



THE VOICE

Vol 26 Issue 32 2018-08-17

Minds We Meet

AUGSA Councillor, Crys Vincent

AUSU Members Meeting Report

What Went On, What's Going On

Wildfires of Note

The Silver Lining to the Smoke

Plus:

*20 Fun Ways to Recycle
In Conversation
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

Looking for Winners

Karl Low



Most of the winners from our Voice Survey have responded and goodies should be in the mail shortly, however, there are a few of you out there who haven't yet. So, if you filled out the Voice Survey, please check the email you left as your contest entry! We need to get your physical address so that we can snail mail your prize, or if you don't want it, do let us know and we'll pull another name from our hat so you can get the warm fuzzies of giving someone else a gift!

As an aside, it's not a literal hat, of course, I put all your email addresses together on a spreadsheet which I pass-word protected so that nobody but me knew the order, and sent it to the VPex of AUSU, along with the Editor in Chief/Executive Director. Then we had the VPex pull a list of random numbers from random.org and send that to myself and the Editor In Chief. Once everybody had the list of numbers, I gave the password to the spreadsheet, the first number was the row of the grand prize winner, and the subsequent 15 numbers all runners-up. Would it have been easier if we just had someone pull names out of a hat, sure, but this way we all know (and now you all know) that nobody had the chance to swing the results in favor of any friends or family.

Which kind of ties into my larger theme, because this issue, we have a report on AUSU's Members Meeting that took place last Thursday. A large part of the discussion was on learning technology and what AU could do to those ends, and it struck me that when we speak of what technology we need, what we're essentially doing is trying to figure out ways that the technology we currently have is throwing up barriers to what we want to do. As I pointed out in a previous editorial, however, technology changes so fast these days that trying to plan this out in any sort of long-term fashion is really just setting yourself up for failure, either by over-anticipating what changes will happen, or, more likely, by not being able to foresee those technological shifts that were unforeseeable.

However, it can be hard to get people to think in the truly abstract way of what they really need and want from their learning experience. So much so that when the question came up of what do we, as students, want from our degree apart from occupational qualifications, the room—which had been reasonably lively to that point—drew a blank. And over the previous week I've been pondering that question and realizing that the answer, at least for me, is not just a capacity for critical thought, but the recognition that that's what university has imparted to me. Yet that recognition has been increasingly lost as post-secondary institutions continue to drive their focus toward the much more measurable "after-graduation employment" statistics.

So many of us, especially in Canada, have come to see post-secondary as little more than a higher-tier job training program, but that's a view that going to put us all in trouble as the speed of automation and the sophistication of AI continues to increase. You can't recognize patterns as fast as computers will. You can't work as cheaply as machines will. You simply can't.

But if you have the ability to look at a situation and figure out how to apply those computers and machines, how to critically evaluate the situation, ah, then you have a skill set that's going to remain in demand—for a little longer than most others, anyway.

But how can we communicate that to a post-secondary institution that's increasingly incapable of responding to non-quantifiables? An institution of primarily administrative employees who are looking for quantitative charts and spread-sheets that they can use to create quick executive summaries and bottom line evaluations to give to their bosses, so that those bosses can, in turn, pass that on to politicians who are looking for a fast sound-bite they can pass to the public about how their

funding decisions have materially—not intellectually, not in terms of individual satisfaction or ability, no, just materially—benefited their voters.

And this isn't to belittle those administrative employees either. They're doing the work their tasked with, responding to the pressures that are on them to continually produce more for less, to try to find ways to glean from the learning experience some sort of objective, non-disputable proof that the systems in place are generally working to give students what they need. And when they find it, the university system responds by noting that this is good information that they can easily use to persuade people, so naturally gravitate to hiring more of the same.

But going beyond objective facts and figures requires time, it requires looking at the individual as an individual, perhaps talking to them to try to determine not just what a person is thinking, but how they're thinking. That's not easy at the best of times, and there are simply way too many of us and way too few of them for any organization to really do it.

So, I'm not sure what the answer is, as to truly prepare a post-secondary institution for 50 years in the future, you need to change how society views post-secondary learning as a whole. You need politicians who feel confident in trusting that their constituents will see the benefit of educating people as a means to train them how to think clearly, rather than as simply another occupational training centre. You need a public who doesn't look at any course that's not immediately applicable to the working world as a waste of resources and time. It's not an easy task. Maybe that's why the question drew such a blank. It's simply too hard to find a winning answer.

Enjoy the read!



Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: Ken and Janny Hutchinson Scholarship in Architecture

Sponsored by: AU, with donations from Daytona Homes and Ralph Hutchinson

Deadline: September 1, 2018

Potential payout: \$1500

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be RAIC Syllabus students or AU students in either the Post-Baccalaureate Diploma in Architecture or the B.Sc. in Architecture.

What's required: A completed application form, along with information about your experience leading architectural projects, your community or professional leadership, and how the scholarship will impact your education, plus two letters of reference.

Tips: Read the Selection Criteria section of the application form carefully for clues on how applications will be judged.

Where to get info: registrar.athabascau.ca/studentawards/undergraduate.php#151



MINDS WE MEET



Crys Vincent is a Councillor in the Athabasca University Graduate Students' Association. Here we get to know some more about one of our fabulous graduate student councillors. This interview was conducted in mid-May.

What brought you to AU and the AUGSA?

Well, I guess I am a bit of a nerd, but I read all the emails that come from the AUGSA, so I've been getting to know the community and ways to get involved through the President's emails and the newsletters since becoming an AU student.

My first interaction was when the announcement around changes to tuition payment came down. I emailed the council about my concerns around these changes. I was really impressed as I received a response right away and with the follow up that took place. I really felt like my voice was heard and by sharing my thoughts as a student I was contributing to the greater community.

What is the last book you read?

I'm a huge reader actually, and the Big Book Sale by Calgary Reads was just a few weeks ago, so I have a tower of novels by my bed :) I'm currently reading a novel (*Middle C* by William H. Gass), something for work (*The Contrarian's Guide to Leadership* by Steven Sample), and something for personal growth (*The Happiness Trap* by Russ Harris). Oh, and my text book, haha!

What show do you think everyone should binge watch?

I'm not a huge tv watcher, but I can definitely appreciate a really well-crafted miniseries or show. *The Handmaid's Tale* is every bit as good as the critics said it was (Season 1 anyway, I hadn't started Season 2), although I wouldn't recommend binge watching it. The artistry and provocative questions the show makes you ask yourself is better digested with breaks in between. *American Crime* is also fantastic—I love the depth of the characters and the actors who switch roles every season is amazing!

Why did you choose to run for AUGSA council?

