



THE VOICE

Vol 27 Issue 22 2019-05-31

Minds We Meet

Interviewing Students Like You!

The Hike of Our Lives

Convocation as the Peak of a Mountain

Porkpie Hat

Human Resources Wants Your Soul

Plus:

*The (Marginal) Joys Of Marginalization
SSR: Road Trip Food Financials
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

Where There's Smoke

Karl Low



Just a few minutes ago, on Friday, May 31, 2019, Athabasca University posted an announcement about having to move convocation. Because of the wildfire situation at High Level, Alberta, the Athabasca Multiplex, where AU traditionally holds convocation, could be pressed into service as an emergency station for residents in the area. While this might not happen, AU has decided to move Convocation down to the city of Red Deer in central Alberta, rather than risk having to cancel convocation, or, worse, having to deal with evacuating a few hundred graduands from a wildfire.

This is obviously going to cause trouble for those who booked hotel space in the town of Athabasca, and for these people, AU has reserved a block of rooms at the Cambridge Red Deer Hotel. You can [find more information on AU's news Hub](#).

For those who booked their stay in Edmonton, the fuss should be minimal as AU has indicated that Convocation will be happening at the same time, and the busses will still be leaving Edmonton at the same time as before, just now they'll have a different destination.

This isn't ideal, obviously, but no matter how much disruption this causes, I can't fault the university for the decision. I'm down in Calgary and the air is an orange haze (which happens to be headache inducing, as it turns out), so I can only imagine how bad it is much closer to the sources. AUSU's own Services Coordinator, Donette Kingyens has noted that it was dark enough at noon today for the streetlights to be on.

While it may have cleared out in a week, there's no guarantees, and it's entirely possible that things may be even worse, so the change in venue strikes me as simply prudent. That said, I'm exceptionally interested in hearing stories from those who attend convocation this year, whether you had to go as far as adjusting hotels and flights or simply got to check out Convocation in the Red Deer venue. Let me know at voice@voicemagazine.org, and if you think you have it in you to write a full article about the experience (minimum 450 words or so) please do, these are definitely the types of experiences the Voice Magazine seeks to share.

Meanwhile, student and podcaster Katrina Griffiths is the subject of our feature interview this week in the Minds We Meet, the Struggling Student Rants returns with some tips on how to make road trips (such as to Red Deer, perhaps?) a little less expensive, but filled with all the flavors and fun of normal, the Porkpie Hat examines the price demanded by human resources, and the Fly on the Wall continues his look at why AU's convocation ceremonies, in particular, is so important to the student experience at Athabasca University.

Of course, in addition to that, we still have news, events, scholarships, advice, and more.

So if you're like me, and trying to stay inside and out of the smoke as much as possible, you could do worse than flipping through this issue, and enjoying the read!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karl'.

MINDS WE MEET



Katrina Griffiths is a thirty-two-year-old living in Alberta studying toward a Bachelor of Science with plans to eventually go on to do a masters in astrophysics and then a PhD with hopes of teaching or doing research. In her spare time, she enjoys podcasting and writing. This is Kat's story.

Could you tell me a bit about yourself? Who are you, where are you from?

My name is Kat, I am thirty-two years old and I was born and raised in a small town on the border of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. I moved to Edmonton, Alberta six years ago with my partner (he's originally from Alberta) and our cat Pepsi.

Describe the path that led you to AU. What made you decided to go back to university?

When I moved to Alberta I started working in an office as a "for now" thing until I could get the chemistry credits I needed to apply to the University of Alberta. After six years of saying I would go back to school but could not afford it I found AU. As cliché as it sounds, I realized I no longer had any excuses not to go back to school. Instead of getting chemistry credits, I realized I could get a whole degree and work at the same time. I decided to get my Bachelor of Science—to prove to myself that I could—and to be the first person in my family to go to university.

Any advice for anyone who is scared or on the fence about going back to school?

Honestly, just go back to school if you can. Stop worrying and overthinking it and just do it. You only live life once and you don't want to be that person who regrets not going back to school. There are so many amazing funding programs if money is an issue and I guarantee if you reach out to friends for help with time or childcare or something, they will be impressed that you're making that leap so they'll do what they can.

What was it like moving to Alberta? Do you miss the Maritimes?

Moving to Alberta from a small-town was scary even with my partner being from here and knowing his way around. But it was also very exciting, and it was great to have so many more opportunities here. I miss the humidity back in the Maritimes and the lower cost of living, but I love all the different people and cultures here.

What do you like to do when you are not studying?

When I'm not studying, I'm a podcaster and writer. I am part of an all-female Doctor Who podcast called Verity! I also run a solo music podcast called Start the Music! I interview people in the music industry, both artists and the lesser known stars like engineers, tour managers, etc.

What made you want to start a Podcast? Do you want to provide a link?

I'm involved in a few podcasts and I love talking about things that I'm passionate about. It's an opportunity to share a part of myself with a group that has similar interests. My podcast is: stmppodcast.com and my Doctor Who podcast that I cohost with five other amazing women is veritypodcast.com.

If you could interview anyone for your podcast who would it be and why?

Just one person? How could I choose just one? I'm going to go with two people because I cannot pick just one. It would have to be Professor Brian Cox which still fits the music theme since he was in a band in the 90s or Brian May, the guitarist for Queen and an astrophysicist. There are plenty of punk musicians that I love to interview, but I think those two would be game changers.

What are your plans with a Bachelor of Science?

My plans for this education are to keep going. After I get my bachelor's I have my eyes set on getting my masters in astrophysics and then my PhD. After that, it'll most likely be a job in research or teaching, although I am less worried about that for now.

What about astrophysics interests you?

Astrophysics interests me because it is so big and humbling. You're looking at how the universe works, that's the question all the great philosophers and scientists ask and it's on a grand scale in astrophysics and then on a smaller scale in particle physics, which, to me, is like the mini-me of astrophysics.

Who in your life had the greatest influence on your desire to learn?

I have plenty of support to go back to school and to keep up with school from my partner, my friends, and my family. However, one person I look up to and has given me strength to try to reach this dream is Brian May, the lead guitarist from Queen. He took 29 years to finish his thesis and get his PhD in astrophysics. His love for cosmology is contagious. It inspires me to keep working at it no matter the distractions.

Do you like learning online? What do you like and dislike?

So far, I'm enjoying online learning. I love reading and working through projects, being able to work at anytime and anywhere is a big asset. Sometimes I dislike not having lectures and the regular classes every day or having to find supplemental material to help work through a problem.

At what point did you waver the most about continuing your schooling? What caused it and what got you through it?

I wavered the most just before I signed up for my first course. I wondered if it was a mistake, if I was taking too much on. Then I got advanced access to the text and lesson plan and all that doubt went away. I love learning.

What's your most memorable AU course so far, and why?

