



THE VOICE

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Education or Indoctrination

Freedom of Debate at WLU

A Sinister Cycle

What Comes Around Goes Around

Gambling for Grades

Roll the Dice on Perfection

Plus:

Council Connection

Review: *Creative Block*

and much more!



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



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

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

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

Editorial

Tuition Lockdown

Karl Low



Recently, it was announced that the NDP government of Alberta has decided that tuition at Alberta's post-secondary institutions will remain frozen this year, and also expects universities to not raise any of the mandatory fees that they typically require. The government promises to backfill funding to make up for what the allowed increases in tuition would provide a post-secondary institution had it been allowed to raise its tuition and fees as normal.

The backdrop of this, however, is that the finance minister has also recently called for all public employees to be willing to accept a 0% wage increase this year at the bargaining table, echoing the freeze the government has put on all non-union wages. This has prompted some interesting discussion about whether the public sector unions should accept Finance Minister Joe Ceci's recommendation, or if they should stand against it. On one side of the issue, it's argued that by allowing the NDP to take the easy way out of freezing pay on public employees rather than the harder task of raising or expanding taxes to cover reasonable increases does not set a good

precedent. On the other side of the debate, it is argued that the alternative, which would likely be a UCP government, would be an even worse turn of events for the public sector unions.

This debate will have real consequences for AU students. If the public sector unions decide to refuse the 0% increases, it could lead to strikes, such as we recently saw in Ontario. This could have a large effect on all students taking courses this year, and if it subsequently leads to a UCP government, we can expect the time of tuition freezes will be over. On the other hand, accepting a 0% increase means it simply becomes harder for Alberta post-secondary institutions to compete for top academic talent for both education and research. One thing most people fail to take into account when looking at the wages of the public sector in Alberta is that the cost of living is higher than you'll find in most other provinces—driven, in part, by the premiums that the oil industry is willing to pay to ensure they have enough labour at the oil sands.

The other news that's getting attention in academic circles is the treatment of a teaching assistant at Wilfrid Laurier University. Our feature article, by new writer Jaclyn van Beek, looks directly at the issue, explaining what happened and why it matters to all students. It's once again revived the debate as to whether university courses are providing education or indoctrination. (For what it's worth, the evidence suggests that if there is indoctrination occurring, it isn't working.)

Also in this issue, many of us have probably heard of courses or tutors who make getting 100% in a course an impossibility. I have heard of tutors explicitly saying they will not give 100% for an essay, as that implies there is no possibility for improvement. But is that really what 100% means? And is that a fair assessment for a student if they can demonstrate mastery of the course requirements? We explore this in our article, "Gambling for Grades," but what's your take on the matter?

And, of course, we have our selection of events, scholarships, thought provoking articles, advice, and other pieces to keep you thinking when you need a break from your studies.

Enjoy the read!

University: Teaching or Indoctrinating?

The Debate Sparked by Wilfrid Laurier

Jaclyn van Beek



University students, why are you pursuing a higher education? For most of us, the answer is simple: we want to gain the skills required to get good jobs in our chosen fields of expertise. We go to school so we can reach our full potential and achieve our goals. Since we've been sentient, we've been asked what career path we want to pursue. Maybe you looked up at your mom or your kindergarten teacher with your wide, wondering eyes and answered that you wanted to be a firefighter, a lawyer, a doctor, an indoctrinated sycophant for a postmodern, neo-Marxist ideology—wait, no, probably not that one. Too

bad, as some university administrations seem to want nothing more than to send you out the door with your shiny new Master's Degree in groupthink.

One such university, it appears, is Ontario's own Wilfred Laurier University. The administration of Wilfred Laurier has come under fire from free-speech advocates (read: a group of people that should include all people but unfortunately does not) for reprimanding 22-year-old teaching assistant, Lindsay Shepherd. Lindsay's crime? Exposing her first-year Communications Studies students to an excerpt from a [video debate](#) between University of Toronto psychology professor Dr. Jordan Peterson and another lecturer. The debate was centered on the then-proposed Bill C-16 and the use of non-binary gender pronouns in general (the use of pronouns like "they" or "ze" to refer to a single, non-traditional trans person). Professor Peterson has gained nationwide infamy in the past year for posting several controversial YouTube videos expressing his concerns about the far-reaching implications of what he considers the criminalization of pronoun misuse. The bill was passed last June and is now law.

Shepherd secretly recorded her meeting with her supervising professor, which the [National Post](#) reported, culminated in several censorious measures, including requiring her to hand in her lesson plans to her superior for review and the potential for in-class supervision. [The recording](#) is telling. In it, Shepherd is told that she was "promoting violence against trans persons" and "creating an unsafe learning environment" by simply showing her students the video without first prefacing Dr. Peterson's perspectives as "problematic". It appears to be entirely uncontested that she showed the clip for the purposes of promoting a healthy discussion and to fairly present both sides of a controversial issue, but this was of no consequence to her accusers. At one point, her supervisor even states that Shepherd's efforts to stay politically neutral were "kind of the problem" and compares doing so with presenting the views of Adolf Hitler in a neutral fashion. As if that's not the most wildly hysterical and intellectually lazy comparison of all time.

Without some clarification, I expect I'd be inundated with diatribes about the importance of being sensitive to the unique plight of trans folks. Before that happens, consider this: any position on gender expression and the use of non-traditional pronouns is irrelevant to the more

central debate around campus censorship and indoctrination. There is no reason why the protection of free speech should be a partisan issue.

Your time in university should be rife with debate, exposure to new ideas and opportunities to develop critical thinking skills. This woman made no effort to defend Dr. Peterson, and she said multiple times in her interview that she disagrees with his perspective—she merely wanted to present both sides of a contentious social issue without bias and allow her students to analyze each argument on its merits. Well-intentioned or otherwise, her supervising professor effectively punished Shepherd for refusing to treat students like infants who must be spoon-fed the “right ideas” because they don’t yet have the intellectual “toolkit” to reason their way through a sophisticated argument. Shepherd is right when she says that shielding students from certain perspectives to protect their fragile sensibilities is antithetical to the purpose of higher learning; you should leave university with the skills to orient yourself in a world full of people that won’t always agree with you.

