

Mi CASA es su CASA, III

The who's who in CASA

A Man's Legacy

Lessons to be Learned

Council Connection

What's Happening to your AUSU Fees?

Plus: The Creative Spark! Not Gonna Do It and much more!



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

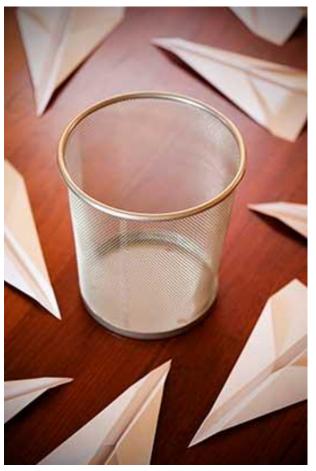


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Hey! Did you know the Voice Magazine has a Facebook page?

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

EDITORIAL Karl Low



Not Gonna Do It

I'm not touching the Chartlottetown thing. There's nothing I can add that hasn't already been said by some pundit somewhere. About the only thing left is my own position, which is the obvious one. Free speech has limits, and the only time it's acceptable to bring violence is when it's to stop other violence from being enacted or incited, and even then as a last resort.

So instead, I'm commenting on something much lighter but perhaps equally concerning to an audience of university students: collegiate sports.

Most universities and colleges have sports teams of various sorts. Even if you don't tend to follow sports, you still will tend to cheer for your team, and be slightly pleased when you here that teams from your university have won some sort of prestigious or challenging game. They're also useful for a recruitment tool, having an excellent sports program is a draw for some types of students, another factor that students weigh in when they're looking at their choice of a post-secondary institution.

AU has attempted to dip its toe into the sports world, forging partnerships with other colleges in creating a hockey

tournament, and even creating an MBA in Hockey Management. But that still doesn't give AU its own teams. With our own teams comes opportunities for merchandizing, or creating deeper connections with Athabasca students, where we have something from Athabasca to cheer for, or, if we're on a team, to do something "for Athabasca University." Admittedly, this is difficult to do at a distance university. We're not on a campus, so an event that requires we gather together on a field or in an arena, whether to play or watch, isn't going to be something many students could benefit from.

But there is another option.

E-sports, or electronic sports, are a rapidly growing segment of the sports market, with some tournaments now appearing on specialty sports channels, and the audiences growing each and every year. What is it? It's video games. Typically, team based, with some form of strategy. And this form of sports is growing, with a very few expert players now making a living exclusively from participating in these events. They're especially big at the collegiate level, because, let's be honest, that's the age demographic that typically has the time available to devote to the hours of practice that are required to compete at the top level.

But that competition also comes with access to scholarships and some prospect of fame for the sponsoring institution. Very recently, engadget <u>announced</u> that top teams in a coming "Collegiate Rocket League" tournament will net \$50,000 in scholarships. Rocket League is a video game involving three players on each side using rocket-equipped cars to essentially play soccer. However, the nature of the game isn't what's

important. There are a variety available. What's important is that this is a sport that fits in perfectly with the distance nature of our institution. It's something that AU students could do, something that would help to promote AU, be a bit of fun, and maybe gain some students some money in the process. With a little bit of marketing support from the institution (or maybe even from AUSU) this might be a winning idea to help AU stand out in the increasingly competitive field of online education.

After all, if you were looking at two distance education schools and one of them had stories about the school or student body supporting the team, even if you think treating videogames like sports is crazy, the notion that you're looking at a school that has a well-developed culture of support between students, an area that the students can all unite behind, might be just that little bit of extra appeal to help make your decision.

It also serves another factor. Any university that has some sort of sports team is far more difficult to consider to be a simple degree mill (even though we have a degree in Hockey Management). And while the stigma of online education has largely diminished for AU, an organized, institutionalized sports team would help to bury it even further.

And yes, part of this comes from my own love of video games, I'm not going to deny it, but I don't think the benefits I list are exaggerated. So if you're interested in helping pursue or develop this idea for AU, get in touch with me at karl@voicemagazine.org, if enough people are interested, maybe we can make something happen.

In the meantime, this week, our feature continues to explore the people behind CASA this time talking to their officer of Governmental and Stakeholder relations. AUSU invests a significant amount of money to be part of this group, so it's good that we have an idea of what that group is doing for us.

And speaking of money, this week's Council Connection reports on AU approving it's newest budget, which stands to have the organization see a deficit of close to a quarter-million dollars, and its plan to address this deficit, by raising the fees that students pay per credit.

But if that filthy lucre is a subject you'd rather not hear about, you can also check out Barb Godin's latest article, this one on the lessons she's learned from the men in her life. What originally started as an article for Father's Day has become, I think, something much more profound and definitely worth a read, whether you're a man or a woman.

Plus, I do want to draw your attention this week to the Creative Spark, where Marie Well looks at how humour can improve your creativity and help you think of out-of-the-box ideas to bring to your essays and studies. It's an article that had me laughing while being a bit revolted at the same time, so obviously it's something I needed to share with you.

We also have an installment of All the Music be Happenin' Now that I think is definitely worth a read. If you haven't been reading this series of articles, I suggest you at least give this one a try, and once you've done that, you can search our archives for the rest.

That plus news, advice, thoughts on open windows, developing your creative writing, events (well, one this week), reviews of the ubiquitous fast-food restaurants—we've all eaten at them, but have we ever stopped to really compare them—and more from the AU community all await.

Enjoy the read!

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Mi CASA es su CASA, Part III



Officer for CASA

Scott Jacobsen

MacAndrew Clarke is the Government and Stakeholder Relations Officer for the Canadian Alliance of Student Association (CASA). After a recent conference, he was kind enough to take the time to have a brief interview with Scott Jacobsen about what he does and how it matters for the organization and for AUSU.

What is your background and how did you find out about CASA?

My background is in Political Science, I studied at Carleton University. I also have a minor in music history and co-op education in politics. I found out about CASA shortly after my work in Brampton, Ontario.

I was always looking for an opportunity to work in government relations or stakeholder relations because it's much tied into what I always did in Montreal, my hometown: lots of community service with community organizations working in at-risk neighborhoods. I've also volunteered on a federal election campaign for an independent candidate and I did some volunteer work here and

there for a federal political party, and for a municipal party in Gatineau. As well, I've always found non-partisan politics to be interesting. So, to me, CASA was that nonpartisan advocacy.

