

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Vol 25 Issue 07 2017-02-17

Meeting the Minds

Interviewing AU's New President, Part II

Minds We Meet

Say Hello to Dakota!

The Gummy Bear Method

Sweet Motivation

*Plus:
Whitey on Mars
The Social Student
and much more!*



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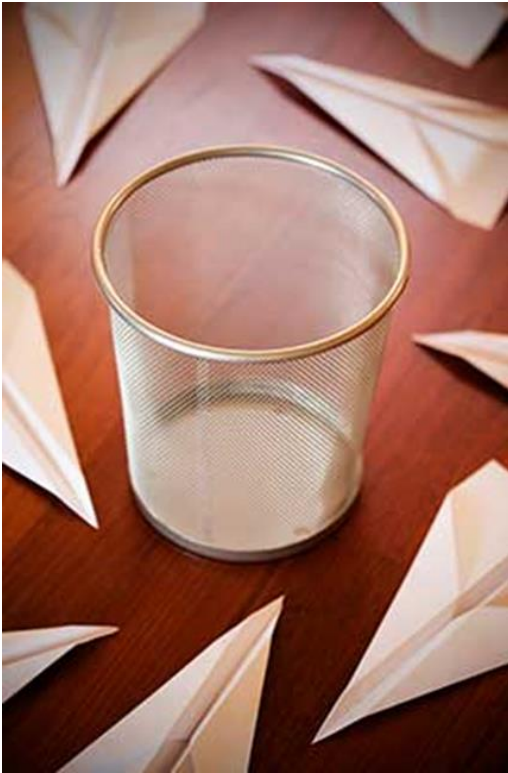
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



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

Hey! Did you know the Voice Magazine has a [Facebook page](#)?

No kidding! We also do the [twitter](#) thing once in a while if you're into that.

EDITORIAL**A Turn for the Worse****Karl Low**

My reading lately has taken a turn for the worse. By that I mean I find my attention caught by stories of impending doom and gloom. And no, I'm not just talking about the endless parade of news stemming from the U.S. President's office.

I mean I'm reading about the coming of AI and automation decimating the work-force, about glaciers in the arctic calving and penguin populations collapsing along with the ice, about the upcoming destruction of the oil industry here in Alberta as the price of renewables continues to drop while the price of oil is slowly squeezed higher as more and more of the "easy" reservoirs are depleted, about the increasing divisions between people who are able to insulate and isolate themselves among tribes able to find a source on the internet willing to support whatever they're willing to click on, just to get a few cents worth of advertising revenue. And while you'd hope it would lead a person to be inspired to action, it's having the opposite effect. I'm finding I care less about any of it.

You would think, given my intellectual surroundings, that this wouldn't be the case. I deal with people who are striving to better themselves. Who are seeking to, if not create, then at least find a better world to

live in, whether that's by imparting motivation or assistance to their fellow students, or simply in the pursuit of their educational goals. Seeing these people should inspire me. After all, we're living in a time when more and more people are getting motivated to head out and march in the streets for what they believe in.

But my mind turns back to that tribalism. When one side marches, the other doesn't stop to think if they have a point, but rather buckles down in their beliefs and attacks the other side. And why not? These days they can easily find the people who support them in those beliefs. In the past, if we found a large group of people agreed with us, it meant we were probably right, because those people were likely most of our community. Today, however, you can find many people who believe in anything, because the community is global, and our minds have trouble scaling to that level. Will our globally connected community be what ends up destroying us, simply because it offers protection for views that may not have any backing in reality? I don't know the answer to this. I hope not. And I think the greatest opportunity we have to prevent it may be schools like AU – where decent education can be provided to anybody around the world.

Which leads me into our feature article this week, the second part of our interview with Dr. Fassina. This time, he discusses the future of education in the 21st century. We also have an interview with a student who was home-schooled, and is now taking Athabasca University courses. A reminder of just how far and wide AU can take education.

I also want to point out the open letter to Elon Musk by Wanda Waterman. I have to point out, I'm an admirer of Musk's drive for innovation and creativity, but Wanda makes some interesting points about how that drive is being used. I'm curious what you might think. Is she right? Or not? Let me know at karl@voicemagazine.org, and enjoy the read!

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karl". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail that loops back towards the end of the word.

MEETING THE MINDS

INTERVIEWS with AU's EDUCATORS



Dr. Neil Fassina is the 8th President of Athabasca University. He earned a BSc in Psychology from the University of Calgary and PhD in Management from the Rotman School of Business at the University of Toronto. He is an active researcher in the areas around applied decision-making. He was installed in mid-January, 2017 and works to remain connected to the communities that he serves. AU is no different. This is the second part of the interview that was conducted in late 2016, prior to Dr. Fassina being officially installed as the 8th president of AU.

What are your general perspectives on education in the 21st century?

That's a very good, very short question with a potentially long answer. If I think about the role of a university, we are a partner in the lifelong learning pathway of an individual. We serve as a partner because we're not the only person or influential force in the learning environment. If we're talking formal education, we're talking everything from kindergarten to pre-school learning environments into being lifelong learners while realizing everyone will always have a lifelong desire to learn. If we consider the formal education pathway, we serve as an element of higher education that enables individuals to better themselves and their community through learning and

knowledge with certain desires or endpoints in mind.

In some cases, it might be for the love of learning. It might be for self-betterment. It might be for the growth of an individual's knowledge. In other cases, there might be much more tangible purposes. They might be coming to us to build a skill-set to be able to apply in a current environment, whether or not it be their current employment or community engagement. They are looking for tangible knowledge that they can then convert into the skill that they're looking to build right there. Alternatively, they might be looking to us to engage in and create knowledge that they would like to apply later. There is a tangible connection between the learning and their community environment. It might be more of a delayed impact, or they are looking to shift the environment in which they are working.

