

# THE VOICE

## MAGAZINE

Vol 25 Issue 37 2017-09-22

### **Minds We Meet**

Brittany Daigle, Hug Your Beagle!

### **AUSU Wants to Give You \$1000**

For 30 Seconds Work

### **AU's 8th President**

The Second Session

*Plus:  
A Healthy Splash  
Comparisons  
and much more!*



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***The Voice  
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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

### The Short End

Karl Low



If you avoid Facebook, you'll likely have missed the Alberta government's recent announcement about additional funding for Athabasca University. This morning, Premier Notley went up to Athabasca to make an announcement about the NDP providing new funding to AU for Mental Health Services.

Between her and the Minister of Advanced Education, Marlin Schmidt, they trotted out some impressive statistics. One in five people will suffer some sort of mental health challenge, which means that it is very likely everybody is affected, perhaps someone you know. A majority of students in a 10-campus study said they'd experienced depression, loneliness and helplessness, with 1 in 10 having said they considered suicide, and 1 in 50 having made an attempt. To put those numbers in perspective, AU typically has about 25,000 students at any one time, and handles around 40,000 students in a given year. 1 in 50 would mean that, if the numbers hold, around 500 of your fellow students, right now, have attempted to commit suicide. It kind of brings a different perspective to those Facebook posts you see, doesn't it?

And given how AU opens the opportunity of post-secondary education up to an audience of people who would find traditional university impossible due to mental health issues, that number is probably even higher among AU students.

As an example, this week, our feature article is with a student who is courageous enough to tell us how she uses AU to help her cope with her own social anxiety while taking her studies. As well, our own Marie Well has been quite open in discussing how she has had, and largely overcome, similar types of difficulties, and I'm sure there are many more, probably even with some people that you feel you know reasonably well.

All of which is why I find the announcement, as good as it is, somewhat of a let-down. From the video, the numbers I heard indicate that while the province will be spending \$25.8 million over three years, Athabasca University will only be receiving about \$200,000 of that funding in each of the years. (AU has since posted that they will be receiving 215,000 each year). Now, I understand that \$215,000 per year is a far better amount than the zero or even cutbacks that many politicians in Alberta seem to be advocating to control budgets, but I'll note that there are 26 public post-secondary institutions in Alberta. A simple even split would make the amount closer to a million dollars. (Which, incidentally, is nearly the amount that the U of A will receive.)

When you consider that AU's mode of operation makes it specifically attractive to students who may have mental (or even physical) health issues that prevent them from attending a normal university, I wonder if once again AU is being given the short end of the stick.

I was also a bit concerned when I heard the Chair of AU's Board of Governors, Vivian Manasc, specifically note that she wanted to see this funding go toward research to reduce the risk of ongoing mental health challenges. While I'm sure that's needed, diverting some of the funding to research means less funding to actually support those in need right now. Perhaps that should be left for one of the schools that received a larger portion of the pie, such as Grant MacEwan University, which will be receiving nearly \$500,000 per year while only servicing some 19,000 credit students.

Now, if after this, you're looking for something to boost your spirits? Well, you're in luck. Not only do we interview student Brittany Daigle, as I mention above, but we've also got the start of an in-depth interview with AU President Neil Fassina, now that he's had some time in the job, and a bunch of other articles of advice, news, and helpful tips to keep you amused until next week. Enjoy the read!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karl', with a stylized flourish at the end.

# MINDS WE MEET



*Brittany Daigle is originally from the small town of Riverview, New Brunswick. She now lives with her boyfriend and her beagle in Toronto, Ontario, where she enjoys the shopping districts, the ability to experience a wide variety of cultures, and taking in the incredible display of city lights at night. She has been an AU student since November 2016 and is currently enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Computing and Information Systems.*

## **Why did you choose AU to study at?**

I attended Dalhousie University coming out of high school for neuroscience, though the environment and the program was not what I was looking for. AU provides me the opportunity to independently work on courses whenever, wherever, and however I want to.

## **What course would you recommend to other AU students?**

I would recommend AU students to take Computer Science (COMP) 200, as it is a very well-structured course for people with no experience in coding. The marker is also extremely resourceful, marks assignments quickly, and provides very good feedback.

## **What parts do you like about online learning through AU?**

The ability to do school work in the comfort of my own home and not having to deal with my social anxiety. Cuddling with my two-year old dog, Ziggs and wearing pajamas all day while studying is an added bonus!

## **What do you dislike about online learning through AU?**

The only thing I dislike is the inability to sit in a classroom and have a professor teach you material. YouTube works though and have been a major help in understanding math concepts specifically. Math is generally my worst subject so it is nice to have teachers and professors visually teaching me concepts, for free. There's a YouTube channel by the name of ProfRobBob where a high school AP Math teacher teaches anything from statistics to algebra to trigonometry. I would absolutely recommend his channel to everyone needing help with a math concept or wanting a refresh. He covered everything in MATH 209 and MATH 215 which are the two math courses I have taken so far at AU.

## **How do you motivate yourself when it comes to studying?**

My boyfriend is actually my major motivator. He graduated with a bachelors of computer science and is currently doing very well financially in his current role. Knowing that could be me when I'm finished my degree is very motivating!

**If you could choose your age forever, what age would you choose and why?**

I would chose to be 22 (my current age) for the rest of my life. I feel like 22 is an age where you know that you don't know everything, but you're excited to learn. My whole life is ahead of me which is scary, yet very exciting.