I believe in the process; I believe that invested students can make their school better. I think that AU wants to have student voices at the table and I want to honour that by taking up the challenge. I also think that through my interactions with the council I will feel more connected to my university's culture and have an opportunity to learn from student leaders and faculty who serve the committee.

What are your academic goals for 2018?

Oh wow. Well, honestly? I am 6.5 months pregnant right now, I have August off from my program, and we are due August 6th. So my goals are around successfully maintaining good

work in my program while balancing this new challenge! I am also looking forward to solidifying my practicum for September 2019, I am really looking forward to that!

If you could have a meal with someone from history, who would it be?

I am fascinated with Jeanne d'Arc (Joan of Arc). I've always had a fascination with her story. I would be so interested to hear her share her narrative. I think I could learn something from her incredible faith in the unseen.

What is one thing you would like to complete personally in 2018?

I hope to be a good mama.

Since being elected, what are your hopes for the 2018-2020 term?

I have joined the Strategic Planning Committee so I am really excited to be a part of visualizing how the last council's work can be operationalized and how the new strategic plan will impact the AU culture. I also would like to see if we can't find ways to engage students more, whether through increase communication, use of technology, or social events. My big picture goal would be that AU students feel more connected to their school's culture and feel a sense of belonging as an AU student.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen works with various organizations and runs In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal and In-Sight Publishing.



**In Conversation
With Bourgeois Mystics**

Wanda Waterman



Hippy Dance Church

Bourgeois Mystics are a crew of eccentric art rockers generating a host of sounds that will delight and amaze you 'til the cows come home. An abundance of weirdness belies their strong work ethic, discipline, and focus. The video for their cover of the Bollywood cult classic "Jaan Pehechan Ho" is a case in point. They're now working on the EP Turn On, Tune In, Sell Out, which should be released early next year. This week Tonto, Squiggly, and someone called Anonymous Illumined Overlord took the time to answer our questions about the band's background, activities, and mission.

What kinds of childhoods did you have?

TONTO: Childhood was filled with dreams of making it to the NBA, especially after seeing Muggsy Bogues in Space Jam. For a while, all I did was play sports. Other than that, it was rather average considering I was in the *extreme* lower middle class. Since my family was in the top 65%, I had to pick myself up by my little proverbial boot straps, mowing lawns and selling overly sweetened lemonade, if I wanted to buy any sick Muggsy Bogues rookie cards.

What role did music play in it?

TONTO: My father played guitar in the Air Force band, and he had a little home recording studio, so there were always instruments lying around. It took a while for me to become interested, though. That all changed though once I saw Jimi Hendrix live, in concert, on YouTube. I wanted to be that guy and make those insane noises. I immediately became obsessed with playing guitar and listening to irreverent devil music like Weezer, Gin Blossoms, and Everclear. However, I also liked Pantera, Alice in Chains, and Rage Against the Machine.

Were you trained in music or did you teach yourselves?

SQUIGGLY: Equal parts. For several years I alternately embraced and spurned piano and vocal lessons, developing my own style with what I'd learned.

Who — or what — was the greatest influence on you as an artist? As a human being?

TONTO: Obviously Muggsy Bogues. The dude was 5'3" and played in the NBA. I sometimes think it was a conspiracy created by the Illuminati just to see if we would just believe in anything. But also, sometimes I don't think that.

SQUIGGLY: Saul Williams is brilliant.

Why did you choose to play such a mixed bag of musical genres?

SQUIGGLY: It didn't feel like much of a choice; our music is the sum of us all having eclectic tastes. We all like a lot of the same music and our individual tastes are very broad. With our upcoming releases, we're grounding ourselves more in the heart of our sound, while keeping all the zaniness intact and still flirting with other genres.

How did the band members meet?

TONTO: After college, we all moved to Austin with big dreams of becoming filthy rich philanthropist rock stars. Most of the band members moved into an apartment complex that lets bands rehearse and party hard 'til the wee hours.

How did you come up with the name?

SQUIGGLY: I was working in a gem/mineral/crystal shop (more of a warehouse) that embraced their spiritual components. Though I still acknowledge and appreciate the power of earth artifacts, I became disillusioned with the mining practices and how people sought out stones based on what metaphysical properties someone told them they had rather than finding it out for themselves. It's this whole industry based on people outsourcing their inherent spiritual wisdom. What do we call a trophy wife or suburban upstart that embraces this culture — someone who's more "spiritually endowed" than everyone else?

Can you describe a typical rehearsal?

TONTO: Rehearsals are strictly business. We all show up on time (except for Squiggly who is usually about three or four minutes late) and then we run the set and work on new tunes for about an hour. We usually keep rehearsals to about three hours with one ten-minute break (give or take three minutes).

What do you like best about *Turn On, Tune In, Sell Out* [EP due for release in early 2019] so far?

TONTO: We've loved the process. We did it all at my home studio, and it's been very laid back, which can be good for the creative process. It's nice that we don't have to pay \$100 an hour for that big corporate L.A. sound. If I remember correctly, our percussionist, Duane Barry, once did

354 takes while trying to capture the perfect slide flute performance. We wouldn't be able to afford that in LA, unless we had a budget like Smash Mouth or something.

What led up to the album title?

OVERLORD: The album title comes from Bourgeois Mystics Corporation™ core value statement: "To sell out our principles for hard cash money." In a world where people are overstimulated by love, peace, compassion, and hope, it is more important than ever to remember the fundamental values that once made this country great. God bless the music industry, and God bless the United States of America. Thank-you.

Did anything funny or weird happen while you were making it?

TONTO: Hmmm, nothing too funny or weird comes to mind. Just lots of arguments involving vegans vs non-vegans, in which absolutely no one changed their stance.

SQUIGGLY: But in which the vegans clearly made better arguments.

What's the story behind the creation of "Jaan Pehechan Ho?"

SQUIGGLY: I saw *Ghost World* in theaters with my squidfather when it came out (early 2000s). The movie opens with the Bollywood dance number from *Gumnaam*. The spastic dancing and campy vibe stuck with me in a big way. When YouTube came on the scene, it was my go-to video to share with friends.

So when the band formed, and we didn't really have a sound honed in yet, this was my choice for a cover tune. As our sound developed, we made some wild arrangement adaptations, and tried to make it even more quirky: we added a metal/hip-hop section to the end, put in a jazz interlude, and gave the overall feel a more surfy vibe. We also sped it up quite a bit from the original.

When we were ready to shoot our first music video, we knew we wanted to make something super eccentric and we teamed with Diego Lozano, who directed the video. We cycled through a few different ideas, the first to make it more of an homage to the original video, but we ended up getting really crazy and running with a bunch of ideas we'd thrown out in a brainstorming session.

How do you regenerate after giving yourself heavily to the music?