To me, where the university sits, we are a group of individuals that come together to help enable that knowledge, to help bring the learning opportunities together in a structured format that will best create the learning or the knowledge the student is looking to create in their life path. A student that runs through a K-12, then immediately wants to enter a university environment finds us as an early university partner. For someone that takes a different life path, that doesn't result in going straight to university straight out of high school, we might take on a later role in their life. Our goal is to be a partner in their lifelong learning forever. They might

come to us for an initial degree. But the goal is to create a learning space, where people will want to return to us to create the knowledge again, create the new knowledge, or create a future knowledge. The role of the university is to create social, community, and economic benefit through the creation of knowledge with our learners.

Partner that with some of the research initiatives that are undertaken in a university environment, whether they be in the pure science level, or more on the basic or theoretical level, moving all of the way up into the applied spaces, where you're solving community, business, and technology issues through innovation. You're bringing ideas together to create new processes or new technologies to help enable the social and economic benefits of the community and the people there to create a stronger quality of life, if you will, for both of the individuals and the communities that they live in.

We are in the midst of the knowledge economy. People might be coming to AU for various positions that they are hoping to get qualified and credentialed for—to be able to take on those positions—so what role does the online university play in preparing people for the current economy?

You hit the nail on the head with the knowledge piece, as we start to move into 'Economy 4.0' language. Once upon a time, it was vocational versus university thinking. They are blending and coming together, where your knowledge is your tool. The role of a university, like AU, is to have very strong programs. Students enter a university with the goal of strengthening a knowledge base in a specific domain—for a credential, or to enable them to enter into a different area of the economic market—whether in a place they're currently employed or to shift to a different field. To be able to gain that knowledge and apply it, creates economic benefits for the individual and social benefits based on becoming involved in a different part of the economy.

If we look at the trajectory of AU at present, where do you hope to bring AU in the last part of 2016 and in 2017?

Great question, I will break it into the short-term and the long-term. I will bring it back to what I said about the long-term vision. What I want to be able to, and I truly believe we will, accomplish in the next 2-3 years is to be able to resolve some of the challenges before us. Frankly, it is to find the balance, which people question with sustainability. As we come to the 50th anniversary of the creation of the university, to me, the university is thirsting to be able to look at what the next opportunity is that will make the postsecondary environment look up and say, "Wow! That's incredible." To get there, we need to make sure the platform from which we are jumping is solid. Over the next 1-2 years, it is about making sure the platform is solid. That we have the balance to make the significant visionary leaps into what Athabasca is capable of doing.

It becomes two parallel processes. It is resolving the challenges and creating the solid platform, while at the same time involving the community in the planning process to identify, refine, and envision what that next opportunity is. It doesn't mean there aren't plenty of things we could go after. However, those two things have to happen together. If what you're trying to do is to resolve challenges and create balance you need to be thinking about what is next, we want to make sure we're making the right decisions for the future rather than today alone. That's what I imagine the next year being very focused on. It is making sure the decisions are put in place that need to be there to create the strong platform and, at the same time, starting the process of figuring out what is that future vision of AU and how are we going to get there.

AU leads the country in online education. If we go to the far future, where do you hope to have provided to the AU of the future, past your own tenure?

Wow! It's a great question. I see my role as not only being part of the current solution, but being part of that next future. I envision a very exciting future. In the first couple of years, I want to be able to have a space,

where no one questions the sustainability of Athabasca. Not because it is sustainable, but because it is exceptional. If I had my druthers in the short-term (5-year margin), I would love to make it where people look at AU and say, "There's a university that's here to stay and always looking to what's next." While working with the community, it would be figuring out what that next step is. Like I said before, there are plenty of opportunities before Athabasca, especially if you consider the mission of being open, being accessible, and being flexible.

One of the challenges that we have is going to be choosing among those opportunities. Albeit, it is a very good challenge to have, but that second stage is to be part of the university that has made a significant strategic decision. It has started to undertake movements in that direction. Where the rest of the postsecondary environment says, "I wish I'd thought of that," we have a history of that. If you look at our origins and the movement towards the distance education, or the leap that we took into online education, we have a history of the university system saying, "That's a good idea. Now, let's get on it." If I, at the end of the tenure, could be part of the community that creates that excitement, man, I will leave an incredibly happy individual.

Thank you for your time, Dr. Fassina.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen is an AUSU Councillor. He works with various organizations, and runs In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal, and In-Sight Publishing.

Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: RBC Students Leading Change Scholarship

Sponsored by: Royal Bank

Deadline: February 28, 2017, 3:00pm EST

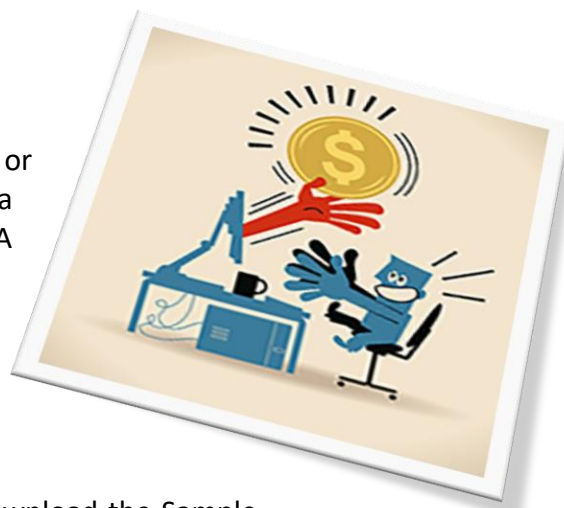
Potential payout: \$10,000

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be Canadian citizens or permanent residents, be enrolled full-time in a degree or diploma program at a Canadian university or college, and have a GPA equivalent to a 75% average. See full [eligibility criteria](#).

What's required: A completed online application form, which includes a maximum 500-word essay describing "one issue you are most passionate about changing globally or in your community".

Tips: The online application must be completed in one sitting. Download the [Sample Application and Checklist](#) ahead of time to use as guidance for the application process.

