



THE VOICE

Vol 27 Issue 10 2019-03-08

The Reputation of Online

Looking at AU in the Real World

On Making a Living

The Porkpie Hat and the Rat Race

Why You Need a Dog

Seven Reasons

Plus:

10 Bizarre Writing Prompts

Vintage Voice - IWD

and much more!



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Views and articles
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AUSU Student Council.

The Voice is published
almost every Friday in
HTML and PDF format.

For weekly email reminders
as each issue is posted, fill
out the subscription form
[here](#).

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Volume 27, Issue 09

© 2019 by The Voice
Magazine

ISSN 2561-3634

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

Accidental Thinking

Karl Low



Yes. It's late. I know. On Monday, my partner and I were in a traffic accident. We weren't at fault. The elderly driver of the other vehicle flew through a stop sign and with no warning and slightly slippery roads, I couldn't stop us before we T-boned into them. Now, before you worry, physically, the damage seems to be minor, so far. (I used to work for a motor-vehicle attorney so I'm well aware of stories of people who thought they were fine for a week or two before their symptoms really started presenting themselves.) Mentally, however, doesn't seem quite so good just yet.

We went to see a doctor, and after an examination he told us both to take a couple of weeks off. But I thought, "stuff that", it's not like *The Voice Magazine* is a physically taxing task after all. But I've noticed changes. My editing is slower. Figuring out the right punctuation or word-choice seems to be a bit more of a struggle than before. More frustrating, however, is that I can't seem to keep focus for any significant length of time. I drift. I can't tell you where, because I'm not sure myself.

AUSU has been very understanding, they told me not to worry about *The Voice* or any deadlines for it, but I still want to get these stories out there. Especially this week, when we've got our own investigation into what an AU degree means in the real world. Our own Brittany Daigle did some first hand digging into what employers really think about a degree from AU in comparison to other universities. The resulting article is our feature presentation this week.

But getting back to my original topic (see? Drifting). One of the things I've been thinking about is the elderly man in the vehicle we hit. The collision report told us that he is nearly 80 years old, and I can't help but remember how he looked as we waited for the fire-trucks so that they could cut the door off of his vehicle to extract him on a stretcher into the ambulance. We were told by police at the scene that his injuries weren't critical (thank goodness for airbags) but that doesn't help with the image in my mind. And so I find my thoughts centered around mortality lately, not just of the body, but of the mind. I'm not used to struggling to find a word, and for the first time, the idea that, as we get older losing our mental faculties is a very real possibility, has become very real to me.

And honestly, it's terrifying.

Which brings me back to education. I've read many studies that keeping our mind sharp is very much like any other organ in the body. It needs to be fed a healthy diet, and to be regularly exercised. Fortunately, editing the *Voice Magazine* is a bit of a brain workout every week, and I find I learn something new each week as well, this week, in keeping with exercising the brain and giving it a healthy diet, you can check out our article on why travel is the best form of education, or advice on how to hide healthy ingredients in our normal foods.

We've also got an article from Darjeeling Jones on why we need to escape the rat race, and if your brain really wants a workout, our *Fly on the Wall* doesn't disappoint. So, let's get started. Enjoy the read!

The Reputation of Online—Athabasca University

Brittany Daigle



On a regular basis, I receive messages from people asking me for my opinions of Athabasca University and questioning its overall credibility. I try to always reply in a reassuring manner and try to make the university sound great, though that is not always easy. People tend to just believe what they want to believe or believe what they read from an online forum that was published in the early 2000's. There could be hundreds of students saying how much they like the university and how successful they were after graduating but the one or two comments from students who did not enjoy the university or could not get a job easily overpowers any of the other comments.

From what I have gathered, people are so caught up in the fact that it is an *online university* that they fail to realize that, just like the majority of other universities in Canada, it is an accredited university. People tend to also ask me if they will be able to get a job with their degree if it is obtained through AU, which is ridiculous and almost insulting. As if they think I would be spending four years of my life and tens of thousands of dollars on a degree for absolutely no reason.

Something I always try to highlight to current or potential students is that you are not putting "Athabasca University – Degree – Online University" on your resume. It is almost like people want to belittle their own education. You are not forced to put "Online University" on your resume and you are not forced to even tell people that information in an interview, because it is not relevant. Most employers are not aware of every single little detail of every university across Canada, so if you omit that information, it likely will not even be brought up. Honestly, most employers will not care where or how you got your degree, just that you have it. Just like employers will likely not ask to see the grades on your transcript, they will most likely not ask why you decided to specifically take your degree online.

So, what do you say if they do decide to ask you why you chose AU, or specifically, why you chose to complete an online degree? Do not make it sound like a negative. Just because it is not the norm, does not make it a bad choice. We live in an online world, eventually more universities will be turning to AU for advice to better adapt themselves. Ultimately, you need to be proud of your degree and own it; you worked hard for it. Explain that you wanted to be in complete control of your education and that you taught yourself everything you know. Explain that you had to be self-disciplined, motivated, and extremely organized to complete the degree, as there were never any due dates or pre-scheduled exams. Explain your reasoning for choosing AU, maybe it was because you were already employed full-time, were raising a child, wanted to move or travel frequently, or just loved the idea of learning the contents of the degree in the comfort of your own home. Be honest but be confident.

Now, I am not going to lie and say that I was never skeptical of AU. When I first heard about Athabasca University, I thought it was the coolest thing ever. Though, when I told my friends

and family about it, they instilled some doubt into me. They told me that employers could end up not taking it seriously, that it would probably be really difficult and expensive, and that I would probably just lose focus of the end goal and end up not finishing the degree. I debated for a long time applying and I finally decided that I would send an email to advising with all my questions and concerns (which I would totally recommend doing if you are in the same situation I was).

Once advising got back to me saying that it was accredited across Canada, I decided to take it upon myself to call employers all over Canada and ask for their honest opinions of AU, and most of the responses I received were very positive. Most employers explained that to them, a degree is a degree, and that they would review the resume just like any other. The only remotely *negative* feedback was from employers who just said they would rate certain universities over others when it came to specific programs, which I thought was perfectly understandable. Some employers even said that they thought AU was harder than *normal* universities and overall rated AU higher than some major universities in Canada.

