



THE VOICE

Vol 26 Issue 05 2018-02-02

Minster Marlin Schmidt

Interviewing the Advanced Ed. Minister

All the Music be Happenin' Now

The Heartbeat of Mother Earth

Money for Nothing

Don't Miss Out!

Plus:

Review: *Writing Down the Bones*
The Bookish Playoffs
and much more!



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



We love to hear from you!
**Send your questions and comments to 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 Flat Out Expression

Karl Low



With the release in the media of the United Conservative Party of Alberta's draft policy's on education, the Alberta NDP government has been doing the best they can to try to show Albertans how that plan is a bad idea, and the NDP way is one that will work better. The Advanced Education office made contact with *The Voice Magazine* asking us if we'd like an opportunity to speak to the minister. Of course we took them up on that, and the result is our feature interview this week, where Carla Knipe did try to get him to talk a little more specifically about the ministry's relationship and plans with AU, not without some small success.

But for me, the best part of the interview is that there is one question where his immediate response seems to ditch the politician speak and we speak to the minister himself. "I don't believe that statement at all," he said in response to one of Carla's questions. Not "we", not "this government" or "the NDP", and not some statement full of qualifying and limiting words, or "weaselese" as one of my friends calls it. Just a flat out expression of belief.

How often is it that we get someone in politics willing to just put it out there like that? I think that's part of the problem with many progressive politicians. When you keep in your head that the world is a complex, messy, conflicting place, coming out with a flat statement of belief is difficult, because you know that there may well be some circumstance where you don't believe that, and the nature of "gotcha politics" that we have these days means in any such case, you will be punished and berated for it.

And that was likely part of the appeal of Donald Trump on the campaign trail. He wasn't trying to be all things to all people, as many politicians do. He has his audience and he was playing to it, and to heck with anybody else. And while I, personally, don't agree with that audience on most things, the way he went addressing their needs specifically and directly is something that more politicians could learn from.

Personally, I'd certainly prefer a politician who was willing to own up to the idea that they've made mistakes, or that they're unable to help everyone, or even that, unfortunately, they don't agree with my priorities. If they can explain it, I can respect that. I'm an adult, as are most voters, I think we could handle that kind of talk if it was done with respect. But you don't see that happening, and part of that is on us. Because of how we react on places like twitter and social media. Where if someone does something we don't like, it's obviously a personal affront, because of course that person knows that we don't like it and went ahead anyway. And that's just so much rubbish.

Which mean that, once again, it's on us. If we want the type of politicians who feel they can be honest with us, we need to start treating them with respect to. So if we see someone jumping down the throat of a politician, making nasty or sarcastic comments, maybe it's up to us to call that person out. Reassure them that it probably wasn't being done to hurt them personally, and if they could explain exactly what was wrong with the situation, who knows, it might just get fixed. And if we're the ones who are making the nasty and saracastic comments (which too often includes me) perhaps its time we stopped. Anyway, enjoy the read!

Karl



An Interview with Marlin Schmidt Alberta's Minister of Advanced Education

Carla Knipe



Recently, *The Voice Magazine* was invited to discuss education issues with Alberta's Advanced Education Minister, the Honorable Marlin Schmidt. We wanted to get a picture of the current issues facing Alberta education and politics; issues that apply not only to Athabasca University but also the overall climate of post-secondary education across Canada.

Alberta's NDP government has been reviewing the post-secondary funding system in general and recently announced tuition freezes for the next academic year. How far along is that process and what might be changing?

The tuition freeze in Alberta is now in its fourth year. We will have another announcement about our policy in the spring. But, because of the tuition freezes, a post-secondary student in Alberta will save over \$1200 during the course of their program and that is something we feel is significant.

As you know, the current funding formula penalizes Athabasca University because the bulk of its students come from outside the province. What is your ministry doing, either to change the funding formula in Alberta or to work with the other provinces to sustain AU?

We are still looking at the funding formula and are hopeful that we can find a way forward that supports AU. We are committed to not raise AU tuition for out of province students, but we know that it is a work in progress. We firmly believe in Athabasca University's mission and mandate and we know that it fulfills a critical gap for education in our province and within Canada. We want to make it easier for those students who want to improve their skills and obtain better careers to do so, and this includes AU. We want to reassure Athabasca University students that its sustainability is important to us.

Recently, you told all Alberta universities to see some means of trimming their budgets. What do you think the source is for the budget trouble that many universities are facing right now?

We feel that the previous PC governments' refusal to make tough decisions about post-secondary education has led to the current situation and now we are trying to get a handle on what is happening currently. We are focusing on the people who want to access post-secondary education, and to help them do so. This includes using the community college system or any other means of doing that, in order for people to become the best citizens they can be and be a key part of Alberta's work force.

AU also undertook a third-party review under Ken Coates, but little information has come out as to what changes AU is going to make to meet those recommendations. What is your ministry doing to implement the recommendations in the review from the perspective of government?

The AU Administration is working really hard to implement those recommendations, and we in turn are working with AU'S admin. For example, the recommendation to collaborate more with northern colleges has led to a partnership between AU and Northern Lights college. There are some big challenges that AU is facing, but I am optimistic that with the new AU President there will be a strong revitalization of AU.

Let's talk about the recent education platform by the United Conservative Party here in Alberta, led by former federal politician Jason Kenney. On the surface, his ideas seem sensible and a back-to-basics approach to education that a lot of people agree with. But we don't agree with the approach they are using.

Why is that?

It's not a bad idea in principle, but their math doesn't add up. The UCP's platform has openly advocated for tax breaks for rich people, essentially creating a two-tiered tax system, and to cut post-secondary programs while also significantly raising tuition. It is the wrong way to go about balancing the budget and it will sacrifice Alberta's future prosperity. My government, on the other hand, is taking the opposite approach. We are expanding programs and creating more spaces for students—currently 1500 more students are able to access post-secondary education in Alberta than previously, and that number might seem small, but it isn't. We have frozen tuition for four straight years and want to make sure that more students have an opportunity to access post-secondary education. We think that because of the previous Conservative government's mismanagement of the education system that goes back years but is more noticeable starting with Alison Redford's government, we need to rectify that and increase sustainability for post-secondary education.