Lindsay’s story is a success story. Her courage in defending herself and the purpose of a quality university education is being recognized by respected figures in media and academia nationwide and has resulted in apology letters from both the Laurier President and her supervising professor, although I think the need for damage control measures after the considerable media blow-back casts reasonable doubt on their sincerity. It is fortunate that Lindsay had the presence of mind to record the encounter, or her academic credibility might now be questioned. Be like Lindsay. Fight the indoctrination and expose it when it rears its ugly head. Hold your administrators to a high standard and, together, let’s ensure that this “soft bigotry of low expectations” has no place in our post-secondary institutions.

Christian, conservative, Canadian – in that order. Follow me on Twitter @jaclynvanbeek.

Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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



AthaU Facebook Group

Laura seeks help with MLA citations for two web resources with similar names; she ultimately gets the answer she needs from the AU library. Danielle seeks guidance on a HIST 201 assignment but all she gets are crickets.

Other posts include myAU login issues, AUSU events, study spots in Calgary, and fancying up an essay.

Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: "HUGE Congratulations to #AthaU professor of Nursing and Health Disciplines Dr. Sharon Moore on her 2017 Ontario Premier's Awards for outstanding college graduates nomination! <http://ow.ly/uzf630gS1HK> #yyyc."

@AthabascaUBiz tweets: "We're #1! Did you know that #AthaU is the first university to offer online courses to help you meet the requirements to write FPSC's Level 1® Financial Planning Examination: <https://goo.gl/KfRmMk> #FinancialPlanning #BComm #Undergrad."

A Sinister Cycle

Karlee Kapler



Who taught you to be so negative? Where did you learn to say, “You can’t, you will look like an idiot, don’t even bother”?

I ask this of myself frequently. Time and time again, I let a potential job opportunity slip away, or watch the shadows change on my wall, the night easing into morning and my insomnia getting the best of me. Throwing blankets aside and blinking into the darkness, while that inside voice is yelling, “Who do you think you are?!”

Who is this sinister voice taunting me? Telling me to give up on my dreams, that maybe I would be happier if I was a person who was willing to just settle. Maybe I want too much, maybe I am not easily pleased, maybe I think too highly of myself.

But where did I learn that I should be ashamed of my confidence? Who taught me to be this way?

After thinking about it for some time, I realized I did not teach myself to be like this, and I am blaming you. I mean you, the person who gave up on your dreams and now you feel that it is your mission to encourage every other person to give up on theirs.

As children, we are told we can do anything – our parents coo that we will be a real singer one day, they just know it! And we truly believe it. But then something changes. One day maybe we meet someone who scoffs at us and makes fun of our dream. Maybe it was even your own parents, or your siblings, or maybe a teacher or a playground peer. The first jab, carving a small wound into your delicate being. It is so significant, but I cannot recall when it happened. But there are times I can recall when I scoffed at someone else’s dream, unloading my whittled confidence and pain onto them. And so the cycle goes. Someone took a piece from me, and I turned around and took a piece from someone else. Here we are stealing from one another, to restore a hollowness that was created by someone who was also hurting. And what does that result in? A large percentage of the population working jobs they hate, living in cities they loathe and pursuing an education their parents encouraged. You know what I mean.

So here’s to you, I am sorry for your pain. I am sorry that whoever told you that you weren’t good enough made you feel this regret, and sorry you later felt the need to strike at another’s dream. You learned from someone else to scrape away at someone’s creative inside, to leave them hollow and place your regrets on their shoulders. That isn’t your fault. But you hurt me, you’re hurting us. It’s not too late to change.

And here’s to us. To being unapologetically authentic, to getting exactly what we want out of life.

I never want to say, “I wish I would have done that”

Do you?

Karlee Kapler is a student at AU, majoring in English. She hopes one day to pursue a career in either editing, publishing, writing, communications, or post secondary teaching. She can’t decide! Feel like reaching out? Shoot her an email at karlee.kapler@gmail.com



Gambling for Grades

Barbara Lehtiniemi



Do you ever feel like when you submit an assignment for marking, you're playing roulette? Occasionally, the results seem random, just like the spin of a wheel.

Most of the time, assignment marks seem to be reasonably accurate assessments. But once in a while, I wonder if the marker just pulled a random number out of a hat.

Round numbers—those marks ending in a five or a zero—seem to come up with more than the average frequency. While it's not unusual to have an assignment marked with a round number—I'm particularly partial to

90 and 95 myself—it's a bit suspicious when you get several from the same tutor. I had one English course in which three essays and the exam all resulted in round-number marks. Did the tutor only have numbers in increments of five on their dart board? How accurate is their assessment if they are only working with a few possible mark outcomes?

There's also the semi-fictional "100". A grade of 100 is apparently achievable for some assignments and for some courses only. My final exam for PSYC 289, as well as all the quizzes, was multiple choice. Answers were either right or wrong and not subject to the marker's opinion. A mark of 100% for that exam, and for the whole course, was possible. I didn't get 100, but at least I was confident the potential was there.

For other courses, though, a grade of 100 seems to be a carrot dangled just out of reach. How often does a student achieve a grade of 100% for an essay-based course? Even getting 100 for a single essay seems as elusive as the pot of gold at the end of a rainbow.

When I receive an essay back from the marker, my expectation is that I should be able to determine what I would have needed to do to achieve 100. If the tutor's comments can't explain the gap between the assigned mark and the potential mark (100, if you believe that), then how did they arrive at the mark they assigned?