In August of last year, I decided to get a small, part-time job on the side for some extra spending money. I went to a total of ten different interviews in two weeks and only one employer knew that AU was an online university. On top of that, I was very transparent in each interview and told them it was an online university, so that I could emphasize that I was extremely flexible for any part-time hours (major benefit of AU right there). At the end of the two weeks, I was offered seven of the ten jobs that I interviewed for, and one of the job offers was from the employer who knew about AU prior to me going to the interview. The only *odd* questions I often received were “did you live in Alberta?”, “how do you submit your assignments?”, “who teaches you the material?”, “how are exams done?”, and my personal favorite “you must be good at computers, right?”

Everyone’s experience will be different. At the end of the day, you just need to be confident in your education. You know how hard you worked towards your chosen degree and you need to sell that, just like everyone else. There is always going to be people who want to criticize your decisions, though at the same time, there will be people that will reward you for all your hard work.

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



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

As we mark International Women's Day March 8, we look back at The Voice's coverage of the day in years past.

Bread and peace. Columnist Hazel Anaka looks at the origin and evolution of IWD. "The UN and others are focused on stopping female genital mutilation, rape as a weapon of war, and the burning of Indian brides with dowries deemed too small. It sort of makes any of our complaints as women pale in comparison." From Where I Sit—International Women's Day, March 3, 2006.

The Global Sisterhood. Writer Sandra Moore focuses on the status of women in the Middle East in this article. "...before the 1979 Iranian Revolution...women were free to attend university, hold high-level jobs and choose their dress. Since the Revolution women have been second-class citizens ruled with an iron fist by conservative males." International Women's Day—Middle East Perspectives, March 12, 2003.

Ten Bizarre Writing Prompts to Kickstart Creativity

Wanda Waterman



If you're a creative writer you're probably already familiar with "writing prompts," those little tips designed to boost your literary engines. Prompts often come in the form of a first line, which is helpful because that's the hardest to write, but they're often way too conventional to give your imagination the kind double-take needed to set its wheels in motion.

Whether you want to write lyrics, poetry, drama, or fiction, you need that first step. As Jacques Maritain pointed out, it's then the work itself that dictates how it's to be written, establishing its own rules — which you can discern if you're mindful enough.

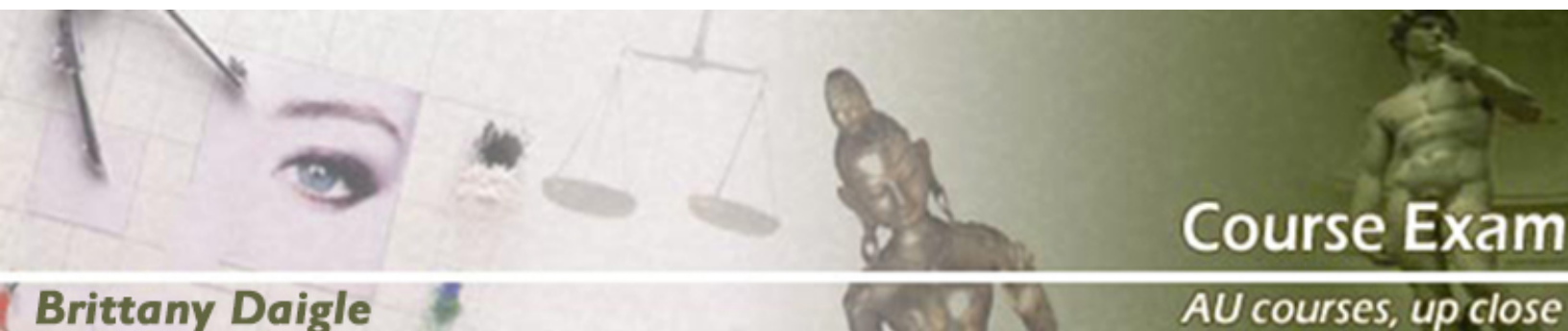
For this reason I've created a set of prompts for your next creative writing project. Some of these have been tested, others are waiting for you to test them. One of creativity's best friends is chance, and you've probably been amazed at the ideas that appear to come out of nowhere but that were in fact prompted by an unusual event; I'm going to try to simulate that process by presenting you with bits of hypothetical weirdness.

Both Rilke and Louis L'Amour agreed that the best advice for a writer was simply to get to work. No time is wasted! The notes you scribble down today and reject may emerge five years down the road to inspire the next hit movie or top forty song. So pick one of these and get cracking.

1. If you keep a journal (almost a necessity for a creative person) you can do the "lucky dip:" close your eyes, open it to any page, and put your finger down. The phrase you land on will be the opening line of a new work. (This tip was given to Judy Collins, who used it to write the song "My Grandmother's House.")
2. Write something based on a typical daily news consumption, that is, a headline, story capsule, a bit of investigation, some expert analysis, and then before you hear the end of one story you move on to another news cycle. Repeat until a story emerges, and phrase the ending as a headline.
3. Open Google Scholar and type in "psychopath." Pick a number from one to seven and count that many items down. Open the research, read it, and base a piece of writing on it.
4. Find a child under the age of five and ask them what makes them angriest, then imagine that happening to an adult and how they would react if that thing happened.
5. Find a homeless person and offer them five dollars if they tell you what they plan to do with the money. Then follow them in your mind.
6. Remember an incident from your life that still haunts you. Write it up but change the gender and ethnicity of each character and completely change the setting.

7. Write an angry letter to someone you despise. Let it all out, but don't name them and don't sign it. Now imagine what would happen if this letter made its way accidentally into a police detective's office during a criminal investigation.
8. Write about what would have to have happened for you to have avoided the biggest mistake of your life.
9. Your main squeeze is trying to break up with you, but there's a lot of noise in the bar. They say, "It's not working," but you think they said, "Let's start twerking," and you do. What's next?
10. Think about writing ruining your life, and then try to imagine how that might happen.

Wanda also writes the blog *The Mindful Bard: The Care and Feeding of the Creative Self*.



Brittany Daigle

Course Exam

EDUC 210 (The Canadian Training System)

Course Exam

AU courses, up close

Brittany Daigle

EDUC 210 (The Canadian Training System) is a three-credit, junior-level introduction to the Canadian labour-market training system. Labour-market training comprises policies, programs, and activities intended to result in an adequate number of appropriately trained workers. In Canada, the labour-market training system has four main components: postsecondary education, government labour-market policy, employer workplace training, and community education. There are no prerequisites for this course and it has a Challenge for Credit option if students are interested.