AU-thentic Events Upcoming AU Related Events

AU MBA Info Session

Mon, February 5, 12:00 to 1:30 pm EST
Toronto Marriott Downtown Eaton Centre, 525 Bay St, Toronto ON

In person

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business
business.athabascau.ca/event-details/athabasca-university-mba-information-session/

Register online at above link

Business Undergrad Info Session

Tues, February 6, 12:00 to 1:00 pm MST
Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business
business.athabascau.ca/event-details/business-undergraduate-information/

Register online at above link

Online MBA Application Workshop

Wed, February 7, 10:00 to 11:00 am MST
Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business
business.athabascau.ca/event-details/online-mba-executives-information-session-7-copy/

Register online at above link

AU Open House & Info Session

Wed, February 7, 10:00 to 11:00 am MST
Online

Hosted by Athabasca University
www.athabascau.ca/discover/open-house/

Register online at above link

second session: Wednesday, February 7, 5:00 to 6:00 pm MST

APA Style and What Graduate Students Need to Know

Thurs, February 8, 2:00 to 3:30 pm MST
Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Graduate Studies
fgs.athabascau.ca/news/presentations/

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

So how would you do that? The United Conservative Party has said that it wants to train people for the skills gap and focus on university programs with that goal in mind.

Recently, the Calgary bid for Amazon failed. This highlighted the current gap in expertise, which has been down to the lack of education and skills funding by previous Alberta governments. The Amazon bid told us that we need more engineers and other positions who are trained and ready for the workforce. That can't happen if programs and services are cut. We need investment in education, not tax breaks for billionaires.

After contacting the UCP, I was informed that despite their education policy being part of their platform that was reported on in other media sources and was written in their policy document, this was only a draft plan and likely to change extensively in committee. Can you speak to this?

I don't believe that statement at all. The previous conservative governments in Alberta have had a strong track record of repeated cuts. In the recent shadow budget that was presented in the legislature, over 400 million dollars of cuts were proposed. The current UCP policy is consistent with past conservative practices. We are alarmed by the UCP's education proposals and are working to change things for the better so their policy of cuts doesn't become a reality. We believe that the past practices of conservative governments will be the future pattern.

We are also extremely concerned about the UCP proposal to severely curtail student unions in post-secondary institutions by letting students opt out of them by making student union fees an option, not a requirement, for students. Student unions play a critical role in university advocacy and governance, both within their schools and by petitioning the provincial government on issues that matter. They also enable students to have a quality of life during their programs as well as numerous social opportunities. If student union funding was severely cut because of the ability for students to opt out, then much of that will be lost. We don't agree with that UCP policy at all.

Looking at the bigger picture of education, you've talked to a lot of stakeholders as part of your government portfolio. What do you see as the biggest issues that post-secondary education is facing at the moment?

My big concern is about spaces. Not just in the big urban universities, but all across the province. Many students have the top grades but can't get into the program they really want. We need to ensure that anyone who wishes to go to college or university can do so—to better themselves personally, or to launch a career or upgrade their skills so they get a better career and be more productive in the workforce. Investment in post-secondary education needs to continue to ensure people can contribute to their province's economic well-being.

We also have a lot of work to do in changing the situation for those learners who are currently underrepresented. Those who are mature students, like many of those at Athabasca, who have not had previous opportunities to access education. We also recognize that opportunities for indigenous learners need to increase, so that they can access the programs and services they need to be successful with learning. We want to make sure that our universities as well as colleges are well-equipped to provide for and support all the learners who want to access them wherever they may live.

A lot of people pay attention to university rankings, like the Maclean's magazine annual report. What is your take on these rankings and how do you think Alberta's universities fare in them?

Of course, I am proud of the place that Alberta's universities have in them because they reflect a high quality of education, but I realize that these rankings aren't the whole picture. I want to see that wherever students go to access their education—be it Athabasca University or a community college or university—they will get a consistent and quality education. The key will be keeping the costs affordable.

Thank you so much for taking the time to speak with us. The students of Athabasca University appreciate it.

You're very welcome, and we really want AU to part of the discussion about post-secondary education.

Carla is an AU student who lives and writes in Calgary, Alberta. Say "hi" to her on Twitter @LunchBuster.



Money for Nothing Upcoming AU Scholarship deadlines

Barbara Lehtiniemi



Where's the money for your next AU course coming from? If you answered "I don't know," perhaps you need to explore AU's scholarship opportunities. There are eight scholarships or bursaries with application deadlines of February 15. There is still have time to examine these opportunities and submit your application.

AU's awards application process is now online, making it easier for students to apply. Simply download the fillable PDF application form, complete all required fields in the form, save it, then submit through the [award submission portal](#).

Here are just a few of the AU undergraduate awards with February 15 deadlines:

AU Award for a Mature Undergraduate Student (\$750)

Are you just undertaking university education for the first time? This award could be for you! Although mature students are often shut out of student funding opportunities, this award is especially for students with a bit more life experience. Applicants must be enrolled in an AU program, have completed at least 6 AU program credits, have a GPA of 3.0 or higher, be between 40 and 60 years of age, and have begun their studies after April 1 of last year. In addition to some basic personal and education information, you'll need a maximum 300-word essay describing how you approach your educational goals. Submit your completed [application](#) through the [online award submission portal](#) by February 15.

AU First in Family to Attend University Award (\$1000). Are you breaking educational ground in your family? If you're the first in your family to attend university, this award could be yours! Applicants must be enrolled in an undergrad degree program, have completed at least 15 AU program credits, have a GPA of 3.20 or higher, and have no family members (including siblings, parents, or grandparents) with any post-secondary education credentials. In addition to some basic personal and education information, you'll need a maximum 300-word essay describing

how a university education will impact your life situation. Submit your completed [application](#) through the [online award submission portal](#) by February 15.

AU PLAR Scholarship (\$1000). Did you complete a Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)? If you've completed the PLAR process and are within 30 credits of completing your undergrad degree, this scholarship could be yours! Applicants must be enrolled in an AU undergrad program, have a GPA of 3.60 or higher, be within 30 credits of completing their undergrad degree program, and have successfully completed the PLAR process. In addition to some basic personal and education information, you'll need a maximum 1000-word essay about your PLAR experience. Submit your completed [application](#) form through the [online award submission portal](#) by February 15.

In addition to these three awards, the following awards and bursaries also have a February 15 application deadline: AU PLAR Bursary, Indigenous Technology Bursary, Premier Ed and Marie Stelmach First in Family Award, Rotary Club of Athabasca Bursary, and Walker Family Bachelor of Commerce Award.