Where to get info: scholarships.rbc.com/StudentsLeadingChange



MINDS WE MEET



Dakota Soares was homeschooled until Grade 12. His educational path has been geared to earning a degree at AU. So, he started taking courses in high school to eventually start classes at AU. Last September, he signed up for the Bachelor of Science in Computer Science and Information Systems. For his day jobs, he raises and sells chickens and, on the side, runs a computer business.

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

I like to play around with my computers. Also, I like to do a whole bunch of extracurricular activities. I like to play guitar. I have played for 12 years. I also play the banjo. Most of the time, I am outside. I am becoming a member of the Great Lakes Poultry Association. Other times, I am taking care of my chickens.

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

That's a tricky question. I know so many people—to pick one would be difficult. I would probably say, in modern history, Bill Gates, Microsoft's Founder and CEO, and Steve Jobs. Those are two examples. Not going back too far, probably those two.

What would the meal be with either Bill gates or Steve Jobs?

The classic North American meal: pizza. I am Portuguese, so if I can entice them to have some octopus, shrimp, or lobster, that's always good, if they would be with me on that.

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

I think my parents. I think both of them have driven me in my ability to learn. Mom has been especially great in that area. My grandparents, too. My desire to learn is based off the immigrant desire to do better themselves and their grandchildren. I would like to take that desire, move it forward, and surprise them with what I can achieve, as well as give back to the family for what they've done for me. Another reason would be the desire to have a better life for my children in this country as well.

Describe your experience with online learning. What do you like or dislike?

I like it. It is flexible. I can do it anytime. For me, I am not an A+ student by any means of the imagination, but I like the flexibility of doing one course or three courses. I like that I can take any program I choose at any time. Personally, my experience has been great. I've had no problems with the web-interface. It's probably about a 24-hour wait between answers from tutors, and that's one thing I don't particularly like. It takes time for them to get back. But when they do, you get your answer. I have a bad internet connection and that is another negative. It's not the greatest, but nothing terrible.

Have you had a time when you wavered about your education?

No, most of the time, I have thought about what I would do after the degree. What is planned after the degree? I want to get a second degree to extend my portfolio. If I was to waver on something, it would probably be my math. Thankfully, the degree doesn't have a ton of math, and I think it should be fine.

What was your most memorable AU course?

I've only done 4 so far. Probably, the most memorable one would be Administration (ADMN) 233. Because it is writing and presentations, something I do well. It is probably memorable because I could get a week's worth of work done in one day. I couldn't do that in high school.

What is most valuable thing in life to you?

I must say, I am Christian. So, my most valuable thing would be my Bible and my relationship with God. That's probably the most valuable thing, the thing that I treasure the most at this point in time.

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

I would say it would be worth it. I know AU has had some issues with finances and the Board of Directors. The worst case scenario is that it might have to close. But it has set a precedent that will continue though. Online learning will continue. To have an online degree, is something most people gloss over. It's not prestigious or anything, but I think AU will become more prestigious, especially since most students are the forerunners of online education. In 20 or 30 years when online education is the norm, we can say that we got our degrees from one of the first almost completely online universities in the world, when not many others were doing it.

What's the single best thing AU could do to improve your student experience?

I think physical textbooks. I don't want to be a bummer or anything. Online is fine. As online students, we are online enough. I would love to have physical textbooks. Even if we were given them on a loan system and we would give them back, even for the duration of the course, in my opinion that would be better than an e-textbook.

What is the most important lesson in life?

I would say being able to learn. Also, listening and watching other people and how they tackle things in life, and see whether it turns out ill or turns out good. Also, the ability to decipher what they do, so that you don't repeat their mistakes. And if it's a good decision, then it is something you can replicate in your own life to get a desired result.

What's something people don't know about you?

The majority of people know that I have a chicken business, but most don't know that I have them as pets. Most people turn their head when I say that I have a pet chicken. That's probably the one thing people don't know.

E-texts or textbooks? Any particular reason(s)?

I would choose a physical textbook because there's nothing like holding the book and being able to read it. Also, there is the ability to take notes in it. Whereas, when you're on the computer, you can make highlights on it, but need a separate Word document to make notes. Physical textbook just gets you off the screen. We're on the screen enough being online and all. The more we can get a substitute physical textbook and take notes and do assignments, and then read a little bit. That balances out the study time in terms of eye strain. That way I can get more done. I don't have to take a 10-minute break every hour. I can take a half-hour break by reading my textbook and then jump back on the computer and continue again.

How do you find the tutors?

I find the tutors great. Probably, the tutor I would shout out most is Mr. Sam Fefferman from Mathematics (MATH) 216. He's been helpful. He's been responsive. I have been able to get a positive response within 24 hours. That being said, the Faculty of Business actually called me last week and asked me how I was doing. I was very pleased at that. I would give them a definite thumbs up for that. It is great to hear someone not through email.

Where has life taken you so far? (travels for pleasure, work, etc.)

I have not travelled abroad. Unless, you want to call the States abroad. I have been to Florida, Montréal, and Ottawa. Life has not taken me around the globe. I don't see it taking me farther than Ontario. Maybe, the West of the country, but I like to keep it close to home.

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

I tend to be a philosophical and political science person. I am reading *The Miserables*. That's a book from the 16th/17th century on The French Revolution. For the third time, I am reading DK Press' World War II (Willmott, C. Messenger, R. Cross). It is an encyclopedia-like book overviewing WW2. Other than that, I haven't been doing much reading other than the study material.



To Whitey on Mars (An Open Letter to Elon Musk)

Wanda Waterman



Dear Mr. Musk,

First of all, kudos to you for acquiring so much knowledge, money, and power! And luck had nothing to do with it; you focused and worked bloody hard, and it paid off big time.

I'll bet you're really excited about the future right now. You probably feel like you're standing on the brink of a world bearing such a startling resemblance to *Star Trek* that it makes you shiver. You must have dreamed for years of a human race so godlike, so serene, beautiful, brilliant, and powerful they could safely explore and settle other planets!

Just a reminder: *Star Trek* was just a television series, and it wasn't really about the technology. Yes, some of the technology they foresaw, like handheld communication devices, actually were invented, but they now do as much harm as good. Warp Drive is impossible. So is time travel. So is teleportation. So is the Easter Bunny. They're all fun to think about and watch on television and get chocolate eggs from, but

they're not and can never be real.

