all clamouring for our attention. And on top of our ever-lengthening holiday to-do lists, many of us have final exams and important course papers and projects added to the mix.

It's hard to get that Christmas feeling when we're faced with the harsh reality of looming deadlines and the finality of that letter grade. But exam stress doesn't need to overtake the season!

The web is home to an infinite number of exam study aids, tips, and suggestions. We're told how to organize our time, how to review course materials for maximum retention, and how to manage exam day—and exam room—stress. We're also given techniques for diffusing stress, and encouraged to carve out time for relaxation even in the midst of the busiest study days.

But one thing that most advice neglects? The necessity of knowing *yourself*. And if you think that sounds counterproductive, or that it's some time-wasting psychoanalytical exercise that's a poor stand-in for good, old-fashioned studying, you might reconsider.

After all, exam stress doesn't come from the course material itself. It's not even caused by poor study skills—in and of themselves. It comes from the student and how she approaches her courses and finals, especially in the context of the larger picture.

If we don't figure out our own student weaknesses, we won't uncover the underlying reasons *why* we panic before finals. And as a result, those “tried-and-true” stress reduction techniques won't solve our crunch time dilemmas, since they won't necessarily be geared to how *we* work. But with a little more self-knowledge, we can avoid our inclinations toward the attitudes and behaviours that result in pre-exam panic.

The Health Centre at the UK's Imperial College approaches this self-knowledge by dividing stressed students into three categories: perfectionists, tense or fearful students, and self-indulgent students. Learning your particular stress-causing weakness gives you the knowledge you need to battle the source of pre-exam jitters right at its roots.

For example, perfectionism might be seen as a good thing, but it's incredibly crippling—particularly when crunch time rolls around. According to the Centre, two facets of perfectionism are workaholic tendencies and procrastination. In my experience, the two often go hand-in-hand; the task of doing it



all perfectly is pretty daunting, and putting it off until later seems the only physically possible coping mechanism. This makes perfect performance even less likely, and stress mounts. Students struggling with perfectionism can learn to combat it by avoiding the self-defeating “must” and “should” attitudes that hamper their ability to move forward with confidence. And by focusing on the bigger picture, these students can avoid getting bogged down in the minutiae.

Don't be too quick to buttonhole yourself into one category . . . some students could move through several phases in the course of one semester.

On the opposite end of the spectrum are the tense and fearful students, whose self-confidence is low. The Centre notes several forms of negative self-talk in which these students engage: overgeneralization and exaggeration, for example. Particularly interesting is their inclusion of emotional reasoning, which they define as “confusing thinking with feeling.” For instance, a student might *feel* incompetent in biology; it’s then a small step to assuming he actually *is* incompetent in biology. How many of us are guilty of that? These students can fight the negativity and defeatist thoughts by using positive self-counselling and role playing techniques. Additionally, they can reduce each task to its components in order to remove much of the impetus for fear.

Then there are the so-called self-indulgent students, who find it difficult to get motivated and focus on studying. But rather than giving the usual advice to essentially suck it up and get to work, the Centre recommends working *with*, rather than against, these tendencies. For example, instead of focusing on the need to put in long periods of intense study (who wants to do that?), students struggling with these attitudes can limit themselves to 30-minute sessions, with a reward at the end of each. Getting successfully through several short study periods removes much of the pain of studying—and accomplishes review work at the same time.

Don't be too quick to buttonhole yourself into one category; as the Centre points out, many students pass through two or three of the categories during the course of their academic career. Conceivably, some students could move through several phases in the course of one semester, depending upon the subject matter. For example, a student whose tendencies are usually toward perfectionism might move through the tense and fearful phase when one course is in an area in which she feels particularly unsure. And a normally perfectionist or fearful student might lack motivation due to burnout from other life stresses, turning him toward the self-indulgent phase.

No tips or techniques on their own will result in that coveted grade. But by understanding a little better where we're coming from as students, we can engage in practices that will overcome our own tendencies to defeat our best efforts. With these as ammunition, we can face the tense exam period with just a little more confidence—and a little less stress.



HEALTH MATTERS

Katie D'Souza



What on Earth Is a MUFA?

MUFAs. We've all heard that cool, yet cryptic, acronym uttered again and again. But what exactly are they?