What I've learned about this field is that the more you know the more you don't know, and the more I started finding out about the system the more I discovered that effective advocacy lies within non-partisanship because, at the end of the day, it's about finding common ground. You and I may have different understandings on, let's say, taxes, but surely we can come to an understanding of the importance of jobs and how that can affect a person's livelihood.

What is your position now and what are your tasks and responsibilities with CASA?

My position right now is I'm the Government Stakeholder Relations Officer for CASA. My task is to build bridges and help student leaders meet with MPs, senators, parliamentary staffers, and stakeholder organizations that work closely with the advocacy priorities of CASA; organizations like Universities Canada, Colleges & Institutes Canada, and Polytechnics Canada, are examples of people that we dialogue with on a regular basis. We also have reached out to the Canadian Association of University Teachers. My job is to look for a way to get as much information about a particular issue and then share it with the membership of CASA, so that soon the leaders will feel prepared in sitting in front of any decision maker or policy maker and basically deliver the ask in a way where they're going to feel confident, that in a way that the person that they're sitting in front of will understand and hopefully absorb to incite them to take some action.

From the point of view of the Government Stakeholder and Relations Officer for CASA, why is CASA important to the 250,000 plus members that are a part of it?

I say CASA is important for those 250,000 students because every single one of those students can rest assured that there are some great and awesome student leaders that I made that presentation to, that are out there and that are willing to fight for them. My job, which is something that I should have said in the previous question, is also to empower and equip the student leaders to continue to stay in that role. Advocacy is not easy and neither is lobbying, especially if you're sitting across the table from somebody that you don't know or somebody that you feel that is opposed to your ideas. This is about trying to find common ground, trying to find an understanding, and that requires a certain amount of depth and flexibility, which is something that I've always seen from the student leaders since I started working in November. So that's the reason why I got up there and did the presentation I did and that's why I still feel that CASA is important because this is the way that change works. Sometimes it would be great if things would move faster, but as I said in my presentation, Barack Obama said that: "progress doesn't always move in a straight line."

Any final thoughts?

Clarke: The work that you're doing is the thing I like to see, which is to see young people getting engaged in politics and then seeing the importance in it because, at the end of the day, you are the future. Every single person in that room is going to be the future. They're going to go on to do great things. But this experience that student leaders are having right now is one of the best things they will ever have, but the reason I emphasized in the presentation that it is not about them is because each and every person in that room is there because of the 250,000 students that represent CASA's member Associations, as well as the 77,000 students that the Quebec Students' Union has brought forward through their partnership with CASA as well. So there are some strong voices that are there because of the students, and because that relationship is always ongoing and there's always going to be a cycle in terms of advocacy. I said in the presentation; it never ends. We can only go onward and upwards, right?

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

Women of Interest

Marion Donovan was born October 15, 1917, in Fort Wayne, Indiana. and died November 4, 1998, in New York City. Donovan was an inventor who is best known for developing the first waterproof disposable diaper. She was one of only three women in her graduating class at Yale University, where she earned a Master's Degree in architecture. Donovan married and had two children. She became quite unhappy with changing cloth diapers and the mess made to the nearby sheets and blankets. She proceeded to invent the first waterproof diaper cover, with the help of a sewing machine and shower curtain. Marion Donovan received four patents for her diaper cover and for the use of snaps rather than safety pins. She went on to be granted 20 patents for women related items, which included a towel dispenser, hosiery clamp, closet organizer and facial tissue box, just to name a few. Marion Donovan was elected into the National Inventors Hall of Fame in 2015.

Additional information about this ingenious woman may be found at the following websites:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marion Donovan

https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2014/10/the-woman-who-invented-disposable-diapers/381310/http://americacomesalive.com/2013/03/07/marion-obrien-donovan-1917-1998-inventor-of-the-disposable-diaper/

The Creative Spark! Gobble Your Gallbladder

Marie Well



Could your jokes make you the next Tesla or Edison? Yes, humour awakes creativity—even in the sciences.

So, let's joke around for some quantum leaps:

What if you could eat yourself? Gobble your gallbladder and 3D print new growth? No animal would again suffer the butcher. Yet, we'd have no need for pigs, cows, and clucks. Livestock would go extinct.

What if you had digitally animated tattoos? CPU brain chips that hack your moods and mental images? Yes, bikers would have ransacks looped on their pudgy pecs. Trudeau's ankle would parade G20s hosted at his safe space, the Pooh Bear Daycare.

Humour helps us gain new ground. And groundbreaking solutions rarely build on common sense. You see, solutions are seldom linear. Instead, solutions carve paths of jagged swirls stretched to endpoints. Roberta Ness says "[N]ot every question has a single solution and the best path to a solution may be convoluted" (p. 132). So, crack jokes on your way to a breakthrough. Jokes help you dabble in the daring, break beliefs, and make mad science meaningful.

Star Trek spurred virtual worlds and 3D printers. Cartoons dared us to craft robots to scrub dishes and darn socks. Today, digital brains are budding. So, if Hollywood shook-up science, might jokes jolt science, too?

Ness says, "There is no better way to blast your mind out of the box than to consider a completely outrageous idea as though it were reasonable" (p. 135).

So, here's my outrageous idea: I learned that mathematicians study the fifth dimension. In the fifth dimension, you see through "skin" and get eyefuls of innards. Now, consider this: near-death-experiencers claim they invisibly pop out of their bodies and enter an afterlife. Might the NDE afterlife be the fifth dimension? And what if *infinite* dimensions exist?

My point? What if, in the fifth-dimension, invisible cows make up McDonald's Big Macs? Calorie free! Outrageous, yes. Reasonable? Give it twenty years.

Dr. Roberta Ness maps out how jokes shake paradigms in her book *Innovation Generation: How to Produce Creative and Useful Scientific Ideas*:

• Jokes lead to innovation. Jokes coax you down the path of reason and swoop you up into the unexpected.

• Get original by defying cliché mental images, says Edward de Bono in his book *Lateral Thinking* (as cited in Ness). [Fat is the new fit forms a present-day cliché. Try defying it without relying on old logic.]

- Right and wrong changes over time, across cultures, across places. Nothing is fixed.
- The following joke came from a headline in the *The Onion* campus paper: "Rich Guy Feeling Left Out of Recession" (as cited in Ness, p. 133). This joke is called a "counterfactual." Jokes can blast beliefs or reverse clichés.
- Slapstick humour gets people laughing. In other words, punching a person gets howls. Why? Laughing off abuse leaves us feeling less threatened. So, use humour to make painful loads lighter.
- Take everyday objects and find novel uses for them. This will flex your creative fire.
- Suggest something completely outrageous, and defend it. By doing so, you'll exercise your creative gifts.