Star Trek, like all good science fiction, is allegory. It uses a hypothetical future to pose questions whose answers have a bearing on our understanding of our present reality and to model the highest ideals and values to which we as humans can aspire.

For example, the *Star Trek* characters (the good ones) were highly cultivated individuals of sterling character. Quitting a needy planet because something more exciting and potentially lucrative was happening somewhere else was just not an option— as it shouldn't be for you either, Mr. Musk.

Besides, it's not like your plans can come to fruition now. The Enterprise had a multicultural crew, whereas travel bans threaten to keep American tech companies from continuing to hire the world's best minds. Kind of throws a wrench into the works, doesn't it?

But don't let all this make you sad for even a minute! There's more than enough adventure to go around right here on terra firma, at bargain prices, to boot. If you confined your explorations to your home planet, your money could be put to excellent use, and you could use your experiences to gather scientific data.

Think of what a hero you would be if you chose this route instead of continuing to launch polluting rockets and trying to send pioneers to Mars where, let's face it, the colonists are just going to end up killing each other like cowboys gone stir crazy after having been shut up in a cabin together all winter.

Consider Antarctica, for one. Figure out how to save the krill population. Help manufacturers develop light, cold-resistant clothing. Design biodomes so spacious and beautiful they prevent cabin fever. (You won't have to worry about providing oxygen!) Study the effects of solitude on the human psyche and then, when everything is ready, bring in more people. Find new uses for snow and ice. Study the effects of your rocket launchings on global warming.

But don't stop there. Build enclosed settlements in Death Valley or on Iron Mountain. Biodomes in every

AU-thentic Events

Upcoming AU Related Events

Creating a winning 3MT in 3 steps

Tuesday, February 21, 1:00 to 2:00pm MST

Online

Hosted by AU's Faculty of Graduate Studies

fgs.athabasca.ca/news/presentations/

e-mail fgseducation@athabasca.ca to register

Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) Information Session

Wednesday, February 22, 10:00 to 11:00 am MST

Online

Hosted by AU's Faculty of Business

business.athabasca.ca/event-details/doctorate-business-administration-dba-information-session-3/

register online at the above address

second session: Wednesday, February 22, 5:00 to 6:00 pm MST

business.athabasca.ca/event-details/doctorate-business-administration-dba-information-session-4/

Keeping Organized as You Search

Wednesday, February 22, 6:00 to 7:00 pm MST

Online

Hosted by AU Library

library.athabasca.ca/orientations.html

no pre-registration necessary

Bannock and a Movie "Trick or Treaty - Part 2 of 2"

Friday, February 24, 12:10 to 12:50pm MST

Athabasca University, Peace Hills Trust Tower, 12th floor, Room 1222,

10011 - 109 Street Edmonton, Alberta

In-person; limited seating

Hosted by AU Centre for World Indigenous Knowledge and Research

indigenous.athabasca.ca/documentation/TrickorTreat_part2.pdf

Register by phone (780)428-2064 or e-mail ivyl@athabasca.ca

uninhabitable place on earth would be far less expensive than settling a small patch of Mars. Consider underground settlements, or floating colonies suspended from air balloons. Population explosion? Bring it on!

Even better, go to an American ghetto. Lots of adventure there! Do research on how to keep yourself safe from drive-by shootings, how to engage in successful community action, how to protect your rights from negligent landlords, how to ensure your children get a good education and stay off drugs, how to find a safe place to sleep every night, how to survive without a stable source of income, and how to live with the symptoms of PTSD—both in yourself and from the people you encounter every day.

You could even go create a settlement among Trump's supporters in the Deep South! Go to Harlan County, Kentucky, and figure out ways to live without professional medical treatment, how to stay calm during debates on call-in radio, how to improve literacy, how to grow enough food to live on. You could teach the locals to vote in a way that furthers their real interests, and you could find a way to keep meth labs from exploding.

Sure, you're standing on the brink of something new and amazing. But there are elements of this new and amazing picture that bear a startling resemblance to the world confronted by Gil Scott-Heron in the early seventies when he wrote these lines, from his poem "Whitey on the Moon:"

*A rat done bit my sister Nell.
(with Whitey on the moon)
Her face and arms began to swell.
(and Whitey's on the moon)
I can't pay no doctor bill.
(but Whitey's on the moon)
Ten years from now I'll be paying still.
(while Whitey's on the moon) . . .*

You describe your space travel ambitions as humanitarian, but which humanity are you talking about? If it's the same race and gender that's been imperializing, colonizing, and cruelizing the world for the last six hundred years, maybe y'oughta step aside.

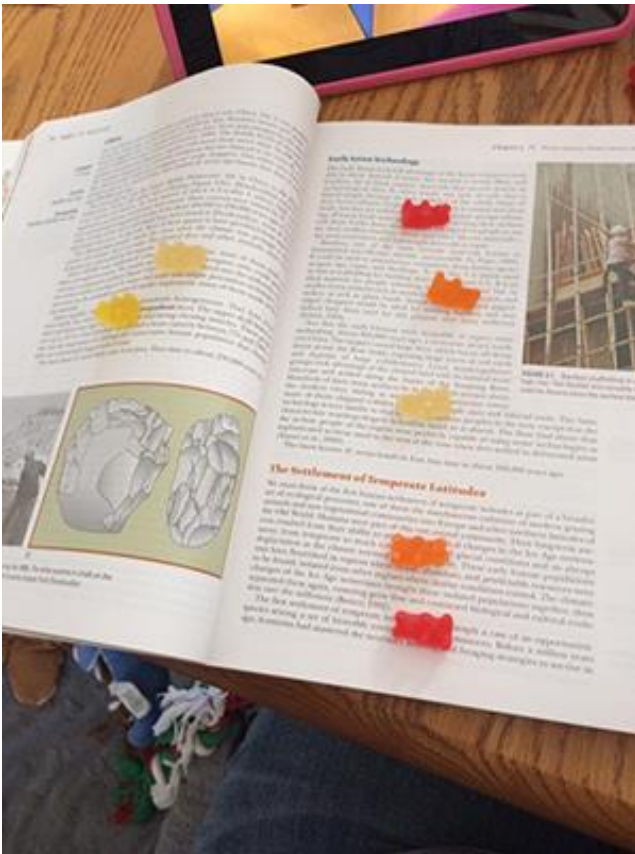
And if you think you can make a pact with the devil for the good of humanity, think again. Trump's interest in space travel is tainted by an urge to compete with Putin, and if Putin takes the bait the Russians will starve, just like they did during the Cold War. Now is the time to tell the past to lie down and shut up. The Cold War is dead and buried in the ground. Let's leave it there.