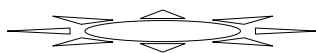
**What is something odd that you are carrying in your bag, purse or wallet right now?**

I have a small glass bottle that is full of sand in my purse from my last year's trip to Cuba for our 3-year anniversary. I never bothered to take it out, plus I enjoy having it on me!

**If you were to create a slogan for your life, what would it be?**

Everything will be okay, just hug your beagle!

*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*

**An Interview with AU's 8<sup>th</sup> President  
The Second Session, Part I****Scott Jacobsen**

*Note: This interview has been edited for clarity and readability. It was conducted after the installation of Dr. Fassina as the President of AU.*

*[Dr. Neil Fassina](#) is the 8<sup>th</sup> President of Athabasca University (AU). He earned a BSc in Psychology from the University of Calgary and PhD in Management from the Rotman School of Business at the University of Toronto. He is an active researcher in the areas around applied decision-making. He was installed in mid-January, 2017.*

*His first interview with the The Voice Magazine was conducted in late 2016, before he was officially president. [Part 1](#) and [part 2](#) of that interview are both available in our archives. This second session was conducted in late May, 2017 as the 8<sup>th</sup> president of AU. This time, Scott Jacobsen explores how his views have evolved as he's gained more experience with AU.*

**Last time, we opened with the discussion about personal background. To start session 2, how have things been for you – adapting to the installation, to the institution, and charting a course with AU?**

President Neil Fassina: Wow – that's an incredibly heavy question. The short answer is fantastic. It has been an incredible learning journey for me. I can't recall whether or not we chatted the last time about it. But as I came into Athabasca University, I had a strong sense of the pieces in play and the community that was there. But to have the opportunity over the last 7 ½ months or so to truly get to know the individuals that are parts of this community, the passion they carry.



The knowledge they have, some of the expertise that they bring to the table. It has been exceptional. It is a lot of learning, a lot going on, but it has left me with a sense of a very bright and positive future for us.

**What seems like the main lesson in the last 7 or 7 ½ months for you?**

Wow – again, really good question, part of the key lesson learned is that for some time there has been an external as well as, arguably, an internal focus on some of the challenges that the university is currently facing. It is not to set those challenges aside. They are real. We will face them. We will tackle them. One of the main lessons is shifting the way we talk about ourselves. Despite the challenges that we are facing, we have so much immense good going on in this university, in our learner community, in our research domain.

We have an immense reputation as a leader in open and accessible distance learning. We need to tell that story. We need to embrace what we do incredibly well. We need to embrace what we do incredibly well. We need to be able to let the world know that we do it incredibly well. It is shifting the way we talk about ourselves, to become much stronger in being personal brand ambassadors. The challenges of the university are outweighed by the positive that is here and the opportunity that is here.

**With those opportunities before us, and with the advantages that we do have, what was one that you knew beforehand?**

Let me give an example around technology, one of the acknowledged challenges that we do have is the need to renew, and frankly accelerate, our technology. Whether or not we are talking about the hardware that underlies things or some of the academic computing elements, while it is a challenge before us, it is turning it around into an opportunity. Athabasca University has an opportunity to take a leadership role in the province and beyond with the goal to renew the technology.

If we're doing so in the lens of a solution, then we may be able to partner with others within the Alberta system to create an even stronger technology backbone. So, it becomes turning what others might see as an uphill battle around technology renewal into a chance to take a leadership role. From the students' perspective, it enables us to move that much quicker in terms of renewing technology we're doing this as a system.

So, we're more able to stay at the front end of where the learning opportunities are. You can do that in house. As an example, we

## AU-thentic Events

### Upcoming AU Related Events

#### Saskatoon Meet & Greet

Sunday, September 24, 1:00 to 3:00 pm CST

Stonebridge Starbucks, 3160 Preston Ave, Saskatoon, SK

In-person

Hosted by AUSU

[www.ausu.org/event/saskatoon-meet-greet/](http://www.ausu.org/event/saskatoon-meet-greet/)

no pre-registration required

#### MBA Info Session - Vancouver

Tuesday, September 26, 12:00 to 1:30 pm PDT

Sheraton Vancouver Wall Ctr, 1088 Burrard St, Vancouver BC

In-person

Hosted by AU's Faculty of Business

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

register online at above link

#### MBA Info Session - Toronto

Wednesday, September 27, 12:00 to 1:30 pm EDT

The University Club of Toronto, 380 University Ave, Toronto ON

In-person

Hosted by AU's Faculty of Business

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

register online at above link

#### MBA Info Session - Kelowna

Thursday, September 28, 12:00 to 1:30 pm PDT

Delta Hotels, 1310 Water St, Kelowna BC

In-person

Hosted by AU's Faculty of Business

[business.athabascau.ca/event-details/athabasca-university-executive-mba-information-session-reddeer-copy-2/](http://business.athabascau.ca/event-details/athabasca-university-executive-mba-information-session-reddeer-copy-2/)

register online at above link

have some of the world's leaders in distance learning. We have one of the leading experts in learning analytics. So, we could move forward with a systems solution on the technology renewal and, at the same time, to be able to leverage the knowledge sets of some of our talented staff.

We then can create that much more progressive movement on reforming the technology environment for higher education. When looking at it from the lens of a challenge, we need to make investments. But when you flip it around and say, "How can we take a leadership role?", there are a lot of pieces already in place. It is just a function of bringing those pieces together to make it happen.

**You talked about how you would "hit the ground listening" coming into the institution's community. How has this approach to leadership been an asset?**

Universities, overall, are incredibly interesting systems with a multitude of different stakeholder groups, different perspectives, and different opinions. The way that a university comes together with all of those different stakeholder groups, to individual faculty members, to staff, the way we can bring all of those various perspectives together is to create the most effective path forward for the university that seems to meet the needs of those stakeholder simultaneously.