First, let's start the deciphering process by unravelling the name: "MUFA" stands for "monounsaturated fatty acids." Although this may sound complicated, we come across these fatty acids on a daily basis. Did you have peanut butter on your toast this morning, or did you eat a handful of walnuts and almonds for a snack? And if that salad you ate last night

contained fresh avocado pieces and was dressed with olive oil—you've been consuming monounsaturated fatty acids, or MUFAs.

So are MUFAs just another health scam? No! With positive MUFA research abounding, it's safe to say that, in appropriate quantities, they are definitely a worthwhile dietary addition.

What might be a scam, though, is the prevalent idea that our bodies do not need fat. Fat is important in our diet; it provides energy and helps us to absorb fat-soluble vitamins (A, D, E, and K), and certain essential fats can alleviate some skin conditions. The key to dietary fat is the type of fat we consume. Certainly, fast-food trans fats have less than valuable, and potentially negative, effects on our bodies. However, "good" fats, like MUFAs, definitely have a role in our nutritional health.

Let's talk about this role. First, disease prevention: a daily intake of MUFAs has been repeatedly shown to exert preventative action against heart disease, stroke, and Type 2 diabetes (adult-onset diabetes).

One of these fatty acids' most positive benefits heart-wise is their potential ability to improve a person's lipid, or cholesterol profile, according to the American Heart Association. MUFAs are also a key component of the Portfolio Diet, which uses soluble fibre, soy, and plant sterols to decrease, or at least control, elevated cholesterol levels.

Weight loss, anyone? It's true; these fats can actually help you slim down. The American Diabetes Association promotes MUFA consumption, since diets with adequate intake of these fatty acids reduce abdominal fat, particularly in comparison with the typical, carbohydrate-rich, MUFA-poor diet that many of us consume. The Flat Belly diet, advertised across North America, advises consuming MUFAs for a smaller waistline. Interestingly, it appears that the slimming effects of a MUFA-rich diet are still evident even when other aspects of the diet or lifestyle go unchanged.

Fat is important in our diet . . . the key to dietary fat is the type of fat we consume.

MUFAS . . . definitely have a role in our nutritional health.

How many MUFAs must be consumed before experiencing positive effects? Although currently there are no specific guidelines, the general rule is to consume one form of MUFA at each meal (for example, peanut butter at breakfast, avocados at lunch, and olive oil at dinner). In fact, the American Heart Association recommends that 15 per cent of our daily calorie intake be composed of MUFAs.

Can there be too much of a good thing? Yes; it's the case with most things in life, and MUFAs are no exception. Overdosing can cause health concerns; although many of these claims have yet to be studied in further detail, it appears that overconsumption of MUFAs can lead to insulin resistance, which fuels diabetes. It's interesting to note that frequent and small, but adequate, amounts of these fatty acids help prevent diabetes, but overdoing it may have the opposite effect.

I'm planning a week filled with adequate MUFA consumption, and I'm sure you are, too! To make your shopping list easier, and to keep variety in your diet, the following is a list of good foods that contain MUFAs: olive oil and olives, avocados and avocado oil, nuts (almonds, walnuts, brazil nuts, cashews, macadamia nuts, hazelnuts, pecans, and pistachios), peanuts, soy, sesame seeds, sunflower seeds and sunflower oil, and tea seed oil (a newly available oil, produced from the tea plant).

Enjoy your adventure to good health!

Katie D'Souza is an AU graduate and a licensed naturopathic doctor. She currently lives in Ontario.

Disclaimer: The information contained in this article is for personal interest only; it is not intended for diagnosis or treatment of any condition. Readers are always encouraged to seek the professional advice of a licensed physician or qualified health care practitioner for personal health or medical conditions.

DID YOU KNOW?



Holiday Exam Procedures

If your course contract ends on December 31, 2010, you'll want to note Athabasca University's special holiday procedures for requesting and writing final exams.

Because the University will be closed for the holidays at 4:30 pm MST on Thursday, December 23, 2010 (it will reopen 8:30 am MST on Tuesday, January 4, 2011), it has created specific provisions to ensure adequate time for exams to arrive and be completed. Students may be eligible for additional

time in which to write their exams.

If you are not writing your exam at the Athabasca, Edmonton, or Calgary campuses and you request it by December 12, 2010, you will be "allowed additional time for exam completion without being charged the Late Examination Request fee." Exams must be written by January 15, 2011.

If you request your exam after December 12, 2010, but before the course contract end date of December 31, 2010, you must pay a Late Exam Request Fee (\$100). The fee must accompany the request. These exams must be written by January 31, 2011.