I'm still new, but ENGL255 is a lot of fun and I'm enjoying all the essays.

Have you given up anything to go to AU? Was it worth it?

I have not had to give anything up to go to AU. Financially I can afford the courses if I take them one at a time and I'm managing my time well, so far.

How do you find communications with your course tutors?

What little I've had to communicate with my tutor, it's been very good.

Do you have any pet peeves?

I don't know if I have a pet peeve, other than maybe rude people.

What famous person, past or present, would you like to have lunch with, and why?

I would love to have lunch with Brian May, if only to pick his brain about his education journey. Brian Cox would definitely be a close second for similar reasons.

Describe the proudest moment in your life.

The proudest moment of my life was an interview I did with one of my favourite TV actors for 400 people.

Describe one thing that distinguishes you from most other people.

One thing that distinguishes me from other people is my time management skills. I never have empty blocks of time that I do not mean to put there.

What (non-AU) book are you reading now?

Right now, I'm reading Carl Sagan's *Cosmos* and loving it. I highly recommend.

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



Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: 2019 Community Volunteer Scholarship

Sponsored by: Dealhack

Deadline: June 30, 2019, midnight PST

Potential payout: \$1500 USD

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be enrolled full-time at a university or college in Canada or the U.S. for the 2019-2020 academic year, be in good standing with their current academic institution, and be involved as a community volunteer.

What's required: An online application form, including reference contact info and answers to five questions about your volunteer activities.

Tips: Check out the [previous winners' page](#) for examples of successful applicants.

Where to get info: dealhack.com/scholarship



Porkpie Hat Human Resources Wants Your Soul

Darjeeling Jones



I sometimes believe that we reach our highest human potential at some time during the earliest years of our childhood. In those early days we are all poets, artists, scientists, fearless explorers, and relentless questers after knowledge. Then, just as we are revelling in the joyousness and sensory overload of sheer existential experience, we find ourselves sitting cross-legged on the mats in Mrs. Urquhart's kindergarten room, or behind the grey desks of Mr. Stredder's second grade classroom, and the process of social indoctrination and creative neutering begins. By the time we get to the end of high school, any potential we may have had for unalloyed wonder and truly original thought has been pretty efficiently sucked out of us by

the long twirlie-straw of societal expectations, and the ominously looming demands of adulthood.

Perhaps some of us have a brief remission during our university years, when we suddenly fall in love with whatever shiny, esoteric forms of thought seduce us. We are dazzled by the sweeping plains and breath-taking vistas of new knowledge we are exposed to. We fall in love with art history or quantum mechanics. We are beguiled by the sweet spell of Bauhaus design, Florentine madrigals, or the byzantine intricacies of cliodynamics.

Ultimately, though, it proves to be a false remission. At some point, our spirits crushed beneath the landslide of student debt, we wake up from the dream and realize that the whole point of university was not to make us wiser in thought and richer in knowledge, but merely to better prepare us to take our proper place amongst the gnashing teeth and grinding gears of the capitalist machine. As John Lennon once wrote, "You think you're so clever and classless and free/ But you're still fucking peasants as far as I can see."

So, those of us who are even lucky enough to have the chance to sell our souls, enter the workforce. Perhaps we find ourselves, for many years, handcrafting espresso-based beverages. Perhaps we find ourselves working in an accountant's office above a sex shop in Soho, laundering money for the Russian mob. Either way, we are at the tender mercies of the Human Resources Department, squirming like some ill-fated songbird being slowly crushed by an iron-fingered, velvet-gloved fist.

Make no mistake, the most important battle in the universe, as far as your soul is concerned, is waged not between Good and Evil, but between Personal Freedom and Human Resources. They are all seeing; they are all knowing. It doesn't matter whether you work for Ikea or the Yakuza, you work for Human Resources. They want to own every atom of your being, and command every precious moment of your time. They do not want you to think for yourself. They do not want you to play. They do not want you to dream. They want you to network and collaborate. They want you to attend corporate team-building exercises during which you will role play,

pretending you are a tree. At some point, you will be encouraged to share your innermost dreams and aspirations with some douchebag named Ron from the Marketing Department.

All may not be completely lost, though. Those of us who have the strongest will to survive with at least a gram's worth of our soul intact may find some small measure of redemption and relief. Perhaps our inspiration and joy has not been absolutely obliterated. Perhaps, every now and then, we find ourselves daring to eat a peach, capable of bending or breaking the rules. We phone in sick on a Thursday, and spend the afternoon wandering through an art gallery, composing ghazals, or doing tequila shooters with our best friend who happens to be a high end, transgender dominatrix, for example. Maybe, just maybe, we hang onto, or reclaim, that tiny spark within us that the world of social regulation has been working so hard to snuff out. That, at any rate, is my dearest hope for you, kind reader.



Fly on the Wall

The Vast Mountains, the Hike of Our Lives

Jason Sullivan



Convocation as the Peak We've been Waiting for

In his award-winning book, *Big Lonely Doug*, Rustad gives eloquent descriptions of the nature of untrammelled forests, never staying far from his central message that the majestic giants of the Pacific coast deserve preserving. Likewise, to explain our studies to others is usually about justifying them in the big picture of our life narrative and personal development. Apparently out of the element of education: a classroom, we're nevertheless the little scholar trees that made good.

We are the ecosystem managers of our own life, so to speak, and attending convocation brings focus to the struggles and triumphs of our AU careers.

What Rustad does, and this resonates with me as an AU student, is glorify a single tree that, as a worker, he'd marked for preservation while much of the surrounding forest was left to be logged. The book's namesake Doug fir thus attains a noble status even though it has lost its original surroundings. We too at AU have typically long ago left traditional classrooms and are in that sense icons of a time gone—at least in the eyes of family and friends who look back, in some cases way back, to their scholarly days of yore. Convocation paints a recognizable sheen onto our studies; everyone knows what graduation looks like and the festivities are real out at Athabasca.

Our student lives are more than just stock characters in a play about growing up, however. AU is a unique experience for each of us, and not amenable to simple explanations. For his part, Rustad uses woolly imagery to glorify the nature of forest trees and the pesky humans who threaten them. In this way he projects much of the angst our species feels toward our human role in nature

and, I would suggest, is seen when others ask with incredulity why we at AU are still in school or why we've decided to go back to school. Our choice can seem intuitively unnatural just like cutting a tree down rather than letting nature take its course! It can seem to others as though we were released from a prison cell only to turn on our heel and march right back into class: didn't Alice Cooper teach us to never look back once school is out? Or, perhaps, we might appear as a bird in a gilded cage, a bunny in a well-cleaned hutch, or a doggy in a backyard run, who, finding the metaphoric gate left open chose to simply snuggle up at the entrance and wait for their master to return. School for many carries a malodorous odour of submission and stupefaction, after all.

