

# THE VOICE

## MAGAZINE

Vol 25 Issue 35 2017-09-08

### **Minds We Meet**

Interviewing Students Like You

### **Playing the Ratings Game**

What Weight the Stars?

### **Surviving the Garret II**

10 Decor Tips for Frugal Students

*Plus:  
Fly on the Wall  
The Fit 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](mailto: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 Relief

Karl Low



The disaster relief specials for Hurricane Harvey haven't even aired yet and Hurricane Irma is lining up on Florida. And while we should remember that any individual extreme event is, of course, not evidence of climate change (just as a particularly frigid winter in Winnipeg isn't evidence against it), the number of times that I've had to remember that point can be.

I have a hobby of keeping track of the type of arguments those who are against people doing anything about climate change (I call them "inactivists") are putting forward. Lately, the bulk of those arguments have been shifting from the idea that it's just some sort of grand conspiracy of climatologists to the argument that while climate change is happening, it's nothing to do with us. I've even seen a few starting to bring forward the view that even if it is us, humanity will be able to adapt. It's what we've always done, after all.

Someone probably said the same thing on Easter Island.

Often, if you can manage to get into a civil debate with an inactivist, and can carry it long enough, you'll find out that the bottom of their disagreement has nothing to do with whether climate change exists or not. It's often more to do with the idea that there is something that needs to be solved which is insoluble by the individual or the free market, and will require coercive action on the part of the government to create the widespread change that is needed to address the problem. The idea that leaving it to the individual will allow the problem to proceed to the point where it's completely insoluble before the worst of its effects have come to pass isn't something that fits well within the free market mindset.

However, if these extreme weather events keep happening, if the "once in a century" events keep recurring every few years, I expect it won't be too long before the arguments will shift to "Well, we took too long to do anything, so now there's no point in doing anything at all, live it up while we can."

While I don't agree with that point of view either, it's with it in mind that I bring you this week's issue of *The Voice Magazine*. Our feature article this week is with single mother and psychology student, Elizabeth Eckert. Her story of how she manages her AU courses, four children including one with significant disabilities, speaks to the idea that we, as individuals, really can handle anything thrown at us.

We also have an interview with AUSU's fourth Executive Director in three years, Jodi Campbell. He tells us about his background with the Student's Association of MacEwan University, and his ongoing involvement with them in the form of their competitive golf teams. And he talks a bit about what he's doing here at AUSU as well.

Then, in the spirit of living it up, I always like to point out articles that have given me a laugh. And this week, Wanda Waterman gives us the second part of *Surviving in the Garrett*. A look at ways that enterprising students can save money by taking up the bohemian lifestyle, and gives tips to help students save even more money while doing so.

We also look at what students should take from professor ratings to musings from the *Fly on the Wall* as to how we can help non-AU students understand just what going to AU is like. And of course our regular selection of advice (whether on school, fitness, life, or jobs), AU events, scholarships, food related, news and just some interesting tidbits to keep you busy and connected with what's going through the minds of the AU community. Enjoy the read!



## Scholarship of the Week

### Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

**Scholarship name:** LiveBright Scholarship Program

**Sponsored by:** Sun Life Global Investments

**Deadline:** September 30, 2017

**Potential payout:** \$2000

**Eligibility restriction:** Applicants must be residents of Canada, between the ages of 16 to 25 or entering first year, enrolled in or plan to enrol in a qualifying full-time post-secondary program for the upcoming academic year. Check the [full eligibility requirements](#).

**What's required:** A completed [application form](#), transcripts from your most recent academic year, along with a 300- to 500-word essay on why financial literacy is important in your life. Mail everything to postal address indicated on website.

**Tips:** Send an optional 1-minute video by e-mail to attract more attention to your application.

**Where to get info:** [www.sunlifeglobalinvestments.com/Slgi/About+us/Scholarship+program?vgnLocale=en\\_CA](http://www.sunlifeglobalinvestments.com/Slgi/About+us/Scholarship+program?vgnLocale=en_CA)



# MINDS WE MEET



*Elizabeth Eckert is a single mother of four children in her fourth year of an AU Bachelor of Arts – Psychology degree program. She grew up in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, but now resides in Red Deer, Alberta – a friendly city with less than 120,000 people and all of the amenities nestled among trees, rivers and lakes. Her hope in sharing her story is to inspire other mothers and students with disabilities that it is possible to reach their educational dreams.*

## **Why did you choose to study Psychology?**

I have always been fascinated by people—the way they think and why they do the things they do. I come from a difficult childhood and carried with me many troubles into my adult life. I want to understand my own behaviour and the behaviors of my family, and now my own children. I have worked with children and adults with disabilities for many years, and learning Psychology has made me a better mother, teacher, and person.

## **Now that you're almost done your degree, what would be the course you would, without doubt, recommend other students to take?**

Honestly just about every one of the Psychology courses I have taken would be of a huge benefit to everyone! The behavior modification course was particularly great for learning to change behavior and biological psych with personality psych both help you understand the origin of those behaviors.

## **How have you balanced being a mother of four with your studies?**

To be truthful, juggling my children, dogs, and my health has been a huge and ongoing challenge. Although two of my children are on their own, I am still a huge part of their lives. My youngest son has multiple disabilities including hydrocephalus, epilepsy, autism and low vision. We attend many medical appointments and he requires a substantial amount of care. We don't have any family or back-up in our new city and I feel a lot of stress being the sole financial, medical, mental/emotional, and physical provider for the boys. However, I have made it to my 4<sup>th</sup> year while maintaining a GPA of 3.5 (or higher) so I must be doing something right!

When you are a student with children, especially a single mom, you also feel guilt for taking time away from your children, or being stressed and tired from exams and assignment deadlines. You also need to be able to have uninterrupted time to retain what you are reading, which is very difficult with children. Booking exams is a challenge when you cannot promise that your child won't be sick that day or have an appointment that they

must attend. There is also the guilt you feel for not dedicating yourself to your studies, passing in a paper when you know you could have done so much better if only you had more time, organizing your assignments around riding lessons, medical appointments, and volunteering. You want to succeed to show your children that dreams come true, that success brings much joy, and that you can become a mom with a great career, but you also do not want to miss your children's achievements, practices, fun days, and family time. What a challenge.

For me, I have to add on worry about missing out on a crucial symptom that might show me that my son's shunt is malfunctioning, his tumors are growing, he may have another seizure, or the super important teachable moments where I can help him learn to socialize, learn, achieve, and make natural supports. I worry I am not giving him the attention he so desperately needs, that I am not researching enough new ways to help him see better, feel better, and better cope with his many disabilities.

**What are some other challenges you have faced in your studies?**

I also have to cope and function with daily chronic pain, numbness, fatigue, and many other challenging symptoms that complicate studying, writing exams, learning, concentrating, making friends, or being needed in relationships and for supports, and that bring persistent fear that I will not reach my goals. Dozens of doctor appointments, surgeries and unpredictable emergencies for both myself and my son have made me want to throw in the towel multiple times. I have had to medically withdraw and retake courses, apply for many extensions, and beg my tutors to grant me just a few more days to finish an assignment I have yet to read the unit for.

**What is the hardest part of distance learning with AU?**

I think the hardest part is the lack of socialization with like-minded students. The ability to form relationships with my peers, tutors and having people to bounce ideas off and study with.