Never mind gobbling gallbladders—what if men could grow milk-rich cow udders? The new milkman? I call it a creative spark!



A Man's Legacy Barbara Godin



The legacy a man leaves for his children is precious. It took many years for me to heal the scars left from damaging father figures. Despite the negatives, life always provides us with a counteracting positive, if we only allow ourselves to see it.

Each man in my life has taught me something about life—some good, some not so good—beginning with my biological father. When I think about my dad I feel love, and loss, both at the same time. Dad was a reserved Englishman who rarely showed affection to any of his four children. He was a heavy drinker. I don't really recall him being drunk or doing anything irrational, but that's not to say he didn't—I just didn't see it. I loved the part of him where I could see reflections of myself, and I knew we were

a part of each other. For example, we both had a short big toe, an inherited condition called Morton's Syndrome.

My parents divorced when I was a year and a half old, so my father was in and out of my life. I lived with him for a short time and I have only good memories of that time. But along with the good memories there is emptiness, as I don't feel I really knew him. The best word to describe my feelings for my dad was "composed." There was nothing intense, and I didn't miss him when I didn't see him. When I visited, we just sat together, exchanging few words. He didn't attend my wedding. And that was okay with me.

I learned from my dad that you can love someone just because of the place they hold in your life.

After my parents separated, Mom met Ray, a convicted rapist, in a bar and brought him into her children's lives. He was a man that you could easily describe as "creepy." He barely talked above a whisper and had a sinister laugh, which always made me feel as if I had done something awful. He did terrible things to my sister, things that she never was able to get over, things that you only read about in books. I will always remember that the dark green blinds in our house were kept tightly closed, as Ray was always fearful someone was after him. He systematically forced my mother to choose between him and her children, and, for the most part, she chose him. However, for some reason, he seemed to like me. At the time I was happy that I was able to stay with mom, I loved her so much. Up until that point she was the constant in my life. But as mom and Ray's relationship deteriorated, and the fighting escalated, I began to wish I was somewhere else. Their relationship was filled with fighting and horrible name calling and the police were constantly at our door. Ray's uncle and his wife, who had no children, began taking me to their place for weekends. As my life was becoming filled with fear I looked forward to going to the Martin's.

Ray taught me that sometimes it's easier to just play the game.

My weekend visits to the Martin's eventually tuned into year-long visits. At first, I liked it there; it was quiet and everything seemed normal like other kids homes, but things changed. Betty Martin was a harsh, strict woman who always seemed to have health problems and spent most of her time lying on the sofa. I tried to get along with her, but I felt such anger toward her because she was trying to be a mother to me, and I already had a mother. Often Henry stepped in and tried to smooth things over. He was very nice to me and took me everywhere with him. He was the father figure I missed and he became like a real dad to me. I loved him and I believed he loved me. But very quickly his vision of love became twisted and sick, and every day I just wished I could leave there.

He taught me not to trust, as people are often not who they appear to be.

As soon as I was able to, I moved out on my own. I met and married my first husband. We were two dysfunctional teenagers, trying to escape unhappy homes. We had not finished high school and were working at minimum wage jobs, which inevitably led to financial stress. When our daughter was born the stress only escalated. We argued constantly about everything. However, we had some happy times with our daughter. As things became more intense, drugs and abuse caused me to take my daughter and escape.

From my first husband I learned that no one else can make you whole, it has to come from within.

My second husband was my lifeline. He restored my faith in men. He loved me unconditionally and always assured me that everything would be fine. He took care of my every need. It was as if his whole purpose in life was to make me happy. At first I found it difficult to accept that life really can be this happy and people can be trusted. I relentlessly tested Ed to make sure he wasn't going to be like the other men in my life, and he never crumbled. We experienced the normal ups and downs that couples go through, but, our life was largely bliss. I thought my life would always be like that until the fateful day when cancer entered our lives.

One year later my dream was over and life was forever changed. My heart was broken. All the pain from the past flooded forward. It took a long time to be able to feel past the pain and see the precious gift I had been given.

Ed taught me that I am loveable and worthy of being loved.

I truly believed Ed was the last man who would be a part of my life, until I met Stan. He had also lost this wife, and through our shared grief we began a relationship. Stan and I healed our grief together and could understand and share the deep pain of losing a loved one. Although Stan grew up without a father, he overcame and was a truly amazing father to his sons.

Stan showed me, and continues to show me, the true meaning of the word father.

Barbara Godin is a graduate of AU and writes the "Dear Barb" column. She lives in London, Ontario with her husband, two dogs, and one cat. She can be reached on twitter @BarbGod



Council Connection August 8, 2017 AUSU Council Meeting

Bonita Arbeau



Athabasca University Students' Union

All councillors attended the August 8th AUSU council meeting, as well as two AUSU staff members and two student observers, including myself. The meeting was a lengthy one, at just over 2 hours long.

The first item of business was to approve a member-at-large for Member Engagement and Communications Committee. It was noted that the AUSU Executive selected the top three applicants, and then council voted by secret ballot. Benjamin McDonald was chosen for the position, and council approved his appointment unanimously.

The next agenda item was the proposed 2017/2018 budget. Taken as a whole, this budget represents a significant increase in the size and spending of AUSU council and staff. Council budgeted for an increase from 9 to 13 councillors and from 3 to 4 executives, a change that will be presented to students in the upcoming AUSU bylaw overhaul. The incremental cost of this larger council and executive, including honoraria, benefits, CPP, and council retreat costs, is estimated to be

\$49,890 this year. An increase in staff salaries of \$61,000, along with a staffing fee of \$10,000, will go toward hiring another full-time staff member. Another new expenditure in this budget is an executive transition retreat (separate from the annual council retreat), to be held in January of each year at an estimated cost of \$4,950.

When asked about these changes, President Shawna Wasylyshyn explained that, although the details are still being worked out, the AUSU Executives' hours are currently maxed out and council has been considering adding a fourth executive for some time. Executive Director Jodi Campbell added that an additional staff member will provide governance and advocacy support to council, and the new executive retreat will allow the AUSU Executive to maintain momentum while planning for an effective transition.

The budget also allocates a total of \$29,500 to mail welcome letters, along with AUSU magnets, to new members. AUSU began e-mailing welcome letters to new members in 2015, but the MEC committee wants to expand this program and connect with new members in a tangible and more memorable way. To avoid sending

the welcome package to visiting students, new members will receive it after they have been a student at AU for six months.