There seems to be a notion among markers that an essay has to achieve perfection in order to be awarded the "perfect" mark of 100. This is nonsense. The only requirement for earning 100% should be "did the student fulfill the requirements of the assignment." If the student achieved the objectives that the assignment was meant to assess, then they earned full marks. There is not one ideal essay toward which we all should strive, but many possible exemplary essays.

Just because an essay can be improved upon does not signal that marks must be discounted. Any piece of writing can be improved upon. 100% should be possible with every essay assignment and with essay-based courses. If 100% isn't possible, then why is it even on the grade chart? Why are we measured against it?

It's often said that education shouldn't be about the marks. That's absolutely true. Marks shouldn't matter. But as much as students would like them not to matter, marks do matter—a lot. Want to apply for a scholarship? The majority of them require a minimum Grade Point Average. Want to get into an advanced program? They'll want to look at your grades before anything else.

From a student standpoint, marks are a method of measuring personal progress. Coupled with thoughtful feedback, marks can also be a source of motivation. Conversely, marks can also be a source of discouragement, especially if the marks seem randomly, rather than thoughtfully, assigned.

It seems to me that grades matter. And because they do, I would like to think that the same care goes into assigning grades as was put into earning them. I don't like to feel I'm spinning a wheel for marks, especially if that wheel has been fixed to avoid anything above 95.

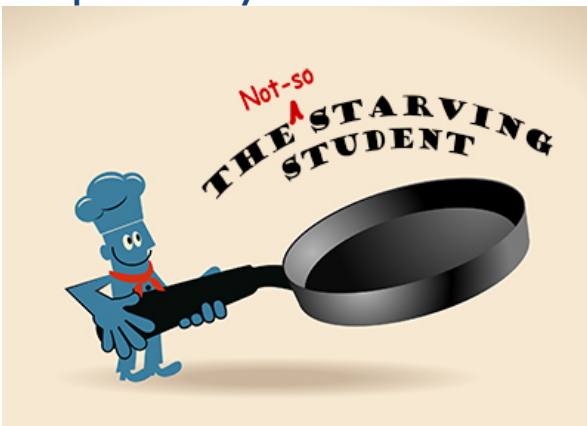
Students put a great deal of money, time, and effort into their courses. It's meant to be an investment, not a gamble. If students wanted to play roulette, they'd go to the casino. The marks we earn for our investment should represent an accurate assessment, not just the spin of a wheel.

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



The Not-So Starving Student Pumpkin for Any Occasion

Xin Xu



The entire fall and winter season highlights the importance of pumpkins. Whether it's pumpkin carving, pumpkin spiced lattes, pumpkin pies, or more, we savour the king of squashes not only for its bright colors and delicious pulp but also for its nutrient content. Pumpkin is a specially cultivated member of the gourd family, abundant in vitamins, minerals and plant sugars. Whereas the skyrocketing obesity rates can be traced to the movement toward greater consumption of processed sugars, pumpkins and other traditional starchy plants provides a sugar form that helps control blood glucose (Kwan et al., 2007). So how

can you incorporate this delicious superfood into your daily meals? We've scouted out some simple recipes that a busy AU student like yourself could use.

Breakfast - Pumpkin Spice Breakfast Cookies: If you only have 5 minutes for breakfast, this is the perfect breakfast for you! For those rushed mornings before finals, these will come in handy and give you enough nutrients to last until your next fill.

- 1 cup of pumpkin puree (homemade or canned)
- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup of ground flax seeds
- 1/3 cup of vegetable oil
- 1/4 cup of honey
- 1 tablespoon of cinnamon
- 2 cups of old-fashioned oats
- 1/2 cup of pumpkin seeds



Add all ingredients into a large bowl and mix completely with a wooden spoon. Give approximately 15 minutes for the mixture to thicken. In the meantime, read over some notes, quiz yourself with some flashcards, and return to the kitchen to divide the mixture into ping

pong-ball sized dough and press gently onto a parchment paper. Through the mixture into the oven at 350° F for 15 minutes and you have your breakfast prepared for the week.



Lunch - Roasted Pumpkin and garlic: roasted pumpkins can be an effortless addition to your lunch. Besides the minor preparation needed, the oven will take care of the rest which means more time for your part-time job and studying for a final exam.

2 kg of peeled, cubed pumpkin pieces
4 garlic cloves
Pinch of salt and pepper to taste
2 tablespoons of vegetable or olive oil

First, preheat the oven to 200° F. In the meantime, toss your pumpkin cubes with seasoning and oil and pack them onto a parchment paper. Place the parchment paper on a baking tray and bake for around 40 minutes or until a soft “mashed” texture is achieved.

Dinner - Pumpkin Chili: Meal prep can be boring if you’re not willing to try something new. Pumpkin chili will not only be a taste-bud pleaser but can be a dinner party sensation as well. They’re simple to make and add a blast of flavor into the traditional chili. Here’s how you make them with fresh ingredients (alternatively you can use canned chilli to add to fresh pumpkins).

2 lb ground beef	1 large onion diced
1 green bell pepper diced	2 cans of kidney beans
1 can of tomato juice	1 kg pumpkin diced
Pumpkin spice to taste	1 tablespoon of chilli powder
¼ cup of white sugar	



In a large pot over medium heat, cook beef until brown, drain stir in onion, peppers, beans and pumpkin. Season with spices and simmer for 1 hour. Alternatively, if you’re in a time crunch like me, toss the ingredients into a slow cooker for up to five hours and serve.



Snacks - Rosemary Pumpkin seeds: You may have just struck gold (literally) when you make these. Pumpkin seeds are a great way to convert your typical kitchen scraps into healthy study snacks. I like to add my favorite herbs to spice my baked seeds and use them for dessert toppings such as yogurt parfaits. Pumpkin seeds are so versatile that you can’t go wrong with filling an entire mason jar with them.