The only way we can do that is by listening. Unless we understand the perspectives and the rationale behind perspectives, and the interest that underlines someone's perspective, then it is difficult to integrate those perspectives and move forward as a unified university with a singular goal. My approach to leadership is one of listening and integrating. It is important for AU. It is a highly integrated and complex system overall.

I think much of the opportunity that sits before the university and our future rests with the people who are a part of our future. I believe the ability and approach to listening and going from there will serve Athabasca University positively as we move forward.

**Now, with more familiarity with the AU community, what are some of the up-to-date concerns for the administration, the faculty, and the students?**

Let's start with the learners, the students: if I had to put a thumb on some of the primary concerns, our learners are looking for confidence in the university. Not only today, but into the future; not only stability, but its goal. They are looking for a consistent and high quality learning experience and a reliable learning experience in terms of reliable technology. They are looking to integrate their learning on their own terms, at their own pace, to serve their own learning goals.

## AU-thentic Events

### More Upcoming AU Related Events

#### **Alumni and Student Mixer - Kelowna**

Thursday, September 28, 5:00 to 7:00 pm  
PDT

OAK + CRU Social Kitchen & Wine Bar,  
1310 Water St, Kelowna BC

In-person

Hosted by AU's Faculty of Business

[business.athabascau.ca/event-  
details/athabasca-university-alumni-and-  
student-mixer-kelowna/](https://business.athabascau.ca/event-details/athabasca-university-alumni-and-student-mixer-kelowna/)

register online at above link by  
September 27

#### **MBA Info Session - Mississauga**

Thursday, September 28, 5:00 to 6:30 pm  
EDT

Toronto Airport Marriott Hotel, 901 Dixon  
Rd, Toronto ON

In-person

Hosted by AU's Faculty of Business

[business.athabascau.ca/event-  
details/athabasca-university-executive-  
mba-information-session-reddeer-copy-2-  
copy-2/](https://business.athabascau.ca/event-details/athabasca-university-executive-mba-information-session-reddeer-copy-2-copy-2/)

register online at above link

#### **Future Alumni Award Event**

Friday, September 29, 7:00 to 9:00 pm  
EDT

Queenston Heights Restaurant, 14184  
Niagara Parkway, Niagara-on-the-Lake ON

In-person

Hosted by AU

[createsend.com/t/r-  
E21D3246E6F14FB22540EF23F30FEDED](https://createsend.com/t/r-E21D3246E6F14FB22540EF23F30FEDED)  
RSVP by September 22 to  
[mschultz@athabascau.ca](mailto:mschultz@athabascau.ca)



If I consider that as the starting point, that helps frame some of the primary pieces for the university, the faculty and the staff. From the faculty and staff perspective, it is an exciting place to work and deliver on the commitments that we make to our learners as well as the commitments we have to meeting our research mandate and supporting each other. Again, it is the need for a direction that we can all hang our hats on and push toward, the need for a plan of action to get there, and a need for the development of community and that culture to enable us to get there. I would echo that there are concerns within faculty and staff, as with learners, which is to make sure our technology is on the front edge of learning pedagogy and educational technology, and is of the highest quality and experience - whether the learning is going through the recruitment or the learning process.

From the university's perspective, the issues remain fairly consistent. It is enabling that learning and research mandate, and the strong sense of community that we have, and embracing the passion of all of our faculty and staff. It is, "How can we effectively organize and direct the resources to make that happen?" We remain cognizant that we, from a financial perspective, are underfunded relative to our peers and continue to advocate for those additional resources.

So, we can effectively deliver. That we are focused on technology renewal, so we can re-establish our role as a leader in educational technology and innovative pedagogy. The university wants to make sure it is highly connected to the communities that it serves. That we recognize that we have a very strong role in many communities, including the town of Athabasca, and wanting to make sure we're not only committed to those communities, but to strengthening those communities and being part of a broader partnership as well.

Then making sure that we put the challenges that we currently face behind us and seizing the opportunities before us, to continue to enable that learning and that research mandate that we have as a comprehensive academic and research institution.

*Next week, we continue this interview with a more in-depth look at some of the technologies and other responses that Dr. Fassina envisions AU using to address some of these concerns.*

*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

**Dorothy Livesay** was born in Winnipeg, Manitoba, in October 1909, and died in Victoria, British Columbia, on December 29, 1996. In 1944 Livesay won the Governor General's Literary Award for "Day and Night" and again in 1947 for "Poems for People." That same year she was the recipient of the Royal Society of Canada's Lorne Pierce medal for her distinguished contribution to Canadian Literature. Livesay became an officer of the Order of Canada in 1987 as well as an officer of the Order of British Columbia in 1992. In 1985 Livesay was awarded an honorary doctorate from Athabasca University. Dorothy Livesay participated as a writer-in-residence at many universities.

Additional information about Dorothy Livesay's life, which included being a member of the communist party, and career may be found at the following websites:

<http://canadian-writers.athabascau.ca/english/writers/dlivesay/dlivesay.php>

<http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/dorothy-livesay/>

<http://www.uwo.ca/english/canadianpoetry/cpjrn/vol03/sullivan.htm>

## Canadian Education News

Scott Jacobsen



### Fake Degrees Still a Problem

According to CBC News: Business, fake degrees continue to be purchased. People acquire degrees to earn better jobs. However, there are predatory credentialing institutions, where the individuals can buy into degrees that are "fake."