Council also approved several changes to AUSU's awards program. First, the maximum value of each computer bursary was increased from \$800 to \$900. AUSU doubled the number of returning student awards and balanced student awards it will give away each year, starting at the November 1st awards deadline. The AUSU awards committee is also introducing a pilot award called #Igo2AU, and this new award is intended to reflect the openness of AU and the diversity of its students. Awards Committee Chair Robin Bleich explained that the award will be available to all AUSU members, regardless of how many credits they have completed, and that applicants will provide a short essay or video in response to questions about their AU experience. One #Igo2AU award of \$1000 will be available at each awards deadline.

The only councillors who had comments or questions about the budget were Kim Newsome and Brandon Simmons. Kim pointed out that the amount for telephone and Internet was inadequate, and council agreed on an amendment to increase that line from \$4,500 to \$6,100. Kim also requested to add \$1,000 for merchandise to use for MEC committee promotions, and there were no objections to this change. Brandon inquired if council would be open to looking for cost savings for the annual council retreat. In particular, he wondered if councillors might share hotel rooms, for example, to cut costs. However, Shawna Wasylyshyn said that she "feels strongly" that councillors should always receive their own hotel rooms for privacy and to prevent any uncomfortable situations.

So, who will pay for these spending increases? You will. The budget has a projected deficit of \$235,969, about 25% of AUSU's reserves. Rather than drawing from reserves, however, the budget presents three alternatives that would bring the budget into the black: increase the \$3.00 per credit student union fee to \$4.25, \$4.50, or \$5.00 per credit. In other words, with the largest increase, students would pay an additional \$6.00 for each 3-credit course. No councillors questioned the deficit or these proposed student fee increases, and the 2017/2018 budget was approved unanimously.

After a few minor policy changes and the monthly report presentations, the meeting ended with a question and answer session. One student observer asked about the upcoming changes to AU's student resource fee. In response to AUSU's advocacy efforts, AU will be reducing the student resource fee by \$50, but students will be responsible to purchase their own e-text or textbook. AUSU promoted this as a win for students in AUSU's July executive blog, but it was evident from the feedback on AUSU's mobile app and the informal AU Facebook page that not all students are happy about the change. This student asked if AUSU had advocated for this or whether it was AU's idea, and inquired when the change would come into effect. Shawna responded that AUSU has been advocating for course material choice, transparency, and cost savings for years, but AU decided on the amount of the course material fee reduction. VPEX Julian Teterenko interjected that AU informed them that most e-texts will be available for around \$50, although textbooks will cost more. Shawna also said that she expects implementation will take longer than the estimated date of January 2018.

The next AUSU council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 12th at 5:30 MST. To receive the meeting information, visit www.ausu.org or send an e-mail to admin@ausu.org. AUSU is planning to release their new bylaws soon, so make sure your voice is heard!

Bonita is a 3rd year bachelor of commerce student at AU, a mom-of-three, a political junkie, and an impassioned tennis fan, who just so happens to enjoy attending AUSU council meetings in her "spare" time. You can follow her on twitter @BonitaRenee88.

The Case for Fresh Air



Barabara Lehtiniemi

It was one of those breezy, freshwashed days that follow intense thunderstorms. Through my open window wafted a tantalizing scent. Delicately floral, slightly spicy, and unfamiliar.

The scent drew me outside. I bent my head to this patch of flowers and that, but the scent's source proved elusive. It was a gift of the breeze, given to me because my window was open to receive it.

I live in what is becoming increasingly rare in southern Ontario: a house with

no air conditioning. When I was growing up, air-conditioned houses were rare. Only posh people had such luxuries. I can still recall the sole house with central air I was ever in as a child.

Years later, window air-conditioners became a luxury within reach of more households. One or two rooms of a house or apartment turned fridge-like in summer, while the rest baked.

Now, central air conditioning has become the norm—almost essential. On sweltering July days in southern Ontario, residents dash from house to car to office to store—all in air-conditioned comfort. One need not sweat in summer any more, it seems.

Except in our house. Built only 25 years ago, this house was never fitted out with central air. I've lived here for seven years and have not had any enduring desire to change that.

Although Ontario summers are notoriously hot and humid, we manage to keep the house at a comfortable temperature. We close windows on hot afternoons and open them on cool mornings. We track the sun and close blinds to keep heat out. At mealtimes, the barbecue is used more and the kitchen stove less. When we come inside on hot days, it feels almost as though we do have central air. Almost.

Only during long hot spells—the kind where it climbs above 30° during the days and doesn't dip below 25° at nights—does it get uncomfortable in the house. Then we turn fans on and talk about sleeping in the basement (which we never end up doing.) We look longingly at our neighbour's pool.

Then the heat breaks with a cracking afternoon thunderstorm and lashing rain. In the cool that follows, we throw open windows to flush the heat out. With windows open on all four sides of our bungalow, it takes only minutes to cool the inside.

By August, scorching summer temperatures are already behind us. We may have hot days, but they are usually followed by cool nights. We have more windows open more often. They are why I won't give in to air conditioning's allure.

Through open windows I catch the scent of flowers and the tang of fresh-mown hay. I hear wind rustling the silky tassels of corn and distant rumbles of an approaching storm. I catch the chattering of squirrels and the chirping of birds. I follow the rhythmic whirr of farm machinery as they plow, seed, and harvest their way through the season.

Would I trade all that for the sterile hum of refrigerated air?

Right now, a distant whistle heralds a passing train. A choir of crickets sings a symphony. A young bird calls out for its next feeding. And an elusive floral scent wafts in my open window.

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

The Fit Student Do it All



Marie Well

I wanted to be the first woman in space. The first girl wrestler in junior high. The first woman to do, well, whatever. But fame comes with problems: egos, drugs, and gone tomorrows.

In grade six, I wrote that I aspired to be a roller derby star. My teacher, not satisfied, told me to try another stab. We settled with prime minister.

Yet, I craved more.

At university, many students major in what they did in high school: math or English. Instead, I wisely chose to explore—but circled back to math. I then moved to another field with hopes to minor in physics, drama, or dance. Settling with a single subject stifled my soul.

Some people specialize. When my young cousin fell into a coma, one nurse stood out. Compassionate. Empathic. All her life this woman loved nursing those around her. As a tiny girl, she had no

question of her calling.