The Canadian Training System is made up of six units, which include three telephone quizzes worth ten percent each, two written assignments weighing twenty-five percent each, and a final examination worth twenty percent. This course covers several interesting topics surrounding the Canadian labour-market training system, such as an introduction to Canada's Training System, Postsecondary Education and Apprenticeship Training, Labour-Market Training Policy in Canada, Workplace Training and Learning, and Community-Based Education and Training for Teaching and Learning. To pass the course, students must have an overall grade of at least fifty percent and a grade of at least fifty percent on the final exam. The final examination for this course must be taken online with an Athabasca University-approved exam invigilator at an approved invigilation center.

The writer of EDUC 210, Dr. Bob Barnetson, has been with Athabasca University for fifteen years (he started tutoring in 2004 and became a professor in 2011). He coordinates IDRL 309/LGST 310 (Human Rights, the Charter and Labour Relations), ORGB 386/HRMT 386 (Introduction to Human Resource Management), HRMT 316/EDUC 316 (Program Planning and Methods in Adult Learning), HRMT 406/EDUC 406 (Work and Learning), and EDUC 318.

The course co-ordinator, Dr. Ingo Schmidt, started as an academic coordinator for the labour studies program in 2007. He coordinates [HIST 336](#) (History of Canadian Labour), [IDRL 496](#) (Comparative Labour Education), [LBST 200/LBST 202](#) (Introduction to Labour Studies), [LBST 330](#) (Workers and the Economy), [LBST 332](#) (Women and Unions), [LBST 335](#) (Global Labour History), [SOCI 321](#) (Sociology of Work and Industry in Canada), [MAIS 514](#) (Theory and Practice of Trade Unions), and [MAIS 650](#) (Canadian and International Labour Education).

For this interview, both Dr. Barnettson and Dr. Schmidt have collaborated on their responses.

Dr. Barnettson “is a professor of labour relations at Athabasca University. His main area of research is the political economy of employment, with specific interests in workplace injury and child farm and migrant workers. He lives in Edmonton and his most recent book is Canada’s Labour Market Training System (which is the course textbook).”

Dr. Schmidt says that he is an “assistant professor of labour studies at Athabasca University. I guess I’m an activist-academic, meaning that I am a long-term activist in labour and international solidarity movements but have also done academic work on unions. I got my Masters and PhD degrees in economics in Germany, worked as staff economist with the metal workers union IG Metall before moving to Canada in 2005 where I had my first job at the econ-department at UNBC in Prince George.”

In describing the course, they note that “There is often talk about shortages of skilled workers and how Canada does a poor job of training new workers. The course interrogates this critique and examines post-secondary education and apprenticeships, labour-market and immigration policy, workplace training and community-based education. At the end, students have a good understanding of not just how the labour-market training system operates, but why it operates that way.”

They also provide some insight into the structure of the course, stating “The course includes three telephone quizzes. Students know the list of questions that can be asked during the quiz ahead of time. The course also includes two short essay assignments and a final exam.”

As for what type of work ethic student will have to have to be successful in this course, they explain “This is an introductory course so it is not particularly difficult. The course slowly introduces students to the information and skills they need to master to complete the assignments. The course does require students take an active role in their learning (it is not just reading and remembering).” They provide some advice as well, “Develop a plan about how you will complete the course with clear deadlines. This will ensure you remain on track as you work through the materials.”

When I asked Dr. Barnettson and Dr. Schmidt what they believe students will take away from EDUC 210, they explain “This course provides the big picture of labour-market training in Canada. At the end, students will have a sense of both how Canada’s labour market system operates and why it operates that way. More specifically, they will understand labour-market training not just as a technical undertaking but as a political arena where different groups (e.g., workers, employers, governments, training providers) seek to advance their own interests.”

As for which aspects of the course do students find most difficult and struggle with most, they state “The course is new so that is hard to say. I suspect that most challenging part for students is grappling with the idea that education is a political activity, rather than a neutral one. For example, there is often a hidden curriculum in training. A hidden curriculum is not a secret curriculum, but rather is a set of expectations and norms that are so taken for granted that they become invisible. For example, the K-12 system teaches us to show up on time and do what we

are told through a system of rules, rewards, and punishments. Most people internalize these rules and carry them with them into their jobs. This process of acculturation benefits employers, who desire reliable and compliant workers. Yet we almost never talk about this process or who it benefits.”

Whether EDUC 210 is a degree or program requirement of yours, or the topics that were discussed above are of interest to you, this course will have you learning interesting material surrounding the Canadian labour-market training system.

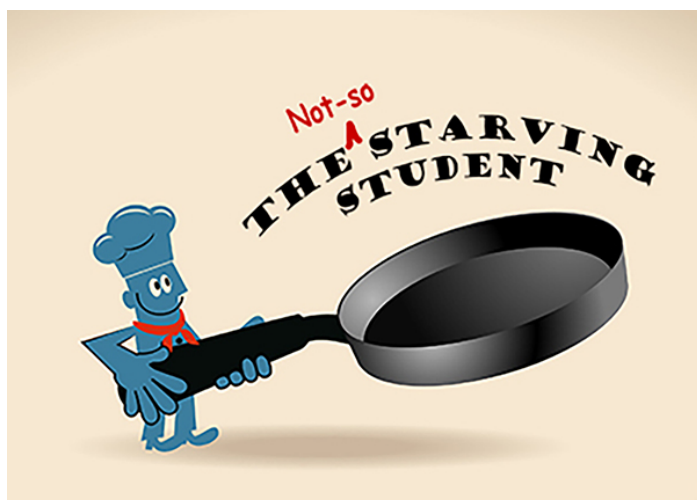
Brittany Daigle is 22 years old and completing her BSc in Computing Science & Information Systems with AU from Toronto, Ontario.



The Not-So Starving Student

How to Hide Ingredients in Your Food

Xin Xu



Hiding ingredients are a means for many parents to sneak nutrients into their children's meals. We may be unaware of the additional zucchini that was added to our carrot muffins or the bananas that were slipped into our afternoon smoothie. Now, speaking as an adult, I never fully appreciated what the ingenuity that came up with hiding nutrients in our everyday meals did for my health and wellbeing.