For further information, including special provisions for those writing at AU's Athabasca, Calgary, or Edmonton campuses, see the full [regulations](#) or call the Information Centre at 1.800.788.9041.

IN CONVERSATION WITH . . .

Wanda Waterman St. Louis

Africa Genesis, Part II

The Africa Genesis Foundation (AGF) was born in the Labour Ward of Lwala Hospital in Northern Uganda in 1991 and was registered as a not-for-profit corporation in 1994 by American feminist theologian Dr. Colleen Weiden. The foundation is a joint American-African organization that fosters health improvements for underprivileged peoples in rural parts of Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania. Recently, Hosea Ayienga Masiga, Executive Secretary of AGF's Regional Board of Directors, took the time to answer some questions from Wanda Waterman St. Louis.



(Read the first part of the interview [here](#).)

Why I Got Involved

When I visited the AGF website, I was captivated by the programs and by the credentials of their officers. I was excited to join AGF, hoping to be involved with their Program Service activities. I was particularly touched by AGF work in Lwala Hospital in Northern Uganda and Naalarami Clinic in Arusha; both were really deep in the rural area.

With the passage of time, my involvement with AGF has become much more than just a job. AGF has become my lifestyle, to a great extent. My growth has been because of first, the work I do, which touches and positively impacts lives of the underserved and destitute. Second, I have a great boss, Dr. Colleen A. Weiden. Third, I can travel to AGF Program Service sites, sites that have tremendously impacted my outlook. My continued involvement with AGF is based on my desire to help people; even if I impact only one human life, it's worth the effort.

What are the biggest obstacles to the work of Africa Genesis?

- Fluctuation of financial income paralleling world economic downturn;
- Inadequate motivation and co-operation of persons, especially of volunteers;
- Divergent interests, some of which may be conflicting, of parties involved; and
- Lack of public interest, awareness, and understanding of poverty in other countries of the world.

Although all of these obstacles are tied to each other, overall the principal obstacle is lack of adequate financial resources. Lack of finances causes most of the other obstacles, which in turn fuel further financial inadequacy.

Why Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania?

I tend to agree with the joke that the borders of Africa were drawn by a couple of bored *mzungus* (white people). The borders are artificial. I have very close relatives—aunts, uncles, and cousins—in Uganda, yet I am Kenyan. Some communities—Bukusu, Masai, Samia, and Teso—were cut in the middle by the boundaries, placing some of us in one country and the rest of the relatives in another. Yet we speak the same language, understand each other, and have similar socio-cultural values. I submit that it is on the basis of this historical unity that the East African Community was founded, with Burundi and Rwanda enjoined.

AGF founders, some of whom were Africans, recognized and appreciated this historical unity and also felt that Uganda alone would be a narrow focus in terms of interest and qualifying corporate funding guidelines. AGF also wanted to take advantage of the ports of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and Mombasa, Kenya, for receiving shipment of containers. Today, our directors hail from the US, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, and Bermuda, so we are a diverse international organization.



“Identity Cards”

I remember Dr. Colleen recounting her experience with “identity cards” in Uganda. Fraught with the after-effects of a case of malaria, Dr. Colleen needed to use the facilities on a road trip. Her African colleagues led her to roadside facilities—luckily, a cotton field with needed soft tufts.

However, Dr. Colleen didn’t realize that others had left their “identity cards” by the roadside too, and those “ID cards” promptly jumped onto the bottom of her shoe. Due to rebel activity in the area, the military were positioned near a small lake on the opposite roadside. The soldiers roared with laughter at seeing the *mzungu* (white, presumably European) wiping and cleaning the shoe in the water; language was not a barrier that day.



What’s Next?

Fundraising! We need resources! We can do all the envisioning and planning that we like, but without financial and material resources, all our plans and visions remain just that—plans and visions. Therefore, we have taken concrete actions to improve and popularize the AGF website, [and use] Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube as forums for publicizing AGF work and advancing AGF fundraising initiatives.

We give assurance that any donation made to AGF shall be put [to] a decidedly worthy [cause] with integrity, accountability, and transparency.