1.5 cups of raw pumpkin seeds
2 tsp of butter
1 pinch of salt
1 pinch of your favorite herbs

First, preheat the oven to 300 degrees F. In the meantime, toss the seeds with butter, salt and herbs into a bowl to mix thoroughly. Then, spread the seasoned seeds in a single layer over a baking sheet and bake for about 45 minutes or until golden brown.

References

Kwon, Y. I., Apostolidis, E., Kim, Y. C., & Shetty, K. (2007). Health benefits of traditional corn, beans, and pumpkin: in vitro studies for hyperglycemia and hypertension management. *Journal of Medicinal Food*, 10(2), 266-275.

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The Fit Student Butt Out!

Marie Well



Make your New Year's resolution to butt out! Quit smoking—before your blonde hair frizzes, your lush lips wither—and your lungs singe.

I smoked during grades six and seven. Luckily, basketball, volleyball, soccer—sports of all sorts—saved my lungs. Sadly, I restarted puffing in grade ten. I'd carry two packs a day, one for myself, the other for the gang of black lungs I called pals. My throat wheezed nonstop, whistling louder than Fred Astaire, and my nose dripped daily.

Unlike me, my little sister smoked like Marlon Brando. She could blow smoke rings back in grade three. When Mom found out, she stuffed a menthol smoke in my sister's mouth, and then lit the nightmare. To Mom's horror, my sister inhaled. Mom grounded my sister most of the year—most every year.

My first attempt to quit smoking, at age twenty-five, failed. Why? Whenever I'd nap, my soul would slip away, not into lullaby land, but into an abyss. I'd awaken, unable to move—unable to open my eyes—until I'd start screaming. After sixteen days of terror, I marathon-puffed a pack of Player's Light. Defeated, I chose life, not health.

That same year, I quit again, this time with Nicorette gum. For the first week, I'd chew a gum every hour, twelve gums per day. Each week thereafter, I'd reduce my gum intake by one. But I still suffered, sweating—screaming—in my bed, shivering at the sight of each moon. After twelve weeks, I beat the smoldering demon—for good.

A reason to quit, ladies? No smoking makes you pretty. Years ago, a beautiful young blonde I knew butted her last cig. After several months, her skin glowed, her face flushed pink—and her blonde hair shimmered. But she had a taste for wild men. So, she dated a smoker and returned to puffing poison. Slowly, her skin paled, her hair frizzed, her lips withered into zigzags. Gross! Smoking draws out our inner hag.

Allan Carr shares secrets to quitting smoking in his bestseller book *Allan Carr's Easy Way to Stop Smoking*:

- Carr offers a “magic method of stopping smoking, which enables any smoker ... to quit: immediately ... permanently ... without needing willpower ... without suffering withdrawal symptoms ... without putting on weight ... without shock tactics, pills, patches or other gimmicks” (p. ix).

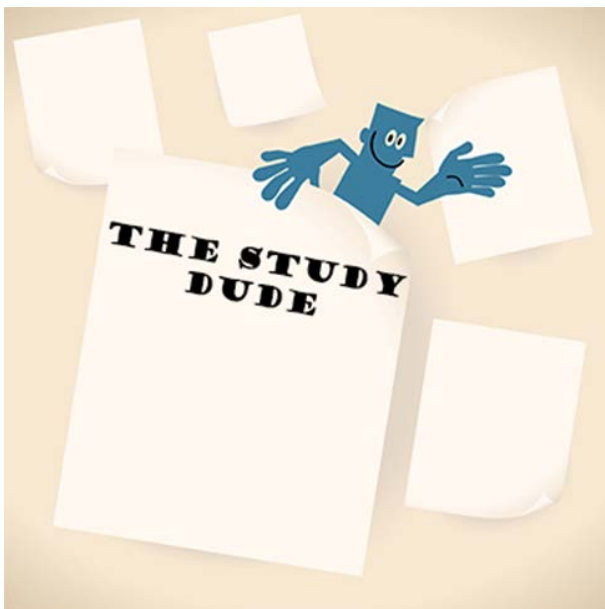
- Step one to quitting? “Remove the reasons that we do smoke ... once the desire to smoke has been removed, the ex-smoker doesn’t need to use willpower” (p. xiii). Carr, in his book, dispels all reasons to smoke.
- A key benefit to quitting? You stop a *severe* addiction: “Every drag of a cigarette delivers, via the lungs to the brain, a small dose of nicotine that acts more rapidly than does the heroin the junky injects into his vein” (p. 23).
- Addicts tend to crave a full pack a day because of the nicotine levels: “Nicotine... leaves the bloodstream quickly.... There is enough nicotine in each cigarette to make the average smoker want a cigarette about every 45 minutes” (p. 24).
- Don’t prolong or mask the pangs: “[don’t] try cutting down or using substitutes like candy or gum (especially substitutes which contain nicotine)” (p. 4).
- Instead, quit at once and enjoy the pangs: “Instead of feeling fearful and anxious about pangs, embrace them. Say to yourself: ‘I know what this is—it’s the little nicotine monster dying’...” (p. 166).
- The pangs will soon disappear: “It can take up to three weeks before your mind and body become fully accustomed to the absence of nicotine” (P. 163).
- To sum Carr’s simple way to quit smoking, “1. Make the decision that you will never ever have to smoke again. 2. Don’t mope about it; celebrate” (p. 156).

Before New Year’s Eve, join a gym, get a makeover—and butt out, cold turkey! Three weeks of pangs will be followed by freedom. But don’t, like me, scream for months in the moonlight with nicotine gum.



The Study Dude Grammar Gift

Marie Well



Did you beg Santa for a leather-bound grammar book? Nothing calms me more than writing. Some people write to make sense of their story, some to laugh at themselves, some to help others. I do all three. And to write half-well, I read grammar books.