SQUIGGLY: Honestly, I don't. I just keep slaving away, working toward making my living full-time as a musician. Being onstage and having a great show where everyone is dancin,' hootin,' and hollerin,' charges me up and keeps me content to keep at it.

What conditions do you need in your life to maintain your creativity?

SQUIGGLY: Momentum! When I'm actively creating, the creativity keeps flowing through me. Before the band formed when I was feeling creatively stagnant I'd send a sigil out into the multiverse (using chaos magick's outline) to engage my creative whims in a musical project, so I'd say it was a most successful spell. I also try to keep my left brains occupied, usually in the form of logic/math games or puzzles. I play a lot of *Magic: The Gathering*, and find that it keeps both hemispheres fed.

Are there any books, albums, or films that have influenced your work?

SQUIGGLY: *The Yes Men* are brilliant. It takes a lot of courage to do what they do, and their political art is very effective. The band identity follows a similar mold; we make (hopefully) bold statements *against* corporate and political tyrants and shiesty spiritualists with their vapid materialism and "money > people" mentality by assuming their identities.

The Love Below by OutKast is one of the most brilliant albums ever executed. It's really catchy and rooted sonically and thematically, but it's also an incredible ride across genres. And the vocal exuberance of André 3000— it's just unparalleled.

Do you follow a spiritual discipline that helps you stay balanced?

SQUIGGLY: Well, when I *was* balanced, I was doing yoga every day and practicing chaos magick for manifestation, but I've fallen out of both disciplines. I also would go to "hippie dance church" (ecstatic dance) most Sundays and that was always a great balance for my week. Now I'm less spiritually balanced, but I'm so engaged in my artistic passion that I'm mostly content.

If you had an artistic mission statement, what would it be?

OVERLORD: To maximize profits for our shareholders. Another less important mission statement would be: "To free the populous from predictable harmony, formulaic instrumentation and arrangement, and the oppressive tyranny of 4/4 time."

What next for Bourgeois Mystics?

SQUIGGLY: We're refining our stage show and pulling a lot of influence from Bertolt Brecht's philosophy of theatre. We plan to tour a lot in 2019 and take over the festival circuit. We're also working on a political sci-fi concept album for 2020.

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



Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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

AthaU Facebook Group

Brit expresses concern about invasive questions on an HLST 200 assignment; other students agree the questions seemed way too personal. Liam posts a heads-up that a Moodle upgrade will be rolled out August 27. Olivia polls students on a potential used textbook buy/sell group.

Other posts include accessing AU library materials, getting final grades posted, the AUSU app, and courses CHEM 218, EDUC 201, and PHIL 231.

Twitter

[@AthabascaU](#) tweets: "[#AthabascaU](#) students, both full-time and part-time, may qualify for financial aid. <http://bit.ly/2O8t99D> [#AskAU](#) [#PSE](#) [#ABPSE](#) [#CanPSE](#) [#StudentLoans](#) [#OnlineEducation](#)."

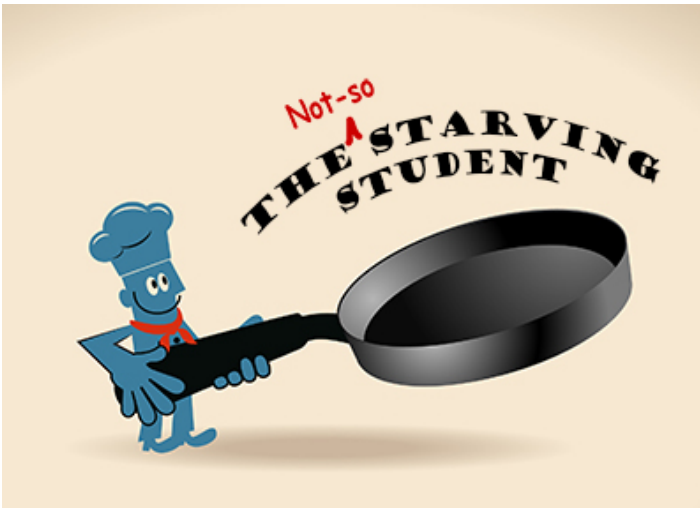
[@AthabascaUBiz](#) tweets: "Work. Life. Family. Grad Studies. We can't promise it will be easy, but we can make it possible. [#MBA](#) info session August 21 at 10am (MST) <http://bit.ly/2MbweZh>."



The Not-So Starving Student

Five Foodie Shows to Binge Watch

Xin Xu



“Guacamole August is the perfect time to binge watch Netflix shows, lay back and get inspired before the Fall term. For foodies, there’s always room to grow in learning about cuisines, appreciating the meticulous detail behind each culinary masterpiece or simply watching celebrity chefs scream at rookie chefs which never seems to lose its entertainment value. Exploring some of my favourite foodie shows this summer has certainly helped me revive my passion for cooking with school out of the way.

you’ll be familiar with the drill. The show begins with 20 contestants competing for top chef. Weekly competitions are both collaborative and competitive and allow for certain personalities to shine. The personal interviews with each chef let audiences truly connect with contestants over the course of the show.

2. **Chopped Canada:** The show selects four chefs and pits them against one another in a fierce battle for the top chef in challenges that include a basket of traditional ingredients as well as a mystery ingredient each week. Unlike Top Chef, each week features a handful of new contestant chefs tackling a three-course dinner. Chopped has given me a myriad of new ideas for dinner parties and continue to challenge me to experiment in the kitchen.



Meatballs inspired by Chef's Table

3. **Chef's table:** Each carefully curated episode of this series gives me goosebumps (in a good way!). If you’re looking for deep, thoughtful artistic renditions of cuisines, beautiful 1080 footage of narrated stories behind each chef and their stories, you’ll be enthralled with this series as much as I have been. The series features international cuisines from every corner of the globe. Not only is the series incredibly informative, its storytelling takes you into the shoes of another kitchen enthusiast.

4. **Hell's Kitchen:** Even if you’re not as passionate about food as I am, Hell's Kitchen has enormous entertainment value, drama and action. Despite some of the inflammatory language thrown around by celebrity chef, Gordon Ramsay, the show is terribly addictive and demonstrates the gut, determination, and toil of beginner chefs as they showcase their talents. Unlike some of the other shows listed, Hell's Kitchen brings the heat of the kitchen to a new level and is certainly not for those who disapprove of Chef Ramsay's blunt critiques.

5. **Iron Chef America:** Based on a popular Japanese cooking show concept, Iron Chef America has drawn in gastro-philes from all over the world. Unlike the other contestant-

based shows, this series features American celebrity chefs or “iron chefs” that compete in challenges with world-class chefs. The show is an entirely different calibre than other shows here. If you’ve ever wondered what goes on behind the scenes in a gourmet Michelin rated restaurant, then this is your show.