In fact, whether you're an AU student living independently or with a family, there is room for adding nutrients into our meals. Sometimes, our taste buds may disfavor a particular food item. For example, my mother has a firm

disdain for eggplants. The combination of the texture and the bitter taste has caused her to avoid this vegetable completely. However, when I had the opportunity to prepare a meal for her, I would add the eggplant to burger patties and meatballs. In the end, she could not taste the egg plant at all! These tricks have been helpful not only for my family, but for myself as well. Here's a few tips students can use to help sneak some valuable nutrients into our meals in non-traditional ways.

Blend it

Since investing in a single-serve blender last year, I have been using the blender to hide a variety of ingredients I normally dislike. After realizing my iron-deficient status, I forced myself to eat a variety of iron-rich veggies such as kale and spinach. One of the ways this was accomplished was by blending spinach into my breakfast smoothies and pancakes.





Substitute it

As a frequent baker, I enjoy following traditional recipes with my own improvisations. For example, replacing traditional recipes made of enriched white flour with oatmeal. This substitution not only increases fibre content but tastes delicious as well.

Stir it

Stir fries present a unique way to flavor and hide non-traditional ingredients. For example, this stir-fried tofu allowed me to add unconventional daikon vegetable to the dish. Having avoided daikon since moving out of my family's home, I finally embraced the nutrients this vegetable had to offer by stir frying it with mushrooms and tofu.



Top it

To sneak nutrients into your dessert or dairy products, try adding toppings such as nuts and seeds to add an extra serving of fibre with very little change to the overall taste. Sometimes, you may not even notice the difference. For myself, I like adding crushed brazil nuts into my yogurt for additional protein and fibre content. For many athletes, protein powder can be another option as well.

Puree it

While recovering from my wisdom tooth removal surgery, I feasted on a week's worth of purees. The texture was suitable for my recovery process and many pureed veggies were hidden in the puree that helped me obtain the necessary nutrients while being unable to chew. For those without chewing problems as I had, purees can also be an excellent dip for snacks. Imagine guacamole and its ability to provide healthy fats and vitamins without compromising the taste!

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



Porkpie Hat On Making a Living

Darjeeling Jones



Ah, human nature, you ungrateful thing—forever longing for what you don't have, perpetually failing to enjoy what you do. Too many of us live our lives like contrary children, not wanting to go to bed when we have to, not wanting to get out of bed when we need to. This point has been brought home to me time and again this season. I have to confess, it's been one long fucking winter for me. Not because of the seemingly endless string of abnormally cold days, but because of the seemingly endless griping and whingeing about the abnormally cold weather. Yes, it is cold. Please get over it.

Better still, get out into it. It's winter of unearthly beauty out there, a glittering world of crystal skies and crushed diamond fog. Here in Winnipeg, the frozen Red River is a wonder to behold, a skating rink miles and miles long, lined on the sides by

whimsical, architecturally designed warming huts. At night, you can stop and warm your hands and feet at a bonfire and gaze up at all the winter stars and planets glowing like coins of radium in the boreal heavens. An added Winnipeg bonus: strategize getting out there in the middle of a work day ('cough, cough') and you can have the entire river pretty much to yourself, the only human sounds being the distant rumbles of trains and traffic, and the swish of your skates carving the ice.

Not to worry, though, if the thought of being in the outdoors at minus forty puts a frozen scream upon your face. In the winter, being indoors also takes on a resonant, tranquil stillness. And, unlike the summer months, you don't have to feel at all guilty about not getting outside and enjoying the weather. What a blissful time this has been for me this past week alone. Empty winter days and long winter evenings spent in the kitchen, Sibelius and Coltrane playing on the stereo, a glass of brandy close at hand, surrounded by the smells of roasting chicken, garlic, and butternut squash, listening to the banshee howling of the winds, and watching the swirling, drifting snow make its spectral progress across the buried lawn. Late at night, reading an old Clive Barker novel in the soft light of a reading lamp, it's possible to imagine you are a thousand miles away, a hermit living in a cabin in the middle of an ancient forest. In these days of screaming overstimulation, it feels like a decadent luxury to be quiet and alone.

In just a few short months—beset by plagues of mosquitoes, horseflies, canker worms, and other assorted varieties of summer's pestilential abundance—folks across Canada will be moaning and bleating about the humidity, burns, bites, and rashes that nature sets upon us. We will complain about our favorite sanctuaries of solitude within the city being overrun by tourists and bemoan that the beaches near the cabin are so crowded there's no room to lie down. At night, we will crank the air conditioning to maximum, and fall asleep dreaming wistful ice age dreams—human nature being what it is.



Fly on the Wall

Springing into Potential Growth

Jason Sullivan



New Light for our AU Spirits

Let there be light, spring seems to say! More light, spring light, the light of the dawning of the furtherance of our higher education! Okay, ahem, please excuse this lofty language but doesn't the oncoming reality of spring make any potential seem more plausible? This time of year, the subliminal becomes liminal in the light of day; likewise, dreams morph into reality when we activate our creative urges. Spring brings forth boundless possibilities for we denizens of AU, bunkered in our study corners all winter. But you don't

have to take my exuberant word for it. Alfred Lord Tennyson spoke precisely of this fecund landscape in his famous poem *Locksley Hall* "in Spring, when a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love" anything seems possible (Tennyson, online). And I do mean anything. Here at AU we can re-align affection for our coursework as the season of sunlight draws its face to the surface of our academic being. March can live up to its name as we march forward with a song of academic success in our heart.

Even as winter may fail to wane in terms of weather, the days are indubitably getting longer. March allows us to stretch out, branch forth, and happily embrace our AU studies with renewed vigour. If spring hasn't arrived literally, it's on its way and already present in the spirit of our anticipation. Just knowing that study breaks can soon be out of doors amidst sunny warmth is enough to make this *Fly on the Wall* study a little harder in the meantime.

With the snow gusting its final gasps and the cold gnawing its penultimate gnaws, we may, in poetic fashion, find ourselves embodying the protagonist of Tennyson's classic phrase. Turning to love can mean turning to the things we love to do and asking a timeless question: what drives us toward the desire to acquire? We can each in our way find ourselves turning to love and not least of which love of our coursework! Being AU students with (hopefully!) a certain heartfelt adoration for our subject matter the spirit of spring can aid our success.