As with all scholarship applications, be sure to read the application form carefully. Make sure you meet all the eligibility requirements. Complete all required fields on the application form and save the form to your computer before submitting it. For the essay portion, compose your essay in Word (or similar program) for ease of editing and spellchecking, then copy into the application form. Getting someone to proofread your whole application is a good idea, too. Good luck!

AU has over 100 awards and bursaries for undergraduate students. Check out all the awards at [Awards for Undergraduate Students](#). Awards with upcoming deadlines are flagged in red.

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



Canadian Education News

Scott Jacobsen



Bragg Okotoks' Needs Support for Catholic School System to Flourish

Western Wheel [reported](#) that the Okotoks' separate school system has requested support from their stakeholders in order for the publicly-funded Catholic school system to continue to flourish in the province of Alberta.

PACE, or Parents Advocating for Catholic Education, is a committee of 10 Christ the Redeemer (CTR) Catholic District parents and 2 trustees. Bonnie Annicchiarico, CTR Catholic associate superintendent

said, "PACE emerged from school councils in our district —[a] conversation parents were having

about their desire about Catholic education and their desire to be more involved as vocal advocates for Catholic education.”

Another meeting will be held on January 23. The point of the engagement of the parents, Annicchiarico said, was to ensure that they are ‘thoughtful and informed’ on the reasons for selection of Catholic education and its importance to them (the parents).

The Alberta education minister from 1979-86, David King, started Inclusive Diverse Education for All in 2017. King wants the dissolution of Catholic school boards and instead have Catholic education as an alternative *within* the public school system. He noted the benefits would save money for busing and administrative costs, and others.

Annicchiarico stated, “Quebec no longer has publicly-funded Catholic education and neither does the Maritimes, there is only three provinces that do, Ontario, Saskatchewan and Alberta...So it pays for us to be aware, diligent and thoughtful. Historically, other provinces have lost their opportunity for publicly-funded Catholic education.”

Canadian Lawyers and Law Students Discuss the Future of Their Profession

Canadian Lawyer said that over 150 lawyers and law students heard a panel of eminent jurists discuss legal education’s future. The event took place at McGill University’s Faculty of Law. The managing director of Legal - Canada/Australia/New Zealand for Thomson Reuters (publisher of *Legal Feeds*), Neil Sternthal, said this is an important discussion for the legal profession.

He said “The pace of change caused by globalization, the disaggregation of legal services, the emergence of alternative legal service providers [and] disruptive technologies” were important to discuss to prepare the next generation of legal professionals. Because lawyers support the rule of law and that effects clients and society.

McGill’s dean of law, Robert Leckey, asked the participants about the requirements to be a successful lawyer. The group across the board noted that diversity and practical training were important. Diversity related to “personal and educational background and in the sexual and racial makeup of the profession.”

Survey Asks Principals about Dealing with Limited Funding

According to the Calgary Herald, the province has been touting increased education funding with news releases, but one parent advocacy group has been looking at the data from the schools that are still challenged by limited resources.

The second annual Alberta Schools Survey is being sent out by Support Our Students (SOS) to every publicly funded school in Alberta. Principals have been asked anonymous surveys to suss out information about they are balancing the tight school budgets.

The balance can require forced options between janitorial services, librarians, music teachers, school psychologists, and special-needs assistants. “Principals have very difficult decisions to make with very limited amounts of money,” Barb Silva, SOS spokesperson, said, “We need them to provide us with this critical information so we have something to arm ourselves with when we go to the minister.”

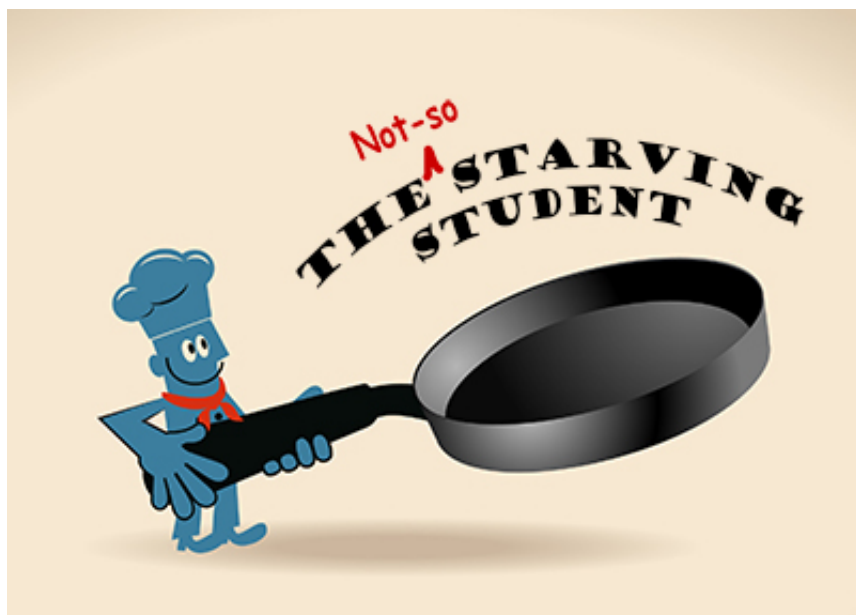
Scott Douglas Jacobsen is the AUSU VPFA. He works with various organizations, and runs In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal, and In-Sight Publishing.



The Not-So Starving Student

Five Fried Chicken Styles that Took the World by Storm

Xin Xu



The classic comfort food that has won the hearts of children and adults everywhere is fried chicken. The love for fried chicken is so universal that besides your local fast food chains, fried chicken has appeared on the menu of five-star restaurants. Despite trying to recreate healthier versions of fried chicken in my kitchen using reduced oil, I find that the ones that truly surpass my expectations are the ones that are juicy, deep-fried and fall-off-the-bone tender. In other words, when it comes to fried chicken the motto should be: go unhealthy or go home. Here are five popular types of fried chicken to try.

German Fried Chicken (Schnitzel)

Some might not consider this fried chicken, but it certainly is a variation of fried chicken pounded into the shape of a cutlet. The chicken is first breaded with breadcrumbs and seasoned with dijon mustard. For those visiting Germany or Austria, this less-greasy version of fried chicken is sure to be a hit.