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



The Fit Student

Marie Well

Harness Your Health; Hone Your Body



Harness your health—and hone your body. Hang out with me, and I’ll dish out secrets for sculpting you into a Madonna or Michelangelo.

But what if you snub gym-rats and heath-nuts? Well, dip your fingertips into the cream: the tighter tummy, endless energy, curbed stress, cured disease, skyrocketed productivity. Once you taste it, you’ll toss out your Twinkies.

But if you’re gung-ho, then dive in. Here are tips on sculpting your power bod:

Gym-go the genius way: Pack a gym bag each night. Rush to the gym the next morning or after work. Strive for an hour workout, five days each week. On your two days off, either rest or do fifteen-minutes yoga.

For tiptop results, get Arnold Schwarzenegger’s encyclopedia of body building—even if you’re female. You won’t bulk yourself up into a she-hulk balloon unless you take steroids (but never take steroids as they’ll kill you off in your forties). Pay personal trainers to steer you through Arnold’s routine.

And if you can’t afford a personal trainer, hire a fourth-year kinesiology student. Get your nearest kinesiology department to let students know your desire to hire. You’ll get a decent discount and a star education. Or hire a fourth-year dance major. Twenty bucks a half hour. (I once hired a former Olympian to train me to wrestle.)

On top of weights, draw on cardio fun. Yes, cardio slims you, but doesn’t sculpt you. So, for curves, combine cardio with weights.

Diet the health-nut way: For diet results, read books on nutrition. Or just read one health book. After all, you get ditto the nutrition rehash, whether in books on curing cancer, dropping pounds, curbing anxiety, or preventing Alzheimer’s.

For example, nutrition books warn about restaurants. So, limit dining out to once every three months. Nutrition books often say 80% of stock at grocery stores fattens you up: prepackaged foods, processed foods, and junk food. So, become a fruit and veggie shopaholic; make your shopping cart a mobile garden.

Every day, chew heaps of veggies plus a few fruits. Swallow healthy fats such as almond butter, avocados, or flaxseeds (brain food). Drink only water, milk from cows or plant sources, or sugar-free tea. And shun chugging Macchiatos with extra whip. Choose water or tea, and a banana instead.

Most of all, avoid desserts. If you must taste sweets, mimic them with healthy treats. For instance, to mimic angel food cake, whip up plain yogurt (instead of whip cream), All-Bran (instead of cake), and berries and bananas (instead of icing sugar). Make mock-up angel food cake your breakfast go-to.

Research says muscles shrink after ten days. Just like with sports, with your health you're only as good as your last game, your last workout, your last week-and-a-half. So, if you thirst for a high-quality life, keep moving and eating well.



AUSU Annual Members Meeting Report

Carla Knipe



Once each year, AU students are invited to come and hear what's happening with AUSU. It is also an opportunity for AUSU members to bring up topics and give some feedback and direction about what AUSU should focus on. The topics raised at the meeting have been discussed and approved by council but it's an opportunity to open discussion to the whole. The following points were raised at this year's meeting and was a mixture of discussion between what has already been discussed by council as well as what participants raised during the meeting.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Auditors very happy with AUSU's process of "cleaning up" the records and are eager

to see how that will play out in the coming year. The previous unrestricted funds have now been restricted for specific purposes. Council's income statement has more revenue than it budgeted for, but still had a small loss. The year's budget reporting revealed this, but the fee increase has enabled AUSU to have a balanced budget moving forward.

ANNUAL REPORT

This was an exciting year for AUSU and big changes are coming up. The demographic of AU's students showed that Alberta had the most students with Ontario close behind, and the number of Alberta students is growing. AUSU hosted its new councillor retreat; this was the second annual retreat, and the first time it was held on the AU campus during convocation. Councillors said that it was a neat experience being on campus. The councillors finalized the strategic plan and made

some changes to how council does things, developing executive work plans rather than a strategic goal list and the work plan for this year was approved. There is a link to AUSU's annual report on the website that contains all the details.

BYLAW UPDATE

Lots of bylaws changed and were revised according with Government of Alberta Post Secondary Learning Act. A big change is that council cannot delegate some responsibilities and the existing bylaws needed to be updated to reflect this. Also, non-governing members can propose changes, but council has the ultimate authority about whether to vote on and adopt any changes. In light of AU's growing enrollment, the council size was increased from nine to thirteen councillors. One side-effect of this change was an increased engagement with council elections by students.

Council also agreed to significant changes to its annual members meeting. In the past, the meeting was more formal but the new meetings have adopted a less formal format that will hopefully invite more open discussion both at the member's meeting and in the future, where students can understand how council's bylaws work and the process involved. There remain many small changes to be done to AUSU's bylaws, such as correcting grammar and wording and more minor provisions to bylaws and these will also happen in the near future.

Along with the actual revision of the bylaws, council caught a discrepancy between the collection of membership fees of current students and refunds for students who dropped out of courses and/or programs. AU was refunding membership fees in all cases of students dropping out, even though the bylaws stipulated no refunds. This led to drop in revenue for AUSU, and Council needing to evaluate under what situations refunds should be given. A solution was put in place that if an AU student withdrew after the course start date, or if a student participated in any course work, then student union fees won't be refunded, however fees will be refunded if a student withdraws before ever starting the course, or when AU refunds fees based on compassionate grounds, such as the fires in Fort McMurray or the large flood in Calgary. This past year saw a major overhaul of AUSU policies and procedures, so it is unlikely that there will be any large overhauls in future.

LEARNING FRAMEWORK

You may not have heard about the new Learning Framework adopted by AU, but it is a significant way

AU-thentic Events Upcoming AU Related Events

Hamilton Meet & Greet

Sat, August 18, 1:00 to 3:00 pm EDT
Boston Pizza, 1563 Main St West, Hamilton ON
In person
Hosted by AUSU
www.ausu.org/event/hamilton-meet-greet/
No pre-registration required

Prince George Meet & Greet

Mon, August 20, 7:00 to 9:00 pm PDT
Pine Centre Starbucks, 31361 Massey Dr, Prince George BC
In person
Hosted by AUSU
www.ausu.org/event/prince-george-meet-greet/
No pre-registration required

Athabasca Meet & Greet

Fri, August 24, 5:00 to 7:00 pm MDT
Boston Pizza, 2201 - 48 Ave, Athabasca AB
In person
Hosted by AUSU
www.ausu.org/event/athabasca-meet-greet/
No pre-registration required

Online MBA Info Session

Tues, August 21, 10:00 to 11:00 am MDT
Online
Hosted by AU Faculty of Business
business.athabascau.ca/event-details/online-mba-executives-information-session-11/
Register online at above link

Business Undergrad Info Session

Wed, August 22, 12:00 to 1:00 pm MDT
Online
Hosted by AU Faculty of Business
business.athabascau.ca/event-details/business-undergraduate-information-session-6/
Register online at above link

forward for the university. AU is thinking about significant changes throughout all of its operations, and part of that is learning framework document about how AU presents its services. The guiding principle of this document is the question, “What are things that need to be considered when dealing with learning?” A steering committee has been formed to implement the framework. It will look at such things such as how learning can improve and change in the future, and how AU can be more inclusive. Originally, there was no student representation on this committee and no consultation planned for students, but AUSU said that because students were the heart of AU, there needed to be consultation. AUSU requested and obtained a seat so that student voices can be heard. Since then, AU has been engaging with students and there have been lots of good ideas and feedback. The recommendations as a result of the consultation will be very important to facilitate learning at AU.