Decades ago, while upgrading English 30, my study of grammar snatched me the top grade. And back in high school, I skipped a grade of French to prove I *got* grammar. Sadly, the instructor taught French *immersion*. Not a word of English. For most of the class, I barely tuned in, rarely raised my hand. The teacher teased me, abused me, nearly stalked me, but come exam time, I scored.

Later, I lost my grip on grammar. Yet, my mentor pressed me to write a fundraising letter for a charity I

founded. When I groaned, she piped, “Either you write, or I’m gone.” So, I scrambled, trembling, searching my mailbox for a template, finding nothing. *But wait! A Reader’s Digest Sweepstake entry form.* My final letter raised zero funds, but gained comic relief, gambler style.

The worst writer’s mistake? If ever you write grammar articles, whatever you do, don’t use a cutesy name. One prof scoffed at a student who, red-faced, made a grammar faux pas. The student defended her error, citing not Oxford, not Cambridge, not Harvard—but the Grammar Girl. That’s like citing Dummies Guides in your dissertation.

Barbara Baig reveals ways to spice sentences in her book *Spellbinding Sentences: A Writer’s Guide to Achieving Excellence & Captivating Readers*:

- Writers use sentence structure to “ratchet up (or down) the suspense, to make readers laugh, to surprise them, to make them cry, and much more” (p. 157).
- Sprinkle in your writing a blend of four sentence types: statements, questions, commands, and exclamations. By doing so, you turn your writing, as if by magic, from a loaf of bread into a birthday cake. Yum!
- A “kernel” is the shortest sentence, consisting of a noun and a verb: *He sang* or *She saw the stars*, for example. Begin or end a paragraph with a kernel (i.e., a basic sentence structure) to liven up your writing.
- Make what is called an asyndeton by joining three kernels together with a comma. In doing so, you commit a comma splice—a no-no in essays! But a yes-sir in creative writing.
- Modify a kernel’s verb or noun (or both). As modifiers, use single words, phrases, or clauses.
- Modify with prepositional phrases such as “under the rainbow” and “over the mountain”: *The man whistled under the rainbow.*
- Or modify with participial phrases such as “tooting his horn” and “smiling secretly”: *The man, smiling secretly, whistled under the rainbow.*
- Place modifiers either before the subject, between the subject and predicate, or after the predicate. Think in this order: “modifier + subject + modifier + predicate + modifier.” Easy?
- But make sure the modifiers make sense in the spot you choose.
- A special kind of modifier, called a free modifier, can be placed in any of the above orders without losing meaning: (1) before subject: *Elegantly yet frailly, she danced*, (2) between subject and predicate: *She, elegantly yet frailly, danced*, and (3) after predicate: *She danced elegantly yet frailly.*
- Use modifiers to create drama, to bolster momentum, to add suspense, or to add rhythm.

A final caveat—for when you gift your niece that Christmas grammar book: what you sacrifice in social skills, you claim in structure.



Council Connection November 14, 2017 Meeting

Carla Knipe



The revision of AUSU Bylaws, The Voice, and the finance policies were the main topics covered at AUSU's latest monthly meeting, held on Tuesday, November 14th.

All current AUSU councillors were present at the meeting, except Vice-President External and Student Affairs Julian Teterenko, due to a personal commitment. President Shawna Wasylyshyn called the meeting to order, and after the usual protocol of adopting the minutes of last month as well as this meeting's agenda, council began to cover what turned out to be a lot of important discussion.

President Wasylyshyn updated Council on the previous action items from last month. The Finance Committee is working with the rest of Council to review and streamline policies and procedures wherever possible. However, this process must be undertaken thoroughly and cautiously. This was evident in the discussion of the motion that proposed to merge the separate Voice Magazine bank account into the

main AUSU account, but to ensure it was recognized as an internally restricted reserve fund that will only be used for The Voice Magazine operations.

However, this is not as simple as it appears. The funds will be moved once the financial audit is complete. Council does not need to approve the closure of The Voice account, but does need to approve the creation of the restricted reserve account. It was suggested that the current motion should be amended to contain the specific amount balance in the Voice's bank account. However, the issue is that when the account actually closes, the dollar amount might be different than what it was on the date that the original motion was made. The Voice's funds are already considered to be internally restricted, and the motion was about moving the closing, audited balance of the account into AUSU's normal investment account where it would raise additional reserves for The Voice. The motion was amended after council's discussion, but was not carried unanimously. President Wasylyshyn opposed the motion due to not feeling comfortable approving a motion putting money into a restricted reserve without the exact dollar amount being listed.

Also related to finances, President Wasylyshyn brought up the point that was first raised in July's Executive Blog that in the future, AU students will purchase their own textbooks. This change has not been officially announced by AU to students but is set to take effect in stages, starting in January 2018.

The next item on the agenda was the sudden resignation of Councillor Scott Jacobsen, who was absent from this month's meeting for this reason. The AUSU President and Executive had asked him to stay on Council in a modified role, but after not hearing anything back from him, officially accepted his resignation.

AUSU then discussed on another issue facing post-secondary education in Alberta and how it would affect AU students. Other provinces have removed tuition tax credits in order to shift to a system of needs-based, up-front grants. NFLD, NB and ONT already have implemented this change, and Alberta is looking to follow. Council noted that 95% of AU undergraduates are paying

their own way through their education with no outside student assistance. Tax credits would benefit the majority of AU students who don't fit the profile of traditional post-secondary students, and who do not qualify for student aid because they are part time, based internationally, or often are working in addition to studying so do not qualify for grants. Consequently, AUSU's position is that tuition tax credit should be maintained. All councillors were in agreement.

The next section of meeting took up the majority of the session, which focused on voting on several motions for AUSU policy revisions. Councillors have worked hard in the past year to scrutinize and clarify policies. There were some reservations whether these changes would sacrifice simplicity for the detail on the more complicated policies, but the point was made that before these revisions, policies were "a lot worse." This was evident in the discussion regarding the revision to the policy on expenditures: this policy required solid guidelines if Council expenditures went over their proposed amount, then specific guidelines would be needed.