Korean Fried Chicken

One of my favorite new discoveries is the Korean fried chicken. There are two features that can't be missed with this style of fried chicken. The chicken is both crispy and topped with a variety of toppings you traditionally wouldn't find in North America. Having tried everything from cheese to curry toppings, I can safely say that the Koreans have the most creative juice out of the entire fried chicken business. If you're looking for the taste of comfort with a dose of originality, Korean fried chicken is a must-try.

Taiwanese Fried Chicken

I raved about this fried chicken style in a previous post while visiting Taiwan. The chicken is authentic and a massive hit for the local foodies. Topped with five spice powder, a blend of spices from anise, fennel, cloves, cinnamon and peppercorns, the fried chicken itself is crispy on the outside but juicy on the inside. Better yet, you can impress all your friends when you record yourself eating fried chicken the size of your face. While this fried chicken appears similar to German-style fried chicken cutlets, it is coated with tapioca powder instead of breadcrumbs for a golden crispy shell.





Nashville Fried Chicken

Nashville is home to the adventurous. None other have ventured so far as to include cayenne peppers into their fried chicken recipe. You can distinguish this fried chicken from the rest through its bright crimson shell. To help you digest the flaming hot creation, Nashville fried chicken comes with bread and pickles. For the eager beavers out there who adore spice, this is the fried chicken dish for you. Just make sure to bring some Pepto in case you can't handle the heat.

Japanese Popcorn Chicken (Karaage)

The unique feature of Karaage comes in its two-bite size. Some key ingredients that add the kick to this tiny but flavor-packed chicken bites are garlic, sake, ginger and soy sauce. Foodies might notice a difference in the crunch from this style of chicken that is quite incomparable to other styles mentioned before. Specifically, the Japanese use potato starch that creates a golden shell that retains its crunch even until the following day.

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: International Business Scholarship

Sponsored by: Export Development Canada

Deadline: February 9, 2018

Potential payout: \$4000

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be Canadian citizens or permanent residents, enrolled full-time in a bachelor's degree program at a Canadian university or college, studying business-related courses, returning to full-time studies for the 2018-2019 academic year, and be in excellent academic standing. See full [eligibility requirements](#).

What's required: An [online application form](#), along with a maximum 600-word letter of intent, official transcripts, a resume, and a reference letter.

Tips: Check the Key Selection Criteria and FAQs for extra info.

Where to get info: www.edc.ca/en/about-us/student-programs/youth-education-program/pages/default.aspx



Book Review

Writing Down the Bones

Tara Panrucker

Writing Down the Bones

Freeing the Writer Within



Natalie Goldberg

Expanded edition with a new
preface and afterword by the author

Book: *Writing Down the Bones*

Author: Natalie Goldberg

I stumbled upon a mentor for life in Natalie Goldberg's *Writing Down the Bones: Freeing the Writer Within* (2005). Her book was on a suggested reading list in an obscure writing class I took many years ago. First published in 1986, this should be a standard go-to book in everyone's personal library. Bursting with vivid personal anecdotes and references to famous writers, her book has remained on suggested reading lists for decades, as relevant today as ever. AU writing students—and who isn't writing something at university—in need of a book with solid motivation and practical writing applications will discover a valuable treasure trove of wisdom within the pages of Goldberg's paperback.

In a succinct preface, the author explains to the reader the reasons one writes, along with her own motivations. Following that is a short introduction on her personal writing history which warrants why she is a present-day writing guru to many. I only wish I had her as a teacher in one of my creative writing classes. My high school English curriculums

could not have been more dry or insipid. No doubt the success of her book over the past thirty plus years is partially due to her meditation studies. Mindfulness practices tend to spill over into all other areas of life, and Ms. Goldberg's book is no exception. Her writing is clear, concise, and delivered with a self-deprecating sense of humour:

We want honest support and encouragement. When we receive it, we don't believe it, but we are quick to accept criticism to reinforce our deepest beliefs that, in truth, we are no good and not really writers. My ex-husband used to say to me, "You look ugly. Aah, now that I have your attention..." He said when he complimented me, I never heard him, but as soon as he said something negative, I perked right up (Goldberg 63).

We are encouraged to write concisely, and the insides of this book illustrate that. Contents are broken down into brief, easy-to-read chapters, often a few pages long, which makes it easy to ignore for weeks on end when you're busy writing a school assignment, but then pick right up where you left. Writing advice ranges from the practical to the frivolous. Natalie manages to make verb and noun exercises fun and makes sentence syntax sink swiftly into our brains. Additionally, she shapes imaginative and innovative writing exercises to experiment with in your spare time. And time flies when you do them; they're that much fun to a writing geek.

Further, *Writing Down the Bones* makes writing glamorous and pleasurable again, something missing in much of our everyday living. Goldberg doesn't just tell the writer to tell a tale, she shows us how with lines like these: "Writing is not a McDonald's hamburger. The cooking is slow, and in the beginning you are not sure whether a roast or a banquet or a lamb chop will be the result" (Goldberg 41). The book also highlights the rare community of writing, with all the distinct and interesting characters jostling around, some gushing with self-confidence, some shy and

stereotypical. Goldberg manages to cut through the tedium of writing and urges her audience to come forward and spill its' words for the world to view. The author writes deliciously about the compulsions and obsessions of writing that a true writer knows all too well.

Following Goldberg's epilogue, the book ends with an informative interview (adaptation) between the author and Tami Simon of Sounds True, a spiritual multimedia publishing company. This ties in beautifully with the Zen of writing, a minor theme within the book. Certainly, *Writing Down the Bones* is an ideal book to own for every developing writer. Goldberg generously offers her readers engaging insights into her adventures in writing and makes it justly fresh and fun.

References

Goldberg, Natalie. "*Writing Down the Bones*," 2005. Shambhala Publications. Boston & London.

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.



The Bookish Playoffs

Deanna Roney



choice of sporting event.