What are some of the ideas that are emerging from this process? A big aspect of this is maximizing the use of technology and customized learning. A big debate among AU students is around e-texts versus paper texts and other course materials that are tailored to the individual needs of the course. Despite AU’s unique learning format that is unlike bricks-and-mortar universities, most courses at AU are still reliant on a traditional textbook as a primary resource. As it stands now, there is not much alternative to textbooks, and students still need them. Another recognition is that a lot of the burden is placed on students to teach themselves in the absence of “traditional” university lectures. What role should AU academic staff play in teaching? How can students have more interaction with staff? So far students have said that they would like the ability to interact with tutors more and in a beneficial way. Students often have a difficult time reaching out to tutors. Also, AU students feel isolated from one another and don’t get the needed interaction and support with each other. Student interaction is not universal between courses and programs, and this is another area where AU is very inconsistent. Another comment from students is that, unlike other universities, they are unable to choose a particular tutor, especially one that fits their learning needs.

Another big area that the Learning Framework is involved with is course development and implementation. Students don’t know what goes into developing a course. Perhaps this is a communication issue between AU and students, but students are demanding increased use of technology that will help them learn, and also taking advantage of the ability to use various platforms, especially on mobile devices. AU prides itself on the ability of students to study anywhere—but the student experience shows that the reality of AU courses often does not mesh with this assertion. Technology is a big part of this process. Classes need consistencies from course to courses—Arts courses have a completely different layout and functionality from Business courses, for example. It was also mentioned that AU needs to look into consistency with the Moodle platform as well. AU as an online university should be at the forefront of technology, but the general feeling among students seems to be that it is lagging behind other universities.

AU staff and administration are eager to find out what learners expect from their education. The issue of interaction goes both ways, where tutors and staff have so little contact with students that they do not know what the student experience is like or what it demands. Coming up with creative and value-added tools such as co-op learning placements and video group chats, were mentioned as just a couple of ideas that AU could use. Obviously, financial constraints mean that AU can’t do that for every course, but even small changes can make a difference to the student experience. The MBA program at AU is a shining success of what could be possible, but the lower undergrad course fees mean that the same tools may not be implemented in other subject areas.

Other questions that are part of the Learning Framework are regarding how students see their education; such as: What can you do with your degree? What about opportunities other than employability? AU as an institution needs to be recognized more with the general public—its brand recognition needs work. Despite the fact that AU is highly regarded among Canadian

universities, there is a stigma that students attend AU because they have no other choice. Perhaps increased advertising and marketing campaigns, in visible places such as on billboards and airline magazines et cetera will help change this perception. Although it was noted that there are some regions where this is happening.

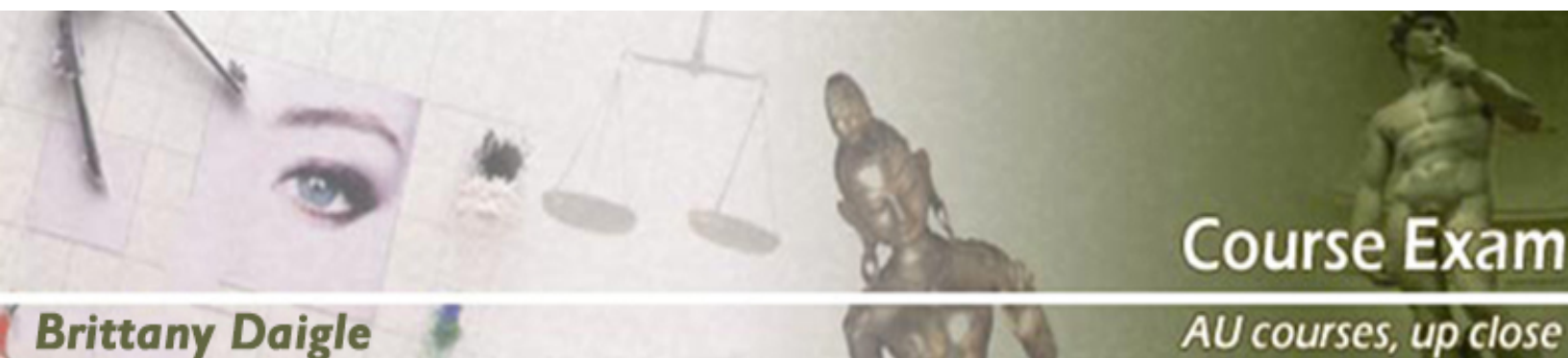
AUSU President Brandon Simmons said that the Learning Framework is an incredible opportunity for AU, as it is not often a university decides to change its whole model from the top down. However, it is also important for AU students to seek out ways to get involved with other students and engage with AU. Perhaps implementing local study groups and the meet-and-greets with councillors will be a start and lead to more opportunities put in place by AU in the future.

In closing, President Simmons remarked that council really appreciates the feedback and will pass any ideas that students have at any time to AU administration. He said that "It'll be interesting to see what the university is like in a couple of years and how it's going to use the current student feedback to make AU even better."

DID YOU KNOW...?

...the city with the most AU students is Calgary, Alberta!

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



Brittany Daigle

Course Exam

AU courses, up close

Course Exam

SPAN 200 (Introductory Spanish I)

Brittany Daigle

SPAN 200 (Introductory Spanish I) is a three-credit introductory Spanish course that introduces students to the basic elements of the Spanish language. By taking SPAN 200 and SPAN 201 (Spanish for Beginners II), students will learn to speak and write simple Spanish in a range of everyday situations. There are no prerequisites for SPAN 200 and there is a challenge for credit option if that is something of interest to you!

Introductory Spanish I consists of eight units, eight capstone assignments weighing forty percent total, eight map assignments worth a total of five percent, sixteen glossary entries for five percent of the course mark, a learning portfolio weighing ten percent, and a final written exam worth the remaining forty percent. While working through the eight units and their associated activities, students will develop oral and written skills through the study of vocabulary and grammar complemented by authentic texts. SPAN 200 emphasizes pronunciation, comprehension, and writing as essential components of the course. SPAN 200 is a prerequisite for SPAN 201. To receive credit for SPAN 200 students must achieve a course composite grade of at least fifty percent and a grade of at least fifty percent on the final written examination.