Wellsprings of Desire; Many Beams of Sunlight on the Mind

If our fancies turn to love, or at least to the idea of scholarly devotion, the nature of desire itself is implicated. So here's the thing; as desire is a subject that underpins every act in some way or another (either by moving us toward or away from some stimuli). so too does the desire for truth and finality animate visions of clairvoyance that dance in our minds. As such, longing and desire are fertile terrain for philosophical inquiry. Perhaps the springtime of our spirit personifies awareness of the possibility and inevitability of not only spring but, more essentially, the wellspring of our creative potential.

Speaking philosophically, spring has to be the most ontologically promiscuous of seasons. The nature of its being (its ontology) parallels the mysterious whims of nature itself; exigences of geography and climate make it hard to say what the month of March will bring. In like a lion and out like a lamb? Maybe, but who's to say? And, anyway, being like something is different than

being that thing itself; that's the nature of an ontological concern. Speaking literally, I can attest that lambs grow into ornery rams in a matter of weeks whereas kitties with lion-like physiognomies and prideful affectations remain cute for a decade at least. At least! Likewise, an adorable, charming, and fun-loving elective course might turn into a snarling beast of a struggle for survival when the syllabus veers into unfamiliar and daunting terrain and drags you and your time along with it.

March, then, can be many things to many people in many places. Yet, in the certain realm of calendars, one thing is for sure: March means spring is on its way. The month personifies a gestation process followed by a partition beyond which spring has, well, sprung. As students who may falter or founder by the end of a long, dark, winter of studies, spring provides a springboard from which to leap into joyous discovery. Archimedes, in ancient Greece, personified the ecstasy of this sort of eureka moment: upon descending into a bathtub of water he realized the mathematical concept of displacement (Mahmood, online). His exit could not have been quicker; Archimedes sprang to his feet and proceeded to race naked through the streets shouting "eureka!" Eureka literally means "I've found it" and as such symbolizes our perpetual drive to acquire new knowledge in our studies; this deep curious need may propel our AU studies as much or more than any economic concerns (Mahmood, online).

March Mysteries Revealed Everywhere

March is far from a season for streaking, references to the movie *Old School* aside, yet clothing and academic inhibitions may appear diminished as the climate warms. Most importantly for our frazzled scholarly minds, fresh sunlight sets our brain cells aquiver. And that charge of new energy can only help our AU success.

March is also a magical time in terms of anticipation; anything seems possible as the sun shines and the earth thaws. It's common knowledge that vitamin D improves mood; at the cognitive level, though, spring seems to provide an existential boost to our very being. Why *do* birds suddenly appear? In spring we may ask this free of cynicism. Presumably we are prone to notice birds on a happy spring day. But wait, why ask why? Spring bursts with a panoply of questions tendered and perhaps a greater comfort with creative flexibility.

In terms of growth and reproduction, spring embodies desire itself rather than the object of desire per se. This includes our personal academic missions. When all the world seems to be smiling we can achieve more clarity about what we want out of life. We can get to the core of the

AU-thentic Events Upcoming AU Related Events

Research Webinar Series:

Learning Analytics: Exploring the Knowledge Boundary

Thurs, Mar 14, 2019, 10:00 to 11:00 am MDT
Online

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No pre-registration necessary

AUSU Council Meeting

Thurs, Mar 14, 6:30 to 8:00 pm MDT
Online

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www.ausu.org/event/march-council-meeting-tentative/

No pre-registration required; e-mail governance@ausu.org for meeting package

Bannock and a Movie "The Crescent Lake Metis: Our Life on the Road Allowance"

Fri, Mar 15, 12:00 to 1:00 pm MDT
Athabasca University, Peace Hills Trust
Tower, 12th floor, Room 1222,
10011 - 109 Street, Edmonton AB

In-person; limited seating

Hosted by Nuksahtowin, AU Centre for World Indigenous Knowledge and Research
indigenous.athabascau.ca/documentation/The_Crescent_Lake_Metis.pdf

Register by phone (780)428-2064 or e-mail ivy@athabascau.ca

All events are free unless otherwise specified

truth of our being. Desire for truth may be akin to desire for cosmic or carnal union with others; spring reminds us that there's things out there made fantastically beautiful by changing seasons. Spring thus brings brightness to nature and also congeals the truths to our lives.

Jacques Derrida, ever-pleased to provide connective tissue between multiple interpretations of a given reality, noted that truth unfolds for us as we seek and learn it for ourselves. "Truth-separated from knowledge-is constantly determined as revelation, nonveiling, that is, necessarily, as presence, the presentation of the present" (Derrida, 11). Each living moment, then, contains the possible desire for, and pursuit of, truth. Our learning fertilizes us as we grow. So, what could bring us out of our comfortable shells and toward the mystery and ecstasy of learning new truths? The onset of spring, of course. Redolent of mythology and science (themselves each steeped in the necessity of rebirth) spring can appear as a rejuvenation of our desire to better ourselves through education. Each day of longer light illuminates the shining path of our studies to the extent that we soak up some rays. Next week we'll dig deeper into the loam of spring and find ourselves as an embodiment of that most intellectually fertile of seasons.

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



A Dozen Reasons why Traveling is the Best Education

Tara Panrucker



There are several methods to acquiring a post-secondary education throughout a lifetime, in addition to traditional college and university routes. For one, we are blessed to have the option of online education from Athabasca University and numerous other educational institutions that enable us to read and learn from the comfort of our own homes. For the explorers, there is the liberal education of travel. Traveling the world is arguably the most enjoyable and mind-broadening schooling available to those lucky enough to afford the ride (or creative enough to find an affordable means no matter what).

Travel gives us the chance to rapidly learn skills and absorb information we cannot in front of our lap tops. Learning how to organize a travel itinerary on the fly or speak five different languages from home is not the same as doing it

while exploring another country.