It is almost that time of year again. Time for the Canada Reads debates! I enjoy following the debates for several reasons, but one of them is just that I really love that there is a televised debate about books. I remember meeting one of my husband's friends for the first time and he observed that I was a "bookworm" or "book nerd" I can't remember which, I very proudly said, "yes. I am." They all laughed and thought it was great that I owned it. But through and through I am a book nerd. So when I get a chance to watch people argue about the merits of a book, well it is like the playoffs in your

As I am writing this the shortlist and the panelists are yet to be announced. I have a few top picks in the long list that I am hoping to see get through. One being *The Boat People* by Sharon Bala, and the other *Suzanne* by Anais Barbeau-Lavalette, translated by Rhonda Mullins. I was not surprised to see Bala's book on this list, it has received a lot of attention even before its publication date of January 9th. I was, however, surprised to see Barbeau-Lavalette's book on this list. This one was a chance find for me when I was looking at the upcoming books on Coach House's website. It caught my attention, but other than seeing it there I haven't heard about this book very much.

The other books on the longlist I haven't (yet) read. I am looking forward to seeing which get through and learning more about them. A great thing about Canada Reads is the exposure that books get. *Suzanne*, for example, it is an excellent book and I think one that should be talked

about more than it has been. Even if it doesn't make the shortlist I am excited to see that it has made the longlist and is getting some of the spotlight that, I feel, it deserves.

Canada Reads is not a "serious" critique of the books, but it is meant to be fun and engaging, to get people to talk about the books and consider new authors. It is considered more of a fun prize for the authors than a serious debate around literature. That, I believe, is why the books that get selected can vary so much. In most other prizes for literature, there are categories; at least fiction and non-fiction are separated, if nothing else. But with Canada Reads the type of book is irrelevant. It is difficult to argue non-fiction against fiction, they are structured differently, and the narrative style is entirely different. But, at the Canada Reads table, they are all present.

Every title that makes the list is receiving a certain amount of recognition. I have picked up many books because they have made this list, having not heard of them before. I don't always read the winner—sometimes its style or plot doesn't appeal to me—but I have always found a few gems in the mix.

I am excited to see the shortlist announced on January 30th and see who the panelists are going to be. It is a great time for books to take the spotlight for a few days. The debates can be watched live on TV or streamed from their website. It is also released as a podcast, but I enjoy watching the antics around the table so always tune into the live stream or televised version. I also avoid social media if I miss the live take—it inevitably will get spoiled if I am even a few minutes behind.

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



All the Music Be Happenin' Now The Heartbeat of Mother Earth

Wanda Waterman



Drumming has been an integral part of Aboriginal cultures since time immemorial, as the drumbeat represents the heartbeat of Mother Earth. All of the ancient Native American drums were made from wood with animal skin heads. Since there were many different animals depending on where the tribes lived some Native American drums were made from deer, elk, caribou and others were made from buffalo skins."

~Mi'kmaq artist Alan Syliboy (photo used with permission)

Early winter, 2001: The drum leaders are singing "The Grandmother Song," a traditional [Mi'kmaq](#) [MIG-maw] summons to the ancestors of everyone in the room. Looking around at the motley assortment of races gathered, I try to imagine our ancestors all showing up at once, and I can't help but wonder how they'll get along.

Echoes of earth

We're seated on low stools around the drum—a massive hollowed oak tree trunk with a moose hide stretched across its surface. We continue pounding until 11:30 pm, when Dusty stops us to say that if we continue to drum until midnight we'll be obliged to drum all night long. As rife with taboos as the whole drumming practice appears to be, the admonition seems suspiciously convenient for a father of four who needs his rest.

No one could fault him. Dusty has given up his few leisure hours to explain traditional drumming to anyone willing to listen, using these drumming sessions as introductions to Mi'kmaq spirituality for natives and non-natives alike.

One of the first things we learn is that the drumbeat echoes the heartbeat of Mother Earth. Recreating her heartbeat is a sacred ritual, an act that sets us within nature and outside of it at the same time. The drum isn't an idol to be worshipped but rather an aid to spiritual experience, and followers of diverse religions are free to use it, to their benefit.

The deep worth of tradition

There's a significant—and measurable—value in such rituals. In 1994 an interesting study conducted in British Columbia showed that, although the aboriginal communities there had a higher than average adolescent suicide rate, communities that promoted their traditional cultures actually had a lower than average rate.

It would seem, at least according to this study, that traditional cultural practices are effective antidotes to colonial oppression. But why? The prevailing theory is that sound mental health demands need a solid sense of self, and to develop one we need to see ourselves as part of a continuity, i.e. of something that's been around for a long time and will probably be around for a long time to come.

I'm willing to bet that if similar studies could be conducted in non-aboriginal communities we'd see strong correlations between higher participation in traditional musical practices and robust mental health. The current popularity of drum circles, drawing forth testimonies of enlightenment, balance, and enhanced energy, is one indication of the importance of a musical practice so primal and common to all cultures.

Might beating time along with Mother Earth's heart heal the damage done by capitalism and industrialization? It would appear that it does, at least for some. I've already talked about the magical serendipity of making music with others, and when the music we're making is as primal as drumming, we've entered an alternate reality, one far more real and immediate than the one we experience by listening to a digitally compressed sound sequence.

Making music—or in particular, carrying on the music—of one's ancestors, I believe has a mysterious healing power that can help get us through addiction, depression, suicidal ideation, and many psycho-social dilemmas. Music is spiritual in origin and tends to return to its spiritual sources. Surely in this circular journey music carries a message back to we the living. But what might that message be?

A persistent demand for reconciliation

Justin Trudeau's 24th of November (2017) apology on behalf of Canada to survivors of residential schools in Labrador and Newfoundland again brought to the fore of public consciousness the relentless quality of the demand for apology from First Nations peoples of the province. Reparations were not enough; there had to be an expression of regret.

If you've ever felt compelled to ask someone for an apology you know it doesn't often go well, and that their refusal to express remorse pretty much spells the end of the relationship. After all, if they're not sorry now, nothing's to stop them doing it again. And again and again and again. Why would you put your heart out there repeatedly for someone to stomp all over? Whatever love you may have held for that person, the sensible solution is to start moving that love in another direction.

But a few First Nations people of Newfoundland and Labrador didn't give up, and eventually the apology came. Their perseverance carried an implicit but deeply stirring gist: "We value this relationship enough to do what it takes to make it work."

Those few exceptional human beings were surely drumming while they waited, either in groups around large drums or drumming alone with hand drums, and this was among the things that gave them their strength. The political urge toward reconciliation was an echo of the drum's call to peace, of the Grandmother Song calling all of us to reach down into our roots to make things right in the world of the living.