**What is the best part of distance learning with AU?**

The best part of distance learning is I actually have the ability to further my education as I am unable to attend a classroom full-time. AU provides many great courses, many great tutors, and a fantastic assistance to students with disabilities which allows me the flexibility and allowances needed to complete my degree.

**If you were a box of cereal, what would you be?**

Wow, tough question. I think I would be a random combination of fruit, fibre, dark chocolate and quinoa. Haha. As a person, I have many desired and not-so-desired pieces, but as a whole package I think I am pretty well-rounded!

**Do you prefer the book or the movie?** I like both. I would prefer the book if I had to time read anything but textbooks, but then again some movies wouldn't be as great as a book.

**If you had to watch a movie on repeat, which movie would you choose?**

Tough choice! Although there are so many great movies that speak to me, I would have to choose *Gone with the Wind*. I very much relate to the main character (Scarlett O'Hara) and the story is fascinating, real, raw, and from a time that I would love to visit.

**What's your favorite way to cool down in the summer?**

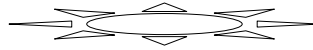
I like to take the kids to the beach and put my feet in the cool water, but when we can't go anywhere I usually use a cold washcloth, haha.



### Once you have completed your program, what are your next steps?

I am not positive what my next step after graduation will be, but I do know that whether I complete a Masters of Counselling or become a nurse, I will keep pushing forward so I can support as many people as possible with my experience and education for the rest of my life. That is my goal for myself and my children!

*Laura Nelson is a marketing analyst by day and a bibliophile by night. She is in her final stages of completing her BA with a major in English through AU.*



### The Newest AUSU Executive Director Introducing Jodi Campbell

**Scott Jacobsen**



*Jodi Campbell is the Executive Director of the Athabasca University Students' Union. From BC's Lloydminster area, he moved to Edmonton in 2002. He graduated in 2006 after learning about business. He started working for MacEwan University as a Consultant/Advisor for the School of Business. He became the General Manager of the MacEwan University Students' Union in 2013. In early 2017, he began work with AUSU as its executive director.*

### What work did you do before coming to AUSU?

Before coming to AUSU I was the General Manager for the Students' Association of MacEwan University (SAMU). I spent a total of eleven years working at MacEwan with seven years spent with the School of Business as a Program Consultant/Advisor and four with the Students' Association. After graduating from the school of business at MacEwan in 2005/2006, I started working for them and I managed two of their business diplomas. It was a great experience and something that really kick-started my career in post-secondary.

### How did you find AUSU? Why did you choose it?

In many ways, AUSU found me. This past March I received an email from a search firm promoting the opportunity here at AUSU to become the next executive director and, after a series of interviews with the executive team, I was selected. At the time, the opportunity at AUSU was very similar to the one I had at SAMU in the way that the organization was about to embark on an incredible journey of change and growth. There was no question that AUSU was the right place for me, as I saw the vision being set out by the executive council right away and what it would take to execute it and establish AUSU as a leader in the student organization industry.

### How has onboarding been for you?

It's been an amazing 3 months so far. We've accomplished so much in such a short period of time since I started. The learning curve has been a big one to familiarize myself with everything AUSU, but at the same time a familiar



one. Much of what we have been working on to establish structure and consistency at AUSU has been identical to the work I completed at SAMU. I owe a huge thanks to the AUSU execs, and especially our president (Shawna Wasylyshyn) for walking me through the transition. So far, it's been great and I look forward to seeing where we go in the years to come.

**What is your favorite pastime?**

My wife and I love to travel. We're big fans of the ocean and mountains, so Whistler, BC has been a favorite stop for us. I highly recommend it as a Canadian getaway. The other one for me personally would be sports in general. I'm a coach at heart and love golf, rugby, hockey, I could go on. I love them all.

**You coach a golf team. Tell us about that.**

That's correct. I am the head coach for the MacEwan University Griffins men's and women's golf teams. It's a passion of mine away from AUSU. We're just about to start our season as the team competes from the end of August to mid-October every year. We have 8 men and 4 women that make up the team and we play up to seven tournaments every year. We have seen a great deal of success as a team and are currently ranked 6th in the Canadian College Athletics Association (CCAA). At the 2016 national championships we were the best team west of Toronto, so I guess that's an accomplishment, right? In Alberta, we have played in 16 provincial championship events since we started the team (8 men's and 8 women's) and we've won 10 of them. I don't get to brag about the team very often, so I thought I would throw that in there.

**Also, does coaching a golf team translate into a similar skill set in terms of being an executive director?**

Absolutely. I have a coaching style of management that has translated into success in business as well. I could go on all day speaking to the connections between being the executive director and team leadership, team building, organizational behavior, strategic planning, team culture and on and on. At the heart of being the AUSU executive director or a golf coach is creating an environment where everyone in the organization (or on the team) can maximize their potential. This applies whether it's the students' council, executive council, the AUSU staff, or the student athletes on my team. Team success and individual success are directly related and you can't have one without the other.

**As the executive director, what tasks and responsibilities come with the position?**

Great question. The ED role in a student led organization is quite vast. I won't bore you too much with the day-to-day activities, however, the core responsibilities include governance support for council and the executives, representing AUSU internally at AU and externally to our partners and fellow students' unions, HR functions, administration activities, financial management of the organization, and overall organizational leadership. I am also proud to say that I also get to play a role in the success of *The Voice Magazine* as its Editor in Chief. I guess that would be the nutshell version of my role. On paper it looks like three and a half pages of tasks and responsibilities, so it's a large role and I love every bit of it.

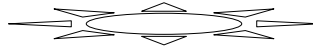
**Looking ahead for 2017/18, what are your hopes for the position and the organization?**

Like I said earlier, AUSU is experiencing a great deal of growth as an organization. You might say that Athabasca University and AUSU are mirroring each other right now, as the University is also experiencing the same type of growth as they look to stabilize the university under the leadership of Dr. Neil Fassina. Like any organization, you have to start at the ground and work your way up. Currently, we are finalizing our new bylaws, establishing a 3-year strategic plan including a new operational plan, reviewing our staff structure roles and responsibilities, giving *The Voice Magazine* a much-needed online face lift (stay tuned for this later this fall), as well as enhancing our advocacy presence at all levels of government and the University. This growth will definitely put AUSU on the map and establish AUSU as a leader in the online education environment. I'm thrilled to be a part of it.

### Any final thoughts?

Well, maybe a couple: I love to whistle, and I'm not talking random whistling, I'm talking about full start-to-finish songs. I've been married for 22 years to my lovely wife Shawna. I'm a better than average juggler. I love going to movies, I'm a huge Harry Potter fan. And I'm dying inside because of the fact we have to wait till 2019 before we see the end of Game of Thrones!

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



### The Fit Student Gym Etiquette

**Marie Well**



If you plan to make gym-going a lifestyle, learn the etiquette.

First rule for new gym-goers? Don't chat—especially if you're female. You want to keep training for as long as possible, right? Then, don't get duped by Ed the gym playboy. Truly, he doesn't mean well.

*I'm in my fifties or sixties*, you might think. No matter. Ed stalks them all. As authors Crowley and Lodge say, "You are not there to make friends or get laid. You are there to save your life" (p. 93).