Also, students should be aware that this course has a special course feature. SPAN 200 is a fully integrated, online course based on a digital Open Educational Resource (OER) textbook developed at Athabasca University, with contributions and support from many academics and

institutions across Canada. Additional information about the project can be found at the Spanish OER Initiative website: www.spanoer.ca.

Michael Dabrowski is the course coordinator for all the Spanish courses offered at Athabasca University. He is currently working on developing a Latin American civilization and culture course, a Spanish civilization and culture course, an intermediate conversation course, and introductory Hispanic literature courses. He has been with Athabasca University for almost twelve years and has been both the course coordinator and tutor for SPAN 200 for almost twelve years as well. Alongside SPAN 200, he also coordinates and tutors SPAN 201 (Spanish for Beginners II), SPAN 300 (Intermediate Spanish I), SPAN 301 (Intermediate Spanish II), SPAN 330 (Texture Analysis and Composition), and SPAN 400 (Advanced Spanish Grammar I).

He states, “This is a basic introductory Spanish course at the University level. While the course will not make you fluent, it will provide a fun, and creative learning environment in which you will gain confidence and a build a strong foundation for your future learning of the Spanish language.”

Mr. Dabrowski continues, “The course consists of eight units that have multiple activities, each terminating in capstone exercises that consist of both written and oral and collaborative components to help students use all aspects of language in every unit. Students contribute to a peer-generated Glossary of terms which is visible to other students within the course. Also, they research cultural practices in areas of cultural interest throughout Latin America and Spain and report on them for the benefit of other students in the course. Finally, students reflect on the learning throughout the course from both the linguistic and cultural perspectives and give meaning to that learning in their life. This, of course, is followed by a final examination which covers the grammar and vocabulary that they have studied throughout the eight units in written format.”

When asked for any advice he would have for students who are currently enrolled or about to enroll in SPAN 200, he states “This is a language course, so it is very important that the student’s study on a regular basis, and ideally, every day if possible. In addition to the daily studies, exposure to the language on a regular basis will be highly beneficial. Since language is used to communicate it would be a good idea for students to find friends to practice speaking and listening. Listening to music in Spanish and watching Spanish films can also really benefit students that are dedicated enough to work through this type of material.”

He continues, “Be creative and have fun with the assignments. A language is a tool for you to communicate your ideas so avoid doing activities to meet the minimum requirements of the assignment. Use language to explore the world around you and communicate your perspectives on the world that surrounds you.”

Mr. Dabrowski recommends this course to “anyone who is wanting to learn the Spanish language and has had absolutely no prior exposure to it. Students who dance or listen to salsa, reggaetón, merengue and other Latin rhythms may also benefit from understanding some of the lyrics that they are hearing while dancing.”

When asked what he thinks students will take away from the course, he states “Spanish language skills are going to be limited, but the student will be able to talk about themselves, their family, their surroundings, and their immediate needs in a language that they did not speak before. For many students, being forced to understand foreign language also assists them in better understanding English, this is usually an unexpected benefit for most.”

When asked what aspect of the course students struggle with most, he states “This is a typical language learning course, so students will struggle with vocabulary, pronunciation, word order, and verb conjugation. Biggest obstacles differ from student to student and are hard to generalize, but if students strategically approach understanding the similarities between Spanish and English and try to leverage what they know from English into a foreign language they typically do not have too many difficulties, if they are willing to put in the work.”

Whether SPAN 200 is a degree requirement of yours or learning Spanish for any reason is of interest to you, this course will have you learning the fundamental basics of this beautiful language!

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



Wildfires of Note

Deanna Roney



Ominous smoke seen rising from my yard

Last year wildfires tore through central BC resulting in the evacuation of the city of Williams Lake. This year, the fire situation has come back. There are several fires burning in northern BC, many throughout the entirety of BC. In my area, there are 8 “wildfires of note”: 200 hectares to 68,000 hectares. One of these fires has been contained. These fires have resulted in many people being put on evacuation order and many more on evacuation alert.

Where I am the fires are not a direct threat. The one that appeared the closest is the one that has been contained, though it, too, burned away from town. Seeing the smoke plume as it started was unnerving. But, something not so surprising has come from all of this; the communities have once again pulled together—not just to help one another but to help other communities that are helping

anyone displaced. There have been call outs for volunteers to help fix fencing and stables to house animals that need to be moved—and these calls have been answered within minutes. It is great to see everyone pull together.

I have also seen some great lists making the rounds on Facebook, advice from those who went through evacuations in the last few years, from the Fort Mac fire to the Williams Lake fire. What should those being evacuated look at taking?

One of the biggest things was gas, it is the first to go, make sure your vehicle is fuelled up. There were suggestions on picking what vehicle to take, what documents you should be taking and which are stored online and are of less importance to pack. There was the suggestion to pack lots

of water and food, toilet paper because you just don't know how long it is going to take you to get where you are going.

You need to pack not only the sentimental things, the important paperwork, certificates etc. As well as survival necessities: food, water, medications, prescription refills. Also, all these things for any dependents, children, pets. If possible, it would be great to pack extra just in case you run into someone who was forced to leave with less notice who may be without.

One suggestion I saw that I think is important to reiterate is that when you leave if you leave sprinklers on it is best to leave them around the yard, to move any flammable material away from the house (planters, wood piles etc), but if you leave the sprinkler on the roof you may end up dealing with water damage.

We have been lucky where we are, there are fires around, but nothing that is an immediate threat. We have been dealing with smoke, which can be a big concern for those with health issues, but the threat of fire is still distant. This is a good time, though, to be ready, to organize, to think about the things that you need to take and the things that you should take. So if that time comes that the fire turns, that the alert comes on, you are already getting prepared. You can take that time to pack the things you have already thought about and be ready to leave should the order come down.

For the most up to date information on fires in BC:

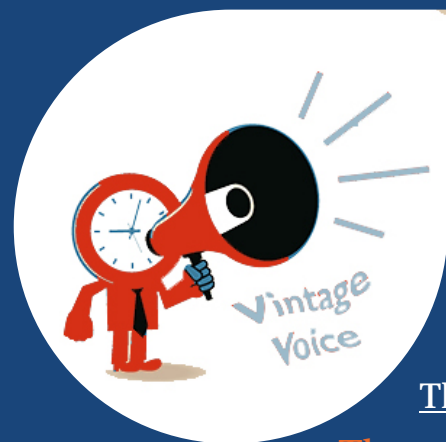
<http://bcfireinfo.for.gov.bc.ca/hprScripts/WildfireNews/OneFire.asp>

For more information on preparing for an emergency:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery>

Deanna is an AU graduate who loves adventure in life and literature. Follow her path on the writing journey at

<https://deannaroney.wordpress.com/>



Unearthing classic articles from previous issues of *The Voice Magazine*.