Convocation: Where the Truth Comes Home to Roost

Convocation is thus a prime chance to wrangle together as many peers and family as possible and show them just how joyous and admirable our journey has been. Finally, there's a beautiful campus for loved ones to recall when they think of us bunkered in our study shed or wherever else we've wiled away our productive times working on assignments and projects. Just as the cover of Rustad's book depicts the dolorous condition of the last fir in a forest, photos from our convocation can go a long way to illustrating literally the triumphant glory of our AU studies.

Sometimes What's Left Out is What's Most Important

What Rustad leaves out, in his desire to paint a clear and distinct environmental picture without too many glaring contradictions, is the all-too-human aspect of life whereby things aren't always easy to summarize. Just as a book can't cover all of the forest and its workers and protectors, no convocation captures the full reality of a given university's student life. Any of us at AU could probably write the essay of our lives detailing all the interpersonal, familial and workplace challenges we've had to adapt to and overcome so that we could succeed at our studies.

In Rustad's case, taking ourselves as stand-ins for his isolated fir tree, he describes the fir's namesake David Douglas and notes that, after discovery of what he originally termed the Pacific Spruce, Douglas "died eight years later, on June 12th, 1834, while hiking a volcano in Hawaii in search of new plants" (Rustad, 40). While strictly true, the details of the botanist's demise remain contentious and murky to this day. What is known for sure is he didn't just die collecting pine cones; he was found dead in the pit of a wild boar trap.

Academic and local sources suggest that he may have been murdered by an ex-convict or a nature guide; whatever happened, the rumours remind us that even while alone in nature (or in our personal study chamber) we are never truly outside society. After being shown boar traps he supposedly retraced his steps and managed to fall in; would this lifelong hiker have made such a grievous error? Some doubted whether his lacerations could have been caused by the trap of the boar he shared it with. ([Greenwell, online](#)).

Possibly foul play was involved; it pays to look deeper at the circumstances and this type of critical inquiry is what education is all about. "A surveyor, A.B. Loebenstein, said he had heard from Native Hawaiians that Douglas was incautious enough to show some money when he was at Ned Gurney's house. The bullock hunter was seen following Douglas, but the natives were so afraid of Gurney, that they never dared tell of it. Gurney was said to have killed Douglas with an ax and then deposited his body in the bullock pit." ([Fullard-Leo, online](#)). Rustad leaves out these lurid details just as convocation speeches can't cover all the trials and tribulations of AU life; our boar trap is one of the mind, spirit, and attention span but it pokes and jabs at our essence nevertheless—ouch!

Details, Details

A simple factotum account of our studies might reference the hard labour of attaining course objectives but the non-academic aspects of AU life are just as vital to our success. We had to make space for that study regime of ours and it's not like we went to a university every day like normal students. Not every pyjama day is a party at AU; there's work to be done.

Like any rhetorician or speechwriter, Rustad's book paints a picture that illustrates his point, in this case, about the need to preserve ecosystems. When we tell the tale of our AU conquests, we, too, will want to focus on the theme of our success, but it behoves us to also note our tragedies, our failures, and our disappointing marks along the way. In many of our cases the reality that led us to AU in the first place was failure itself: many of us experienced unsuccessful forays into university studies or simply didn't go away to college due to our geographic isolation. Kids who grow up in college towns see the world much differently than those of us from rural locations, after all. This is echoed in the echo chambers of brick and mortar university nature clubs who contrast sharply with hook and bullet gatherings of small town outdoor enthusiasts. We may not have been impaled in a boar trap but our journey through the jungles and forests of academia weren't a walk in a manicured university parkland either.

Parting Thoughts: Lifelong Learning is the Gift That Keeps Giving, if we Keep Our Critical Abilities Intact

Finally, as we bask in the convocation glow it helps to remember that whatever the speakers say in congratulation, we've each had our own private path to the top. Sometimes distance education can seem like it fits all types of lifestyles and other times it seems to match distinct types; chatty Kathys probably are less suited to solitary studies than Booker T. bookworms. Yet beyond it all is the fact that, like any experience that, let's face it, we do pay for, there has to be a certain amount of marketing and branding that goes on. So, if at convocation we hear something from the stage that doesn't match our own narrative or fit our own story then we can recall the case of Chief Seattle, an ostensible spokesperson for environmentalist anti-colonialism.

AU-thentic Events Upcoming AU Related Events

Gatineau Meet & Greet

Fri, May 31, 5:30 to 8:00 pm EDT
Boston Pizza, 179 Promenade du Portage,
Gatineau QC
In person
Hosted by AUSU
www.ausu.org/event/quebec-meet-greet/
Email services@ausu.org to RSVP

Fact or Fiction? Publishing in Open Access at AU Press

Sun, June 2, 1:00 to 2:30 pm PDT
University of British Columbia, AMS Nest
building, Vancouver BC
In person
Hosted by Congress 2019 and AU Press
www.congress2019.ca/calendar/1268
Register for a complimentary pass at
www.congress2019.ca/general-public

Listening to the Earth:

Alumni & Student Reception

Mon, Jun 3, 5:30 to 8:30 pm PDT
The Listel Hotel, Impressionist Gallery,
1300 Robson St, Vancouver BC
In person
Hosted by AU
news.athabascau.ca/events/listening-to-the-earth-alumni-student-reception/
RVSP through above link

Online MBA Info Session

Tues, Jun 4, 10:00 to 11:00 am MDT
Online
Hosted by AU Faculty of Business
business.athabascau.ca/event-details/online-mba-executives-information-session-2019-jun4/
Register online at above link

Convocation 2019

Fri, Jun 7 & Sat, Jun 8, 11:30 am to 3:00 pm MDT
Westerner Park, 4847A 19th Street, Red Deer, AB
In-person and online
Hosted by AU
convocation.athabascau.ca/index.php
Live streaming available through above link

All events are free unless otherwise specified

Chief Seattle is famously attributed with the bumper sticker line “When the last tree has been cut down, the last fish caught, the last river poisoned, only then will we realize that one cannot eat money” ([Quote Investigator, online](#)). The truth, it turns out, is that the real Chief Seattle was pressed into propaganda service by well-meaning, but somewhat duplicitous screenwriters. Seattle “did give a speech in 1854, but he never said “The earth is our mother.” Nor did he say “I have seen a thousand rotting buffaloes on the prairie, left by the white man who shot them from a passing train.” There were no bison within 600 miles of the chief’s home on Puget Sound in the Pacific Northwest, and trains to the West were years away. The words Chief Seattle have become famous for were written by Ted Perry, the screenwriter for *Home*, a 1972 film about ecology” In fact, “Chief Seattle is probably our greatest manufactured prophet,” said David Buerge, a Northwest historian” ([Snopes, online](#)). At AU, our success is more than a caricature as comeback student of the millennium.