Eds fume when you don't respond. Yet, the moment you engage them, a hemorrhoid appears. With each passing workout, it swells bigger and bigger and bigger. No easy way to lance that lima bean. So, stay silent.

You can chat with staff. Ask them how to use the machines. Hire them to show you proper form. Just don't tell them your plan to

try-out for the Olympics. They may argue.

Do buy Arnold Schwarzenegger's *The New Encyclopedia of Modern Bodybuilding: The Bible of Bodybuilding*. The book shows step-by-step pictures for each exercise. Play close attention to the page that lists his weight routines. If you must, read his diet ideas. Or walk to a McDonald's drive thru and order 100 big macs—extra cheese, hold the buns. You might get a discount.

As a gym newbie, "you don't know how to behave and you're probably a bit of a loser by local standards, whatever the hell they are. The people are intimidating. .... Well, the hell with them" (Crowley & Lodge, p. 93). During my first gym visit, I spotted the ideal: a muscular, lean lady. Surely, she could teach me form. So, I stood behind her and copied her routine—that is, until she stopped, snarled, and slammed her weights.

Stay silent even with same sex. And don't sound like you're having five babies from across the room. No grunting. Breathe in, breathe out. Simple.

Lastly, to maximize cardio, travel to and from the gym on a bicycle. Buy a sleek road-racing bike. Plant mirrors on both handlebars. Buy flashing nightlights for your helmet. Most of all, don't get the Indy 500 cycling wear if you sport a Dad Bod. No-one needs to see your fries.

Chris Cowley and Henry S. Lodge share tips on gym etiquette and training strategies in their book *Younger Next Year: Live Strong, Fit, and Sexy – Until You're 80 and Beyond*:

- "Don't feel like an idiot if you can barely stay on the treadmill for fifteen minutes low speed the first day" (p. 84). "Do as little as fifteen minutes the first day" (p. 90).
- Don't go gung-ho on day one.
- Work your way up to forty-five minutes a day of cardio.
- Weightlifting makes your muscles sore: a good sore.
- Yet, certain sports make your muscles less sore: cycling, swimming, and cross-country skiing. Add these to your routine if possible.
- Don't think golf is your ticket to aerobics. Many chubby folk golf.
- "You're not doing anywhere near enough [exercise] if you're fat as butter. If you're short of breath. If you look like hell. Do not lie" (p. 95).
- "Take up some entirely new sport or activity, like squash or yoga, and get good enough at it to know whether you want to keep it in your life" (p. 136).
- Once a month, go on a three-hour aerobic afternoon. Hike, cycle, ski, skate, swim, dance, or play sports. Whatever you do, make it fun.
- Buy a heart monitor.
- Check with your doctor before starting a fitness routine. You might have a physical condition that heavy exercise makes fatal.

When I wore spandex to the gym, a PhD female asked me why. Good question. She wore a ballcap, scruffy tee, and baggy sweats.

Now, I bench press in oversized bunny hugs. And the girls bouncing in sports bras? They're doomed to lance those lima beans.

### Women of Interest

**Dr. Lalita Malhotra** was born in Delhi, India, on November 2, 1941. She received her education in India and the United Kingdom before arriving in Canada in 1975. Dr. Malhotra is an obstetrician/gynecologist who set up her practice in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. She has become known as the "Angel of the North" for her efforts to advocate for women's health issues, especially among the First Nations Saskatchewan. Malhotra established a Women's Wellness Centre and a menopause clinic in Prince Albert. She has delivered over 10,000 babies since her arrival in Saskatchewan. Dr. Malhotra was awarded the Saskatchewan Order of Merit in 2001 and the Order of Canada in 2006, as well as being recognized as Citizen of the Year in Prince Albert in 2008.

Further information about this remarkable angel may be found at the following websites.

<http://canadianimmigrant.ca/canadas-top-25-immigrants/canadas-top-25-immigrants-2010/dr-lalita-malhotra>

<https://www.makers.com/lalita-malhotra>

<https://paherald.sk.ca/2017/04/01/order-canada-turns-50/>

## Fly on the Wall

Perceptive as a Bat, Blind as a Human

Jason Sullivan



On dusky, late-summer nights bats flit and flicker by in what appears to be playful pursuit of insect prey. I marvel at how it might feel to actually *be* what, in German, is known as a *fledermaus* (Reverso-Softissimo, online). As a flying mouse, I'd traverse the starry night's buffet and dance aloft with my nocturnal kin. Mice scurrying along the surface of the ground might pause to gaze up at me and squeakily murmur *must be niiice* as they go about what, to them, feels relatively like grovelling compared to my liberated aerial foraging. Athabasca education might also elicit this sort of response from students attending brick and mortar schools; after all, we at AU do *appear* to be

liberated from the constraint of attending classes. Whether nocturnal and studious or diurnal and multitasking, we accomplish our goals away from the yoke of external regimentation. Our academic lifestyle may seem exotic and attractive to others yet the nature of how it feels to embark on distance education remains obscured.

Can we know or understand what it is like to be another person, let alone species? This question retains practical importance if we are to help non-students relate to our experiences and give them guidance as to what to expect if they choose to embark on a similar path. Adults returning to school from the wilderness of the real world may find the confines liberating or claustrophobic. The arid realm of solo study was certainly a shock to me given that memories of bygone school days were imbued with socializing among chummy (and not-so chummy) peers and interacting with deeply influential (as well as utterly caricatured) teachers. To embark on the distance experience recalls the concept of the uncanny (*unheimlich*). School is still school, and yet, creepily different. Ernst Jentsch "ascribes the essential factor in the production of a feeling of uncanniness to intellectual uncertainty...one does not know where one is, as it were." (Jentsch in Freud, 2). Being an AU student can feel like being a regular pupil, only not quite. Something is eerily disorienting, inconspicuously askew, as though we find ourselves playing a familiar role in a movie out of a forgotten dream. It's like being in familiar terrain but with a totally new set of senses almost akin to morphing from a human into a bat.

Thomas Nagel, in his 1974 essay *What is it Like to Be a Bat*, noted that that there must be certain characteristics present when a being *is* a bat and that this subjective reality is not limited to what we know about how their physiology works. As mammals we can somewhat imagine ourselves flapping with their wings and even sensing objects through echolocation. Nagel notes that "if one travels too far down the phylogenetic tree, people gradually shed their faith that there is experience there at all" (Nagel, 438). As humans, we assume similar tendencies between ourselves and other species based on our common physiology. Yet bats use sonar and we use our eyes; their act of sight is drastically different than ours although we both succeed in apprehending objects such that we don't bump into them. As with taking the same course in a classroom or through AU, the material enters our brains yet by different channels depending on the context of our instruction. In the case of bat subjectivity, "there is no reason to suppose that it is subjectively like anything we can experience or imagine" (Nagel, 440). Likewise, two humans can share their experiences of, say ANTH 275, but that doesn't mean that they assimilate the material comparably. Akin to being colour-blind and seeing colours differently from the norm, perhaps we distance students possess bat-like echolocation as we feel our way through the dense undergrowth of our textbooks. Explaining the education process merely in terms of information intake, and



subsequent recapitulation as retrievable knowledge, leaves out the actual subjective processes of learning that are vital to understanding experience. We might all end up with the same general facts in our mind but the knowledge we glean is a unique product of our environment.