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



Brittany Daigle

Course Exam

ORGB 364 (Organizational Behavior)

Course Exam

AU courses, up close

Brittany Daigle

According to the syllabus, ORGB 364 (Organizational Behaviour) is a three credit, first year introductory business and administrative studies course that has students developing a strong understanding of Organizational Behaviour theories and provides students with the skills to be able to apply those theories in a real life setting. There are no prerequisites for this course.

Organizational Behaviour is comprised of twelve lessons (or units), two assignments weighing fifteen percent each, one assignment weighing twenty percent, and one final exam weighing fifty percent. The twelve lessons discussed within this course cover several topics, which include perception, personality, values, motivation, decision making, communication, team dynamics, negotiation, conflict management, leadership, and organizational culture.

The three writing assignments within this course are each sectioned into a Part A and a Part B. The Part A sections in the three assignments have students demonstrating their understanding of certain terms, whereas the Part B sections have students applying theories to case studies. The assignments are in question and answer format. Students are required to understand concepts and case studies within the textbook, paraphrase the content, and properly cite their responses in APA format. The three assignments have target word counts (though not enforced) that should not impact the quality of the responses. The word count is present to help students stay focused with their writing and to not go on a tangent.

Finally, the three-hour final exam is split into two parts and is very term heavy. Part A contains thirty multiple-choice questions worth one point each and Part B contains five short-answer questions that are worth ten points each, for a total of eighty points. Students should be aware that no choice is given on the short-answer questions, so students should be comfortable

answering a wide variety of content. Students should have a high understanding of the assigned chapters and the corresponding learning objectives that tie into the chapter summaries for the final exam.

Sue Mitchell, one of the academic experts (AE) for ORGB 364, has been coordinating and teaching at Athabasca University since 1998 and has been an academic expert for ORGB 364 for over twenty years. She has completed a masters degree and three quarters of a PHD. Currently, she is an academic expert for ORGB 390 (Managing Change) *which is a discussion heavy course*, COMM 277 (Group Communication) *which is a group dynamics course*, and ORGB 364 (Organizational Behaviour).

At the beginning of the telephone interview, Mitchell stresses “One of the big things that we talk about in OB (Organizational Behaviour) is that we get a mental model and once you are stuck in that mental model you cannot get out of it. Students need to take the initiative to contact and engage with their academic experts. Introduce yourself, ask questions, and address any of your concerns. For ORGB 364 especially, students will be out of their comfort zone. I am personally here to allow the opportunity for not only learning to occur but for success to occur. Distance education is very isolating and people need to utilize the resources that Athabasca University provides and what you pay for.”

When asked about the course assignments, she states “The first assignment is the most difficult as it is asking you to apply the related theory to case studies, which is critical thinking. Students need to make sure that they are fully analyzing and describing the content in the textbook. Do not pick and choose what to include. Students need to fully describe what the authors are saying and if you do not understand a concept, contact your AE.”

Moreover, she states that “This course is like an introductory sociology, psychology, humanities course, as there are a lot of terms. There is no way that students will know all the content for the final exam. Moreover, this course’s content is presented in the sense of how an ideal,” and she stresses the word ideal, “organization should run. It is looking at the foundation of any OB course which is the interrelationship of stakeholders and how their behaviour drives the organization to success.”

Mitchell states “I would recommend this course to anyone in an organization, as it gives an ideal expectation of how management should do things. Anyone in a managerial or leadership position could benefit from this course. Also, it teaches student empowerment, motivation, how to work independently, how to have a voice, share opinions, and to be interactive.”

Lastly, she states “Prior organizational experience would help students in this course. Also, strong writing skills are expected from students. If students are not confident with their writing then taking a writing course prior to this course or submitting your work to the AU Write Site could be beneficial.”

From personally taking this course, ORGB 364 is very definition and writing heavy. Students will need to read paragraphs within the textbook multiple times to understand terms to then explain those terms in their own words. I found the assignments to be relatively easy, though reaching the target word count was not. I now wish that I would have contacted Sue Mitchell while completing the course as she would have informed me that the word count is not mandatory if my writing remained clear. Also, despite the assignments specifically stating what terms to write about, students will have to read most of the textbook to be successful on the final exam. When studying for the final exam I thought I could get away with just studying the terms and case studies that were discussed within the three assignments, though that was not the case. When I

sat down to do the final exam I knew almost none of the multiple-choice questions and I could barely write anything down for the short answer questions. Surprisingly, I just passed the exam, but I know that if it was not for my good guessing, I would not have passed. In my opinion, the multiple choice section of the final exam reminded me a lot of the PSYC 289 and PSYC 290 final exams.

Whether this course is a required course for your program or degree or it is just a general interest of yours, it will have you learning organizational behaviour theories, how to apply them, and how organizations are ideally supposed to operate.

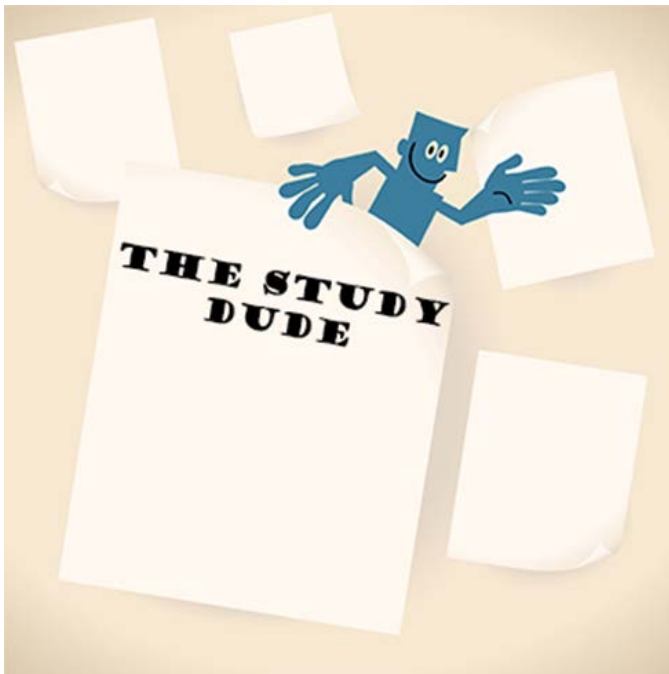
Brittany Daigle is 22 years old and completing her BSc in Computing Science & Information Systems with AU from Toronto, Ontario.