Sincerely,
Whitey on Earth

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

The Gummy Bear Method for Motivation

Barbara Lehtiniemi



Motivation tricks are the little games we play to cajole ourselves into persevering through a disagreeable task. Some days, students have no problem getting through several hours of solid studying while, on other days, every minute buried in a textbook seems like eternal agony.

AU student Amanda Gillis recently posted a photo of her newly-adopted motivation trick: using gummy bears to lure her into reading successive paragraphs in her textbook. Other students—who should have been studying and not on Facebook—quickly commented on how well this trick would work for them, too.

On those days when you need a little trick to get your momentum going, try one of these:

Gummy-Bear Method. Place a gummy bear at the end of each paragraph of your textbook page. When you finish reading each paragraph, claim your tasty reward. This works with other treats too but it's advisable to use chewy treats so that you have a reasonable chance of making each treat last until you're due to eat the next one. Health tip: choose fruit-based treats, not sugar-based.

Timer Method. Set a timer for a short interval that seems manageable to get through, such as 10, 15, or 25 minutes. Disconnect your internet and vow to do nothing else but study until the timer goes off. At the end of each interval, reward yourself by quickly checking social media. Then reset the timer for another short study session. If you do a full 25 minutes in one stretch, set the timer for a five-minute break and step away from your desk for a refreshing break before getting back to work. (For more timer tips, read *The Voice Magazine's* article about the Pomodoro Technique, [Measuring Time with Tomatoes](#).)

Switching Horses Method. This works best if you're taking multiple courses. If you find yourself unable to concentrate on one course, put those books aside for 30 minutes or so and switch to another course. When you get back to your first course, you'll feel fresher. Plus, you will have accomplished more studying in your other course. If you're only taking one course, switch to a different task, such as reviewing earlier chapters, peeking ahead to the next assignment, or finding an online resource that explains the material in a different way.

Goal and Reward Method. Set a goal you want to reach in your day's studying, such as finishing a textbook chapter or a study unit. Decide ahead of time how you will reward yourself for reaching that goal. The reward should be an indulgence—something not too expensive or inconvenient but one you wouldn't otherwise allow yourself to have (maybe a specialty coffee, a hobby magazine, or a short walk in nature.) A special short-term reward will help you push through the day.

There's no real trick to studying—you've just got to get through it. Finding motivation on those days when you're tired, sluggish, or just sick of school is often the hard part. If you can trick yourself into getting through the next ten minutes, and then the next ten, you'll eventually gain enough momentum to reach your study goals.

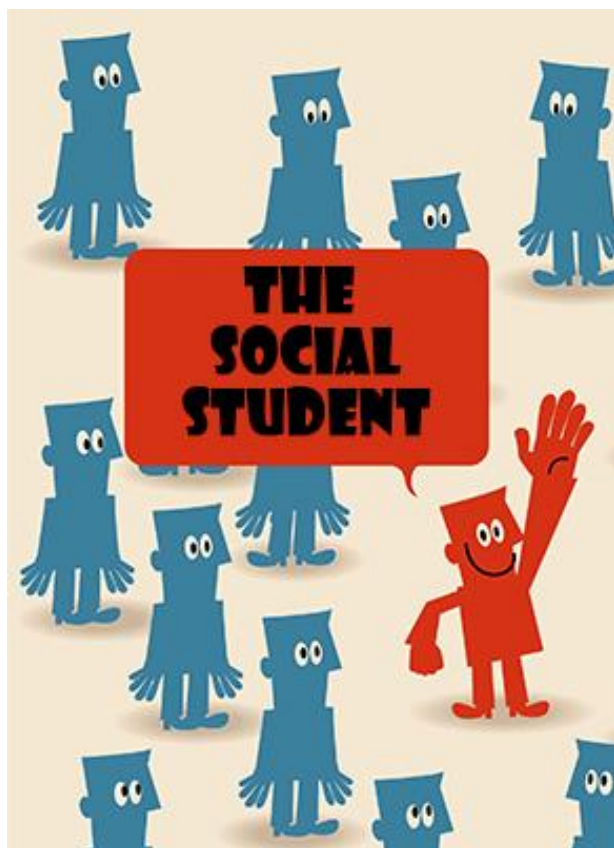
Share your favourite motivation trick to get you through sluggish studying, at voice@voicemagazine.org.

Barbara Lehtiniemi is a writer, photographer, and AU student. She lives on a windswept rural road in Eastern Ontario.



The ~~Lonely~~ Social Student Clubs, Contests, and Cash!

Marie Well



Facebook's now a landmark for student cash, clubs, and contests. Let me clarify. Do you have a research project and need to solicit research participants for interviews? Do you want to start an academic club or debate team? Or do you want to sell tutoring services? If you flinched at any of these questions, then Facebook's ripe for you.

I ran for cover from Facebook for years, fearing trolls running rampant on my Facebook page. But once I fired up my Facebook presence, I discovered the power of social media. And you can, too—for academic purposes.

So, prepare yourself for the joys of spending four bucks for a thousand eyeballs peering at your video. Facebook's powerful. And thanks to Andrew Macarthy's book, *500 Social Media Marketing Tips*, I've synthesized ways for you to make your academic grade through a Facebook Page.