Unlike Hollywood movie convocations, with their glitz and vapidness, Athabasca convocation is a unique and authentic experience. We don't need to create mythologies around our studies; we know how awesome we are. And we don't have to exit through the gift shop or endure any cultural appropriation along the way. The essence of the AU student body isn't a pep rally or a politicized activist desire that, when meeting setbacks, requires a comfort puppy or pony. AU success is about the satisfaction of an academic job well done; the rewards are in our work.

So, just as we have to be wary of difference when thinking of the very real shared experience we have with other Athabasca students, we have to take a critical stance toward quotes and perspectives that seem natural and believable. The essence of the Athabasca experience is as diverse as the planet we inhabit and the only statement that really summarizes us all is: we are resilient. Removed from what appears to be our natural learning environment, a classroom, we succeed where others fall.

Whatever our expectation of convocation, I can guarantee the experience will be fascinating—not because it matches what we imagine in advance—but because it surpasses what we've come to expect from our mental stereotypes about distance students and, indeed, the fairly isolated town of Athabasca itself. Whatever our image of our fellow students may be, the best way to test that hypothesis is to attend actual convocation and have a few conversations with tutors, instructors and workers in and around the campus and the town. We may feel like that last student in a class, and like the last tree in a forest, but meeting and greeting others of our ilk is an enlightening and worthwhile experience. If I could I'd attend convocation every year.

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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.





The (Marginal) Joys of Marginalization

Wanda Waterman

“At some point or another, everyone has felt unseen and unheard and marginalized.”

- Ayanna Pressley

If you remember the comic strip *Bloom County*, you may recall Binkley and his dad having a discussion in which they realize that their status as white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, men puts them in the minority. The irony of course is that white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant men are typically seen as the mainstream of society, the standard by which all other groups are judged. So outside of this rather narrow cohort, what remains? Who are the marginalized, anyway?

If you start peeling away marginal groups from society you'll have to just keep on peeling until there's nearly nothing left, because unless we've devoted our lives to boring conventionality we each have something about us that pushes or threatens to push us to the margins, limiting our access to health, safety, freedom, financial security, and fulfillment.

Let's suppose, for example, that you're a WASP male; you'll still feel excluded from mainstream society if you're gay, a Krishna devotee, living in poverty, a communist, an amputee, a transsexual, residing in rural Alabama, or even just socially awkward. Most of us are marginalized, or at least feel so at some point in our lives, which means that social inequality is everyone's problem.

But there's a bright side. There are certain perks to being marginalized of which even the most anarchist of unemployed gay social klutzes can avail themselves.

For one thing, you don't have a façade to maintain. You've already been rejected from mainstream society, so you don't have to pretend you're one of *them*. You can wear colourful clothes. You can speculate about whether the earth is flat. You can tell people about themselves. You can eat fried onion rings dripping with melted cheese without whining about calories.

For another, you're off the hook when it comes to the goals and aspirations of the majority. A house in the suburbs? Not when there are tents, trailers, abandoned factories, and friends with couches. A six-figure salary? Not worth selling out for. Passing carbon tax on to your customers instead of paying it yourself? Not if you want to sleep at night. Faking friendliness to your social superiors in order to advance your career? Puh-leeze.

All well and good, but as my title suggests, the rewards of marginalization are piddling at best. Maybe the marginalized don't want riches, power, and fame, but we certainly want enough for our needs — which won't be provided as long as inequality remains the order of the day.

You're not going to waste your time and energy going for any of these things because even if you did want to sell your soul for money, status, and power you know very well that, for you, it's

nearly impossible to attain these things. Why? Because money, status, and power are very closely guarded by the *least* marginalized members of society: those with the greatest sense of entitlement, who are looking for any excuse to withhold the goodies.

What's really bizarre is how even the marginalized blindly submit to this twisted state of affairs, actually believing that a white man in a suit is the most trustworthy and capable character in town despite evidence to the contrary. If we were a little more observant we might admit that the best accountant for miles is the Sikh, the best doctor the female Syrian refugee, and the best kindergarten teacher for our children is transgender.

So whatever it is about you that marginalizes you even a wee bit, embrace it. It grants you a kind of solidarity with the true majority, and there's strength in numbers—strength enough to challenge the illusions of entitlement.

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



The Struggling Student Rants Road Trip Food Financials

Angela Pappas



The Best Food to Pack for Road Trips

Spring is in the air, summer is just around the corner, traditional students are nearing the end of their semesters (not us AU die-hards, obviously), and everyone is dreaming about warm, lazy sunsets and BBQs. But for those of us at AU who were not lucky enough to have escaped this past winter, wanderlust is now taking over. Now that the long, dark, frigid nights are behind us, we get to roll down our windows, crank up our playlists, and hit the highway. And what better way to watch our savings from working hard all winter disappear, than a cross-country road trip? Some expenses will be necessary. Eating is considered essential, for example, there is no

negotiation there. I hate to be the one to burst the bubble, but, with food costs on the rise, it's hard to not go over the budget in this category.

Most people will just accept this as fact and think there's not much anyone can do about this. People have to eat—I won't argue there. I will point out, however, that we can control what, when, and where we eat. I also realize that when we go on holidays we look forward to the luxury of having no meals to plan and prep for, and no dishes to clean up. We also look forward to all the greasy diners along the way and the niche, eclectic eateries once we get to our destination. I am by no means opposed to some well-deserved rest and relaxation. We're all humans after all, and

without pauses in our pursuits, we can wear out. The result can be a toll on our mental and physical health, and it can seem impossible to keep going without burning out. I will, though, remind us all of the importance of our financial goals—whether that’s becoming debt-free, saving for retirement, paying for your AU tuition, or even something as simple as paying cash for that new washer and dryer our household needs. And if you think eating out while on holidays won’t get us any of these things, I invite you to do the math for your own family vacation. For myself and my spouse, a \$50.00 meal allowance per day, for one week, equals \$700.00—that’s 3 AU credits right there, paid in full.

That greasy diner may be calling our name, but our wallets and guts will thank us for resisting the temptation. We can still survive a fifteen-hour road trip, with plenty of pit stops for sightseeing, and plenty of delicious and healthy snacks along the way. Some easy-to-make, popular snacks include popcorn, protein bars, trail mixes, and string cheese. We can also fill up bags and coolers with pre-made grocery store snacks. This will save us more than just a couple bucks, but there are plenty of other fun and frugal options out there to consider as well.