The Study Dude

Hard Knocks Hobbies

Marie Well



Are you as crafty as Martha Stewart's prison-time? She mixed her hobby with hard-knocks, fetching herbs while roaming prison lawns. She whipped up gourmet meals for inmates while looking polished in prison stripes. Spotless cell too, I bet.

At work, my office looked messy; my hair, Einsteinian. My computer screen rimmed with sticky notes, scrawled by shaking hands. My folders heaped, stuffed with pages taunting tattered edges.

Down the hall, Chaz's office looked spotless. He sported color-coded folders, not a paper peeking out. His office wafted lavender and pine. He polished his narrow-toed shoes nightly. Chaz would say, "If you stress with mess, clean with care."

Employers may pat backs for cleanliness—but they'll pour vintage wine for organizing skills. I might've organized using project management software, but its price bulges eyeballs. Instead, I color code to-do-lists. I once colored green for top priority. Yellow for second priority. Red for completed. But I switched the order, baffling myself. Luckily, I found an app for prioritizing with color-codes: *Task Planner*. Unlike me, the app keeps colors consistent.

So, how do you prioritize chores? Dirk Zeller's book says delegate dull chores but do chores that fit your hobbies. I have tons of hobbies—many birthed by chow. For instance, I enjoy buying colored plates and bowls for eye-candy din-din. So, washing dishes gives me pleasure. I eat healthily, so I love grocery shopping. Sadly, I once adored cooking, but panic attacks fueled a fire phobia. Nothing fried now, nothing baked—just nuked or raw. No Martha here.

Dirk Zeller reveals the art of planning and delegating chores in his book *Successful Time Management for Dummies*:

- Why plan your schedule? “For every minute you invest in planning, you save ten minutes in execution” (p. 53).
- How do you begin prioritizing with your schedule? “Take a good look at your top 12 goals and identify the tasks you need to do that align with those goals” (p. 55).
- When scheduling, keep in mind the 80/20 rule: “Only 20 percent of those things that you spend your time doing produces 80 percent of the results that you want to achieve” (p. 54).
- So, do chores that fit your hobbies: “You can apply the 80/20 rule to help balance how you invest your time in chores so it aligns with your hobbies” (p. 60). In other words, if you love the outdoors, then do gardenwork. If you love to snowshoe, shovel the walks.
- And delegate the chores not aligned with your hobbies: “Cooking, cleaning, shopping, laundry, yard work, bill paying, and other tasks are essential, but that doesn’t mean that you have to do them—sometimes the added cost of hiring help is worth the time it frees in your schedule.
- Lastly, schedule “those little pleasures that add texture to your life—reading, study, yoga, your weekly facial” (p. 61).

My neighbor spent hours sculpting her lawn. She flaunted bird baths, cobblestone walkways, and sculpted trees. A backyard Martha. I wondered, “Why not focus instead on health?” Well, the world blooms when we care about tasks that clash.



Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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



AthaU Facebook Group

Emily sparks off a hot discussion about the relative worthiness of AU's masters programs. Veronica seeks advice on signing up for Amazon's student prime account with AU's new student e-mail addresses; not only does she get the help she needs, but AU's IT volunteers to contact Amazon to put athabasca.edu e-mails on their map.

Other posts include funding for NB students, open-book exams, the incompatibility of smart phone calculators and invigilated exams, and courses ENTP 212, FREN 362 and RELS 204.

Youtube

Are you a new AU program student? Check out [AU's New Undergraduate Program Students Orientation](#) webinar, posted by the [Faculty of Biz](#).

Twitter

[@AthabascaUSU](#) (AUSU) tweets: "Did you know that you can check out print books from the [@AthabascaU](#) library and have them shipped to you, or access e-books on their website? Find out how to make the most of the library with their online orientation! <http://bit.ly/29pje0M>."

[@AthabascaUBiz](#) tweets: "Attn [#Toronto](#): We're hosting an in-person [#MBA](#) info session Monday, Feb 5 12-1:30 pm (EST) as part of [@TopMBA](#) World Tour! Join us to find out the [#AthaUBiz](#) difference: <https://goo.gl/Mw39Ww>."

Women of Interest



By Huydang2910 (Own work) [CC BY-SA 4.0
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via Wikimedia Commons

Barb Godin

Dorothy Crowfoot Hodgkin was born May 12, 1910, in Cairo, Egypt, and died July 29, 1994, in Limington, Warwickshire, England. In 1964 she was the third woman awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry for her development of protein crystallography. Dorothy's other discoveries include the structure of penicillin, Vitamin B12, and the importance of insulin in diabetes.

She became interested in chemistry at the age of 10, when she received a chemistry book from a friend of her parents. At the time, she was one of only two girls allowed to study chemistry with the boys. Her mother, a botanist, encouraged Dorothy in it and by the time Dorothy was ready for university her mind was set—she would study chemistry. Beginning university in Oxford at Somerville College, she eventually moved on to Cambridge with her college education paid for by a Somerville scholarship and her aunt. In 1932, Dorothy was the third woman to ever achieve an honors degree in Chemistry. Despite her outstanding marks she had difficulty finding work until J.D. Bernal of Cambridge University, a pioneer of modern molecular biology, provided an opening for her. In 1937 she was awarded her PhD for research on X-ray crystallography and the chemistry of the sterols.

Dorothy spent most of her career as a researcher at Somerville College at Oxford while teaching chemistry at the women's college there before she became a lecturer. In 1936 she was appointed the first fellow and tutor in chemistry, a position she held until 1977. A distinguished honor for Dorothy was to be one of the first people to travel to Cambridge to see the model of the double helix structure of DNA constructed by Francis Crick and James Watson. In 1960, she was appointed as the Royal Society's Wolfson Research Professor. This provided the funding she needed to continue her research at Oxford. One of her most remarkable research undertakings was the study of insulin, and she travelled extensively to promote her findings.

When Dorothy was twenty-four years of age she was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis. The pain in her hands and feet would become progressively worse throughout her life, eventually becoming crippling deformities. Even though she ended up in a wheelchair, Dorothy never stopped her scientific research.