Canadians attending post-secondary education are hoping for the benefits that tend to come from education, which are better jobs, higher pay, and so better lives. But as has been discussed in the media, a Marketplace investigation estimates hundreds of Canadians own "bogus degrees."

"Education doesn't come with a guaranteed job,

but post-secondary students expect some kind of payoff for all the time and money invested, CBC News: Business reported. Canadian student debt, though, is about \$28 billion.

### Canada Performing with the Best, OECD

William Watson, at the *Financial Post*, said, "I don't want to talk down the family business—my spouse and I both teach at university—but a graph in the latest edition of the OECD's Education at a Glance might make a person think we Canadians are overeducated."

There are no other countries in the OECD who have 50% or over for their 25-to-64-year-olds. In terms of the payoffs for education, the OECD states "still a lot" for Canadians. The gross lifetime payoff for men with a university education is about \$405,800 over and above those men with only a high school education.

Granted, this is less than the difference found on average for OECD countries. The main drawbacks are the cost of education, \$18,300, and the lost earnings while in school, \$44,700, as well as the income taxes on the additional earnings.

### Canadian High School Students Among the Highest Performing, PISA

*The National Post* reported that the results for Canada in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) have been positive. Our country is one of the highest-ranking countries in the world for education

Our high school students have been stagnant for the past decade, but stagnant at the top. One issue is that science proficiency is a problem. 10% of students aged 15 are lacking the basic proficiency levels to be able to participate in society at large.

The 2018 Times Higher Education World University Rankings were similar. Overall though, Canadian students performed with the top in the world on science, math, and reading performance, where 72 nations were participant in the ranking.

## Make Informed and Moral Votes for Alberta School Trustees, Bishops Urge

With the nominations for the Alberta Catholic school trustees closing, many bishops are encouraging potential voters to be informed and moral in their votes for the election day., CBC Canada: Edmonton said.

Seven bishops from the Northwest Territories and Alberta recommended guidelines for the election of school trustees in a letter. Edmonton Archbishop Richard Smith, of the letter, said, "Not as a directive, not telling them how to vote. We don't do that...Catholics vote out of their conscience, but understand that that conscience needs to be informed."

The urgent message of the letter focuses on voting for Catholic school trustees that are "first and foremost, disciples of Our Lord" with an emphasis of a "spirit of prayer and in accord with an informed conscience."

The seven bishops' letter centralizes on selection of leaders within the school community who will ensure the furtherance of a school environment consistent with the "values and teachings of our Lord as taught through our Church...[and] ensuring that their every decision will always accord with the truth of the Gospel and the teaching of the Church."

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



## AUSU Wants to Give You \$1000 for 30 Seconds of Work

**Barabara Lehtiniemi**



If you had a chance of receiving \$1000 for 30 seconds of effort, would you try for it? This is not a theoretical question. This autumn, AUSU will give \$1000 to the winner of its new #lgo2AU Award. To apply for the award, all you have to do is submit either a 30-second video or a 500-word essay.

Not only is it easy to apply for the #lgo2AU award, but every student has an equal chance to receive it. Unlike most other AUSU awards, the #lgo2AU Award has minimal eligibility criteria. Applicants aren't required to have completed a minimum number of credits, nor maintain a minimum GPA level. Applicants don't need to be enrolled in an AU program, nor do they need to be studying full time. The only requirement is that applicants must be a member of AUSU. (In general, any student enrolled in at least one AU undergraduate course is automatically a member from the day their course begins.)

The new #lgo2AU Award was developed by AUSU to "reflect the flexibility and open nature of AU." By avoiding any minimum credit or grade criteria for this award, AUSU has made it possible for every

AU undergraduate student to qualify for an award this year.

Applicants for the #lgo2AU Award must choose to submit either a 500-word essay or a 30-second video with their application. The topic of their submission can be any one, or any combination, of the following topics:



What makes AU unique;

- How does/has AU improve(d) your life;
- What is it about AU that fuels your passion for learning;
- Why you chose AU;
- How does AU inspire you, and/or;
- What AU means to you.

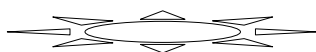
The #Igo2AU award joins AUSU's bi-annual suite of scholarships and bursaries. Online applications now being accepted for the November 1 deadline. One award of \$1000 will be available on each of the next two award deadlines, November 1, 2017 and May 1, 2018; students can only win this award once. The #Igo2AU Award is a pilot for this fiscal year. AUSU will evaluate the award in 2018 to decide whether to keep it and, if so, whether any changes are needed.

For all the details, and to apply, go to the [awards application form](#) and select the AUSU #Igo2AU Award from the drop-down list.

In addition to the new #Igo2AU award, AUSU will be giving away more awards in two other categories. Both the Balanced Student Award and the Returning Student Award will each see four awards of \$1000 given out this award cycle, up from the usual two each. Similar to most AUSU awards, the Balanced Student and Returning Student Awards have minimum credit and grade requirements that applicants must meet to qualify.

For now, the #Igo2AU Award is the only award that's as open and flexible as AU.

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



## The Fit Student A Healthy Splash

Marie Well



Look thirty in your fifties! Not like the fifty-year old grandpa with fit abs. I bet he drinks cola. Instead, look like a real thirty-year old. Truly. How? Well, you decay after age twenty, says Chris Crowley and Henry S. Lodge in their book *Younger Next Year: Live Strong, Fit, and Sexy – Until You're 80 and Beyond*. So, exercise six days a week your entire lifetime—whether you're young or old.