Fruit and Veggies

Most road trip snacking is born out of boredom. The first hour of the road trip can be exciting: exiting the hustle and bustle of the city; trying to get comfortable; picking the right playlist; adjusting the temperature so everyone is happy; you know the drill. After that first hour, though, the passengers start to fall asleep, the driver gets annoyed, the kids get restless, and soon we hear the usual, “Are we there yet?” echoing from the back seat. So, passengers and driver alike start to snack without realizing it, and before we know it, a family-sized bag of Doritos is gone, our jeans’ zipper is open, and there’s a thick coating of orange cheese glued to our fingers and anything we touch. Plus, with all those carbs, we now need a nap at 9:00 a.m. Veggies can solve most of these problems. It doesn’t have to be the usual carrots and dip, unless we want it to be, of course. I have learnt to fill up a Ziploc bag with cauliflower and broccoli florets and go to town. Tip: Costco now has Kraft KD cheese mix in a bottle—sprinkle on top, and enjoy! We can do the same with baby carrots, snap peas, celery sticks, radishes, and anything else that comes to mind. Stick with veggies that aren’t messy though, not those juicy peaches from the farmer’s market. Because Murphy’s Law says that if the kids insist on those fresh cherries, there is a one hundred percent statistical probability they, and the entire back seat area, will be covered in red cherry juice.

On a side note, if we’re not a big fan of veggies, we can trick our brain into thinking they’re great. There are single serve Tupperware containers we can fill up with ranch, guacamole, hummus, or a mayo and ketchup combo (trust me on this one). We can also choose some dried fruit pieces as a great snacking option but look for those with the least amount of additives, such as sugar, flavour, colouring, and preservatives. We can also make our own a few days ahead of time.

Protein

All our hard work at the gym this past winter does not need to be sacrificed to the carb gods during our road trip. Bad, or low-quality carbs, will make us feel hungry almost immediately after consumption, and we’ll be looking to open the next bag of potato chips before we even make it to the next exit! The key to satiation is protein. Not all protein sources come from chalky-tasting, dry, brick-like bars. There are some great-tasting, all-natural, protein-rich options out

there, that I prefer. Eggs are my numero uno go-to—boiled, egg salad, deviled, try experimenting. Greek yoghurt is also a good place to start. Buy a big tub, portion it into single-serve containers, sprinkle some walnuts and honey, and store it in the cooler to enjoy along the ride. For an extra protein boost, try adding almonds to the yoghurt, instead of walnuts. And if you aren't a big fan of yoghurt, just portion off little Ziploc bags of 15-20 almonds, with or without pre-popped popcorn, and snack away (almost) guilt-free. Most nuts are high in fat, however, so don't go too overboard on these. Roasted chickpeas are another great protein source. They're sold in bulk at Superstore and Bulk Barn, salted or unsalted, or at Costco in large family-sized bags, with a variety of flavours to choose from.

Sugar

Finally, if we have to satisfy that sweet tooth, there are frugal and healthy ways to get around this. There's nothing to feel guilty about, we all need something sweet as a pick-me-up between lunch and dinner. Instead of grabbing the usual chocolate bar from the gas station (guilty), don't give up entirely on the idea of protein bars. Most supplement stores have samples to try before you buy. If they don't have any displayed on their counters, there's no shame in asking, I'm sure they prefer your business over opening up one protein bar. Plus, Mars launched their protein-enriched chocolate bars—yes, you read that right! Mars, Snickers, and Bounty protein-packed bars have approximately the same calories, less fat, and triple the protein of a regular candy bar, and they taste amazing! Popeye's, Amazon, and many supplement and health-food stores offer them, in single bars and bulk-packs. They are a bit pricier than your dollar-store candy bar, and I get the irony of this being mentioned in a column urging smart spending habits; however, your health is non-negotiable.

Another choice for something cheap and sweet, if there are no health concerns, is dollar-store junk food. Local dollar stores usually carry any type of snack and junk food item out there, and even more. Most times it will be a knock-off brand but at a fraction of the price. Fill up the cart with cookies, candy bars, and gum, but also consider some graham crackers, apple sauce, and Jell-O cups as a better alternative to plain old jujubes and KitKats. Finally, if there's any free time before the trip, we can also whip up some homemade goodies too—some of which can also substitute for breakfast-on-the-go and save us an extra \$10-\$15 per person. It all adds up! Classics, like low-sugar muffins, scones, cookies, brownies, and bacon-n-egg cups can be portioned and kept in the cooler. Serve the bacon-n-egg cups with ketchup packets and crackers and enjoy!

Boxes and Bags

The last thing on the list, that can help save some cash, is the packaging. Plastic take-out containers are great for the road—they're light, they stack well, and they're disposable. Another bonus is that if we lose or break one it's not the end of the world. If we're going to use disposable cutlery, save all the cutlery that gets tossed in the paper bag at the drive-thru. I put all that cutlery in a dedicated tin can in our junk drawer, and when we hit the road it's ready to go. We can also find reusable plastic utensils and food containers at the dollar store to bring back home with us. At a dollar a piece, we won't care if they break, and they won't break the bank. Finally, don't forget the accoutrements! It's never a bad idea to have a roll of paper towels, some baby wipes, and some hand sanitizer in the car within easy reach. Again, these are all available on the cheap

at the local dollar store, versus having to dish out triple that amount at the first gas station we pull up to. Especially, if we gave in, let the kids take those cherries along for a snack, and now we have fruit juice dripping down the back windows.

This summer, make sure to unwind and relax from all the hustle and bustle of the daily grind, but above all, make sure your road trips don't derail you from your vision and long-term financial goals. Happy travels everyone and stay frugal and safe.



Course Exam

Brittany Daigle

ADMN 232 (Introduction to Management) is a three-credit introductory business and administrative studies course that translates management theory into effective management practice by examining what managers do and how they do it. The course presents theories of management applicable to the public and private sectors and then reconciles these theories with current practice. ADMN 232 has no prerequisites, as it is recommended as a suitable point of entry to the Bachelor of Management and the Bachelor of Commerce degree programs. This course has a Challenge for Credit option if students are interested.

Introduction to Management is made up of four sections containing fifteen lessons, two assignments (worth 15% each), a midterm examination (for 35%), and a final examination (for the remaining 35%). The fifteen lessons within this course cover several interesting topics surrounding business, such as leadership, motivation, leading teams, management, control, planning, decision making, ethics, and much more. In order for students to receive credit for ADMN 233, they must achieve a minimum grade of fifty percent on both the midterm and final examinations, and a minimum overall course grade of D (50 percent).

Dr. Alex Kondra has been working at Athabasca University for seventeen years. Alongside this course, he coordinates HRMT 322 (Employment Law) and RIBL 687 (International Business: Understanding and Managing Legal Risks), and coaches for undergraduate case competitions.

If you would like to learn more in-depth information about HRMT 322 (Employment Law), read my previous Course Exam article.