Some people feel scattered and spread. The solution? Seek careers that mix up plenty of passions—or specialize and tend to hobbies, says Emilie Wapnick, author of *How to Be Everything*. Marketing marks my passion. Where else does one job combine design, analytics, video, events, writing, and Wordpress? Paradise.

Consider your hobbies. I delve in robotics, martial arts, and weightlifting. To juggle our passions, cut out time wasters. I've watched less than twenty time-sucking TV hours since 1996—but more than two thousand at the movies.

To find your passions, drum up lists of life's highs. When I recorded my first song in a studio, I felt glee. When I ran for school president in junior high (but lost), I felt pumped. When I pumped iron and punched pads, I felt free. My advice? Do more euphoria.

Emilie Wapnick gives the nod to more euphoria in her book *How To Be Everything*:

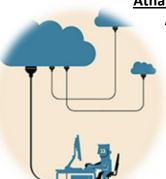
- Sometimes we spend a lifetime figuring out what we love to do.
- "The idea of doing one thing forever can sound like a nightmare to us" (p. 14).
- The notion that we have one calling is misleading. Many of us have plenty of callings.
- *Multipotentialites* are people with many interests and hobbies. These people bubble over with curiosity.
- *Multipotentialites* have multiple passions. The books you own shed insight into passions to pursue.
- *Multipotentialites* apply skills from one hobby or interest to the next—in other words, they show talent at synthesizing; they innovate.
- Multipotentialites get labeled as Jack-of-all-trades. Yet, Jack-of-all-trades specialize, too. [Papa serves as a handyman electrician, mechanic, carpenter, and plumber—but shines as an industry-leading entrepreneur.]
- Multipotentialites make great entrepreneurs. Working for yourself lets you dive into many duties.
- Do stuff just for fun, too. "Be careful not to confuse profitability with value [A hobby] might provide us with opportunities to grow, to give back, to improve our mental or physical health, to spend quality time with our family ..." (p. 45).

A creative type travelled the world. When people asked him, "What do you do?" he bristled. A better response? "I do it all."

Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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

AthaU Facebook Group



A post about negative tutor reviews on RateMyProfessors.com prompted an active discussion about how much weight to give such anonymous reviews; this thread later disappeared. Chris noticed his computer settings altered after a ProctorU exam; other comments confirm that this sometimes happens.

Other posts include complex variables, Psyc texts for sale, and the ACCT 460 midterm.

The Landing

Prof Jon Dron blogs about Strategies for successful learning at AU.

Twitter

<u>@AthabascaUSU</u> (AUSU) tweets: "Student feedback has influenced clinical procedures in the Faculty of Health Disciplines. For more info, visit https://t.co/tKnbn2sII0."

<u>@AthabascaUBiz</u> tweets: "Do you like craft beer? If you do, then we have the event for you! https://goo.gl/qqXEMK."

Creative Writing



Deanna Roney

One of the questions that comes with learning creative writing is which is the best way: studying the classics, or taking creative writing courses? My argument is, well, both. Though the classics could be switched up with more current work, as long as the work is sound. This is why the classics are so useful, because everyone has agreed that the characters, plots, settings are all well developed. There is a certain style that came with the classics that isn't employed anymore, however they clearly get their point across, and every character is developed.

Reading is a vital part of writing. Reading

good novels to see how it is done, and poor ones to show what not to do. It might sound simple, that if you know what to do you will instinctively know what not to do, but this is not the case when it comes to creative writing. It is hard to recognize a bad character development, or plot point, in your own writing. It is easier to see in someone else's work, you aren't as emotionally involved in it.

Understanding creative writing isn't as simple as taking a course or reading some books. You need to devote yourself to it, practice it, refine it. Like any other skill, it takes time and patience to hone. I have found creative writing courses to be instrumental in my writing. Having someone go through my work and highlight areas that work, or don't work, and make suggestions on how it may be resolved or suggesting sections to read to understand why it needs to be resolved.

With anything you need to know and understand the rules before you can break them. If you just break them without understanding why or without a specific reason it comes across as messy as opposed to artistic license. In this case taking a creative writing course, or reading textbooks, is an important step to understand why the choices made in the classics work so well and why the characters are so compelling. It shows you the reasons why certain plot devices work, and others don't.

So, is it better to study the classics or take creative writing courses? I think it is better to do both. To build an understanding of the tools and methods and then to see them in action. These cement the concepts and allow you to translate those from observation and into practice. It takes a lot of time to hone any creative (or non) skill, and writing is no different. The best thing to do if creative writing is what you want to do is find courses or a mentor, collect as many books on writing fiction as you can, as many classics, contemporary books, and read, write, repeat.

There was one short story I wrote in one of my first creative writing courses, which I took in the midst of my degree so I had studied plenty of classics to this point. When I went back (after I finished my degree and dedicated months to continue to hone my style) and I read this story that I had been so in love with I found it to be utterly lacking. There was drawn out setting descriptions, the characters were flat, and the inciting incident lacking.

Your style and understanding of creative writing should always be growing and developing. It is something where you are always learning a more effective way of portraying emotion or setting. To create suspense. You are never finished learning. Use the tools that are available to you, if you have access to courses, take them, if you can get a hold of some textbooks, do. If you have access to classics (which are usually free to download in ebook format) then read them, read modern books, read a wide variety of genres. Ultimately, don't limit yourself.

Deanna is an AU graduate who loves adventure in life and literature. Follow her path on the writing journey at https://deannaroney.wordpress.com/



Canadian Education News

Scott Jacobsen



The Difficulties of International Students in Canada

According to the <u>Huffington Post Canada</u>, the Canadian education system is attractive to students from around the globe. There were 266,620 international students circa 2016 based on <u>data</u> from Statistics Canada.

It was estimated by the <u>Canadian Federation of Students</u> (CFS) that the tuition for international students is more than three times the cost of the students from Canada, the domestic students. Once in Canadian higher education, the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities <u>reports</u> that they face a number of big problems.

These issues can include feeling alienated, having to deal with finances, integrating family life with academics, and then accessing the labour market of Canada. "Taking the first step and participating in programs already in place would help in feeling integrated, settled, and ultimately achieving success," the Huffington Post Canada said.

Survey Done on the Costs of Post-Secondary Education

A <u>press release</u> was released about a survey by <u>Universitas Barometer</u>. They worked in conjunction with CROP polling firm to look into the real costs associated with post-secondary education. Those costs are "a significant concern for 68% of Quebecers aged 18 to 24 years old, as well as for 78% of the parents surveyed."