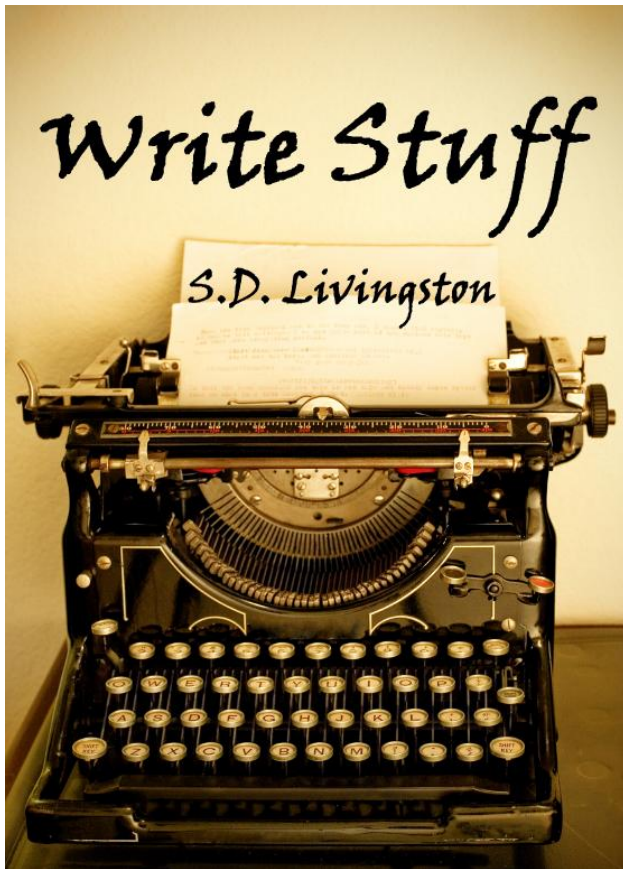
Our hope is that this interview will help someone know about AGF and enable us to give hope to just one more person.

Africa Genesis Foundation is registered with the Secretary of State of Illinois as a charitable, not-for-profit corporation, the Office of the Attorney General under the Charitable Trust Act and Solicitation for Charity Act in Illinois, the Internal Revenue Service as a 501 (c) 3 tax-exempt organization in the US, and the NGO Council of the Republic of Kenya as a non-governmental organization (NGO). To contact AGF: AGF Home Office, P.O. Box 224, Utica, IL 61373-0224 USA. Email: africagenesis@yahoo.com. AGF Regional Office, P.O. Box 10695 GPO, 00100 Nairobi, Kenya. Email: africagenesisfdn@yahoo.com. Website: www.africagenesis.org.

CHRONICLES OF CRUISCIN LAN

Wanda Waterman St. Louis





That Reminds Me

How's your memory? No, I don't mean the memory on your laptop or how much room you've got left on your iPod. I'm talking about your own memory, the one that stores all the stuff in your head. More and more, as we rely on our gadgets to remember birthdays and phone numbers, it seems we're in danger of losing the mental muscles that used to perform those tasks. Luckily, a new literary contest celebrates those skills—and might just provide some students with a talent that will be very valuable in the future.

Last week, Scott Griffin (founder of The Griffin Trust for Excellence in Poetry) announced Poetry in Voice/Les voix de la poésie, a “national bilingual poetry recitation contest combining the dynamic aspects of slam poetry, spoken word, and theatre, with the study of great literature in the high school classroom.” Twelve Ontario schools will take part in the contest's pilot phase, and the program is expected to be nationwide by 2013.

In an age where billions of pieces of data are available at the click of a search button, the notion of memorizing long passages might seem antiquated. Sure, it had value in Homer's day, when USB keys didn't exist and a travelling bard could support himself by reciting the thousands of lines of epic poetry he'd committed to memory.

But it's not so much the memorization that's important. It's what the memorization is connected to: the ability for sustained, focused thought. It's a skill that's becoming rarer by the day, and its demise will have profound consequences on us all.

Nicholas Carr discussed the issue with frightening clarity in his essay “Is Google Making Us Stupid?,” which appeared a couple of years ago in *The Atlantic*. In it, Carr wrote about how his “concentration often starts to drift after two or three pages” of prose. “I get fidgety,” he wrote, “lose the thread, begin looking for something else to do.” The shift is worrisome because Carr, like many others who grew up without the Internet or other digital distractions, was losing his ability for the “deep reading that used to come naturally.”

It's no secret that memory and sustained focus are connected. W.R. Klemm, a professor of neuroscience at Texas A&M University, notes in his blog that “memory formation is enhanced by sustained attentiveness and focus.” Meditation, another form of sustained mental focus, is also closely tied to memory, and scientific studies have shown that it actually alters the physical structure of your brain.