Dr. Kondra provides a brief introduction, stating “I earned a PhD in Business Administration (with a major in Industrial Relations, and a minor in Organizational Analysis, Economics and Statistics) from the University of Alberta in 1995. I previously taught at Acadia University and was a faculty member while Acadia rolled out the first all-laptop environment in Canada. I have served at Athabasca University as the acting Vice President Academic, Dean of the Faculty of Business, and Executive Director of the Centre for Innovative Management, acting Associate Vice President Academic, acting Director of the School of Business, and program director for AU’s

undergraduate business programs. I am currently the MBA program director as well as an Associate Professor, teaching in areas of organizational theory and human resources.”

When asked to describe the course to students, Dr. Kondra explains that ADMN 232 “is a survey course of a broad number of topics that will be useful to an entry level manager. It tends to focus on the soft skills and organizational skills required in management.”

As for the structure of the course, he states that “There are two written assignments with a twelve hundred word limit. There is also a mid-term and final examination. They each have seventy multiple-choice questions and students will need to choose six of eight short answer questions to answer.”

He continues by providing some advice for students, stating “The material is not overly hard in most cases but as a survey course there are a lot of concepts to cover. Use the publisher’s web site to practice for your exams. Use the Write Site if you are unsure of your writing. They are very helpful.”

Dr. Alex Kondra believes students will take away “A broad understanding of the day to day management of people and organizations.”

As for what he believes students find the most difficult, he states “The volume of material is significant. Also, for many people this is their first essay type assignment in a long time. People struggle as a result.”

Whether ADMN 232 is a degree or program requirement of yours, or if the content discussed above sounds like it would be of interest to you, this course will have you learning a lot of interesting material surrounding the topic of management.

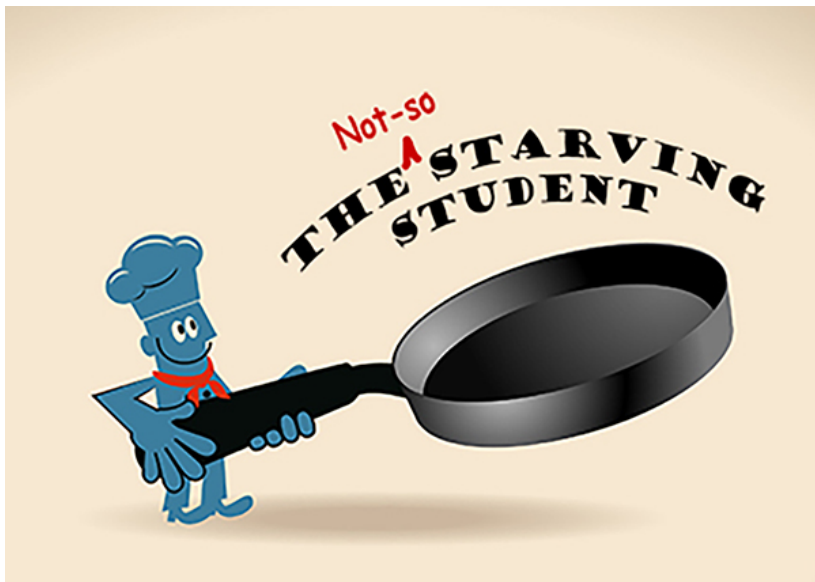
Brittany Daigle is 22 years old and completing her BSc in Computing Science & Information Systems with AU from Toronto, Ontario.



The Not-So Starving Student

Four Popular Cheeses and How to Use Them

Xin Xu



Have you been to a social function complete with wine and cheese but couldn’t seem to exactly pinpoint the name of the slices of gooey goodness? I had the same indecision, as I pick up a mysterious slice, not understanding how to properly use this even if I had purchased a pack myself. Recently, though, after hosting a Game of Thrones finale Medieval-style wine and cheese night, I have learned enough to safely introduce some of my favorites. For students who are planning on splurging a bit for their summer Netflix marathons with friends and family, this is a great starting place to show off your “exper-cheese.” Here are some must-know

cheeses and how they can be used, whether in the kitchen or otherwise!

Brie

This is my all-time favorite cheese; one that melts as easily in your mouth as butter. Brie cheese originates from an area of France that specializes in producing soft cheeses. The distinct white mould surrounding the interior is a feature that makes this cheese easy to identify on the charcuterie board. The interior is made from cattle milk giving it a soft, gooey texture when heated. My personal favorite recipe for this cheese includes melting the cheese on top triscuits in the oven or microwave. Remember, only a minute in the oven (and seconds in the microwave) will create the highly sought-after stretchy and sauce-like texture.



Camembert

The less creamy counterpart to the Brie is the Camembert. The main reason for the creamier texture of Brie is the higher fat content used during production. Sometimes up to triple cream is used to give the gooey, melt-in-your-mouth sensation. Camembert, on the other hand, has more intense, earthy flavors than the Brie. Both cheeses originate from the same area in France, however, and are nearly indistinguishable.

Parmigiano-Reggiano

Shortened to simply “Parmesan”, this aged cheese is made exclusively from unpasteurized cow milk. Unlike other cheeses, the only additive in the fermentation process is salt. Typically the average Parmigiano is aged for two years before being served (Gastaldello). Parmigiano is a must-have on the cheese board. Given its classification as a hard cheese, parmigiano has a strong flavor as most of the moisture is required to have left the final product.



Blue Cheese

Did you know the same mould that adds flare to your otherwise pale slice of cheese is the same antibiotic that you receive from your family doctor? Yup, penicillin is the active ingredient that gives this cheese a pungent scent and flavor. Blue cheese was discovered by accident when cheeses were stored in moisture filled caves (Fabricant) The distinct blue color comes from the mould spores burrowing through the cheese in search of oxygen. My personal favorite recipe include the blue cheese dipping sauce. After melting the blue cheese in a saucepan, adding sour cream, lemon and Worcestershire sauce makes a sensational dip for crackers and veggies.

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



The Fit Student Want a Cindy Crawford Look?

Marie Well



Wouldn't You don't need dimples to have Cindy Crawford's look. You can settle instead for a Cindy Crawford bod. I'll share Cindy Crawford's diet and fitness routine and compare it to my active lifestyle. If I can claim a fit bod at nearly fifty, so can all you AU femmes (and fellows).

But let's face it, who compares to Cindy? I don't. I didn't when I turned 18 either. But, hey, why not a slice of Domino's to drown my sorrows? Or better yet, why not live at least as healthy as Cindy? So, let's check how my health stacks up to Cindy's—and how you can get Cindy fit, too.

Fitness

Cindy does “equal parts cardio and strength training.” I do more cardio than her but less strength training. As for you, consider doing both cardio and weights—at gyms. Going to gyms is like going out for dinner. Gyms, unlike home studios, come built for exercise: less distractions; more workout options. How many ellipticals can a home host anyway?