The more we generalize about experiences the less we provide useful information; the outcomes of schooling may be similar in all instances, yet a would-be AU student needs to know just how different the skill sets of time management and solitary study are from the guided realm of classroom discussions and pop quizzes. In this sense, distance schooling makes for an entirely different breed of scholarly animal. Nagel reminds his readers that "it may be more accurate to think of objectivity as a direction on which the understanding can travel" and that a "shift to greater objectivity ... does not take us further to the real nature of the phenomenon" (Nagel, 441). If we are to retain fidelity to the actual being of an experience, we have to remember that there are aspects unique to each individual and each set of experiences: "it is a condition of them referring to a common reality that their more particular viewpoints are not part of the common reality they both apprehend ... [so] ... the species-specific viewpoint is omitted" (Nagel, 445). It's easy to elide specific facets of our educational experience even though these are precisely what make it uniquely our own.

Akin to giving someone a taste of the AU experience by assigning them some mock readings, one might wonder about donning a bat suit (complete with all the necessary physiological trappings such that our senses would perceive as a bat perceives). It'd be like *cosplay* where participants dress up as their favourite fantasy or anime character. One elite university in Taiwan holds a "Petite Fancy expo" four times a year that attracts up to 40 000 visitors (Ashcroft, online). This sort of ontological promiscuity where participants imagine themselves being their favourite characters, complete with proper dress and makeup, is akin to imagining oneself as a different type of species or a different sort of scholar. A person could certainly watch some TED talks or read a textbook and imagine themselves as an AU student. Yet there may be no replacing the abject terror of a looming deadline while facing stark walls and silence while sitting alone working on course material. The isolation of distance schooling, though fruitful and valued for many, is hard to translate without actually experiencing it. While *cosplay* involves "doing your best to become a character for a day", acting as a distance student would require submitting oneself to a regiment of assignment deadlines and exam invigilations. (Tsing, online). Even then, knowing that one is being a distance student *just to see what it's like* is different than actually being one. Making

## AU-thentic Events

### Upcoming AU Related Events

#### Nursing and Health Studies Library Orientation Webinar

Saturday, September 9, 12:00 to 1:00 pm MDT

Online

Hosted by AU Library

[library.athabascau.ca/orientations.html](http://library.athabascau.ca/orientations.html)

No pre-registration required

#### MBA Info Session - Edmonton

Tuesday, September 12, 12:00 to 1:30 pm MDT

The Westin Edmonton, 10135 - 100 Street, Edmonton AB

In-person

Hosted by AU's Faculty of Business

[business.athabascau.ca/event-details/athabasca-university-executive-mba-information-session-calgary-3-copy-copy/](http://business.athabascau.ca/event-details/athabasca-university-executive-mba-information-session-calgary-3-copy-copy/)

register online at above link

#### BComm/CPA Info Session

Tuesday, September 12, 5:00 to 6:00 pm MDT

Online

Hosted by AU's Faculty of Business

[business.athabascau.ca/event-details/bcomm-cpa-information-session-4-copy-copy-2/](http://business.athabascau.ca/event-details/bcomm-cpa-information-session-4-copy-copy-2/)

register online at above link

#### MBA Info Session - Edmonton

Tuesday, September 12, 5:00 to 6:30 pm MDT

Doubletree by Hilton West Edmonton, 16615 - 109 Ave NW, Edmonton AB

In-person

Hosted by AU's Faculty of Business

[business.athabascau.ca/event-details/athabasca-university-executive-mba-information-session-edmonton-5/](http://business.athabascau.ca/event-details/athabasca-university-executive-mba-information-session-edmonton-5/)

register online at above link

one's own academic world is an essential aspect of distance schooling that is hard to replicate, just as its hard to imagine seeing without seeing with one's own eyes.

We have to alter our being somehow to experience what we desire; to understand how things appear to an Other requires realizing that the physical facts of seeing are separate from the crucial element of interpretation. We have to be open to seeing our environment in a way conducive to success; this requires developing useful hermeneutics. Looking through other eyes is a great way to see if a lifestyle works for us; anyone considering AU ought to investigate their abilities with time management and ask themselves how good they are at being a self-starter. To partition necessary study time from a chunk of leisure is easier to imagine than do. What appears as one thing, free time, becomes quite another: a study opportunity. Martin Heidegger illustrates how seeing is tied to context in his description of studies where photos were taken of images seen by the eyes of glow worms and onto their large, troglodyte, retinas.

"The retinal image of a glow worm looking in the direction of a window was observed. The photograph clearly reveals a view of the window and its surrounding frame together with the mullion and transom; it reveals a large letter R which had been attached to the window pane, and in rather indeterminate outline even a view of the church tower which can be seen through the window. This is the view given on the retina of the glow worm as it looks toward the window. The insect eye is capable of forming this view. But can we infer from this what the glow worm sees?"

Removed from their caves we can only imagine what they saw through their being as glow worms. To imagine that the glow worm sees the church and the letter 'R' in the same way we humans do, even though the objective facts of the appearance appear the same to us, requires the erasure of the glow worm's interpretation (such as it is). The window provides a view to a human and an obstacle to a glow worm. It's like how a quiet evening can be transformed by the ominous sense of a lingering deadline. Heidegger concludes, instructively for those considering how to describe the experiential reality of distance education, that "the difficult is not merely that of determining *what* it is that the insect sees but also that of determining *how* it sees." (Heidegger, 231).

The glow worm sees to fulfill its needs which differ from our own. To aid a would-be student we must help stimulate them to realize just how different from normal school their experience will be. We have much more in common with our fellow scholars than we do

### AUSU Council Meeting

Tuesday, September 12, 5:30 to 7:30 pm  
MDT

Online

Hosted by AUSU

[www.ausu.org/event/september-council-meeting-2/](http://www.ausu.org/event/september-council-meeting-2/)

No pre-registration required

### Online MBA Info Session

Wednesday, September 13, 10:00 to 11:00  
am MDT

Online

Hosted by AU's Faculty of Business

[business.athabascau.ca/event-details/online-mba-executives-information-session-10am-mst-september-13-1000-1100-online/](http://business.athabascau.ca/event-details/online-mba-executives-information-session-10am-mst-september-13-1000-1100-online/)

register online at above link

### How to get a PhD while working

Thursday, September 14, 6:00 to 7:00 pm  
MDT

Online

Hosted by AU's Faculty of Graduate Studies

[fgs.athabascau.ca/news/presentations/](http://fgs.athabascau.ca/news/presentations/)  
e-mail [fgs@athabascau.ca](mailto:fgs@athabascau.ca) with your student ID number to register

### The Art, Science and Business of Craft Beer

Friday, September 15, 5:00 to 7:00 pm  
MDT

Blind Enthusiasm Brewing, 9570 - 76 Ave  
NW, 2nd floor, Edmonton AB

In-person

Hosted by AU's Faculty of Business

[business.athabascau.ca/event-details/art-science-business-craft-beer/](http://business.athabascau.ca/event-details/art-science-business-craft-beer/)

\$20 per person; register online at above link

with glow worms, yet the experience of learning at a distance is nonetheless unique. To give others a sense of what the AU journey entails requires us to remember these differences that we may come to take for granted. As Nagel states "the more different from oneself the other experienter is, the less success one can expect from this enterprise" of mutual understanding (Nagel, 442). We all bump into walls as we succeed in schooling, but learning how to see them in advance allows us to navigate.