- Run a "research question" contest and award a prize. If you want to do research on, say, "eating habits of high intensity athletes," then host a Facebook contest where people instant message you or comment their experiences with food as high intensity athletes. Specify that all instant messages and comments will be used for research purposes. To get exposure for your contest, pay to boost your Facebook ad, targeting "high intensity training" people in the region you wish to study. Invite people to email you if they wish to participate in an additional one-on-one interview or focus group for your research.
- Run a "student club" event and get friends to subscribe. If you want to host a student club in a specific city, then post the free event on Eventbrite and link it to your Facebook Page. You can specify an audience of students (from any university or just from AU). Then, message the official and unofficial AU Facebook admins to ask about promoting your event through their social media accounts.

- Start an interest group! Create a Facebook (interest) group on your own Facebook page. Ask about promoting it through the unofficial AU students group on Facebook. So, if you want to start a group of, say, math buffs, then create it on your Facebook Page. Then, after you message the official and unofficial AU Facebook admins for permission, promote your group to AU students through comments posted on the page or in the group. Also, contact the Voice Magazine for some free advertising love.
- Teach it! Make a video of your AU class presentation and post it to Facebook. Boost the post with a \$3 ad campaign, and watch people come in droves to hear your stuff. You can specify your audience to include people in your age range with the interest of, say, "math" or "philosophy" or whatever, depending on your topic. This option works best for either narcissists or open-knowledge advocates or people-who-learn-through-teaching.
- Sell tutoring! Offer tutoring services through a Facebook Page. Then, promote your tutoring services by creating a Facebook ad. Include a "phone now" button. Yes, on your Facebook ad, place a blurb on your know-how with math and then make a carousel of math textbook images that you own. Request people phone you for a free consultation for tutoring services. Your advertisement will cost around \$14 total, for a week of exposure, but you get to narrow your target, for example, to math students within a five-mile radius of your home.

Lastly, I've abandoned the "lonely student" theme in favor for something that might make you smarter, more successful, or richer, whether you're a social media pro or a late bloomer. So, fire up your Facebook and get an edge as a social student.



The Creative Spark

Cover Up! Cover Pages and Presentations

Marie Well



What makes books sell? The covers, partly. And what makes your essays nab great first impressions? The covers.

We all know that presentations—not just cover pages—rank high when visual eye-candy gets served. We tend to love slideshows of optical illusions, but loathe screens stuffed with bullet points—especially when the speakers' words and the text don't match.

Even if your content lacks luster, your cover page can embellish your final product. Remember the story of the groom who wanted a divorce the day he saw his bride without makeup? Well, he might be grading your paper.

Many professors breeze through papers, I've heard that some sometimes grade without a full read. So, the first

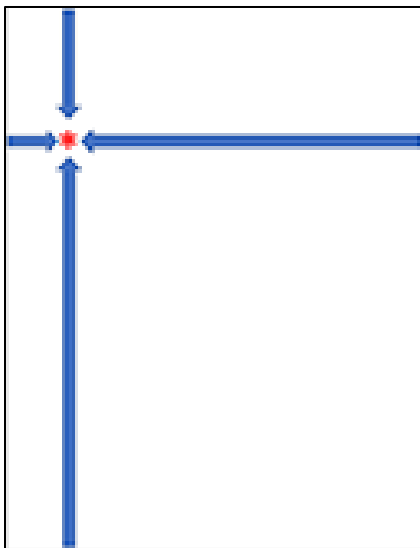
two pages often serve as your grade benchmark. Polish them. With that in mind, why not make your cover

page or presentation shine? You don't need to spend a lot of time playing with designs. You just need some basic design principles to speed up the flow.

So, we're going to show some design principles to help you make a stupendous slideshow or essay cover. The book *Design Basics Index* by Jim Krause ranks as the all-time best-design-book I've ever read. His advice, like eye candy, gets served in bold font below; mine gets catered as the aftertaste.

Place it in the oddest spots. Not really. Better stated, place your cover page text (and text alignment) at a point that is not center. Better still, place your cover page text (and text alignment) so that they stand at unequal distances from every side of the page, says Krause.

In a prior article, I showed how off-center alignments work much better than center ones. Now, I show you that, when it comes to design, inequality rules.



To clarify, look at the following image:

Notice how the red dot is located on the page at unequal distances from each side of the page? That inequality, says Jim Krause, creates intrigue—like the eureka that comes during solving a puzzle. So, place your text (and text alignment) at unequal distances from each paper edge.

Color sends emotions. (p. 74) To ignite emotions, use bright colors with grayscales. Use warm colors (yellows, reds, and, oranges) with complementary cool colors (greens, blues, and purples). Also, use colors to convey themes like isolation. For instance, the single dark red pen amid grey

pens can stir emotions. Similarly, small yellow circles grouped together on a page with one big blue one in the corner can show loneliness and power.

What gets EMPHASIZED? Make one aspect of your design pop and the other take backstage. In other words, let either just your image or just your text take up two thirds of the page. If you have a telling image, let it take the lion's share of the stage, or if your title pulls you in, let it dominate the scene.

Group by Theme. If you are using multiple images or text blurbs, then group them by theme. For instance, if you have an image of a question mark, place it so that it overlaps with an image of Isaac Newton. Don't put those closely related items on opposite sides of the page!

Similarly, if you have a slogan to place on your title page, like "I think, therefore I am" put it next to, say, a picture of a spider weaving an intricate web. Group thematically related items—and spark interest wherever you can.

So, use design principles to cover up your essays—flaws and all. Eye candy, like syrupy raspberry-chocolate-mints, can liven up the driest of read, convey emotions, and send hidden signals to the person assigning your grade.