As for cardio, Cindy clocks 20 minutes at least three times a week. I clock one to two hours of cardio at least four times a week. If you do 30 to 50 minutes of cardio three times a week, you'll see life-changing benefits; you'll feel as vibrant as flowers, bunnies, and chicks in the spring.

But to mimic Cindy's workouts, you also need weights. Cindy follows her cardio with 30 minutes to an hour of “old school lunges, weights, squats, and bicep curls.” I follow my cardio with 30 minutes of heavy weights (Arnold Schwarzenegger style) three days a week. As for you, learn to lift weights—or to use body weight (think pushups, sit-ups, squats, and lunges). No need for Arnold's dumbbells if you just want to tone.

I don't know how Cindy finishes her workouts, but I finish mine with five-minutes abs and eight-minutes stretches. And I cap my sessions with hot steam baths and ice-cold showers. Steam baths give even pasty-face femmes a natural blush.

Diet

Cindy doesn't stuff herself with junk food. I stuffed my cake hole with crud for much of my life. I went from fast-food fads to nibbling next to nothing. Now I eat clean and green.

Similarly, Cindy says no to processed (packaged) foods. She opts for whole foods instead. Cindy says, “I usually have a protein shake for breakfast ... For lunch I'll have salad, sometimes with chicken, sometimes without. For dinner we'll go for sushi, or if we eat at home I'll try to make a meal like turkey meatballs with pasta, a salad, and a vegetable.”

Wow! No wonder Cindy looks so skinny.

Yesterday, for breakfast I wolfed down bran, kefir milk, flaxseed, apple, banana, berries, and half an avocado. For lunch I stuffed myself with flaxseed, kefir milk, lentils, banana, and an apple. For dinner, I devoured sockeye salmon, kefir milk, yams, cauliflower, carrots, beets, sauerkraut,

flaxseed, and another apple. I typically eat nuts and seeds instead of triple helpings of apples and flaxseed. But, hey, whose grocery budgets doesn't get whacked tax time?

As for your diet, do dine light like Cindy, but load up on veggies, nuts, and seeds. Also, do chow on fish like Cindy and me. But ditch Cindy's protein shakes. Consider eating natural sources of protein instead. But if you crave shakes, then juice organic whole veggies sprinkle with protein powder. This shake will give you vitamins, minerals—and muscles.

My advice to both Cindy and you? Savor probiotics. You can get probiotics from sources such as sour cabbage, kefir milk, miso soup, and kombucha. Good gut bugs gear up great health. And 80% of our immune system comes from our gut. So, beef up your belly with good bugs.

But what's for dessert? Dark chocolate! Both Cindy and I chow on dark delights. Dark chocolate (70% or higher) comes loaded with antioxidants, fiber, iron, copper, and manganese. And AU students take note—dark chocolate boosts brain power. During all-nighters, forget cups of Joe; reach for dark bars.

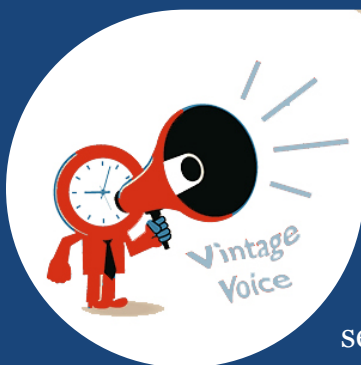
Final Thoughts: Discipline

Discipline marks the key to health. It's not avocado one week and ketchup chips the next. Good health means workouts and nutrition—'til the day we die. So, before or after work or during lunch, get fit three to five days a week. After all, it only takes 66 days to form a habit.

I started out barely able to walk a block. If that's you, then do like I did, and walk that block—every day. After a month, get a gym membership. Keep upping the ante with heavier weights and more cardio. After two years, you could get as fit as Cindy Crawford. (If you have a bigger frame—in other words, you rank as an endomorph—then you could get as fit as Kate Upton).

In June, I celebrate two years of fitness and healthy eating. Not only did I lose forty pounds within the first six months, but I also went from looking 93 to 39. I say, "Forget the senior's discounts; get ripped for Cindy's jeans." And I bet she has extra pairs—fit for the Cindy in you.

Disclaimer: Before making fitness or dietary changes, consult a doctor, preferably a fit one.



Unearthing classic articles from previous issues of The Voice Magazine.

To observe #NoTobaccoDay, May 31, we dug up these in-depth articles loaded with motivation to help you chuck the 'baccy for good.

Living to tell the tale. Writer Wayne E. Benedict traces his escape from a 50-per-day cigarette habit. "When I was a teenager people in their thirties seemed pretty old, like they'd already lived a long life. Now I realize that they were oh so young when addiction to tobacco robbed them of everything."

Tobacco, January 14, 2004.

Ready, set, stop! Shannon Maguire coaches you with all you need to know to overcome a tobacco addiction. "You may find it easier to rid yourself of these types of addictions if you identify the obstacles that you will have to overcome before you attempt to quit and formulate a plan to help you achieve your goal." How to Quit Smoking, November 1, 2003.

The Study Dude

Seven Tips for Star Students

Marie Well



Were you the kid who joined every school sports team and club—and still got the A's? That was me in grade nine, but so not me in graduate studies. If you're able to raise a family, work full-time, take on extracurricular fun, and excel at studies—all at the same time—then, I beg you, write a book for the rest of us. And sign it with a well-earned coffee stain.

But for those of us who merely dream of star student status, here's 7 tips to top the grades:

Don't quit.

I met grad students who toyed with quitting their programs. Such mental flailing strikes me as “a rite of passage” for most grad students. It's the norm. But “perseverance is the heart of mental toughness ... you don't have to do this. You can leave right now ... All you have to do is quit ... The mentally tough person will hear all these little voices in his head But they don't have power over him anymore” (Winters, p. 127 of 134, 96%). Darn, they should've packed their books, not their one-way to Ding-Dong Texas bags. Yes, there's such a city.

Don't stack up the extracurricular fun.

Talk about Ding Dong, I had no thoughts of quitting grad studies. I was having heaps of fun doing fitness up to five hours a day, making documentary films, taking singing and dance lessons, and, oh, so much more. Studies seemed a side distraction. But I ended up short of the 3.8/4.0 GPA needed for PhD program entry. To my credit, I at least finished with the master's degree. But my dream of a professorship died. So, don't overdo the whoopla. I wish I saved auditioning for Survivor for the grad ceremony.

Limit your focus.

At the U, I floated my first year, taking all kinds of classes to gage my interests. “The shiny object syndrome is when people jump from one thing to another without settling on one thing and becoming good at it. The shiny object syndrome breaks many dreams into tiny pieces and many never recover from it” (Winters, p. 128 of 134, 96%). You'll shine enough when you claim your A.

Choose programs based on talent, not buddies.

After some exploration, I went into math. But I switched to yet another program that offered the most friendships. That's an issue with physical universities: you could end up taking a program due to peer pressure, not talent. That's like dropping a star student status in astrophysics to study clowning with BFF Rex.