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*Jason Hazel-rah Sullivan is a Masters of Integrated Studies student who loves engaging in discourse while working in the sunny orchards and forests of the Okanagan.*



## Playing the Ratings Game

**Barabara Lehtiniemi**



How seriously can students take anonymous online ratings of their AU tutors?

One AU student recently commented on the unofficial [AthaU Facebook page](#) that she'd checked her tutor's ratings on [RateMyProfessors.com](#). After reading multiple negative reviews, she was considering dropping that AU course.

Some responders to that post questioned what weight should be given to such reviews. Several people pointed out that people with

negative experiences were more likely to post a review on an anonymous forum. There does seem to be an imbalance between negative and positive reviews.

Rating sites like RateMyProfessors.com have been around almost as long as the internet. Rating forums such as RateMyProfessors.com and RateMyTeachers.com give students an anonymous space to vent about their profs. Although I'd been aware of such sites, I'd never bothered to see what other students said about my AU tutors. So far, I'd been happy to form my own assessment of each tutor.

Strictly for research purposes, I decided to check the ratings for tutors I'd had for already-completed courses. I started with the tutors I had particularly liked. A few of them had only a handful of positive (and no negative) reviews. Other tutors had a mix of positive and negative reviews.

Next, I checked the tutors I didn't like so much. Not surprisingly, the reviews for those tutors were primarily—but not exclusively—negative. I found it interesting, and a bit relieving, to know that other students had noticed the same things I did. Not surprisingly, tutors with overall poor rankings tended to have more reviews than those with positive rankings.

Finally, I checked the tutor for my next course. Fifteen ratings, mostly in the "awful" and "poor" categories. Yikes! Interestingly, the reviews for this tutor were several years old; there were no reviews in the past four years. Perhaps this tutor has improved and isn't prompting negative reviews, or maybe they've been away. For comparison, I checked the same tutor's rating at another university; there, the ratings were much higher, more positive, and more recent.

What became clear as I read the reviews was that views varied widely. One student called a tutor "rude", while another referred to the same tutor as the "best teacher ever." Another tutor was both "fantastic" and "one of the worst". Feedback from another tutor was simultaneously "insightful" and "cryptic." If these disparate comments refer to the same tutor, perhaps the difference is in the students' perception.

The reviews themselves made for interesting and often entertaining reading. One eloquent reviewer described an AU English tutor as:

"a miserably amateur petty despot who considers assignments to be a power struggle. Her scrawled notes are virtually illegible and many of them are subjective nonsense. She is not fit to teach and needs a nap. She loves reminding you that you are nothing..."

One only hopes this student put their capacity for the written word to good use, perhaps as a member of government opposition.

How reliable are sites like RateMyProfessors.com? Not any more reliable than the students entering the ratings. While AU tutors may seem semi-anonymous—a vague entity associated with an e-mail address and phone number—these student raters are fully anonymous. Did a student post a scathing review because the tutor was genuinely awful, or because the student found themselves struggling with a course that exceeded their own ability?

If you've ever gone to a hotel or a resort, then later looked up the reviews on Tripadvisor, you know how varied the perception can be of the same place. Ultimately, though, it's your own experience that matters most to you, not what someone else thought.

Should I care that I'm beginning a course with a tutor who has garnered so many negative reviews? Maybe. Honestly, though, I prefer to form my own opinions rather than put faith in reviewers sheltered by online anonymity. I've taken enough AU courses to have faith in my ability to perform well regardless of how much—or how little—I like the tutor.

I think it's safer to take ratings sites like RateMyProfessor.com with a large grain of salt. Without knowing anything about the students posting the ratings, it's difficult to gauge where they're coming from. While some comments might genuinely reflect the instructor's abilities, they could just as easily reflect a personality clash between student and instructor, or even the student's failure to devote sufficient effort to that course.

For me, I'll take sites like RateMyProfessors.com for their entertainment value only. And hope I'm never featured on the equally entertaining [RateYourStudent.com](#).

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



## Survival in the Garret II

### 10 Decor Tips for the Frugal Student's Crib

Wanda Waterman

A while ago we brought you some tips on how to live on a shoestring during your student years. These tips come compliments of the art world, where (at least in theory), passion for one's work supersedes avarice—a circumstance compelling artists to pinch pennies like there won't be any more next week, which is often the case.

While we brought you a couple of decorating tips in the previous list, this time we choose to focus on creating the right kind of interior ambience for next to nothing. Why? Because making your dorm room, apartment, trailer, or parents' basement more attractive will entice you to spend more time there, hopefully up to your eyeballs in research and moments of academic epiphany.

Several of these tips can be carried forward into your successful career as an astronaut, neurosurgeon, or pizza deliverer, standing you in good stead in both feast and famine.

#### 1. Encourage the sharing of wealth

Persuade your affluent friends to be less materialistic, and then hang around a lot when they start wanting to unburden themselves of their stuff.

#### 2. Overgrown sprouts

Remember the bean sprout habit from the last article? Well, occasionally you're going to forget to harvest those sprouts, and you'll come home to small trees growing in your sprouter. Don't chide yourself, because it's at this point that they become houseplants!

You don't even need dirt for this—just place the plants, roots and all, in old wine bottles or thrift store vases filled with water, and watch them grow, providing your room with a natural elegance. Later on you can either replace them or plant them in dirt.

Mung bean sprouts make a really nice plant, and when the zombie apocalypse comes, you might even be able to harvest a few beans to sustain you during the lockdown.

#### 3. Fairy lights

Drape cheap miniature Christmas lights over a curtain rod, around a bookshelf, under a glass tabletop, or on the wall close to the dining table for that twinkly dusk atmosphere. If you celebrate Christmas, you won't have to go digging around for lights for the tree—just pull them off the wall. You can easily return them to the wall after the tree dries up.



#### 4. The sidewalk

If you live in an urban area find out which evenings people put their unwanted home furnishings out on the sidewalk. You'll be amazed at what you can find there. Be sure to wear running shoes in case you've mistakenly made off with the belongings of someone in the middle of a move.

#### 5. Books

If you have lots of books, stack them up in creative, decorative ways—as lampstands, for example—wherever you need a space to look intellectual. Library and thrift stores are great places to find more. Supplement your own books with huge luxurious library tomes on art, architecture, and photography, placing them in prominent places. Plastic covers are a dead giveaway, so avoid books with those if you want visitors to think you spend a fortune on books.

#### 6. Stuff and Hide

Use fancy second-hand cushion covers and pillowcases to store your off-season clothes and bed linens. Reduces clutter and the cushions look nice piled up on the floor. And a down jacket makes a divinely comfortable pillow.

#### 7. Thrift it

If you buy nothing else at thrift stores, buy knickknacks, plant pots, crockery, art, and candles, all of which are amazingly cheap—even the good stuff. Make up stories about the history of each item and wow your friends.