Women of Interest

Nancy Wake was born August 30, 1912, in Wellington, New Zealand and died August 7, 2011, in London, England. Wake became a prominent woman in the French Resistance movement during World War II, and one of the most decorated heroines of the war. Between 1940 and 1943 she saved hundreds of Allied soldiers and downed airmen by leading them through occupied France to a safe place in Spain. In 1944 she assisted in establishing communication between the French Resistance and the British Military. As well, after the fall of France, she became a courier for the French Resistance and joined Captain Ian Garrow's escape network. Wake's phone was tapped and her mail intercepted, leaving her life in constant peril. Ultimately the Gestapo put a 5 million-franc price on her head. Wake's husband was captured, tortured and killed. She claims to have killed a man with her bare hands. Nancy Wake's remarkable life story was documented in her 1985 bestselling autobiography "The White Mouse."

Some of Nancy Wake's awards include: Companion of the Order of Australia; George Medal; France and Germany Star' War Medal 1939-1945; Medal of Freedom (United States); Badge In Gold (New Zealand).

Additional information about this amazing woman may be found at the following websites.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nancy_Wake

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/14/world/europe/14wake.html>

<http://www.badassoftheweek.com/index.cgi?id=27450552861>

Student Sizzle AU's Hot Social Media Topics

Following what's hot around AU's social media sites.

AthaU Facebook Group

Kelly seeks help deciding between her final two choices for tablet/reader. Lynette asks for feedback on COMP 210. Anna seeks student feedback on a BA in Women and Gender Studies.

Other posts include a Calgary study group, Australian weather, the AU crest, and courses ACCT 253, HRMT 322, and PSYC 200.

Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: "An #AthaU professor's viewpoint on the importance of #BlackHistoryMonth: <http://ow.ly/IH52308JgBl> #BlackHistory."

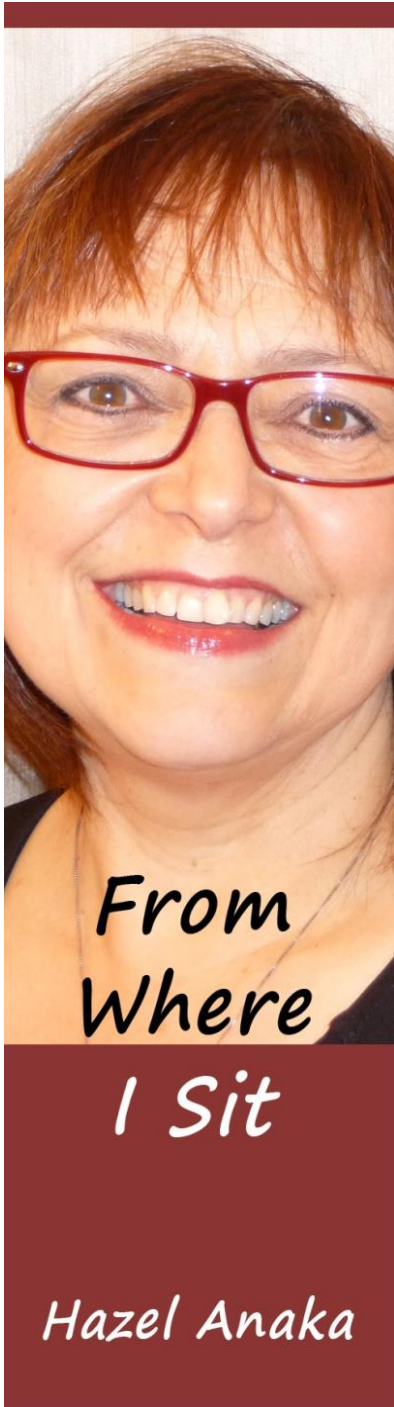
@AthabascaUSU (AUSU) tweets: "Planning to graduate at the 2017 @AthabascaU Convocation but can't afford it? Apply for the AUSU Travel Bursary! <http://bit.ly/1GIWJhi>."

@AU_Press tweets: "Lynda Ross comments on the myth of 'motherhood and having it all' in Interrogating Motherhood: <http://ow.ly/h3Co308OCjd>."

Youtube

Supplement your course resources with online lectures from Yale University's Yale Courses playlist.





Improves Your Odds

As my recovery from a fall on an icy sidewalk drags on, I've learned a few things. At the risk of being too clever by half, let's call them the Five A's.

Alone. As much as some of us (okay, it's me) value time spent alone, it is absolutely impossible to get through this life alone. For starters, there are some real safety issues. Having a health emergency without the ability to summon help from an ambulance or anyone else can be deadly. Moving through the house and the world, doing things one is physically unable to do, and having a sounding board for questions and concerns is best done with a cadre of others.

Accessibility. The issue of access to health care becomes real personal real fast when it's you or your loved one needing help. All of us understand (and accept) the concept of triage in an emergency department because it's a golden rule kind of thing. I'd expect to be treated first if my need was greatest, so it's okay if you're treated first when your need is greatest. The other part of accessibility is built structure. Our house would not accommodate a wheelchair. Even using a walker wasn't exactly a picnic. Toilet and countertop heights are all wrong.

Awareness. Am I alone in having sensitivities to drugs? I hate taking meds. But long ago I learned no medals are awarded for trying to power through without medication, that you can't let the pain get away from you, and that pain management is part of the recovery process. As headache and nausea rivaled the pain and discomfort from the actual injury I got scared. Paying attention to what our body tells us requires awareness. And a willingness to trust ourselves despite what experts may say.

Accomplished. When I decided I couldn't stand the nausea and headache another moment, I got Roy to take me back to the hospital. This time, through sheer dumb luck, I got a remarkable doctor. Her thoroughness astounded me. A sad commentary when a doctor being thorough is noteworthy. This doctor asked probing and follow up questions; *listened*; actually *examined* the injured leg; ordered an ECG, blood work, and urinalysis; got me on an IV to relieve symptoms; offered advice and reassurance that I would get better. That is an accomplished professional.

Attitude. Through this whole bloody mess, I've had to monitor my thinking. That meant accepting missing a planned writer's retreat, asking for and accepting help, managing pain, questioning treatment, and believing I will get through this. It's meant breathing and calming myself during what could have become panic attacks. It's meant making the best of this enforced inactivity by reading as much as my headaches allowed.