32% said the costs were the reason why they decided not to pursue their education. 94% of students and 97% of parents agreed on the importance of education. 26% of students between the ages of 18-24 who considered education important were "not enrolled in post-secondary studies" at the time of the survey.

Many surveyed students were motivated because of the financial contribution from their parents. Some details on Quebec students:

- 53% received financial support from their parents (source of the funds not specified)
- · 39% benefited from the Loan and Bursaries Program
- · 22% received educational assistance payments (EAPs) from a registered education savings plan (RESP)

To see more details, even tips, please see <u>here</u>.

Education Advocates Get Backlash for tweets

<u>CBC News: Calgary</u> reported on an Alberta education advocacy group "being slammed on social media for suggesting the deadly violence last weekend in the United States is a cautionary tale against alternative schools."

The advocacy organization is called Save Our Schools Alberta (SOS Alberta) tweeted about the Charlottesville, Va. Unite the Right rally. The tweet said the rally "reaffirms for us why we cannot afford to segregate our children [—] not by class, race, culture, religion or ability."

Barbara Silva, SOS Alberta spokesperson, stated the organization examines the "institutional systems that create barriers or inequality for children." Silva noted the aim was to link the recent events for proactive dialogue around all barriers for students.

UNB Professor Argues for Pleasure in Sex Education

<u>CBC News: New Brunswick</u> said, "A University of New Brunswick professor is calling for changes in sex education in the province after talking to young people about their intimate lives." The study by Lucia O'Sullivan used a sample size of 400 people aged 16 to 21.

These study participants described their sexual problems. O'Sullivan said she thought their sex lives would be fine, but that sexual problems were "very high." The problems for young people's sex lives were from the get-go.

When asked to have a pleasurable sex life, students didn't know exactly how to answer the questions, O'Sullivan reported. She thinks students should be given the appropriate information because the withholding of information doesn't help. She believes we should work to give them the proper platform, so students can have an enjoyable sex life as they grow "fully into their adulthood."

Canadian Students and Teachers Earn High Praise

"A recent <u>BBC article</u> called Canada "an education superpower." It referred to the fact that, in recent years, Canadian students' results in literacy, mathematics and science are among the best in the world.

We're in the same echelon as countries like Finland and Singapore," *The Record* said.

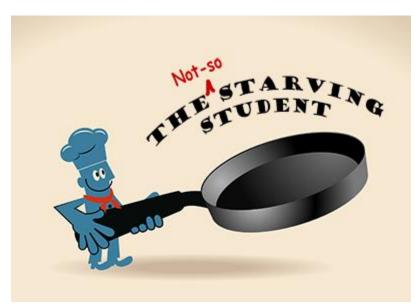
The article took information from a study by the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) and the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD). In Canada, because of the British North America Act of 1867, the provincial governments play a larger role in educational policy than the federal government.

The author noted a large number of immigrant children in Canadian schools. Canada is seen as having "a common commitment to an equal chance in school." An important point was the small gap between the advantaged and disadvantaged students.

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

\$5 Fast Food Challenge

Xin Xu



With inflation nearly at its peak, students may find that scouting affordable food has become a chore. I decided to experiment with what a five-dollar bill could afford in the now. As a student, there's a certain criteria I use to rank my fast-food experience. The fast food selection, quantity and price tag are of high importance. To beef up the challenge, I thought I would only scout food items that are can satisfy at least one of your meals, so we can cross out all the snack items *a priori*. If you thought this was an impossible task, you'd be surprised what the fast-food world has to offer. Unfortunately, I couldn't find any balanced Canadian Health Guide acceptable options at this price. Hence

for the health nuts out there, this list may not be your cup of tea.

Subway

Selection: 5/5 Quantity:3/5 Price: 3/5

Sitting at \$4.69 (according to this past week's menu), Subway has a wider selection than many of its fast-food competitors. For this price you'll find a selection of cold cut combo, meatball marinara (personal favorite), pizza sub with cheese, and vegetarian subs paired with your favorite bread. Although, I admit there have been tweaks to this category in the last few years (including removal of some options in the value menu), overall Subway's custom subs offer a price that's hard to beat. Quality and quantity, however, is very much debatable.

A&W

Selection: 2/5 Quantity: 2/5 Price tag: 5/5

Priced at \$1.75 (according to past week's menu), A&W offers the single buddy burger that seems more like a snack than a hearty meal. However, I have purchased at least three of these beef sliders (\$5.25) that makes for a more substantial meal than a single beef patty slider. Another possibility is opting for the double buddy burger. Choosing buddy burgers is of course, under the assumption you're satisfied with being a carnivore.

McDonalds

Selection: 4/5 Quantity: 3/5 Price tage: 5/5

Unsurprisingly this popular king of fast food makes the list. While inflation has hit even McDonalds, there are still a couple options left on the menu that deserve honorable mention. My personal favorite is a custom junior chicken with two patties. The two patties give an almost gourmet appearance to the burger. With the introduction of self-serve machines, you can even customize your condiments to include Thai chili or chipotle sauce.

Wendy's

Selection: 4/5 Quantity: 5/5 Price tag: 4/5

With the \$1.89 value menu that rolled in six years ago (prices have changed since), Wendy's offers a wide selection of fast food items that put A&W to shame. The menu includes nuggets, burgers, fries and wraps so you'll never have to order the same thing twice. With \$5, the starving student can mix and match two items from the list. Or even better yet, ordering off a second value menu with the choice of the Junior Cheeseburger Deluxe for the price of \$1.32 (prices have changed since).

Tim Hortons

Selection: 2/5 Quantity: 3/5 Price tag: 3/5

While the selections and quantities might not be up to par, Tim Hortons does offer choices that "appear" to be healthier with the choice of brown or white bread. I found their under \$5 hot food varieties to be limited at best. The few items worth mentioning include their various breakfast sandwiches, the hot chilli, BLT and their chicken salad sandwiches.

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

Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: FormsBirds Scholarship Contest

Sponsored by: FormsBirds

Deadline: September 15, 2017

Potential payout: \$500

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be enrolled, or planning to enrol, at an accredited college or university in 2017, and have a minimum GPA of

3.0. See full eligibility criteria.

What's required: A completed <u>application form</u>, a 600–1000-word essay explaining the importance of your major in today's society, an official academic transcript, and a photo of the applicant.

Tips: Read the <u>official rules</u> carefully.