Don't hire a flaky fitness trainer either (Crowley and Lodge, 2007). Some charge your card, but idly chat your entire lazy workout. Others count your reps—but you learned to count in grade school. No need for either.

Instead, hire trainers who make you sweat and huff—who test the limits of your spirit. In short, hire a trainer, not a gym buddy. If you must hire a gym buddy, pay Grandma. You'll get a sincere visit—plus some tasty baking.

And do much more diet-wise. Two Christmases ago, I spent the holidays getting three-root-canals on a broken molar. The culprit? Diet cola. One cup of cola and my teeth ached like marshmallows. A month of cola, and a cap broke. And now, my doctor wants me tested for gastritis. Diet cola? Yes, festering in my gut with zero nutrition. Like popular poison.

Super fries, burgers, and sodas kill. So, I discovered the cure for cola—the cure for most ills. At least, the cure for fit granddaddy fifties. Namely, exercise, nine-hour sleeps, and superfoods. With this combo, your mood lifts. Your energy rises. You feel fuller on less food. Best of all, you stand a decent chance of reversing—even annihilating—disease.

The final cure for granddaddy fifties? Whiten your chops, says Chris Crowley and Henry S. Lodge. Years of black teas stained my teeth. People mistook me for a smoker—until I found extra whitening toothpaste. One brush, and years of buildup? Vanished.

Or get dental cosmetic surgery. Papa spent tens of thousands to get super white teeth. Now, he grins—a lot. He also inspects and criticizes my teeth. His only regret? He passed on the whitest shade.

I phoned Papa recently, reassuring him that he'd reach 90 or even 100. I told him the secret: dress more stylishly the older you get—it confuses people (Crowley & Lodge, 2007). And hopefully style baffles biological clocks.

Chris Crowley and Henry S. Lodge show how to defy aging in their book *Younger Next Year: Live Strong, Fit, and Sexy – Until You're 80 and Beyond*:

- The secret to lean health? "The only way to lose weight is to embark on a program of steady, vigorous exercise, avoiding the worst foods being thrust upon you in our national diet and eating less of everything" (p. 213).
- And the secret to preserving your bones? "Lifting big, heavy weights ... stops the bone loss ... stops (or offsets) the muscle loss ... stops the weakening of tendons" (p. 155).
- But how heavy should you lift? "Eventually you have to get to heavy weights and low reps .... That means lifting weight that you can lift, say only ten times before you literally cannot do it anymore" (p. 159).
- The best news for aging? Weightlifting—even in your nineties—gets you mobile. "There was a study done a while ago in a nursing home. They got all residents, including the ones who were bedridden, to do weights. ... Almost all the bedridden got up on walkers. The guys on walkers went to canes, and so on" (p. 161). Weights give you legs.
- The worst news for aging? Isolation kills. So, keep your friends close—even if they bug you. "We're tempted to say, the hell with so-and-so. Well, don't; we can't afford to lose a one" (p. 280). Love others; cuddle others—for longevity.
- So, stay connected: "if you have a faith, go back to church or temple or the pagan altar of your choice. Coach Little League, drive a school bus ... volunteer at anything you want, but volunteer. You might not always like it, you might even find it boring, tedious, or frustrating .... [but] you need to matter" (p.264-265).

A friend's dad made drastic changes to his diet. Why? In his late forties, his health tanked. Mine did too. So, exercise—and let blueberry yogurt mark your unhealthiest treat. Get 7 to 9 hours sleep, no matter how sedating the medicines. And love. Your bowels will return the love—with a healthy splash.

## The Creative Spark!

### Farewell to Deathbed Woes

Marie Well



You've heard the deathbed woe: "I wish I had..." So, chase dreams daily—take risks. Risks give rise to successes. Forget about the failures for now. We'll celebrate them later.

But first, the naysayers. Some people view us as weak-kneed fools. Brother warns us, "Lose the lofty goals." Charities la-dee-da our desire to televise talent shows. Aunty plans our future as hermits painting abstracts in her basement.

Why? Maybe it's doubt, fear, jealousy, competitiveness, money, stress, age, or whatever. Naysayers itch to blurt, "I told you so." Naysayers may get their zero hour. We all fail sometimes. So, how do we fail gracefully? Draft a CV of failures—and celebrate each F, says Helen Sword.

Yes, we all get whacked with flying F's. I didn't graduate high school with my class. I got fired after two days as an underage lounge waitress. I failed to get a PhD in math. I failed to get a PhD in anything. So, celebrate. Crack the virgin cocktails and burst balloons.

We all face rejection, too. I didn't get chosen to go to camp in grade five. Mom and I broke each other's hearts—and now never talk. My darling supervisor blocks my entry in the faculty.

Other times, we get lucky. Lucky people "leave no stone unturned and follow all kinds of paths" says Ann Blaire (as cited in Sword, p. 175). I lucked out. I aimed to get the silver medallion in math. But I fled the math department—and won a silver medallion in communications instead.

So, chase dreams, celebrate failure, shoo naysayers—in other words, take risks. The more risks, the better the luck.

Helen Sword says take risks with writing, too. She bares the art of risk-taking in her book *Air & Light & Time & Space: How Successful Academics Write*.

- Take risks; don't conform.
- Learn the rules—and then break them, says Fabrizio Gilardi (as cited in Sword).
- Or, take writing risks from day one.
- Or, play it safe and bust the rules once you've got tenure, says Stephen Ross (as cited in Sword).
- But if you play too safe, once you choose to break the rules, your writing style won't magically appear, says James Shapiro (as cited in Sword).
- Sadly, peer reviewers slap us into acting like meek conformists.
- Yet, "writers with egos made of glass are unlikely to survive in academia too long" (Sword, p. 178).