#### 8. Scarf drapes

Use summer scarves for artsy drapes. You can go true-blue gypsy by mixing up colours and sizes, or you can find a sale on a bunch of the same scarf. They're pretty, blow around nicely in the breeze, and are light enough to suspend from two cup hooks and a fish line.

#### 9. Arrange

Take five minutes and go around arranging things artistically on all your surfaces. This alone grants a classy look to any space.

#### 10. Jewellery

Old necklaces you like but don't necessarily want to wear can be draped over lampshades, hung from a wall, or wrapped around a vase. Old bracelets can be used as tiebacks on your scarf drapes.

Finally, remember that a nice living space will help you relax and enjoy life, becoming your haven among life's hassles. Best of all, it will give your pad that bohemian ambience you'll fondly remember in your later corporate years.



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

## Drafting the Dreaded Cover Letter

Deanna Roney



Writing a cover letter can be challenging, what do you put in it? That depends on what you are applying for. Is it a posted job? Then you want to reference the posting and how your skills will benefit the company specific to that posting. Reference the skills required section of the posting and give some concise examples as to how you are experienced in those.

If you are sending out your resume cold it can be a bit trickier. Applying for a job that isn't posted is a risk and more difficult. Because nothing is posted you want to start the cover letter as clear as possible: what is

this letter regarding? Don't start with your skills and make them wait until the end to figure out why you're telling them this. Be upfront: what are you hoping to get out of this letter, what position are you eager to get, and what is compelling you to email this specific company out of the blue to try to get it?

In either case, you want to share your specific skills: what makes you a perfect fit for this job? Do you have direct experience, relatable experience? While this will be covered in the resume, the cover letter is a good place to break it out a bit more, show off the skills. For example, when applying for different publishing related jobs I am always sure to include my bookkeeping background. While this may not seem relatable it shows that while I love working with words, I am decent with numbers too, I am organized, and familiar with various computer programs.

You want to use the cover letter to show off a little, show the company why they should take you on. You do this with both the content of the letter as well as the tone of the letter. While you want to show off a little you also don't want to come across as over the top or too braggy. Keep it professional, make sure every sentence plays an important role, and keep it to a single page. It is about being concise, showing why you'd be a great fit, and what makes you stand out from others.

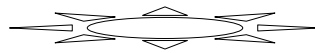
Another important step in writing that cover letter is that once you think you have it polished and ready to start sending out, send it to a trusted friend first, or industry professional that maybe you have connected with in the past (as long as they've invited you to keep in touch), and ask them to critique it for you. I did this with a recent cover letter; I had reached out to a few agents and asked if I could ask them a few questions about the industry, one graciously invited me to send her my cover letter if I wanted more eyes on it. If you are invited to do this, never pass it up. She ripped my cover letter apart and when I worked to put it back together it was drastically improved. She explained why she made the changes she did and it all made so much sense and seemed so obvious in retrospect.

It is always easier to read and critique someone else's cover letter than your own. With our own writing, I think we just get too close to it to see the flaws. Having that second set of eyes, professional or not, is important to make sure you are using that limited space to the best of your ability.



Writing a cover letter can be hard, and it doesn't matter if it is a posted job or a cold-query. Just remember why you are applying for that job, that company. Use your space wisely, be conscious of the tone of the letter and be explicit about your goals. Touch base on all of these while writing that letter: let the company know why you reached out to them, what makes them special in your eyes, and why do you think you would be a good fit there?

*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**



### Income Inequality Worsening with Higher Tuition Fees

Huffington Post: Business stated that the high tuition fees in Canadian universities are making economic inequality worse within the country. This is also adding to a mismatch between the economy and post-secondary education.

Economists Benjamin Tal and Royce Mendes described the vulnerabilities potentially exposed in the following economic downturn. As well, they noted that the mismatch in the economy and education is exemplifying the disappointment in youth employment.

This disappointment is leading to more Canadians have below average household incomes. That means more wealthy, but also far more poor, Canadian citizens. Young Canadians have begun to adapt by applying for educational streams that are high-demand and high-paying, e.g. the science, technical, engineering, and mathematics disciplines, but these are disciplines where tuition is rising the fastest.

### Indeed Released a Listing of Jobs not Requiring a University Education

"While a university degree can be helpful in landing the ideal job, a recent report by job search site Indeed offers a reminder that it's not the only route available," Global News: Money reported.

Indeed released a list of jobs that pay well in Canada that do not need a university education. The listing included information on the number of openings in every field per one million job postings between May and July of this year.

"Many trades and tech-related roles are in high demand," Jodi Kasten, Managing Director of Indeed Canada, said, "Employers are facing skills shortages meaning these roles can offer good career prospects or even self-employment opportunities."



### **International High School Student Numbers Rising**

CTV News reported on the increasing numbers of international students in Canadian high schools. Canada is working to build "valuable relationships and – in some cases – boost revenue." The increase has been a bump in recent years.

Even though only a small number of the high school students in Ontario and British Columbia are comprised of international students, school boards have reported a doubling of the international high school student numbers.

For an example of the growth rate, the Toronto District School Board has seen an increase of 5-10% per year. The Thames Valley District School Board noted that they have experienced a 100% increase since the launch of its international program only three years ago.

"School boards say they are making concerted efforts to draw more international students to their halls, participating in recruiting events around the globe," CTV News said, "partnering with education agents and working to identify emerging markets."

### **"Knowledge is a Critical Key to Reconciliation"**

The Winnipeg Sun said, "Knowledge is a critical key to reconciliation. That's the belief of the new education lead for the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR), whose role was announced Wednesday. The University of Manitoba-based centre named Kevin Lamoureux to the job, who will guide the development of education programs and partnerships."

Lamoureux described how the history of Indigenous peoples in Canada has been lacking in education in the past. He has been the Association Vice-President for Indigenous Affairs at the University of Winnipeg. He is taking a year leave from the U of W position to be the education lead for the NCTR.

Lamoureux reported on the missing history in Canadians' lives, and the desire for reconciliation. The U of W, as well as the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, Dalhousie University, The University of Alberta, and The University of British Columbia, are education partners.

### **Student Mental Health a Priority, Says P.E.I. Education Minister**

Canada needs tech workers, according to Huffington Post: Business. Statistics Canada is showing a significant need for these kinds of workers. Scientific, technical, engineering and mathematics fields grew the most in the past year, with over 39,500 new positions.

There were 4.6% more jobs in these fields in June, 2017, than in June of 2016. The job market as a whole only grew 1.8% in comparison. In short, Canada isn't graduating enough tech students in parallel to the growth of the positions.

Only 29,500 tech students graduated in 2015. The report from Wednesday also said that between 2016 and 2020 Canada will create 218,000 tech jobs. CIBC has called for a redo on the Canadian education system to help the economy more. Economists Benjamin Tal and Royce Mendes have described the shift in students reaching for more tech jobs now.

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

## The Creative Spark!

### Swing Your Partner

Marie Well



Do you cringe at the idea of group work? Do you twitch and tingle to Cotton Eyed Joe busting your woofers?

Professors dole out budgie-sized bits on how to work in groups. And howl when you flail. A feminist professor called students who declined group work "Princesses." She despised princesses—and hammered their grades.