1. Living in a different culture gives you first-hand experience of how others on the planet spend their day: unique mealtimes, religious rituals, and much more. Diving in and developing personal understanding of the history, social habits, and motivations and perceptions of another culture provides incredible insights.
2. You'll discover how people are portrayed in the news and in the movies greatly contrasts with how they are in real life. Travel opens your mind to the similarities and differences of people in other countries that you may never comprehend otherwise.
3. If you believe you have a certain 'type' of person you like, from girlfriend to study mates, think again. You may find yourself drawn to people of diverse backgrounds and cultures while traveling who enrich your life in ways you never imagined.
4. Travel imparts life skills, such as independence and patience, under all kinds of circumstances, from delayed flights to rioting locals. You become your own boss and must book accommodations and decide how to fill each day. Indeed, if you're shy now, chances are you won't be after traveling.
5. The science of nature, climate change, and animals becomes much sharper when you explore new regions of the world.
6. You'll discover exotic new foods and flavours, as well as cooking techniques you can take with you.
7. Reading about historical buildings and landmarks is one thing; touring outside and inside of them provides an astounding new understanding of the past.
8. Viewing beautiful works of art in a book or magazine is inspiring. Seeing them in brilliant detail before you—there are no words.
9. Absorbing a new language is much faster when you can practice it daily with the locals.
10. Travel plucks you out of your comfort zone and drops you straight into chaos, the unexpected, and unfamiliar. Your deepest held beliefs and attitudes will be challenged. Amazing adventures and spontaneous experiences await which you're likely to remember the rest of your life.
11. Connecting with other travellers can lead to new career breaks down the road, unlikely sitting in a classroom.
12. If you genuinely want to get to know your friends and family, you undoubtedly will under the pressures and challenges of travel. Plus, people tend to talk openly in surprising new ways while away from home.

Whereas a traditional education can turn into a new career, a travel education can also broaden the mind, feed the soul, and lead to new relationships and connections with people of diverse backgrounds. Travel further nourishes the senses and trains you how to survive wherever you find yourself. In the words of Saint Augustine: *"The world is a book, and those who do not travel read only a page."* A trip abroad can inspire a new way of living in the world that staying where you are cannot.

Education is certainly not confined to a classroom or online setting. Besides, traveling develops emotional and intellectual intelligence. Travel and education genuinely go hand and hand. Combine them both and you're unstoppable because a curious mind contains no borders.

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



Seven Reasons Why AU Students Should Get a Dog

Francesca Carone



The domestic dog is a member of the genus *Canis* (canine). They have been bred through hundreds of years from a type of wolf, extinct today, to become the friendly, loyal companions we now know. The dog was one of the first species to be domesticated and selectively bred for various behaviors and physical attributes. The most loyal pet you can have, each dog is unique and they come in many sizes, personalities, and colours. For example, if you are allergic to dogs, you can get a poodle or another hypoallergenic breed which rarely sheds. Taking care of dogs can be challenging without some experience, but learning is easy. They have enriched people's lives by providing friendship, love, companionship, and exercise. Here are some reasons why you should consider getting a dog as a pet even while attending school:

They are pretty independent

Dogs can be left alone outside for small period of time, tied up, and will enjoy the fresh air. If you must be away for only a day or two, you can leave them at home; but just make sure you leave out enough food, water, and training pads. They can be boarded for longer periods of time. Getting a short haired-breed would be preferable for those with less time on their hands. As a distance student, this is not usually a problem, but it is nice to have somewhat independent animals because most of our lives are pretty busy.

They help people feel better

If you are sad, upset, lonely, or angry, dogs can help you feel better. They don't ask for much in return and their love is unconditional. Dogs are known to be soothing and therapeutic and can also relieve boredom or help you study by alleviating stress. Exam stress can be difficult for many students. Take time away from studying to relax with your dog.

They help get you to exercise

If you have a dog, you need to walk it. That means you have to walk as well. If you already go for walks, a dog would be a good companion. The bigger the dog though, the more you need to walk it. For a miniature breed, around the block would probably be enough, three times a day. If you want to get in shape, get a larger dog and go for longer walks. We all know we spend way too much time online, and with most of our schoolwork being online, it can be difficult to get enough exercise everyday.

They can teach kids responsibility

If you have children or plan to have some, dogs can help teach them about responsibility. They can help in discipline, cleaning up after them, and feeding them. These duties help to teach children good workmanship and responsibility.

They are lots of fun

Dogs can make you laugh. They get into things and can be comical to watch at times. They can play fetch with you or play hide-and-seek. They can even be taught to clean up their own toys.

As students, a lot of our time is spent doing serious things, having fun with your pet can reduce stress and keep you happier and healthier.

They can help make friends

Meeting other people with dogs on a walk is a quick way to make new friends. Conversations are easier and shy people can find a way to socialize with others while taking their dog out.

They are loyal companions

A dog doesn't care what you look like or how much money you make. A dog cares about you, and they are a good friend. They are loyal and kind. They also have been known to save human's lives at times.

So, if you are thinking about getting a dog or puppy, make sure you do a little research on what breed would be best for you. Some dogs require more grooming, walking, or attention. Some breeds work well with families, and others, not so much. During puppyhood, all breeds require basic training, walks, and attention. One thing is for sure, they will enrich your life in the long run.

Francesca is an AU student living in Nova Scotia, who enjoys animals, kids, and nature.



Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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



AthaU Facebook Group

Veronica experiences difficulty accessing journal articles through the AU library; troubleshooting tips include clearing cache/cookies or switching browsers. Alicia wonders if an essay word count limit includes the works cited page; the consensus says no, but always wise to check with the person who will be marking it.

Other posts include informal course extensions, cheezies, DegreeWorks, and courses ARHI 201, BIOL 230, PSYC 315, and SOCI 365.

Twitter

@austudentsunion tweets: "It's tax season! Don't forget you may be able to claim tuition and loan interest on your income tax. Find out more at <https://bit.ly/2UbO0w8>."

@AthabascaUBiz tweets: "Deadline Alert! MBA application deadline is March 15 - now's the time to polish those resumes and write those essays and apply today! <https://bit.ly/2EBAX1K> #OnlineEd #CDNPSE."

Youtube

Need some motivation to get through the final credits of your degree by April 30? Get pumped for convocation by watching AU's 2018 Convocation - Day 1 or Day 2.

The Study Dude Waste Time the Smart Way

Marie Well



What time wasters haunt you?

I waste an hour every morning reading health articles. But I convince myself that, when I turn 70, I'll write the MCAT and enter an undergraduate program in medical science education. I could become a doctor by the time I turn 80. So, for the past two days, I've poured over admissions requirements for the MD program. *Cough!*

I also tell myself studying for the MCAT prevents Alzheimer's. Plus, I'd gain knowledge to report to my angels when I enter heaven. Angels love to hear about the knowledge we've gained while on Earth, according to near death experience accounts. *Double cough!*

But realistically, I need to earn an income. Pay down debt. Keep a roof over my head. Eat groceries. You know, live the dream. So, I need focus, not time wasters. "Time wasters enter your life every day" (page 156 of 270, 56&).