In 1937 Dorothy married Thomas Hodgkin, the Director of the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana. This is also where Dorothy spent a large part of her professional life. Dorothy and Thomas Hodgkin were not allowed to enter the USA, except by CIA waiver, due to Thomas' affiliation with the Communist Party. Although Dorothy was not a communist, she had strong views about social inequalities and was focused on the prevention of nuclear war. At the age of 84, after having three children and three grandchildren, Dorothy died from a stroke at the home of her husband.

Additional information about Dorothy Crowfoot Hodgkin's may be found at the following sites:

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

https://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/chemistry/laureates/1964/hodgkin-bio.html

https://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/chemistry/laureates/1964/hodgkin-facts.html



Shortest Path

As long as I can remember I've been a sucker for blank journals. Of course, back in the day they were a motley collection of simple three-subject coil notebooks or plain Jane, utilitarian books like the old black and white Mead composition books of our youth. They ranged in size from small, pocket or purse sized booklets to over-sized artists' sketchbooks or dollar store mid-sized ones. They had ruled pages or stark pristine scary blank ones.

If I was feeling especially fine and in need of a splurge, I might spring for a moleskin one. Or a tactile one with handmade paper and leather wrap cover. During a sale at Chapters I snagged a hot pink Kate Spade one. I've got a couple boxed sets with lovely watercolour garden/floral images. Some had mod '70s style cover art. Some have elastic closures or ribbon bookmarks.

A quick look around my office reminds me of a lovely coil book called *Woman's Journey* that I used during a Manitoba retreat. It's got quotes, pouches and tabs like Spirituality, Reaching Goals, Family, Joy Catchers. In another, I found a goals list I wrote in 2005. No, I still don't have a Mercedes or gallery representation but I have achieved others.

There are also interest-specific journals and naturally I've got some of those too: book list, wine, travel, project, restaurants. And don't get me started on the ones with writing prompts! For Christmas, Roy and I each got *The Story of My Life* journals from Hilary, hint, hint.

Most of us have received promotional ones with embossed company name and matching pen as gifts or as convention swag. I've begun using the 2-pack journals available at Costco as a repository and to house my endless to-do-list for my festival work.

And let's not forget the branded companion journals to bestsellers. Designed as a tool to supplement and maximize the efficacy of the original book, they are also shrewd marketing for the author. Think Julia Cameron's *Morning Pages Journal*, Sarah Ban Breathnach's *Illustrated Discovery Journal*, *Gratitude Journal*, and *Simple Abundance Companion*, or Rhonda Byrne's *The Secret Gratitude Book*.

I'm ashamed to admit how many of these journals are still empty. For the longest time, I doubted whether what I intended to write was journal-worthy. Jim Rohn talked about how early on his life he bought a blank book for \$22 in the hope that he would find content sufficiently valuable to justify the purchase.

But I am getting better. I've been faithfully completing Neil Pasricha's *Two Minute Mornings* journal and Breathnach's *The Simple Abundance Journal of Gratitude* for weeks now. I've been less faithful with my new *Write One Thing* and *Draw One Thing* journals but each has been 'violated' by me.

In a conversation with a former *Voice* editor, I learned she was a faithful journal writer and had years worth of chronological, organized identical journals. Wow. On one level I envy that discipline and wisdom. On another I know that is not me. Unfortunately, for me that means that finding anything specific is like an archeological dig. So, I'll continue in my own flawed way to record my life and thoughts, wring insight and wisdom from what I read and see and do, and aim to improve my practice and the ability to retrieve specific content when needed. In my opinion, journaling is one of the shortest (and cheapest) paths to health and wellbeing, from where I sit.

Hazel Anaka's first novel is *Lucky Dog*. Visit her [website](#) for more information or follow her on Twitter @anakawrites.





Picking the Right Guy

Dear Barb:

I am dating this awesome guy. He's great looking, has money, and a charismatic personality. All my friends think I am so lucky to be dating Derrick. The problem is I'm attracted to someone else, but I don't want to end my relationship with Derrick and then regret it after. The guy I'm attracted to isn't really good looking or rich, or any of the things that Derrick is, but I just really like him. We get along great and whenever we are together we have a lot of fun. I think he is attracted to me, but I'm not really sure. What if I break up with Derrick and this other guy isn't interested, what would I do then? Help, Deb!

Hey Deb:

Thanks for writing. If you break up with Derrick and the new guy isn't interested then you just move on. You shouldn't be with someone "just in case" it doesn't work out with someone else. You should be with someone because you enjoy their company and care for them. You might want to rethink your relationship with Derrick anyway, since you are obviously interested in other people. Best of luck Deb!

Dear Barb:

Jay and I have been friends for years. We've been through a lot together as we both lost our dads when we were young. Recently he came out as gay. I always suspected he was gay but thought I might be wrong because he dated girls at times. It seems that since he came out, he is getting really close with me. Often he puts his arm around me or grabs my hand playfully. I am not gay and not interested in pursuing anything except friendship with him. I don't have a problem with him being gay. Everyone has to live their truth. I don't want to alienate him, but I'm sure he knows I'm not gay, so I am confused, maybe I am reading his signals wrong. Not sure how to clear this up and still maintain my friendship with Jay? Thanks, Zack.

Hey Zack:

Thanks for your letter. Possibly you are reading his signals wrong. He may just feel so relieved that he has come out, that he is just being himself. While he was struggling to come to terms with being gay he may not have wanted to do anything that would be misconstrued by other males. Since you guys have been friends for so long I would assume he knows you are not gay, but just to be sure, have an open discussion with him. Tell him you are happy that he has come out and that you couldn't imagine being gay and having to keep something like that inside. Be supportive of him dating other men. Best of luck Zack.

Follow Barb on twitter @BarbGod

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





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IMPORTANT DATES

- **Feb 7:** [Deadline to submit Nomination for Election](#)
- **Feb 9:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Mar 1](#)
- **Feb 12:** [AUSU Election Candidates Announced](#)
- **Feb 13:** [AUSU Council Meeting](#)
- **Feb 15:** [March degree requirements deadline](#)
- **Feb 28:** [Deadline to apply for course extension for Mar](#)
- **Feb 28:** [AUSU General Election Ballots Open](#)

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3. Deadline to Submit Nomination: **Feb 7** at midnight MT.

Questions?

Email the Chief Returning officer, Jacqueline Keena, at cro@ausu.org.

Alternatively, join our election forum [here](#) and post your questions online!

Find out more about the 2018 AUSU General Election on our website [here](#).



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