- So, don't feel shame when some brute attacks your writing. Even top academics get their work rejected.
- Instead, prove wrong those who attack your writing. How? Publish a book, says John Heilbron (as cited in *Sword*).
- Also, rethink criticisms as favorable feedback, says Shanthi Ameratunga (as cited in *Sword*).
- And remember—luck comes to those who chase opportunities

Take risks, set goals, and wave farewell to deathbed woes. Risk sparks success in writing, academics, and well-being.

In past articles, I begged you to list starry-eyed goals. Yet, I worried my goals were wildcats. Not at all. One of my wildest hatched—to be raised, braised, and gobbled. A paradox? I call it a creative spark!



## The Mindful Bard

### Le Bonheur

Wanda Waterman



**Film:** *Le Bonheur*

**Writer:** Agnès Varda

**Director:** Agnès Varda

"Yes! Got it! This is a happy family! Can we move to the next scene, please?"

Viewing hundreds of fast-paced Hollywood films with machine gun editing does tend to spoil one for thoughtful films. Besides, some of the more arty films appear to pride themselves on being as dull and unfathomable as a tax return, and sometimes the ending arrives accompanied by a sense that you'll never get that time back.

With Agnès Varda's *Le Bonheur* (*Happiness*), getting through the drawn-out sequences to the end of the film will reward you with some insight into the dark side of the traditional nuclear family, a social institution which, according to Varda and many other social critics, appears to depend for its survival on female roles without real people in them. It's no surprise that the film has been compared to *The Stepford Wives*.

The handsome François, his lovely wife Thérèse, and their two, cherubic offspring, Pierrot and Gisou, have an idyllic life. Whether picnicking in the countryside, pottering around the house, or paying visits, their days look sweet as honeysuckle. But shadows are about to fall.

While visiting François's aunt and uncle, Thérèse smilingly offers the aunt a lovely bouquet she's taken pains to assemble from wildflowers in the forest. The aunt brushes them away, saying, "Keep them. I have enough flowers in my garden."

Thérèse's carefully crafted expression of kindness has been dismissed as if it meant nothing. A look of perplexed hurt dashes across her face, but she keeps her composure. She doesn't even whine to François about it afterwards—that would make her not a nice person, and being a nice person is all she has.

This kind of female archetype still haunts women today. It's this ideal that makes us feel shame when we can't look perfect, maintain a successful career, keep a perfect house, raise perfect children, and keep our partners perfectly happy. The question the film asks is this: *If you could do all that, where would it get you?*

Thérèse isn't allowed to object, complain, or disagree. She's not allowed to feel resentment, rage, despair, or any other of the normal range of human emotions. She must work hard, sacrifice herself, pocket insults, and accept neglect and indifference, all with a loving smile. She carries it off brilliantly, and her husband knows himself to be a very lucky man.

François so brims with happiness that when Émilie (a postal worker who oddly looks just like Thérèse but with more makeup) takes an interest in him he's ready to spread the happiness around.

On their next bucolic family outing Thérèse asks François why he seems so buoyant lately. Reluctantly he tells her about his affair, adding that it doesn't change his love for her. Thérèse is crushed but does all she can to hide her pain, sweetly remarking that she's glad to see him this happy. He's so delighted with having gotten away with betraying her that he insists on making love to her before falling asleep in the grass.

When Thérèse fades out of François's life forever he quickly replaces her with Émilie, and the family life carries on as blissfully as ever. The disappearance of their biological mother seems not even to have registered with the children as they take Émilie's hands and wander through the sunny meadow.

Before marrying François, Émilie had been her own person. She'd supported herself, had her own place, read books, and listened to music. Now she must leave all that behind her. When François tells her that he loves his children and hopes she can love them too, she hesitates, saying, "I don't want to replace anyone."

When she steps into Thérèse's role she leaves her true self behind, just as Thérèse had done before her. Neither Thérèse nor Émilie are allowed to exist as persons in their own right. Each woman is required to become a kind of empty shell, consisting of no more than the role she plays within the family.

Incidentally, I discovered this little cinematographic epiphany via [Mubi](#), where, for a monthly pittance you can enjoy a varying selection of intelligent films new and old. It's truly a fabulous resource for film students and buffs alike, and I'm so glad I found it. (For the record, I'm not receiving any compensation from Mubi for saying this, nor will I ever.)

*Happiness* manifests five of the Mindful Bard's [criteria](#) for films well worth seeing.