Where to get info: www.formsbirds.com/scholarship

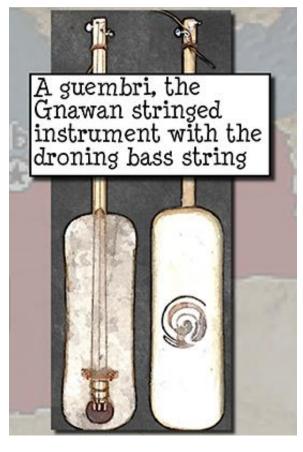


^{*}Prices listed may have changed

^{*}All rankings are based on my observations alone

All the Music be Happenin' Now Chapter Six: Gnawa

Wanda Waterman



And now to backtrack just a little, to just before the dawn of the Arab Spring.

I was first drawn to Moroccan music in 2009 while reading *The No-Nonsense Guide to World Music,* by Louise Gray (Gray, 2009). Gray chose a thoroughly postmodern structure by building her book around the most moving and influential musical genres the world over, genres I described in my review as "fountainheads of primal musical energy." The genres that stood out were Spain's fado, Greece's rembetika, and, most of all, the Sufi music played in the Djemaa el-Fna marketplace in Marrakech, Morocco.

I soon learned that nearly every region—sometimes every city—in Morocco had its own musical tradition, some more vibrant than others, and that much of the music carried the voice of resistance. This fact, combined with peculiar cultural conditions and a tumultuous history, made the country look like a powder keg.

Morocco has long been a relatively repressive country and in 2009 was becoming more so. Poverty, high youth unemployment, corruption in government, severe restrictions on freedom of speech, and religious rules—strict to the point of exasperating—were creating a stifling hopelessness. Moroccan

blogger and poet A.T.B. summed up the Moroccan youth experience as a schedule of glorious escapes with American television followed by daily rude awakenings:

Happy, man!
just happy!
until we grudgingly shuffled outside
to find the horizon had sucked
the sun in leaving behind
a smudge of colors like a
fly swatted against the wall
and our nightmares standing
out there patiently waiting.
- A.T.B, 2009

A.T.B. had also written a post about El Bashir Hazzam, a student blogger from Taghjijt, close to the Sahara in Morocco's Guelmim province. El Bashir had blogged about a peaceful student demonstration and had also published the students' condemnation of the police for their heavy-handed reaction. Taghjijt was then placed under a curfew and local Internet cafés were either closed or placed under surveillance to prevent news of the incident from reaching the outside world. El Bashir was charged with "spreading false information about human rights that undermined the kingdom's image" and sentenced to four months in prison.

I found El Bashir's Facebook page and quickly began communicating with his brother, Abdellah. El Bashir, now in jail, could only speak Arabic, but Abdellah, studying for a degree in French, was able to answer my questions. In the process of the series of <u>articles</u> I wrote about El Bashir for the *Voice*, El Bashir went to court and was acquitted, due in large part to the relatively large amount of public attention his case garnered worldwide.

His thanks to me and the *Voice* for our small role was gratifying, for sure, but I had a heap of music to explore. Abdellah graciously continued communicating with me, sharing information about his region, the Moroccan Sahara, and the music played in his village, until his fiancée quite understandably demanded he stop texting with other women.

Back to the language site, where a request to learn French and Arabic won me several language partners from Morocco. Most were enamoured of the *rai* music of Algeria (more about that later), but one Moroccan sent me an mp3 of some of the most haunting music I'd ever heard. A woman with a stirring voice sang from the point of view of the nurse of Prophet Mohamed. My source said the genre had been created by sub-Saharan slaves sold in Morocco. It was called "Gnawa," a term I didn't remember having seen before, even in the aforementioned music guide. But it soon became clear that the "Sufi" music Louise Gray had heard in Marrakech was Gnawan.

It was all starting to come together. I was soon privileged to meet Driss Akjij of Meknes, a fountainhead of Maghrebian musical assistance. In the coming years it was Driss who helped me translate the Arabic and Berber dialects on the North African albums I was now voraciously devouring and scribbling about, Driss who explained recent Moroccan music history, and Driss who suggested new artists.

I became convinced that the unique history and cultural conditions of the Maghreb at this time were about to lead to some earth-shaking political changes, and I imagined this would begin in Morocco. I wasn't very surprised when the following year the first domino in a series of civil conflicts fell in the Maghreb, but I was a little taken aback to see the unrest exploding first in Tunisia. The Jasmine Revolution, which turned out not to be a revolution at all, sparked the series of events in the Arab world that continue causing tremors today.

Talking with victims of these conflicts was devastating. The only way to stay sane was to keep my mind on the soundtrack. The questions now occupying my mind were these:

What is it about the Sahara?

Why did the experience of crossing it change people forever? How did this great desert generate such incredible music, music that lies at the center of all music like a jewelled navel?

References

A. T. B., from poem "This American Dream" 2009
Gray, Louise., *The No-Nonsense Guide to World Music.*, "Between the Lines" in association with New Internationalist Publications Ltd., 2009

Wanda also writes the blog The Mindful Bard: The Care and Feeding of the Creative Self.

AU-thentic Events

Upcoming AU Related Events

MBA in Hockey Management Info Session

Thursday, August 24, 10:00 to 11:00 am MDT

Online

Hosted by AU's Faculty of Business business.athabascau.ca/event-details/executive-mba-business-hockey-info-session-5pm-mst-online-3-copy/register online at above link



Been There, Done That

For the first time in forty-two years I attended Edmonton's Heritage Festival. In the past I considered and then dismissed the idea of going. It's so big, it's so far, and it's so hard to get to were the worrying deterrents. It'll probably be too hot. Or it might pour. There's a lot to see and miles to walk; what if the comforts of shade and tables and toilets were nowhere to be found.

But about a week ago I found the festival's little travel guide inserted into the Edmonton Sun. That made it feel more real. The map didn't look that daunting. It was possible to buy food tickets ahead of time. But the clincher was that Hilary agreed to go with me.

For affairs like this I rely on her to drive or orchestrate the logistics. The festival runs three days and is a strict no car zone. So we parked as close as we could (outside the Tag & Tow residential areas) and ordered an Uber. Let me just say, the traffic is a freaking gong show. With policemen directing traffic, bumper to bumper park and ride buses, plus normal Sunday traffic, it felt like a parking lot. Eventually we got there. Roy suggested a cheque payable to the Edmonton Food Bank would be a lot easier than toting a bag of canned and boxed goods. Smart guy.