But groups can succeed, especially when made of many cultures. Helen Sword shows one reason why multicultural groups thrive in her book *Air & Light & Time & Space: How Successful Academics Write*. She says some foreign students slip in proverbs from their place of origin. Proverbs, like metaphors, shake up new knowledge.

Multi-cultural groups do wonders. But what happens when the world morphs into one glum face? Sadly,

*Yahoo!* news homogenized the globe. When I taught Japanese speakers English, I learned that *Yahoo!* force-feeds the Japanese its global view. Fake news makes the globe a melting pot steeping with revolts.

Is there an advantage to homogeneity? In one group, a foreign exchange student wrote perfect English, but no-one knew. We discovered her gift for English too late—after our report suffered a B.

So, how might groups flourish? Through sports team psychology. Not the K-12 psychology ruled by bullies and Queen Bees. No. Real sports psychology. The psychology where all team members matter.

Yet, teams can consist of more than equals; opposites make teams, too. What are opposites? For one, the reader and the writer; for another, the writer and the editor. So, write for your reader, says Sword. And sit up straight when the editor growls. When I write, I focus on an ideal reader: a friendly female I once interviewed. Likewise, imagine audiences who support us and who favor fun, suggests Sword. Visualize their smiles and winks—square dance together to Cotton Eyed Joe.

When I write, I listen to the editor. When he says add humor, I study comedy. When he says people like a glimpse into your life, I share my soul. When he says big words sound stuffy, I opt for the little 'uns.

Helen Sword shares her research on multiculturalism and collaboration in her book *Air & Light & Time & Space: How Successful Academics Write*:

- Learning a new language takes thousands of hours of labor. No easy way out. Sorry, friends.
- English-as-a-second-language-students can master English wisely. How? By watching English subtitled TV and films, reading English books, finding English-speaking friends, and hiring English editors.

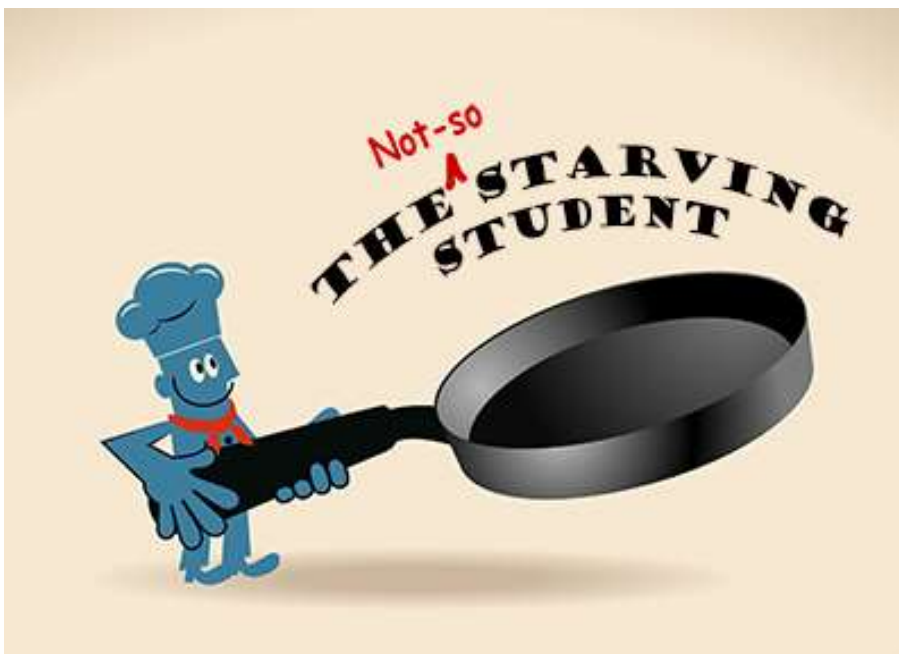
- English-as-a-first-language students could teach English voluntarily, monetarily, or barter-based.
- Many multilingual writers outperform native English writers.
- Metaphors from other countries add flavor to English. Same with parables and spiritual wisdoms.
- Our readers shape "not only how and what we write but also how we feel about our writing" (p. 110).
- Discard the critic. Don't give that whiner a whit. Focus on the fun readers.
- Seek out "charismatic leaders" in audiences—the ones who smile, laugh, and nod—says Lee Shulman (as cited in Sword). They'll inspire you, not depress you.
- Editors can benefit by pointing out points-of-confusion, boredom, or bafflement. Heed an editor's wisdom. Hire editors to critique your work.

When I lacked spiritual wisdom, I sat on a hillside. I pondered, "What is the most intelligent act a person can do?" The answer? Benefit another's life. Or square dance to Cotton Eyed Joe. A paradox? I call it a creative spark.



## The Not-So Starving Student Cooking Independantly 101

**Xin Xu**



Recently I moved from living in the comforts of my parents' home to a new home closer to school, work, and downtown Edmonton. The first week navigating the freedom of cooking my own meals has been a rocky start. Not knowing where to begin, I scrambled to purchase ingredients, eliminate ingredients (from the mold!) and finally achieving the optimal balance in the fridge inventory. For many of you who are independent cooking gurus, this one's for you. These are the top things I wish I had known while learning to cook independently.

### **Plan your meals:**

I made the mistake of going grocery shopping without knowing exactly what I wanted to eat the next week. The process would be less time-consuming and more enjoyable had I created a master plan. With the help of technology, there's thousands of cooking apps on your phone, do yourself the favour of downloading one to give yourself plenty of fresh ideas. With those ideas, walk into the grocery store with confidence, find the ingredients and save yourself the headache of pondering what's for dinner.

### **Pack up on condiments**

Even if you had a favourite dish you swore you could eat everyday, by midweek your palate would be craving some diversity. Most students don't have the luxury of fine dining, but you can certainly spice up your meal prep (literally) by stocking up on versatile condiments. My top picks are chilli paste (Frank's Red Hot, Sriracha, Buffalo wing sauce), Lawry's Seasoned Salt, garlic powder, cilantro flakes, ground cumin, paprika, ground

peppercorn and Dijon mustard. Even for the amateur cook, these seasonings will make your homemade meals taste gourmet.

### Portion, portion, portion

Cooking protein is often a headache for beginner cooks. They come in bulk and as a single student with the occasional roommate, the portion sizes are simply too big. When I first purchased a pack of 30 chicken breasts, I would freeze, thaw and re-freeze then re-thaw the entire package. Not only do these frequent cycles of freeze-thaw destroy the protein texture but also reduce the tenderness of the meat. Accordingly, my curry chicken no longer tasted fresh. I learned quickly that portioning was the best solution to maintaining freshness while saving time. When you first purchase your favourite protein (beef, chicken, fish, lamb) portion the protein into small packets. Now, you only need to thaw the package when you begin to cook. To kick your cooking game up a notch, try adding seasoning to each packet of protein and voila! You've portioned and marinated in one step.

### Meals on standby

The beginning of the school year comes with a certain sense of confidence, confidence that you can budget your time from school, work, and take on extracurricular or volunteering commitments, but as the term progresses, the responsibilities are not always manageable. To ensure that you at least consume three meals a day, purchase standby meals for the inevitable exam seasons. For myself, I have a pantry full of instant mashed potatoes, heat-and-drink soup cups, and a fridge packed with yoghurt, hemp seeds, and fruits. For times when you're struggling to self-care, these meals will save your routine. We're not saying that the selection is healthy, but at least you're fed.