So what does all this have to do with students memorizing



poetry? Well, think about all the highly trained people we rely on every day. The doctors and pilots and engineers who need focus and mental discipline to master their jobs—and to stay good at them. If our society increasingly prizes fractured snippets of information, and the weak memory and shallow focus that go along with this, where will the next generation of brain surgeons come from? Who will be there to wade through dense pages of textbooks when the average student has lost the ability to focus on anything much longer than a Twitter feed?

That's not to say that everyone who enters Poetry in Voice will keep honing those skills beyond the contest. Or that memorizing poetry is the only way to develop mental discipline and focus.

But Poetry in Voice reminds us that, along with the joy and beauty in verse and prose, the arts foster skills that carry over into practical matters like flying planes. That even as we rely on technology to do our thinking and remembering for us, it's more important than ever to talk, as the Walrus once said, "Of shoes—and ships—and sealing-wax / Of cabbages—and kings."

CLICK OF THE WRIST: Toy Story

It's crunch time at the North Pole, and the elves in Santa's toy workshop are working overtime. In their honour, this week's links will examine some of the fascinating history of toys, dolls, and games.

If You Build It

Lego sets have been popular with the young generation since they were first introduced in Europe nearly 70 years ago. But they're equally loved by grown-ups, whose creations are often more art than play. Here are a few outstanding Lego sculptures created by so-called brick artists—and be sure to flip through the reader contributions in the comments section for more photos and links.

Top 100

What were the most popular toys of the 20th century? *Forbes* has a brief overview of the history of toys—all the way back to thousands of years B.C.—and includes a slide show of the top toys from each decade. Talk about bringing back memories!

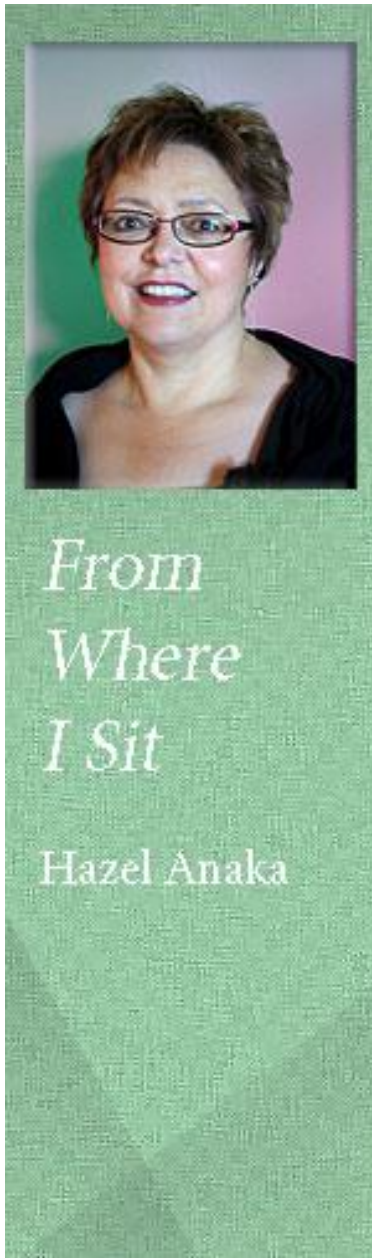
Board Meeting

Move over, Monopoly and Scrabble—board games have been played much, much longer than your paper cards or wooden tiles might suggest. This short history of the board game focuses on those that were played in the ancient world, thousands and thousands of years ago. And it includes directions for several ancient board games. Something to consider for your next family game night!

What A Doll

Ever wonder why they're called "Barbies"? This short video history of the popular doll includes an interview with the Mattel Company's co-founder, Ruth Handler, who explains the inspiration behind the doll and the name. You'll also enjoy the narrated photo montage of Barbies past and present.





Loose Ends

It's again time to use this space to wrap up loose ends; to bring you updates and closure; and to introduce teeny items that will never grow up to be full-blown, stand-alone columns.

One. Regular readers will remember that in September, I sent a \$40 cheque to an American company to research a 1934 mining stock certificate that had belonged to my dad. I had hoped to find I was suddenly rich. As the intervening weeks piled up, I had all but given up on ever getting an answer and thought my \$40 (and a potential fortune) was lost.