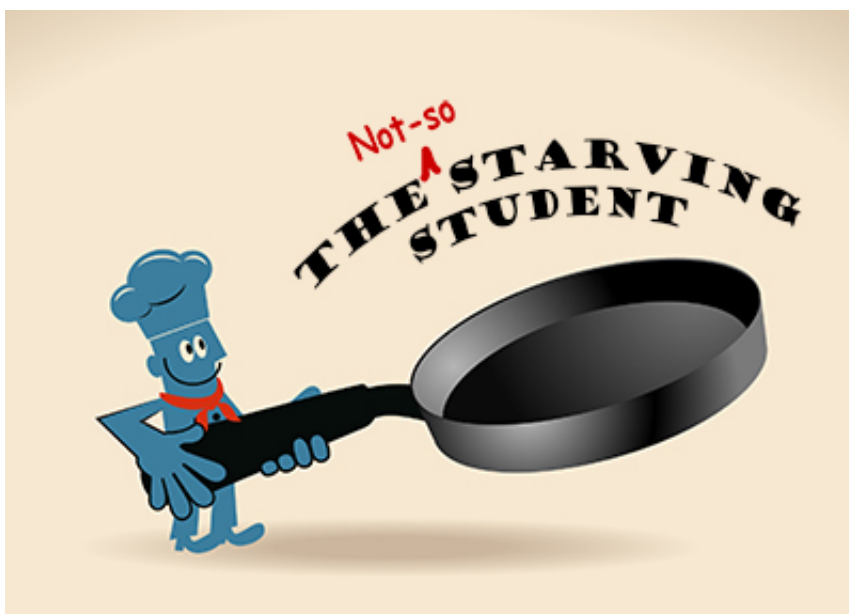
- It's authentic, original, and delightful.
- It poses and admirably responds to questions that have a direct bearing on my view of existence.
- It displays an engagement with and compassionate response to suffering.

- It makes me want to be a better artist.
- It makes me appreciate that life is a complex and rare phenomena, making living a unique opportunity.

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

## The Not-So Starving Student Buffet Tips

**Xin Xu**



Despite carefully controlling portion sizes, sometimes the option of buffet is too tempting to pass up. Having recently booked my trip to Las Vegas this Fall, I'm sure to visit a handful of top-notch buffets on the Vegas strip. Regardless of which buffet you're feasting at, there's some fundamentals to the art of buffeting. You might have even heard of questionable tips from friends and family about the best way to approach buffets that offers the most value and enjoyment. Here's a page from the experts and will help demystify common misconceptions. Note: the following message is 0% scientifically proven and 100% from experience.

### Don't starve before the marathon

When you starve yourself before a feast, you're doing yourself a disfavor in the buffet game. Not only is this unhealthy but it reduces the capacity of your stomach to store the additional food. Eat a light breakfast if you're heading to a lunch buffet or grab a small portioned lunch if you're planning on dinner buffet.

### Stay hydrated

Given the variety of cuisines offered at buffets are often savory and salty, it's critical that you stay well-hydrated before the feast begins. Water helps to dilute the seasoning you're consuming and improves digestion.





**Leave the grease for last**

If you're drooling at the first sight of bacon, onion rings or fried chicken, you might be tempted to start out with the classic comfort food. However, if you're a seasoned buffet goer, you'd know that heavy grease helps hasten the onset of food coma. What does that mean for you? It could mean packing in less of the buffet dishes offered. If those are the items you're craving, saving them for last might make your post-buffet experience more satisfying.

**Lunch > Dinner**

The last trek I made to Las Vegas involved a series of dinner buffets which offered a greater gourmet selection, but also lowered the post-meal satisfaction. Staying bloated until midnight might be a great idea for student night-owls, but biologically, the stomach is then forced to function at odd hours and thus produces unpleasant effects. Giving yourself ample time to digest a heavy meal may improve your buffet experience in the long-run.

**Start small**

The expert buffet goer knows the digestive system has its limits. Depending on your comfort zone, you may want to feast in several rounds. Your first round should involve a series of spoonfuls of your favorite dishes. Similar to taking a multiple-choice exam, you want to consider all your options, weigh them, and use the process of elimination in round two. Once you have narrowed in on your favorites, your round two will be that much more enjoyable.

**Post-meal walks**

For the average person, buffets are a strain on our digestive system. Particularly if you're a carnivore. To help your body kickstart the process and reduce bloatedness, take slow, relaxed walks following a heavy meal.

*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:** Montem Health and Wellness Scholarship

**Sponsored by:** Montem Outdoor Gear

**Deadline:** September 30, 2017

**Potential payout:** \$1500

**Eligibility restriction:** Applicants must be enrolled in high school, college, university, or trade school, and have a passion for a healthy lifestyle.

**What's required:** An e-mail with contact and school info, proof of student status, along with a 500-1000 word essay on promoting a practical approach to a healthy lifestyle during your school years.

**Tips:** Dual-purpose your essay and apply for the similar Hiking Ambition Wellness scholarship, featured in last week's *The Voice Magazine*.

**Where to get info:** [montemlife.com/scholarship/](http://montemlife.com/scholarship/)



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

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

#### AthaU Facebook Group

Fred wonders why there's a lag time between course registration and course accessibility; the rest of us wonder why we never noticed. Samantha is curious how long it will take for AU to process her marital name change—the wrinkle is her upcoming exam with ProctorU, which requires a name match. Barbara's looking for a hardcopy of an Indigenous Studies text and manages to snag the loan of one from another student; did she really just agree to swap an all-inclusive vacation for it?

Other posts include pharmacy school, common core mathematics, course refunds, and courses ANTH 275 and ECON 247.

#### reddit

A few new posts this week, including one asking if it's possible to finish 5 credits by Feb 2018. The consensus is it's not *impossible*.

#### Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: "Please take note of Sunday's MyAU service upgrade which may impact your online activity: <http://ow.ly/YUKU30fiAqW>."

@AthabascaUSU (AUSU) tweets: "AUSU is now accepting applications for our November awards cycle. Apply today! <http://bit.ly/1GIWJhi> #freemoney #AthaU."



## Comparisons

Deanna Roney



We have a tendency to compare ourselves to others. Our failures to their successes. There is the adage that what we see is only the tip of the iceberg. We see overnight success, but never the years of unrecognized work that went in before that "overnight".