So, ask yourself, "if things were perfect, what time wasters would disappear? Then set about making the changes necessary to make them disappear" (p. 157 of 270, 57%). I'd slash off an hour of sleep (nine instead of ten), cut out Amazon Prime health documentaries, stop reading so many health articles, and put aside studying for the MCAT.

But I'm keeping my gym-time. Non-negotiable. Life is too short to miss the highs of the gym. What hobby of yours can you not live without? Yes, be choosy with your time.

One way to overcome time wasters involves crafting a routine. Make a to-do list: "add anything necessary and identify one or two things that are priorities, things that you must do today" (p. 176 of 270, 64%). Whenever I map out to-do lists, my productivity soars. I get all my gym-time, cleaning, work, and training tutorials done early. And I end up with time for reading health articles. But as soon as I shift away from my to-do list, my productivity plunges.

Schedule even time wasters on your to-do list: each day "do something nice for yourself Take care of yourself" (p. 176 of 270, 64%). I love to sweat in the gym, hop in the steam, shower in ice cold water, and eat a high fiber breakfast. What nice thing can you offer yourself? Read a book? Do a sport? Watch a health documentary? Just make sure your nice things don't swallow your day.

Instead of wasting time, "focus on a habit change" (p. 176 of 270, 64%). My dream is to make documentary films. So, I started learning Adobe After Effects at least two hours a day. What habits would you like to create? Gym-time? Healthy eating? Skills-development? Let your dreams forge your habits.

Lastly, "do daily duties" (p. 176 of 270, 64%). On my to-do lists, I schedule duties like cleaning, learning, working, and, of course, exercising. Slot your schedule on a phone app. And make sure to add time for breaks, lunch, sleep, and, best of all, fun.

So, waste time the smart way. Choose careers, hobbies—and time wasters—that lead to dreams but pay the bills.



The Fit Student

Marie Well

How to Heal a Heart Attack on your Birthday



water.

One year, Mom didn't write to wish me a happy birthday. We weren't getting along and often clashed. The next day, I found out she had a minor heart attack on my birthday. I felt responsible and saddened. "The current odds when it comes to your health are that you will die from the effects of one of the following common but often preventable conditions—heart disease, stroke, diabetes, or cancer" (Hahn, location 113 of 4072, 3%).

And Mom is in her 70s now, possibly prone to diabetes due to obesity. "The odds also predict that one in very three children born in America will develop diabetes during their lifetime, that two-thirds of American adults will be overweight, and that one-half of those people will be overweight to the point of being obese" (Hahn, location 113 of 4072, 3%). But I take comfort that Mom spends her springs and summers gardening. She touches the soil, gaining microbes to bolster her immunity. She eats fresh garden-grown veggies. Plus, she cooks meals from scratch, sometimes in the kitchen for two hours straight. And she filters her

Not only did Mom garden, but, for a while, she farmed chickens for their eggs. I saw a documentary on confined animal feeding operations, and Mom's chickens would've ranked in the top 1% of humanely raised animals. During the day, they roamed freely on her seven acres of land. Plus, Mom planted all kinds of trees with berries for her birds to eat. Mom even had a chicken with a disability that she fed extra treats—sometimes cake. So, Mom's happy chickens likely laid healthy eggs.

"We optimize our chances of being healthy and staying well by eating right, by exercising regularly, by not smoking, and by avoiding excessive alcohol use" (Hahn, location 125 of 4072, 3%).

But what if we don't take care of ourselves and have a heart attack? Of what if we do take care of ourselves but get a burst brain tumor anyway? Well, no amount of gardening or humanely grown eggs can save us in those crucial next moments. But the doctor might.

After all, "We must take advantage of the miracles available today through modern preventive medical care" (Hahn, location 125 of 4072, 3%).

There are telltale signs indicating you need to see a doctor: "As part of their medical education, doctors are taught that there are certain classic symptoms that, until proven otherwise, are the first signs of a serious medical condition that requires urgent or even emergency treatment" (Hahn, location 141 of 4072, 3%). For instance, "chest pain is one of the most important issues in all of medicine. Chest pain is the most common symptom of a heart attack or a signal that you are about to have a heart attack, and heart attacks and heart disease are the number one killers in America" (Hahn, location 1022 of 4072, 25%).

Aside from telltale signs of emergencies, there are rules that scream, “Go see a doctor!” These self-explanatory rules are as follows:

- “New Symptom Rule”
- “Previously Unexplained Symptom Rule”
- “Rapidly Changing Symptom Rule”
- “Changing Skin and Bones Rule”
- “Loss of Ability to Function Rule”
- “Trust Your Instincts Rule” (Hahn, location 340 of 4072, 8%).

If any of these rules apply, seek medical advice. After all, through “getting care when necessary, taking advantage of the full benefits of modern preventive care, and most importantly, eating well and exercising, every person can maximize the odds that they will live a long, healthy, and happy life” (Hahn, location 156 of 4072, 4%).

Mom is entering her twilight years. The next birthday she doesn’t write, I’ll think back to the cake she fed her chicken with a disability. But for now, we barely ever speak.

References

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Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: BeArt-Presets Academic Scholarship Program

Sponsored by: BeArt-Presets

Deadline: April 1, 2019

Potential payout: \$2500 USD

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be students at the undergraduate, graduate, or senior high school level.

What's required: An online application form, including a maximum 700-word essay describing how winning this award will help you achieve your education and career goals.

Tips: Read the application requirements carefully.

Where to get info: www.beart-presets.com/beart-scholarship-program





Dear
Barb

Barbara Godin

Budgeting

Dear Barb:

I am in my first year of university, while also taking a course from AU each semester. I'm anxious to get through school and begin working on my career. Being a student, obviously I don't have a lot of money and I'm having a hard time budgeting. I get some grant money and loans, plus I work part time and my parents help. Because of my heavy course load, I can't work very many hours. The problem is I am almost finished my first year and I have more debt than I expected to have, and if I accumulate this much debt every year I'm going to be drowning by the time I graduate, especially with the changes to OSAP brought in by Doug Ford. I need to find a way to budget more efficiently, do you have any suggestions?

Thanks, Tara.