Well, the other day, Bob Kerstein, president of Scripophily.com, sent me an email. It seems they researched the North West Minerals Ltd. certificate in the Financial Stock Guide Service, the Directory of Obsolete Securities, and/or in other resources. The Directory profiles companies whose original identities were lost due to change of name, merger, acquisition, dissolution, bankruptcy, or charter cancellation.

Kerstein went on to say that North West Minerals staked several claims in the Caldwell Bay area, which I see is located in the northwest corner of Saskatchewan. Apparently the work undertaken was not commercially viable, and the company ran out of working capital. The company's charter was revoked before 1950 for unpaid taxes and fees and for failure to file annual reports. He went on to explain that because there is no evidence of merger, acquisition, or distribution to shareholders, the stock has no redeemable value. But I could check www.unclaimed.org or www.missingmoney.com. Another dream dashed.

Two. After years of resisting and foot-dragging adoption of any advances in technology, I'm ready to cave and buy an iPhone 4. There are Androids out there that are slightly cheaper. But just this once I want what the cool kids have—while it's still a cool thing to have. So rather than fighting the future and clinging desperately to paper and pencil, outdated address books, and scraps of paper with phone numbers on them, I intend to buy a smart phone and learn to use all (most) of its features. I could have lists on it or look up Edmonton addresses. The possibilities (and apps) are endless.

Not only that, but I also redeemed 2,350 air miles to order a Sony Reader Touch Edition that is en route to me as we speak. Yes, this consummate book lover is going high-tech. And in case you suspect that this behaviour is the result of a head injury, relax. It's a classic case of "If you can't beat 'em, join 'em," and I want to do it graciously. Somehow I drifted away from a long-ago vow to not become roadkill on the information highway. I'll still own and love books, but I'll add convenience and portability to the mix.

Three. My house continues to be a warehouse for Mardi Gras party decorations. Very soon, we'll have a work bee to add handles to one thousand masks. I can reclaim my house after December 11, and maybe even get the Christmas tree up. Yeehaw.

This is just a partial list, from where I sit.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK



At Home: An Apple A Day

What looks like an apple, smells like an apple, and tastes like an apple—but doesn't turn brown like an apple? The answer: an apple. That is, an apple from the “Arctic” variety bioengineered by a specialty fruit grower in Summerland, B.C.

As the CBC [reports](#), the new strain of apple contains technology that suppresses “the enzyme that induces browning.” An Australian company has used the same biotechnology to develop potatoes that avoid the same problem.

Okanagan Specialty Fruits, which has petitioned the United States Department of Agriculture for approval of the apple, believes that “the technology would lower the cost of producing fresh slices,” rendering apples more popular and more accessible.

But GMO crops are controversial, and not everyone's enthusiastic about the apple breakthrough. Apple growers are leery about growing a variety that could be unpopular with consumers, and are also concerned “about cross-pollination of conventional trees with genetically modified ones if they were planted in close proximity.”

And Andrew Kimbrell, executive director of the public interest organization Center for Food Safety feels that the GMO apples won't benefit the consumer, whose ability to determine fresh fruits will be hampered. As Kimbrell told reporters, “A Botox apple is not what people are looking for.”

Around the World: First Native Americans in Europe

Archaeology, linguistics, and the study of old manuscripts—all have contributed to the historical record of the peoples and cultures of this world. Now there's a new area to explore for a fuller knowledge of often untold stories: the evidence found in DNA.

As the *National Geographic Daily News* [reports](#), our ideas of the history of the western world may have been shaken up since a new DNA study, which suggests that “a Native American woman may have voyaged to Europe with Vikings.” The study, which investigated a type of DNA that's only passed on from mothers to their children, discovered that a number of Icelanders possessed “a genetic variation similar to one found mostly in Native Americans.”

Viking-era Icelanders are believed to have reached Canada just prior to A.D. 1000. Although previously nothing in the historical record suggests that a First Nations woman accompanied the Vikings back to Iceland, the study's authors, after analyzing the genetic and historical record, theorize that this is the “best explanation” for the genetic strain's appearance in modern Icelanders.

Although admittedly it's “a big mystery,” and further research is required, it's worth pursuing. As Hans Gulløv, a historian with the Greenland Research Centre in Copenhagen, told reporters, sometimes “we have to write history anew.”