Much of the discussion centered on if a particular expenditure went over the approved budget; if an expenditure is within budget, then a formal chain of approval isn't needed. However, if an expenditure goes beyond, then various levels of approval are required. Councillors discussed the various levels of approval and also discussed changes in the AUSU Bylaws with regard to fee collection by AUSU. An increase or decrease in fees requires a special resolution by Council which requires giving notice to the membership and then holding consultations. AUSU cannot change fees without this process.

The other main point of discussion was about election conduct. This is especially pertinent for the election that AUSU has just called. The membership was notified of the changes to the election policies by e-newsletter on October 20, providing more than 21 days notice as per AUSU bylaw 5.03. All councillors were in favour, with no discussion raised by the Executive.

After a short break, the meeting resumed with the second part of the agenda, which was to discuss the monthly executive reports. President Wasylyshyn

AU-thentic Events

Upcoming AU Related Events

Business Undergraduate Info Session

Mon, December 4, 5:00 to 6:00 pm MST

Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business

business.athabasca.ca/event-details/business-undergraduate-information-session3-copy-2/

Register online at above link

Leadership and Management Development (LMD) Info Session

Tues, December 5, 10:00 to 11:00 am MST

Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business

business.athabasca.ca/event-details/athabasca-university-leadership-management-development-lmd-information-session-4-2-copy-copy-copy-copy/

Register online at above link

AU Open House & Info Session

Tues, December 5, 10:00 to 11:00 am MST

Online

Hosted by Athabasca University

www.athabasca.ca/discover/open-house/

register online at above address

second session: Tues, December 5, 6:00 to 7:00 pm MST

Using NVivo as a Research Tool

Tues, December 5, 2:00 to 2:45 pm MST

Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Graduate Studies

fgs.athabasca.ca/news/presentations/

e-mail fgs@athabasca.ca with your student number to register

AU Library Orientation Webinar

Tues, December 5, 5:00 to 6:00 pm MST

Online

Hosted by AU Library

library.athabasca.ca/orientations.html

no pre-registration required

Manufacturing Management (MMC) Info Session

Tues, December 5, 5:00 to 6:00 pm MST

Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business

business.athabasca.ca/event-details/athabasca-university-manufacturing-management-mmc-information-session-4-3/

Register online at above link

said that she was pleased to see a recent notable increase in engagement by AUSU, and said that the executive was working very hard to engage both students and the wider AU community. She reiterated that the potential changes to government tax credit policy is a huge issue for AUSU and that is why it is advocating for AU's unique education situation. However, she noted that the current CASA Policy on tax credits was not reflective of this situation, and advocated that it be tabled for further research. Some in CASA suggested they create specialized policy focused on mature learners. But President Wasylyshyn felt it was not appropriate to single out age over other factors, and such a change would be against inclusivity as a Canadian Alliance of Student Associations.

In the awards report, Robin Bleich noted that the Awards Committee had 66 applications approved last year. There is Increased awareness by AU of AUSU awards, as many students are not aware of the AUSU awards. The AUSU awards are now linked on the AU website identifying them as undergraduate awards.

The Executive Compensation Review Committee has been hard at work comparing data with other schools about executive compensation. Their work is ongoing.

AUSU has just hired Emannauel Barker as the new AUSU Governance and Advocacy Coordinator starting December 1. He comes with a lot of experience and will be a great addition to the team.

The Communications Report related some positive news about The Voice Magazine since the relaunch of its new website and format. Since the relaunch, The Voice has had a huge increase in readership and a lower bounce rate. There has been more interaction with multiple pages than ever before. AUSU, who funds and oversees The Voice, received a lot of positive feedback and notes that The Voice has seen at least a 50% increase in readership and subscriptions. Before The Voice's website relaunch, traffic was in the 700 visit range. Since the relaunch, traffic has increased to the 2200 range. AUSU is excited to see where this goes.

More AU-thentic Events

AU Kelowna Seasonal Cheer

Tues, December 5, 5:00 to 7:30 pm PST
Kelowna Yacht Club, 1370 Water St, Kelowna BC

In-person

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business

business.athabascau.ca/event-details/athabasca-university-kelowna-seasonal-cheer/

Space is limited; RSVP online at above link

Online MBA Info Session

Wed, December 6, 10:00 to 11:00 am MST
Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business

business.athabascau.ca/event-details/online-mba-executives-information-session-10am-mst-dec6/

Register online at above link

Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) Info Session

Wed, December 6, 5:00 to 6:00 pm MST
Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business

business.athabascau.ca/event-details/doctorate-business-administration-dba-information-session-7-2/

Register online at above link

AU Calgary Seasonal Cheer

Wed, December 6, 5:00 to 7:30 pm MST
Hyatt Regency Calgary, 700 Centre St South, Calgary AB

In-person

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business

business.athabascau.ca/event-details/athabasca-university-calgary-seasonal-cheer/

Space is limited; RSVP online at above link

AU Edmonton Seasonal Cheer

Thurs, December 7, 5:00 to 7:30 pm MST
Royal Glenora Club, 11160 River Valley Rd, Edmonton AB

In-person

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business

business.athabascau.ca/event-details/athabasca-university-edmonton-seasonal-cheer/

Space is limited; RSVP online at above link

Also, AUSU staff and President Wasylyshyn recently met with provider Oohlala regarding concerns with its mobile app. There have been issues with the app for quite some time and there have been multiple instances where functions of the app were not working despite this being required in accordance with AUSU's service agreement with Oohlala. **Communications and Member Services Coordinator**, Donette Kingyens, kept thorough notes of all the issues that happened with the app over the past 2.5 years and Executive Director, Jodi Campbell conveyed AUSU's concerns. As a result, Oohlala offered AUSU a year of service for free, 25% off the following 2 years, and committed to getting the app working the way it is supposed to.