Hey Tara:

Thanks for writing, I'm sure many students are struggling with similar financial issues, and Doug Ford did not make things any better by eliminating the interest free grace period on student loans. There are many things you can do to budget your money in a way that would leave you with the minimum amount of debt possible when you graduate. However, you will have to become very disciplined and follow a budget,

which means you need to keep track of where your money is going and where you can cut back. Spend a month tracking all your expenses and then you will have an idea of how much money you need. You didn't mention whether you live at home or in an apartment or residence. Each will change your monthly expenses. The Government of Canada provides [a worksheet to help students budget](#) their money. I would suggest you print it out, it's a great starting point.

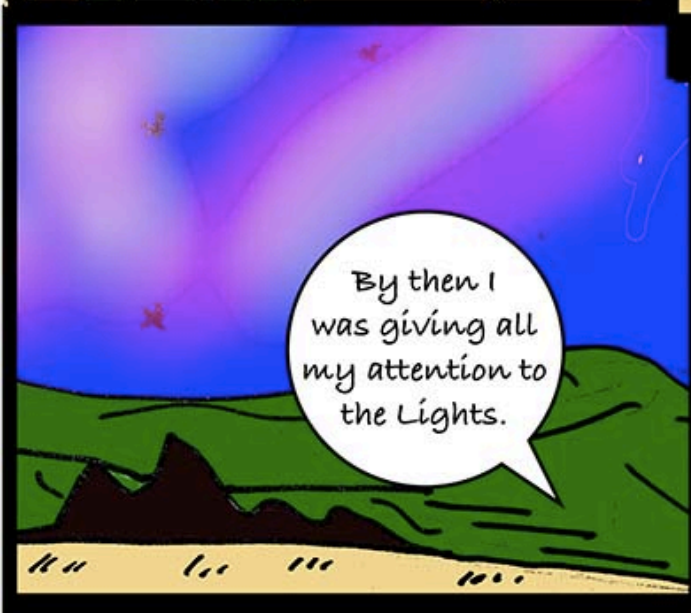
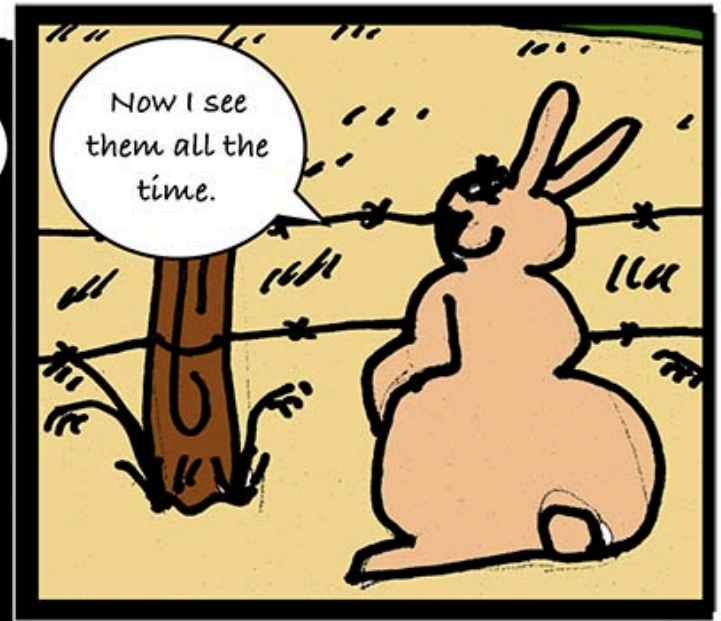
Also, there are several things you can do, and avoid doing, that will stretch your student dollar. For example, find a part time job. You may think you can't, but working a few hours a day or on the weekends, will provide you with extra money, plus you won't be out socializing, so you will be spending less money. Also avoid credit cards. They may seem like the answer to your money problem, but in reality they are only going to add more monthly debt, as getting one means you now have a credit card payment. Apply for all the scholarships and bursaries that you can. Even the smallest amount will help. Books are an enormous expense for students, and, when possible, buy used. Often bookstores will have a limited number of used books, but you have to get them early, as they will go quickly. Most importantly follow your budget and include money for entertainment, as you are going to want to go out with your friends. Hope this information is helpful Tara and good luck in the future.

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
The Northern Lights

Wanda Waterman





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STUDENTS' UNION

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IMPORTANT DATES

- **Mar 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Apr 1](#)
- **Mar 14:** [AUSU Council Meeting](#)
- **Mar 15:** [April degree requirements deadline](#)
- **Mar 29:** [Deadline to apply for course extension for May](#)
- **Apr 10:** [AUSU Council Meeting](#)
- **Apr 15:** [May degree requirements deadline](#)
- **Apr 30:** [Deadline to apply for course extension for June](#)

Executive Council Election Results

AUSU just held it's annual Executive Council Election, in accordance with [policy 3.02](#). Although the entire student council is elected by the general student membership, the executive positions are elected internally from among the elected councillors.

We are pleased to announce that our existing executives will be continuing in their roles for another year. This is a great benefit to AUSU, for numerous reasons:

- The current executive team has been a great asset to AUSU, holds over 20+ seats on AU boards & committees, and has accomplished a lot for AUSU over the past year.
- Having executives on for more than one year helps them plan for the future of AUSU with a full picture perspective of the roles of executive.
- Having some consistency with the executive team helps foster the connections AUSU has made with the University, as well as with provincial and national stakeholders and advocacy groups.

Your new and returning executive team is:

President	Brandon Simmons
VP External & Student Affairs:	Melinda Goertz
VP Finance & Administration	Natasha Donahue

We are looking forward to another great year with a fantastic [council](#) and executive team!



Help us name our new Podcast!

We are ready to launch our NEW podcast! It will be an ongoing series with podcast episodes on a variety of topics for AU students, such as interviews, info on resources, navigating AU policies, tips for online students, current events, and more!

You can listen to the first episode online [here](#). Many more to come soon!

The only thing the podcast series is missing is a NAME! While each episode will have a different topic, we need a name for the series.

We narrowed it down to three options (listed below), but **[now we need YOUR vote!](#)**

- **AUSU Mic Drop**
- **AUSU Open Mic**
- **AUSU & You**

Take our poll on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#) to help us choose a name!



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THE VOICE

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Publisher	Athabasca University Students' Union
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www.voicemagazine.org

The Voice is published almost every Friday in HTML and PDF format.

Contact *The Voice* at voice@voicemagazine.org.

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ISSN 2561-3634