To celebrate Thrift Shop Day August 17, we sorted through heaps of still perfectly good articles to find these vintage gems.

Minimalist Max. Student Max Birkner describes his minimalistic life—so perfect for the starving student! "It took me an hour to move into this place (it was furnished). The move was completed when my girlfriend brought over a knife and fork from her place." *Broad Minds Think Small, Part 1 — Cluttered to the Bone*, April 13, 2012.

The gap between cheap and frugal. Writer Janice Behrens points out the benefits of frugality and offers tips to achieve it. "Spending money wisely and mindfully is one of the most important skills one can possess in our wealth-driven society, a skill that can greatly contribute to the enjoyment of life." *The Good Life — A Better Life through Being Frugal*, June 2, 2006.

20 Fun Ways Students Can Recycle

Tara Panrucker



Watch any news channel and chances are you will hear about another disturbing overflow of plastic and other garbage polluting our environment. While it may seem daunting to overcome the damage that has been done, there is strength in everyone pitching in, in their own way, to reduce garbage and begin to reverse the effects of not recycling.

1. Ensure no plastic bottle ends up in the garbage and put empties into the recycle bin, or return your stash for refund.
2. Get creative with kids and make old plastic containers into fun new toys. YouTube has endless inspiration to get

kids inventing cool new creations. The most inventive one I've seen is a jet pack for a children's Halloween costume made out of old bleach containers. The ideas are endless.

3. Use old plastic bottles as containers for a hanging wall garden. Fill with soil and seeds and watch your garden grow.
4. Glue old bottle caps together to create uniform new containers for your office space.
5. Cut the top of a laundry soap bottle and give your child a cool recycled beach scoop for making sand castles at the beach. How groovy is that?
6. An old shampoo bottle can be cut in half to be recycled as a charging station to hold your phone.
7. Empty spice containers can be recycled as new spice containers and save you money at the same time! Simply wash when empty, buy spices at a lower price in bags, then add to old spice containers and reuse. Brilliant.
8. Recycle old coffee creamer containers by cleaning, then use as snack containers. They pour out snack portions perfectly.
9. Reuse old glass jars by filling with tea lights and creating ambience in your living space, indoors or out. Cluster varying sizes and heights for effect.
10. The tin tops of cans or jars are perfect for using as garden labels (write on the tops with black permanent marker). Simply hammer a small hole with a nail and it's ready to hang.
11. Are stacks of old magazines or maps taking up much needed storage space? Create a feature wall in your office space by wallpapering one area featuring your favourite places or themes.
12. Old egg cartons make excellent organizational storage containers for small objects like paper clips, thumb tacks, and other small items that tend to spill over in drawers.
13. Looking to organize your garage or garden space? Spray paint old tin cans and attach to a wall for instant organizational container space for all small tools and garden seeds.
14. Instead of throwing away a plate that broke or chipped, learn the art of making a mosaic instead.
15. Glass jars and bottles make excellent vases and can easily be embellished with raffia and ribbons to match any décor.
16. Use old tools and other metal objects like an artist and create an amazing new sculpture out of used parts.

17. Don't throw away those old wine corks; recycle them into a new bulletin board.
18. Glass containers can also be repurposed into new bookends by filling with sand and seashells or other cool objects of your choosing.
19. You may think an old wooden chair or stool have seen better days until you sand off the old layers and cover it with a fresh new coat of paint.
20. Every Christmas take your stack of greeting cards and snip gift tags for next year's gifts. Use a hole punch for attaching with ribbon to presents.

Recycling must be a way of life for everyone to positively affect our environment. It doesn't take long to create a new habit. Set up your own system that works for you and your family and help reduce our environmental impact. Cleaner oceans, rivers, and landfills will prevail if we all pitch in and do our part.

Tara Panrucker lives on Vancouver Island and is seeking a General Arts Degree at AU.



Council Connection August 9, 2018 Meeting

Carla Knipe



AUSU's monthly Council meeting, held on Thursday August 9th at 6:30, was a quick and smooth one. It was followed by the annual Member's Meeting. Despite some dial-in issues at the beginning, there were twenty participants listening in (including Council and Staff) and discussion at both meetings was positive. Councillors Julian Teterenko and Vice-President External Melinda Goertz were absent with regrets.

After the usual formalities of calling the meeting to order and adopting last month's minutes, the first item of new business was a motion to approve the AUSU 2018-2019 budget as recommended by the finance committee. This motion was moved by Councillor Lisa Oracheski and seconded by Mark Teeninga. President Brandon Simmons provided a few highlights about the financial report and emphasized that for the first time in many years, AUSU had a balanced budget, which was something to celebrate.

President Simmons said that was made possible by several factors. The recent AUSU fee increase was the major contribution to AUSU's financial health, but the work that was started with the previous Council and continued by the current student government regarding analyzing and improving procedures and policies have helped to optimize how and where funds are allocated. What the improved AUSU financial situation means for AU students is that more initiatives and student "perks" will be opening up; specifically, some additional student awards and other programs such as Lynda and student discounts.

AUSU is still tweaking student awards and finding ways to optimize where the funds are allocated. Some awards receive a high number of applications, such as the academic achievement and student volunteer bursaries, so AUSU would like to ensure the financial awards are responding to student needs. Despite the high number of applications, these awards were receiving a lower amount of funding compared to other awards. The emergency bursary, on the other hand, has never awarded its full share of the funds allocated to it. The budget anticipates moving that

unused portion to instead be used for the computer bursary, providing up to twelve computers. Councillor Oracheski said that the finance committee is in a constant process to balance the academic achievement awards versus the need awards, but this process is more than simply creating more awards.

Executive Director, Jodi Campbell noted that the budget is reflective of how AUSU is still growing as an organization and going forward it needs to address future needs while optimizing the current status quo. He also said that the new budget allows for current council to also focus on other initiatives such as improving the website and student mailouts. Having a balanced budget that everyone can be proud of will allow council to reach its goals. This motion was carried with no opposition.

The next section of the meeting was highlighting the Executive and Committee reports. Natasha Donohue, the VP of Finance and Administration, noted that she was trying to get more student involvement with the committees but it has been difficult. For the awards committee, chair Amanda Lipinski said that summer has been a low period for student award applications. AUSU's Executive Director Jodi Campbell said that an engagement contest on Twitter and the recent launch of AUSU's Instagram account had a positive response.