AUSU UPDATE



Convocation 2010

AUSU wishes to congratulate this year's graduates, whether attending Convocation in person or by distance. We wish you the best of luck in your future pursuits. You are an inspiration to all AU students!

AUSU Executive Election

AUSU has recently held its internal election for the Executive. We wish to congratulate Barbara Rielly (President), Bethany Tynes (Vice President External and Student Affairs) and Sarah Kertcher (Vice President Finance and Administration) on their election and thank those that ran for their willingness to serve.

Internal elections are being held to determine committee membership and we expect that all will be in place shortly. Our new Council is taking its bearings and has already begun to set the direction for this term.

Student Issues

AUSU recently completed a compilation of reported student issues covering a two year period; all issues were recorded in such a way as to ensure that student information remains protected and private. This effort confirmed what we long suspected; that tutor problems were the single biggest issue faced by our students (56 of 120 complaints).

Outdated course materials and errors in texts continue to be reported as well as were exam issues, slowness of the transfer process, and the scantiness of information in School of Business FAQs. Over that two year period there was a decrease in the number of complaints about student financing, exam request problems, difficulty registering in more than six courses, and materials shortages for courses. Kudos to AU for improving in those areas. Now if we could only get the Tutors' Union to the table . . .

New 2010 AUSU Handbook/Planners – Arrived!

Finally! People have already started receiving the new planners in the mail, and we're currently shipping them out as fast as the orders come in. Full of useful information about AUSU, writing styles, course grading, great finds online for your studies that you may not have known about, as well as having places to write down your phone numbers, keep track of your assignments, and, oh yeah, a year's worth of calendar to plan out your schedule too. We'll give one free to each AUSU member just for the asking.

Remember, though, we only print a limited number of these each year, so when they're gone, they're gone.

Let 'em Know who Represents for You!

AUSU logo mugs, hoodies, USB keys, and much more are all available for sale from our office. Also, used locks can be purchased at half price! Check out our merchandise catalog on our front page. You should

check out our hoodies in particular—made in Canada and 100% bamboo, we're offering them for just barely over our cost, and they're both durable and comfortable.

And if you have new little ones in your family, or know somebody who does, check out our baby onesies. Made by American Apparel, these onesies are high quality and let folks know your kids are growing up to great things as a "Future Graduate of Athabasca U"

AUSU Scheduling Meeting with Tutors' Union – Not really an Update

Some things resist change. We're still waiting for a response from the Tutor's Union as to when we might be able to meet with them to discuss ways that AUSU and the Tutor's Union can work together to ensure that students are getting the contact they need. Unfortunately, they haven't yet replied, so we're stepping up our campaign to get in touch with them. If you want to help, the next time you're talking to your tutor, ask them if they know when the Tutor's Union will meet with AUSU so that the groups can work together on common issues.

Our statistics we've been collecting from the forums and your calls show that issues with tutors - specifically the amount of time taken for marking assignments and exams are your number one concern. Help us help you.

SmartDraw Program Renewal

Some of you who took advantage of our program to provide SmartDraw software to members have been getting notifications that your software license will soon be expiring. Fortunately, AUSU will be continuing this program, so if you haven't already, go to the AUSU home page to download the newest version.

SmartDraw allows you to create a wide range of graphics for your assignments and submit them electronically in a Word file. You can also place your graphics in Excel or PowerPoint files, or export them as TIF, GIF, or JPEG files to make a web graphic or even a logo. Just a few of the graphics you can make include Venn diagrams, genetics charts, graphs, organizational and flow charts, and Gantt charts.



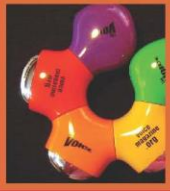



For any course that requires charts that cannot be easily created in Word or Excel, this should be a real time saver and make it easier to submit all portions of an assignment by email.

Remember, though, that you should always check with your tutor to find out if there is a specific format he or she prefers. Your tutor does not have to have SmartDraw to view these graphics, however. Installations under this program are good for one year. The package includes both the Standard and Health Care editions of SmartDraw.

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THE VOICE

1213, 10011 109th Street NW, Edmonton, AB T5J 3S8 - Ph: 800.788.9041 ext. 2905 - Fax: 780.497.7003 attn: Voice Editor

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Editor-In-Chief Tamra Ross
Managing Editor Christina M. Frey

Regular Columnists Hazel Anaka, John Buhler, S.D. Livingston, Jason Sullivan,
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