The meeting lasted over two hours, unusual for AUSU. This was because of the discussion of the bylaw and policy revisions. AUSU does have a policy revision schedule in place to ensure that the policy manual stays up to date and keeps the revisions spread out. However, there were a lot of extra policies on the schedule this month, partially due to falling a bit behind in October, and also because numerous policies needed to be updated to align with the new bylaws. The policy revisions are now back on track and should be caught up after December. President Wasylyshyn summarized Council's efforts this year by saying "It was a busy year but I very proud at how much Council accomplished."

Before the meeting was adjourned at 7:24 PM, , Council was asked whether there would be an AU meet and greet in Calgary. AU did not provide any details as they were in the process of being finalized, but one is scheduled for January. 2018—so Calgary AU students are urged to keep an eye out for details.

The next AUSU monthly meetings are scheduled for Tuesday December 12th and Monday, January 15th. Both meetings start at 5:30 PM MST and all AU undergraduate students are welcome to attend by teleconference.



Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: Grey Smoke Media Scholarship

Sponsored by: Grey Smoke Media

Deadline: December 31, 2017

Potential payout: \$3000

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be enrolled in a post-secondary institution in Canada or the U.S., and pursuing a career in the fields of business marketing, communications, liberal arts, or social sciences. Preference is given to students in the first or second year of studies.

What's required: An online application form, along with a 500-750 word essay describing an obstacle you faced in the past and how you overcame it.

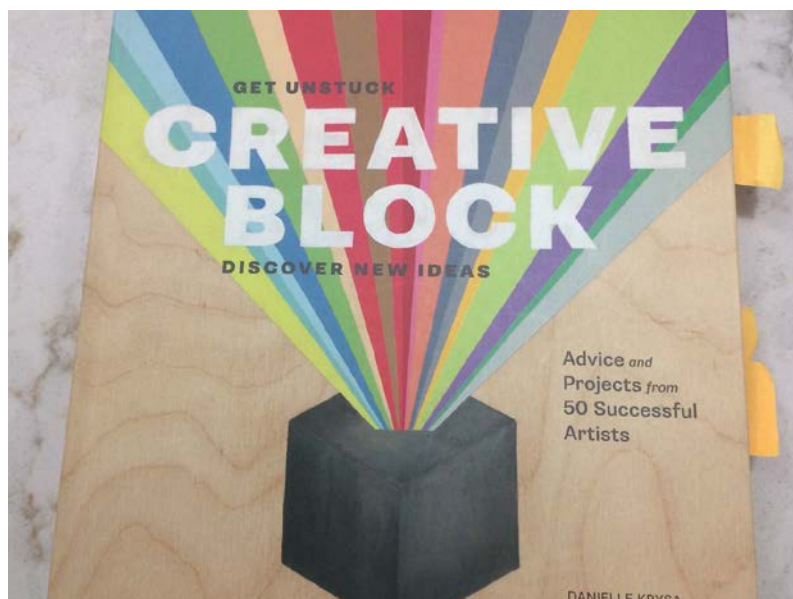
Where to get info: greysmokemedia.com/scholarship-application/



Book Review

Creative Block

Tara Panrucker



Book: *Creative Block*

Author: Danielle Krysa

For fellow AU students seeking a book oozing with creative inspiration and artistic motivation, look no further than Danielle Krysa's *Creative Block* (2014). This gem of a book overflows with solid advice from fifty different artists worldwide who work in a variety of diverse mediums. Each artist outlines a creative task to potentially boost (and unblock) your creative process. They also provide tips for coping with everything from jealousy toward other artists to struggles over a difficult piece of work. The author, who also began blogging as "The Jealous Curator" in February of 2009, has felt the

sting of the green monster during her own artistic endeavours, so she can relate to the challenges of artistic invention.

The writer's introduction encourages you to reconnect with the joy of creating that you may have lost to adulthood. With personal insights into her own history and process, Danielle brings the intimacy and compassion conveyed in her words to the sensitive artist in everyone. The beauty of how this book is structured means you can begin anywhere; it all depends on the medium and project you choose. Interview questions generally adhere to the same format for each interviewee. Interviews are organized in no apparent order, but an index will easily guide you in locating the artist, a key word, or a subject. The advice and suggestions coming from the artists themselves are designed to help you 'think outside the box'.

Not just another pretty coffee table book, *Creative Block* caters to bibliophiles who want to do something more than just reading. Should you feel intimidated as a novice artist, rest assured the artists interviewed range from established to emerging, professionally trained to self-taught. Projects range from simple home crafts to travelling on a treasure hunt. In addition, many of the artists interviewed are also curators, entrepreneurs, teachers, and writers. There are artists creating bizarre works of art out of material I never would have imagined possible. So now you have no excuses.

Creative Block is an enjoyable read, brimming with infinite possibilities and innovative activities. The material inside provides a life-line leading out of self-flagellation and the misery of being uninspired, thus revealing new ways of perceiving the world. Moreover, it gives delicious insights into what and how successful artists produce and encourages you to dive into doing something rather than nothing. Having read the entire volume and tested assorted projects, I wholeheartedly recommend this book. Discover new ideas and projects, often using what's right in front of you, and become unstuck.

Students may also check out Ms. Krysa's web site to discover her other books, or to uncover further artistic incentives at <http://www.thejealouscurator.com/blog/>.

Krysa, Danielle. *Creative Unblock*, 2014. Chronicle Books, San Francisco. 288 pages.

Tara Panrucker is currently enrolled in an AU online English course to help hone her writing skills and eventually achieve a General Arts Degree. She is a freelance writer and avid enjoyer of the outdoors, currently residing on Vancouver Island.