The final topic was discussion was the Communication and Members Services Coordinator's Report. There has been an increase in engagement both on social media and AUSU's website, and these platforms have seen consistent traffic. AUSU will continue to enhance its current social media strategy by using such things as a calendar outlook for future events, which will hopefully lead to increased attendance at Council meetings and the in-person events such as the meet and greets. AU is being supportive of AUSU and wants to work with Council to increase student engagement, especially in light of AU's Learning Framework strategy.

One question from the floor during the Q and A period was about the closure of AUSU's Student Lifeline program, which is being replaced by AU's new, and allegedly equivalent program, specifically about the potential for gaps in service. Nothing has been released by AU regarding the changeover, but Student Lifeline has told AUSU that they are committed to working with students and are willing to extend their operations for free for an additional 30 days or so if it's needed while the transition happens.

The rollout should be ready to go by the end of August, but there has been scant communication about the details of new service, just that there will be a new provider. AUSU is looking for more information from AU so that the details of the change can be conveyed to students.

Another question was about the meet and greets. Attendance has been generally low for these events: no students showed up at the Sherwood Park event, and only one person attended in Vancouver. One comment from the floor said that the location for these events are important, especially for students who do not drive or who have limited access to a vehicle. Another suggestion was to reach out to students in specific programs to invite them. But the communication between AUSU and the students who took the time to come out has been valuable. Topics that have been discussed were the lack of consistency between courses and instructors, how teachers teach and the expectations by both instructors and students for individual courses.

The formal council meeting adjourned. The next meetings are **Thursday, September 13th, 2018, and Thursday, October 11th, 2018**. Both meetings are at 6:30pm MST and open to the public.

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



Dear
Barb

Barbara Godin

Twice Shy

Dear Barb:

I have always been a shy person, but, as I'm getting older, it seems to be getting worse. I constantly feel uncomfortable in social situations unless I am with my immediate family. When I was in school, if the teacher would call on me, I could barely speak out loud. When it was time to do oral presentations, I would be stressed out for days before I had to speak. I have never introduced myself to anyone and if I am introduced to a new person all I can do is utter a weak "hi." Throughout my life my mother always excused my behaviour by explaining to others that I was just shy. No big deal was ever made of it by my family. It was just a consensus that "Marg is shy." But now that I'm an adult, I really would like to overcome and become more social. My best friend is the only person I really talk about this with and she says I might have social anxiety. I have read a few books on overcoming shyness, but I can't seem to put into practice what I read. I don't know where I could turn to for help, do you have any suggestions? Thanks, Marg.

Hey Marg:

Thanks for sharing your situation. I can understand that you have reached a point in your life where you want to be more outgoing. The Social Anxiety Institute conducted an extensive study on the differences between shyness and social anxiety disorder. The results of their findings confirm that shyness and

social anxiety are two different things, however some of the symptoms do overlap. A major difference between shyness and social anxiety disorder is that social anxiety disorder is not considered a normal personality characteristic, but shyness is.

Individuals who are shy are often able to live a normal life and not feel held back by their situation. They accept their shyness and do not see it as a negative trait. Whereas people who suffer from social anxiety feel held back and unable to do the things they want to do. From your letter it does seem like you feel held back and not able to participate in the activities you would like to. Most likely you are an extrovert by nature, but you are not able to fully express yourself and live your life completely. So you may be suffering from social anxiety disorder, rather than simple shyness. Throughout the last 30 years there has been a significant increase in the number of individuals being diagnosed with this disorder, perhaps because more professionals are trained to identify the symptoms. You can do a test online to [find out where you fall on the spectrum](#). Whatever the results are, you may want to follow up with your doctor, as he/she will be able to refer you for further counselling or put you in touch with a support group for shyness or social anxiety disorders. Good luck Marg, and let us know how you make out.

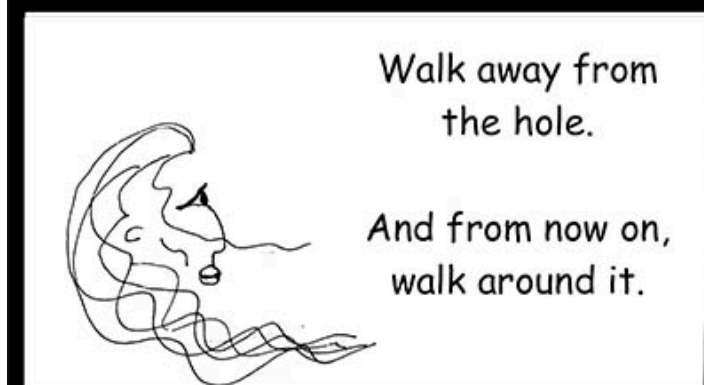
Follow Barb on twitter @BarbGod

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.



Poet Maeve
Inner Needs

Wanda Waterman



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

IMPORTANT DATES

- **August 17th:** Facebook Live
- **August 18th:** Hamilton Meet & Greet
- **August 20th:** Prince George Meet & Greet
- **August 24th:** Athabasca meet & Greet
- **September 13th:** Public Council Meeting

AU's Learning Framework

"AU has undertaken the design of a far-reaching Learning Framework that will embody our commitment to our learners and our determination to transform the future of learning at AU and beyond. Our Learning Framework will articulate a vision of our learners' diverse journeys. We know that learning happens everywhere, inside and outside coursework, and that our learners follow diverse pathways before they come to us, while they study with us, and beyond. Whereas universities typically orient new students by teaching them about the institution and academic culture, AU's Learning Framework will be organized around the premise that it is our job to learn about our learners." – [AU website](#)

AUSU sits on the Learning Framework Committee to help represent the student voice and we want to hear from you!

Oh, did we mention there are prizes for participation?

Win Bluetooth headphones, free proctorU codes and more when you engage in this initiative. Your name will be entered if you participate in one of the following:

- One of the August [Meet & Greet](#)s
- Comment about the AU Learning Framework during an August [Facebook Live](#)
- Participate in the Forum at <https://www.ausu.org/forums/>

Join now for your chance to win!



More Prizes?

That's right! AUSU is also hosting a Twitter contest to help our students and their families prep for Autumn.



Tweet [@austudentsunion](#) about how you are getting ready for fall for your chance to win Amazon gift cards and more! Be sure to use the hashtag #aufallprep

Our contest ends **August 31st**, so don't miss out before September long weekend.

Contact Us

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 Website: ausu.org

AUSU will keep students at the heart of the organization, understanding that its primary objective is to enhance the overall undergraduate student experience at Athabasca University. AUSU accomplishes this by keeping students first, remaining relevant, being accountable, striving for excellence, fostering community, and strongly advocating for our members.

We'd love to hear from you!

CLASSIFIEDS

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

THE VOICE

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