Get obsessed.

Academic success could use more than perseverance. Top performances beg for that something more: obsession. “Motivation is not something that keeps you up at night, but obsession does. It's something that is always in your mind. When you go to the gym, in the shower or going for a run its always there. Your purpose consumes you” (Winters, p. 120 of 134, 90%). Find that

obsession by discovering your academic passion. Or grow obsessed with the act of one-upping your last letter grade. Where there's a will, there's an A.

Shoot small.

If you don't feel obsessed with schoolwork, then shoot for small wins: a well-thought out term paper, a chapter read, daily studies, or an all-day study stint (with ten-minute breaks every fifty minutes). I shoot for small wins because, hey, nowadays everyone gets a prize.

And build on your goals.

My first goal at the U was to not fail the one class I took. When I did well, I mapped out my next goal: get an A. And then I started taking more classes, scoring all A's. After that, I ended up the top performer in most every math class I took. Finally, I entered grad studies and got a master's degree. "When you start building small wins you start creating massive wins" (Winters, p. 127 of 134, 96%). Don't just win a giant panda; buy out the circus for your very own backyard.

So, now you have the tools to get the A's. But avoid all-nighter coffee stains. Save the stains for Tim's, not your take-home tests or term papers. But if you write a book on how you raised a family, worked full-time, took on extracurricular fun—and claimed straight A's—all at once—then, by all means, sign it with a pot of Joe.

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Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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



AthaU Facebook Group

Pilar is working in Mexico and wonders about her exam options; responses suggest ProctorU or a local invigilator. Victoria is curious how transfer credit works when AU doesn't have equivalent courses; there is often a way! Kayla asks about typical course load; this leads to a discussion on the merits of taking single or multiple courses at one time.

Other posts include slow marking, scholarships, rescheduling exams with ProctorU, midnight deadlines, and courses ACCT 355, BIOL 235, FREN 200, and SPAN 200.

reddit

Is COMP 210 fine with beginners with little computer background? Anyone? Anyone?

Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: "[#AthabascaU](#) students and alum: snap a selfie with your degree or certificate & comment below with the snap, telling us the program and year you completed it and add [#AthaU19](#). We'll randomly select 3 people to win a Athabasca University swag bag!"

@austudentsunion tweets: "CONTEST TIME! AUSU has over \$1000 in prizes to give away! Follow AUSU (Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram [@austudentsunion](#)) and tag a post with [#igo2AU](#) for a chance to WIN! Visit <https://bit.ly/2WtyPD8> for more details."

Accredited and Vaping

Dear Barb:

Hi! I have just completed my first course at Athabasca University and did very well. The problem I have is, every time I tell people I am obtaining a degree through an online university, they respond by asking why I don't go to a real university! They say I am wasting my time and that I won't be able to get a job with an online degree. When I tell them it is an accredited university, they look at me funny. I have done my research and I know that an Athabasca degree is recognized, but it still bothers me that people make judgements like that. What is the best way to handle this? Thanks Emma.

Hi Emma:

Yes it is annoying when people stick to these antiquated views without doing any research. The main thing is that you have done your research and you know an Athabasca degree is as recognized as a bricks and mortar degree. In a lot of respects obtaining a degree online is more challenging, as you must be a much more disciplined person to achieve your goals. I guess the best way to handle people like this is to let it go. There is no point in engaging with them. But if it is someone like a family member and it is important to you that they realize AU is

accredited, you could refer them to the [Athabasca University website about accreditation](#) and then they can check it out for themselves.

Thanks for writing Emma.

Dear Barb:

I haven't read anything in your columns about vaping, so I decided to write in. I have recently switched from smoking regular cigarettes to vaping. I feel vaping has got to be a better alternative than smoking, although a lot of people don't agree. It just makes sense to me, without the nicotine and chemicals of regular cigarettes going into my body I am better off. What is your opinion on this issue? Thanks, Blake.

Hi Blake:

Great question! I am not an expert, but I have done some research on vaping vs. smoking. Just to correct you, there is nicotine in electronic-cigarettes. Since vaping is a relatively new phenomenon there are no studies into the health effects of long term vaping. When cigarettes first surfaced, no one thought they were bad for you, and for many years women smoked cigarettes throughout their pregnancy. It was many years before the links with cancer and the low birth weight in babies born to mothers who smoked became widely known. Although studies have shown that there are significantly less carcinogens in vaping than in regular cigarettes, undoubtedly carcinogens are a part of both smoking and vaping. So, whether one is better than the other? Who knows. It seems to me you are taking a chance either way. Thanks for your letter Blake.

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
Old Dilemma

Wanda Waterman



The information on this page is provided by the AU Students' Union. The Voice does not create this content. Contact AUSU at services@ausu.org with any questions about this article.

IMPORTANT DATES

- May 30: [Deadline to apply for course extension for July](#)
- May 31: [Gatineau Student Meet & Greet](#)
- June 7-8: [Athabasca University Convocation](#)
- Jun 10: [Deadline to register in a course starting Jul 1](#)
- Jun 15: [AUSU In-Person Council Meeting](#)
- Jun 15: [July degree requirements deadline](#)

Follow AUSU for a Chance to WIN!

AUSU has over \$1000 in prizes to give away in our Spring #igo2AU Contest!

HOW TO ENTER:

- FOLLOW AUSU on social media ([Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), or [Twitter](#))

AND

- TAG A SOCIAL MEDIA POST with the hashtag [#igo2AU](#)

That's it! If you already follow us, great! Just tag a post with #igo2AU to enter!

PRIZES INCLUDE:

- BlueTooth Flip4 Wireless Waterproof Speaker
- Sony On-Ear Headphones with Microphone
- Free Online AU Exams through [ProctorU](#)
- Amazon Gift Cards (valued at \$25 or \$50)
- S'well Bottle Prize Packs

CONTEST DEADLINE: June 14, 2019

Follow us @AUStudentsUnion



For more information visit our website [here](#).



Student Social TONIGHT in Gatineau

AUSU is hosting an AU Student Social event in **Gatineau, Quebec on May 31!**

Come on out to meet fellow AU students, get to know your students' union executives, and get some free AUSU swag!

When: Friday, May 31 from 5:30 – 8:00pm EDT

Where: [Boston Pizza Quebec](#)
179 Promenade du Portage, Gatineau, Quebec

Help us plan – please RSVP to services@ausu.org or on our [Facebook Event](#).



New Open Mic Podcast Episode!

Episode 5: [Time Travel 201 with AUSU Executives!](#)

Your AUSU execs get together to explore student representation, advocacy, and the intricacies of time travel, among other topics.

Check out past Open Mic episodes on our website [here](#).



CLASSIFIEDS

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

THE VOICE

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