Mail Delivery

Deanna Roney



This I got my first brown box in the mail in a year and a half; it is intimidating and exciting. By the end of my bachelor's degree, I had the layout of essays down pat, and formatting became second nature. But, now I am out of practice and looking at this stack of books has me wondering, was it a good thing to take a year and a bit off? Should have I jumped right into my Masters after my undergrad instead?

As I mentioned, by the end of my BA I was well in the groove. I was no longer intimidated by essay assignments and was confident in my ability to answer the questions when I got them. I had found an academic groove and was content in it. So, on one hand, maybe it would have been better to keep myself in the groove and move forward. It would mean, after all, that I wouldn't have to relearn how to write a coherent essay, or get my mind back into the rigor for academic research, or remember all those sources I had found for literary papers.

On the other hand, I think taking the time off has been beneficial. Because it doesn't take much for a groove to become a rut. I buried myself in school work and I think coming up for air has reignited the passion for pursuit of furthering my education. I have spent the time away from school refining what I want to do, getting experience through internships, and giving my mind a chance to regroup.

I am nervous about starting again; but, I think that all those things that became second nature are only just hiding beneath the surface. Once I get a paper under my belt I think everything will come back. What is more important, for me at least, is that I am coming back with a new perspective and an understanding of exactly what I hope to gain through this graduate program.

And, it is easy to forget how wore out I felt by the end of it. I had pushed myself hard for a long time to get through my BA and by the end of it, I was exhausted (elated, but exhausted). Everyone takes their own path and for me, while I have some anxieties about getting started again, taking time away has been good. I came back to it organically, through a conversation, it wasn't planned, *per se*, but I realized I was ready then because the thought excited me. I started researching programs and schools. I thought about exactly what I wanted to get out of it, and discussed the possibilities with a few contacts from my BA.

After looking at various options I found that AU offered the best solutions for me. I love its flexibility for one, but beyond that, the course options and the ability to fine-tune some of the degree to my areas of interest is what settled my choice. So here I am. Again. With a new brown box from the mail.

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

Teen Angst

Dear Barb,

I am the mother of a thirteen-year-old daughter and an eight-year-old boy. I am about halfway through my degree at AU and I work part time, so I am very busy trying to take care of everything. My husband is great; he helps out with the kids and does most of the cooking. We have always been fairly relaxed parents and our home has mostly been stress free, but recently things have changed. My daughter went from being an easygoing loving child, to an angry teenager overnight. She has a whole new group of friends and has even changed her appearance. I knew the teenage years were coming and it would be a difficult time for us as parents, but this change seems to be very drastic. Melissa always came straight home from school, but a few nights ago she strolled in after dinner with no explanation. When I asked her where she was, she had a meltdown, screaming at me that it's none of my business, and then she ran into her room banging the door behind her. My husband and I were shocked, what happened to our sweet little girl? Even when I attempt to clean her room, she makes it clear that she does not want me going through her dresser drawers. I have always cleaned out her drawers for her. I'm wondering if she's hiding something. I have resorted to going through her room when she's at school, but I didn't find anything suspicious.

As a parent am I wrong in wanting to know where my daughter is and if she's hiding anything? Please Help! Ashley.

Hi Ashley:

Welcome to the world of teenagers! You said you knew it was coming, well it's here. I don't think your daughter is doing anything out of the ordinary for her age, as she is trying to push the boundaries. It's important that you adjust your reactions to her behaviour; otherwise you will be in constant conflict with her. She does not want to be treated like a little girl anymore and is trying to establish some independence. Most likely your daughter is not telling you where she's going because she doesn't want to hear your opinion or advice. She wants to make her own decisions. This is a normal part of growing up. Similarly, she wants some privacy, which is why she doesn't want you going through her dresser. Don't be reactive, try to respect her decisions. She will be more likely to ask for your advice if you are not handing it out freely. If she has a "meltdown" calmly state that this is not acceptable behaviour and walk away. If you don't engage her, she will not have anyone to continue her rant with. Choose a time when you are both in a good place and calmly discuss what expectations you have for her, as far as curfew, chores, her behaviour, then let it be. If she doesn't adhere to the rules, you and your husband have to clearly and strongly state what the consequences will be. No doubt the teenage years are difficult, my best advice is to present strong, caring, parental role models and have faith that things will work out. Hope this is helpful, thanks for your letter Ashley.

Follow Barb on twitter @BarbGodin

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



Politically Bereft
The Republican Candidate

Wanda Waterman





AUSU
ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY
STUDENTS' UNION

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

IMPORTANT DATES

- **Dec 8:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Jan 1](#)
- **Dec 12:** [AUSU Council Meeting](#)
- **Dec 15:** [January degree requirements deadline](#)
- **Dec 22:** [Deadline to apply for course extension for Feb](#)
- **Dec 23-Jan 2:** AU & AUSU holiday closure, inclusive
- **Jan 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Jan 1](#)
- **Jan 15:** [February degree requirements deadline](#)

Holiday Challenges?

The holiday season can be challenging in numerous ways. Lynda.com has put together a few helpful playlists that can help you get by!

The playlists can help you:

- Manage holiday dinners with your family
- Handle meeting new relatives
- Juggle demanding holiday schedules
- Manage holiday shopping with ease

Check out the complete playlists [here](#)!

Get your FREE subscription to lynda.com on the AUSU website [here](#).

Turn on.
Log in.
Get smart.



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?

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

So far, this year, there have been over 1000 friendships made and over 24,000 chats and likes on the Campus Wall! Don't miss out!



AUSU Travel Bursary

Do you need to travel for an AU course (exam, practicum, labs, etc.), but having trouble finding the funding?

Apply for AUSU's year-round [Travel Bursary](#)!

AUSU
Travel
BURSARY



AUSU E-Newsletters

Did you miss an AUSU newsletter? Wondering what's going on at AUSU?

Check out our newsletter archives online [here](#).



EXTRA! EXTRA!

AUSU News and Updates

CLASSIFIEDS

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

THE VOICE

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