Because no one can escape challenge or misfortune forever, it's wise to spend some time formulating a plan. Keep caring people in your life, minimize risks for falls or injuries in and around your environment, don't disregard what your gut tells you, seek out accomplished experts, and think straight. It improves your odds, from where I sit.



Dear
Barb

Barbara Godin

Roomie Reservations

Dear Barb:

Hi, I am in my last year of high school and have been applying to universities and colleges. Last week I received my first acceptance letter from at a topnotch university and will be living in residence at least for the first year. I know that AU is a distance university, but I heard about The Voice through some on campus students who are taking AUs courses to accelerate the road to their degree. My dilemma is that I am a little leery about having a roommate. I am an only child therefore always had my own room. I've heard all kinds of horror stories about bad roommates and I'm hoping I can avoid this happening to me. Do you or your readers have any tips on how to get along with a roommate? I don't want to start off with problems? Thanks Jay.

Hey Jay:

Congrats on being accepted at a first-class university, this is the first step on your life journey. It's understandable that you would feel a little apprehensive about moving in with a total stranger. You could be meeting an awesome person who becomes a lifelong friend, or you could end up with someone you really can't stand. The most important aspect of making this a successful union is communication. Communication is the cornerstone of any relationship. Once you are both unpacked and somewhat settled in, ask your roommate to join you at Starbucks or Tim Horton's for a coffee. Chat about what is important to you, share your schedules

with each other and discuss whether you both prefer to study in the room or the library. If you choose to study in the room you will need to have some undisturbed, quiet time. Also, discuss whether you will be having friends in the room and perhaps set times when your room will be friend free and most importantly respect each other's privacy. It might be a good idea to let your roommate know ahead of time if you will be bringing friends home, just so they are not caught in an uncomfortable situation. You will also need to discuss keeping the room neat and tidy, if that's what you both want. Keep in mind that some people need more sleep than others, so be respectful of each other's schedule. It's also important that you respect each other's property, which means do not eat each other's food or borrow each other's clothes, (this would be more apt to happen with female roommates). When, or if conflicts arise, discuss them right away. If you find confrontation uncomfortable, try texting your roommate with your concerns. This will start the conversation and then hopefully you will be able to discuss the situation face to face. There may also be Residence Programs Assistants on campus with whom you will be able to discuss issues. Good luck Jay!

Follow Barb on twitter @BarbGod

Email your questions to voice@voicemagazine.org. Some submissions may be edited for length or to protect confidentiality; your real name and location will never be printed. This column is for entertainment only. The author is not a professional counsellor and this column is not intended to take the place of professional advice.

Later, when the lovebirds find themselves alone. . .

You've got some explaining to do, young lady!



Heigh-ho!

What's the name of the laundry soap that washed all your blues away?



It's called "Inner Revolution."

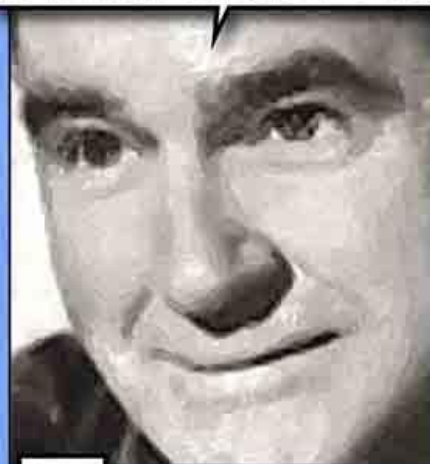


I've found myself, Alan. And my self has brought me to a place that's out of this galaxie!

I'm glad to hear it. Especially now. I just spoke with the captain . . .



He thinks we can land in 36 hours.



Are you ready, Emma?



For anything, my darling. Anything at all.

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The Doppelgänger Cure, by Wanda Waterman



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Financial Check-Up

How prepared are you for life's financial ups and downs? Is your budget uncomfortably tight? Is debt dragging you down?

From tips on saving for emergencies to paying back loans or sticking to a budget, **Student LifeLine** has advice, resources, and tools to help you get a handle on your money worries and boost your financial wellness.

Contact **Student LifeLine** any time, 24/7 at **1-800-567-2255 (TTY:1-877-371-9978)**, to connect with a caring consultant for support and resources.

This is a FREE service for all AUSU members!

You can also log in to www.lifeworks.com (username: AUSU, password: wellness) to access a wealth of helpful articles and tools to help you strengthen your financial future, including:

- Quizzes: [Do You Have Debt Problems?](#) and [How Financially Resilient are You?](#).
- New podcast: [Managing Your Money in a Changing Economy](#).
- Podcast: [Building Your Financial Resilience](#).
- Full-length recording: [Taking Charge of Your Money](#).
- Access tips: [Avoiding Money Conflicts as a Couple](#), [Getting Out of Debt](#), [Taking Charge of Your Money](#).
- Read articles: [Achieving Financial Well-Being](#), [Quick Tips for Setting SMART Financial Goals](#), [Online Tools to Help You Budget](#), [Helping Your Children Become Financially Responsible](#), [Understanding How Emotions Can Drive Spending](#).

Student Lifeline provides help and support 24/7 for any issues, from health, wellness, work, life, money, school, community referrals, and more!

IMPORTANT DATES

- **Feb 15:** [February degree requirements deadline](#)
- **Feb 16:** [AUSU Council Meeting](#)
- **Feb 28:** [Deadline to apply for course extension for April](#)
- **Mar 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Apr 1](#)
- **Mar 14:** [AUSU Council Meeting](#)
- **Mar 15:** [April degree requirements deadline](#)
- **Mar 31:** [Deadline to apply for course extension for May](#)

Student LifeLine

WHAT CAN IT DO FOR YOU?

We can help you get a handle on your money worries and build financial wellness

LifeWorks.com

User ID **AUSU**

Password **wellness**

Help is at your fingertips, 24/7

Available on the App Store

ANDROID APP ON Google play

Get it at BlackBerry World

AUSU ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' UNION

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CLASSIFIEDS

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