Before leaving home, I'd printed off the menu that itemizes each pavilion's food offerings and number of coupons required. With seventy countries offering over 500 food and drink items, each coupon being worth a dollar, and some incredibly long lineups some pre-planning made sense. As it was, two of us used sixty dollars worth of coupons! That unbelievable amount is more a function of price and less of big eaters. An onion cake, five bucks. Four slices of watermelon, five bucks. A heavy fruit-filled bun from Russia, five bucks. Four spring rolls, five bucks. Three Mexican Tacos de Cochinta, twelve bucks. It all adds up.

The grounds were muddy from the previous night's rain and hailstorm. But there were tables to sit at and dance performances to watch. There was shopping to do if your tastes run to clothing, jewelry, souvenir type objects. Everything I saw seemed either over-priced or readily available through ethnic stores or mall kiosks.

We walked and we walked. I didn't have the presence of mind to wear my Fitbit but according to my phone we logged about 8000 steps or 5.3 kilometres. In the heat.

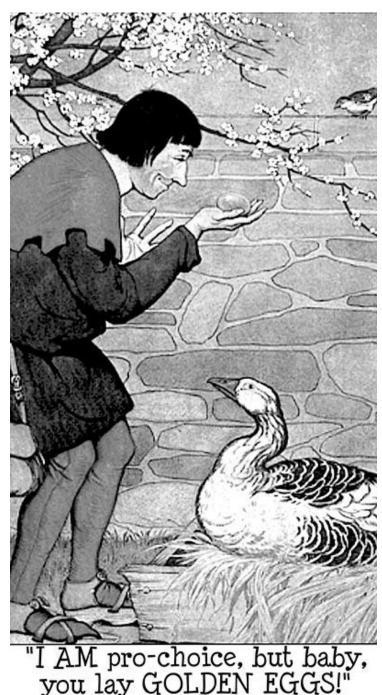
This description likely sounds whiny. And in many ways, that's exactly how I felt. Between the food coupons (\$60), two Uber rides (\$24), the two donations to the Food Bank (\$50) it wasn't a cheap outing.

And yet. There is something to be said for the sheer mammoth undertaking of it all, the absence of any visible complaints or impatience, the exposure for the ethnicities represented, the food drive, the magnitude of the volunteerism.

But maybe the biggest thing is I can scratch it off my bucket list: attend the world's largest multicultural festival in one location. Been there, done that. Now this crowd and traffic hating introverted farm kid never has to go back again, from where I sit.

Hazel Anaka's first novel is Lucky Dog. Visit her website for more information or follow her on Twitter @anakawrites.

If Babies were Commodities, Would we Even be Having this Discussion? Wanda Waterman



If babies brought us money instead of costing us a small fortune, if they brought us extra time instead of monopolising it all, if they moved our careers ahead instead of stalling them, if they cleaned things instead of always needing to be cleaned, or if they got us good tables at fancy restaurants, there would be no debate about who pays to terminate a pregnancy.

But the debate roars on, and it just can't stop being about the money. The Texas Senate just approved a plan requiring separate insurance coverage for abortions, even abortions in the case of rape or incest, making it the eleventh state restricting abortion insurance coverage in private insurance plans.

According to <u>Senator Brandon Creighton</u>, "Texas must take steps to prohibit taxpayer and premium dollars from subsidizing abortions that are not medically necessary."

Let's take a step back from our respective positions and ask what it is about Western society that still makes this issue so cumbersome. Why are so many pregnant women forced to make decisions whose negative effects they may never escape? Why do even planned pregnancies leave mothers feeling exhausted and hopeless, obliged to sacrifice themselves to compensate for a culture that only wants to take their money and run?

Babies and their moms need ready access to good nutrition, safe housing, adequate rest, social supports, education, and personal fulfillment. To be pro-life and refuse to fund such resources or to be pro-choice and demand access to funding for abortions while quietly tolerating social conditions

that prevent mothers and children from thriving is hypocritical.

The only way to be sincerely pro-life *and* pro-choice is to stop making it about the money and to start becoming a society that rushes happily to the task of rearing new children and empowering the personal freedom of their mothers.

It takes a village, people. Let's get busy.

Wanda also writes the blog The Mindful Bard: The Care and Feeding of the Creative Self.



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IMPORTANT DATES

- Aug 31: Deadline to apply for course extension for Oct
- Sept 4: AU and AUSU closed for Labour Day
- Sep 10: Deadline to register in a course starting Aug 1
- Sep 12: AUSU Council Meeting
- Sept 15: October degree requirements deadline
- Sept 29: Deadline to apply for course extension for Nov
- Oct 10: Deadline to register in a course starting Nov 1

Connecting and Communicating

Relationship issues, misunderstandings, friction with classmates or friends—these can all affect your energy and well-being. This month, take advantage of our many resources to help you communicate and collaborate more effectively and bridge gaps.

Contact **Student LifeLine** any time, 24/7 at **1-800-567-2255** (TTY:1-877-371-9978) to speak to a caring, professional consultant for free expert advice.

You can also log in to www.lifeworks.com (username: AUSU, password: wellness) to access a wealth of helpful articles and resources, such as:

- Homepage feature Connecting and Communicating, with links to articles, infographics, toolkits, and more.
- New podcast, Anger Resolution Tips, featuring Dr.
 Steven Stosny, a renowned author and media consultant on relationships, anger, and abuse.

This is a FREE service for all AUSU members!

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



Win for Nursing Students

AUSU has been actively advocating for changes to clinical practice procedures on behalf of students in the Faculty of Health Disciplines at AU for over a year.

One of the primary concerns was that the clinical signups were based on an online sign-up sheet that opened at midnight MDT, and required students to compete for a limited number of spaces. At times, the sign-up sheet was full only moments after it opened, which has had a detrimental effect for many students, some of whom ended up having to extend their programs to wait for the next clinical sign up opportunity, with no guarantee that they would be granted a spot on a future list.

In addition, students starting a clinical placement were required to write the NURS 401 Medical Math Exam on the first day of their placement, which for some students meant a significant cost for travel and accommodations. If the math exam was not passed, the placement was cancelled, and students who travelled were out their travel costs.

This past week, the Faculty of Health Discipline announced some program changes, including a new system for clinical placements which factor in prerequisite course completion dates, number of previous sign-up attempts, and program end date. They will also be administering the medical math exam <u>before</u> the clinical portion of the course.

Read more about this online <u>here</u>.

AUSU is excited to see some positive changes for students, and will continue to actively advocate on behalf of all undergraduate students at AU.

Advocacy Works!

CLASSIFIEDS

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

THE VOICE

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