I think we tend to do this a lot in creative work as it is a subjective world: there is no right, or wrong way. We watch, on various social media platforms, illustrators work and when we look down at our own illustrations, they are different. And by default, theirs is "right" and ours is "wrong". This comparison stunts so many in their journey. The truth of it is that someone is probably comparing themselves to you and considering themselves not good enough.

I used to paint and draw a lot. I sold a few paintings and exhibited in several shows in the region. When I went back to school my focus shifted and I found my love of words again. I have always enjoyed watching illustrators and artists work, I subscribe to several YouTube channels and can get lost in their talk about paper, pens, and ink.

I had this idea when I started school again. A combining of my love of art and words. Through the years, though, this idea got lost. My ability to draw became rusty, and when I would pick up the pencil it didn't last long; the results were less than desirable.

It is great to draw inspiration from others, to learn from them, but don't compare your situation to theirs. Don't compare your work to theirs. Yours should be different, it should be unique. It is hard to push through that boundary sometimes. But there is something fulfilling in it. You don't have to show your work to anyone else; it can be something just for you, something that makes you feel good and releases some of the day's tension.

There is so much focus on money and professional success that sometimes we forget about the other things we love, the things that probably won't contribute to our lives in that way but that will in others.

Creative work can be hard, but it is a labour of love. From the start of my degree in English I heard all the sayings about not being able to find work. But there are so many opportunities out there. They may be difficult to find, and even harder to land, but they are there. It is a matter of perseverance, it will (probably) take longer than you want, there will be obstacles that you didn't anticipate, and you may work a job alongside the pursuit of the dream. But, if you are able to land that job you love, the one that seemed to far out of reach, it will have been worth it in the end.

Your creative work, just like your journey, is going to look different from everyone else's. Regardless of your pursuit, set some time aside to work on the things that are a passion project because these will keep you refreshed and help to hold you up when the pursuit feels impossible.

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





*Dear  
Barb*

*Barbara Godin*

## Uninvited Commentary

**Dear Barb:**

*I am in my early forties and about to enter into my third marriage. My wife to be has also been married twice before. We are not having a big celebration because we both feel a little awkward having to deal with all the comments about a third marriage. I know I messed up in my previous marriages, but I really feel like this is the right thing to do. I don't know how to deal with the comments from others. Do you have any suggestions? Thanks, Jason.*

Hey Jason:

Congratulations on the prenuptials. Three marriages is a lot, but the important thing is if you learned anything from your failed marriages. Often people who experience multiple marriages are people who always believe they are right. If you are a person who constantly thinks they are right and everybody else is wrong, you may not be ready to enter into another marriage. But it takes two to make a mistake and in failed marriages, both parties have equal ownership. As far as entering this marriage, you are the only one who knows what you truly feel in your heart. If you honestly believe this is going to work and you are marrying for the right reasons, then you need to hold your head up and ignore the negative comments. I know it's a hard thing to do, but it's your life and you cannot live it according to anyone else's values. Good luck, Jason.

**Dear Barb:**

*One of our relatives owns a cottage and often family members use it for their vacation. We went there a couple of weeks ago and we were assured that we could have it to ourselves for the week; however, that was not the case. The owner of the cottage and their children arrived half-way through the week, so we all had to double up the sleeping arrangements so there would be enough room for everyone. Don't get me wrong, we love them, but we just wanted a week of peace and quiet. I don't think they should have showed up unannounced during the week we were using the cottage. A few family members think I am being unreasonable since they are letting us use the cottage free of charge. They felt they should have been able to come and stay at their own cottage. What do you think, Lauren?*

Hey Lauren:

I tend to agree with you. If the owners assured you that you could have the cottage to yourself for a week then they should have kept their word. Maybe next time, you should offer to pay for your week that may cause them to think twice before arriving, since you are basically renting the cottage for the week. Great question!

*Follow Barb on twitter @BarbGod*

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## IMPORTANT DATES

- **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](#)
- **Oct 13:** [November degree requirements deadline](#)
- **Oct 31:** [Deadline to apply for course extension for Dec](#)
- **Nov 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Dec 1](#)
- **Nov 14:** [AUSU Council Meeting](#)

## Awards and Bursaries

AUSU is now accepting applications for our November awards cycle! Each award is worth \$1000.

**Academic Achievement Award** (2 available): For students who have achieved academic excellence.

**AUSU Bursaries** (5 available): For students in financial need and/or with exceptional life circumstances.

**Balanced Student Awards** (4 available): For students who balance multiple commitments.

**Returning Student Awards** (4 available): For students who have returned to studies after a long break.

**Single Parent Bursary** (2 available): For students in financial need who are single parents.

**Student Volunteer Awards** (2 available): For students who do volunteer work.

**#Igo2AU Award** (1 available): Available to all AUSU members, no matter how many courses they are in or have completed. Applicants just need to submit either a 500-word essay or 30-second video articulating any one, or a combination of the following areas: what makes AU unique; how does/has AU improve(d) their lives; what is it about AU that fuels their passion for learning; why they chose AU; how does AU inspire them, and/or; what AU means to them.

Find out more or apply online [here](#).



## AU Student Mobile App

Want to get connected with the campus community?

Want quick access to services and resources available to you as an AU student?

Want to check out events and deadlines?

Get the FREE [AU Student App](#), courtesy of AUSU.

So far, this year, there have been over 500 friendships made and over 10,000 chats and likes on the Campus Wall! Don't miss out!



## AUSU FAQ's

Have questions about AUSU or our services?

Check out our [Frequently Asked Questions!](#)

**AUSU**  
**FAQ's**



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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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