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

## Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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

#### AthaU Facebook Group

Susanne requests a link to the elusive AU LPN-BN Facebook group page; it's just a click away at [www.facebook.com/groups/4177983500](http://www.facebook.com/groups/4177983500). Alisha seeks recommendations for courses to finish off her BGS degree that will help when she goes on to an Ed. degree; responses include a variety of ANTH, ENGL, RELS, SOCI, and WGST courses.

Other posts include re-taking courses, the MATH 215 midterm, and the life-saving nature of course extensions.

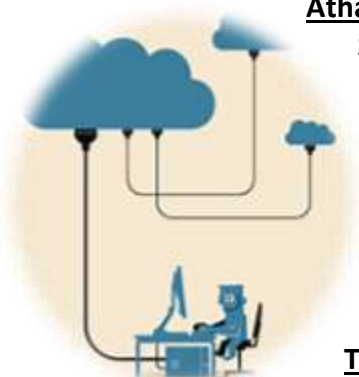
#### Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: "Already compiling information for your courses & wondering how our library can help? We have the answer for #AskAU: <http://ow.ly/14Tm30ePhhg>."

@AthabascaUSU (AUSU) tweets: "Are you dealing with financial stress? Struggling with debt? Find out how AUSU's free Student Lifeline can help! <http://bit.ly/2iFPr84> ."

#### Youtube

Skip the first 90 seconds of bun to get to the meat of Study Tips for the Online Student, posted by the University of North Texas at Dallas.







Dear  
Barb

Barbara Godin

## Where There's a Will

**Dear Barb:**

*I guess I have more of a statement than a question. A close family member recently passed away without a will and it has been chaos ever since. My aunt never discussed her wishes with anyone, not even her own children. Her husband passed away three years ago, so the responsibility for everything is falling to her children. Fortunately, there was an insurance policy to cover the funeral expenses, but no one knew whether she wanted to be buried or cremated or where she wanted her ashes or burial. Did she want an open casket with a viewing or closed casket? When her husband passed, he had a traditional funeral, but there was only one plot purchased for him. The only time I ever heard her mention any wishes was at her husband's funeral when she said she did not want a big funeral like he was having. She was a very private person, so her children are trying to be sensitive to what she might like. Then there is all her property and money which are frozen, I'm not really sure what the process is to release these assets. Her children have had to hire a lawyer to assist with the proper procedures. No one disputes the fact that my aunt's children should get everything, it's just that it's going to be a long and difficult process for them. I just hope your readers take the time to make sure they have a will, or at least have all their assets joint with whomever they want to leave them to at the time of their death. Thanks Jessica.*

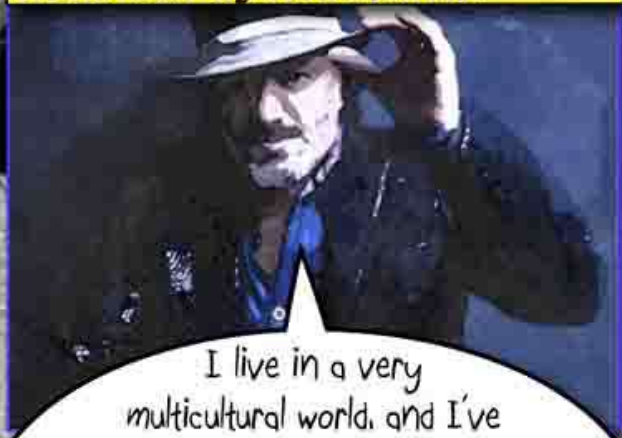
Hi Jessica:

Thanks for addressing this critical issue! I have found some information about dying without a will in Canada. When you die without a will you are considered to have died "intestate." In this case your assets will be divided by your provincial government. Each province has their own rules for how this would take place. If you have assets such as RRSP's and you have named a beneficiary, they will be passed on to that person. If you have a home or other assets that are jointly owned they will be passed on to the second name on title. Any other assets will be distributed according to the Intestate Succession Act, which, as I said above, will be different for each province. The Succession Act follows a strict order as to how your assets will be distributed. For example, in Alberta your spouse receives the first \$40,000 of your estate and rest is split between your spouse and children. Even if you have not had a relationship with an adult child for years, that child will get a portion of your assets. One important aspect is that in most provinces, common-law partners are not recognized as spouses. However, a common-law spouse may seek legal counsel and petition the courts, but this is an additional expense that could have been easily addressed before hand. All of this can be avoided and your wishes honored by the simple and inexpensive act of making a legal will. Great topic Jessica!

*Follow Barb on twitter @BarbGod*

Email your questions to [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto: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.

In the summer of 2013 I interviewed rai artist Rachid Taha. He was touring his new album, "Zoom." I asked him about his propensity for musical syncretism.



I live in a very multicultural world, and I've always been curious. My curiosity ends up feeding my music. I've also listened to a lot of intellectuals, writers, and painters who've helped me evolve. This is my wealth.

I saw him perform at the Olympia Theatre in Montreal. Muslim and kafir alike, the audience was enthralled. This was not a niche artist, but a world-class star.



Enta omriiiiiil libtada ...

WATERMAN PHOTO

Taha, like Khaled, had taken rai and used it as a leavening agent for a fusion of world genres.

He had done so with an enthusiasm so infectious he'd ended up working with people like David Byrne, Brian Eno, Patti Smith, Mick Jones, Robert Plant, and Fela Kuti.



I can't forget the past,  
the racists,  
or those who enslave us!

WATERMAN PHOTO

So what was it about these Algerian rai artists that drove them to so fearlessly seek out and embrace the best of world music and merge it with their own?





This space is provided by AUSU. The Voice does not create or edit this content. Contact [services@ausu.org](mailto:services@ausu.org) with any questions.

## IMPORTANT DATES

- **Sept 4:** AU and AUSU closed for Labour Day
- **Sept 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Aug 1](#)
- **Sept 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](#)
- **Oct 12:** [AUSU Council Meeting](#)

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**Offer available until September 30, 2017.**



## First 'Reading' of Bylaw Revisions

As announced in August, AUSU council will be voting on some proposed bylaw revisions. In accordance with AUSU bylaws, the first reading of the proposed bylaw changes will be held during our September council meeting on **Tuesday, September 12 at 5:30pm MT**.

Meetings are by teleconference, and all members are welcome. The meeting agenda and teleconference instructions are posted online [here](#). There is a Q&A period at the end of all council meetings to allow feedback and questions from the membership.

To find out more about the bylaw revisions, including numerous ways you can provide feedback or ask questions about the bylaw revisions, visit our website [here](#).

**AUSU BYLAW REVISIONS**



## AU Quick Links

Having trouble navigating the AU website? Want an easy way to find out what resources are available to you?

**Check out our AU Quick Links online [here](#).**



**Athabasca University  
Quick Links**

*Courtesy of AUSU*

## Career Resources

Looking for a job? Need help creating a resume or preparing for interviews?

**AUSU's [Career Resources](#) can help.**



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# CLASSIFIEDS

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Classifieds are free for AU students! Contact [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org) for more information.

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## THE VOICE

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