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Minds We Meet Interviewing Students Like You!

Down with the Foodies Born in the Wrong Time

Why Racism Still Exists And What to Do About It

Plus: Yoga and the Gold Rush The Future of Technology and much more!

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The Voice Magazine www.voicemagazine.org 301 Energy Square 10109 – 106 ST NVV Edmonton AB T5J 3L7

Email voice@voicemagazine.org

> **Publisher** AU Students' Union

Editor-In-Chief Jodi Campbell

Managing Editor Karl Low

Regular Contributors Barb Godin, Barbara Lehtiniemi, Jason Sullivan, Wanda Waterman, Xin Xu, and others

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



We love to hear from you! Send your questions and comments to <u>voicemagazine.org</u>, 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 It's a Stretch

It's hard to believe it's less than a month until Christmas. That means there's only three more issues left of The Voice Magazine this year, and that it's time to start thinking about what your personal pick for Best of the Voice Magazine will be.

Like the university, we'll be taking the last full week of December off (they say they're only closed from noon on the 24th, the Tuesday of that week, but let's be honest, even the few people who haven't officially taken the Monday and first half of Tuesday off are unlikely to be there in much other than body, and then the Voice will resume publication on the third of January with our annual "Best of" issue.

I'll be honest, each year I get very few suggestions for which articles to pick as the Best of, so that means if there's anything you read over the past year of articles that you think deserves another chance to shine, your odds of making that happen are really high. Just write me at <u>karl@voicemagazine.org</u> with your pick. Maybe you don't quite remember what it was called? No problem; give me your description of it and I'll see if I can dig it out of the archives.

In the meantime, if you read our events column this week, you'll see there's a number of seasonal cheer gatherings going on for AU students and alumni, possibly one in your area. If you haven't checked one of these out before, you really should. I'm not a social person by nature (there's a reason I went to AU after all, and I don't think I'm alone in that) but these events always seem to be at decent locations with some great snacks and a couple of complimentary drinks.

I had hoped to have a full article out about the recent one in Calgary, but technical issues have meant I couldn't get it into decent shape before publication. Just trust me in that the events are a great way to meet other students (with a couple small caveats) and realize that there's more people involved with AU in your community than you probably knew.

Meanwhile, this week, our feature article is an interview with full-time student, part time archer, Fiona Nanke. What lead her to AU and where is she going? She was kind enough to take some time to answer those questions for Minds We Meet.

We've also got a look at racism and it's origins, a critique of the foodie, some consideration of where technology is heading from an AU student's perspective, and advice on everything from what to give for Christmas if you think you have nothing to give to marriage advice to a recipe that could just possibly become a new family tradition for you and yours. And, of course, there's also the aforementioned events, scholarships, news, an article taking us back to the Yukon from last issue and drawing the parallels between the gold rush, yoga, and being a student at AU.

Does fitting the gold rush and being an AU student into yoga pants feel like a bit of a stretch (pun most definitely intended)? You'll just have to read it to find out! Enjoy the read!



MINDS OF MEET



Fiona Nanke lives in southern Alberta with her husband and three little girls where she takes her Bachelor of Public Administration program from AU with a major in Governance, Law, and Management. She recently took some time to talk to the Voice Magazine about who she is and her journey so far.

Can you give us a little bit of background information about yourself? Who are you? Where do you live, where do you come from?

I'm Fiona. I live in a small hamlet in southern Alberta. I've lived in southern Alberta almost my entire life. I was born in England but have been here since I was two years old. I am married and have three little girls.

What program are you enrolled in?

I am currently enrolled in the Bachelor of Public Administration majoring in Governance, Law, and Management program.

Could you describe the path that led you to AU? What was it that made you realize you wanted to go back to school, and what pushed you into the Bachelor of Public Administration program?

I went back to work after having my second daughter

and decided I did not want to do what I was doing anymore. I took one class and then suffered a horrific concussion. I had another baby and after returning to my job after maternity leave, my role had completely changed to something I did not agree with. So, I applied for student loans and here I am now, two years later!

Do you have any advice for people who are on the fence about going back to school?

My biggest piece of advice is to follow your intuition and find people who are in your corner. Because it's hard, but worth it.

What do you do like to do when you're not studying?

I love to read. We are quite an outdoorsy family, so we spend a lot of time camping.

Do you have any favorite hobbies?

I love archery!

What are your plans for this education once you finish?

Relax for a month or so, reconnect with the world! I want to one day work as a policy developer for the federal government.

Is there anyone in your life that has influenced your desire to learn?

My nana. I know that seems cliché, but she is a pillar of strength and education. The one person to always rooted for me and pushed me to do better in everything I do. She was a school principal, so education is huge to her.

Could you share your experience with online learning so far? What do you like?

It's been quite the learning curve. I love that I can work on my own time, and at my own pace. I also love that it has given me the ability to be at home with my young children while still completing my degree.

Is there anything that you found that you dislike?

The only thing I disliked was the language course I took. I found it extremely hard to understand and learn without being in a classroom speaking the language. I would never take a distance language class again.

What is your favorite AU course that you have taken so far, and why?

I loved <u>INST 301</u> (Indigenous Education). The content was so well put together and all of the readings were so well chosen. My tutor was amazing, and I just loved learning about traditional knowledge.

Would you recommend that course to other students?

I firmly believe that indigenous education should be a mandatory piece of the public educational system in Canada and I would absolutely recommend this course.

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

A full-time job with amazing benefits and financial stability. I regret it because it has been extremely difficult to stay afloat. Was it worth it? Yes, but if I could do it again, I would have done part-time funding and stuck with my job. However, my future is brighter. I've spent two wonderful years gaining an education and raising my babies. So, no I don't regret it, I just have looming student loan debt that terrifies me.

How have you found communications with your course tutors?

Most of them have been fantastic; easy to connect with and a wealth of information. I have had two that were difficult to contact, and they did not provide any help, and or just did not ever return emails.

Do you have any pet peeves?

Not getting assignment back within the expected 10-day turnaround. I'm still waiting on a few assignments I submitted in May!

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

Oprah! Again, I know completely cliché, but I would love to sit and have a conversation with her. To talk about everything and knock down the celebrity and just the real person, she fascinates me.

Could you share one thing that distinguishes you from most other people?

I am ridiculously adaptable and flexible. Meaning I am honestly the easiest going person I've ever come in contact with. I do not get stressed out and I stay extremely calm in crazy situations.

What is the most valuable lesson you have learned in life?

To be humble and appreciate all that is given to you in life.

Have you traveled? Where has life taken you so far?

Yes, I recently went to México and Jamaica. I also spent a summer in southern Ontario and another summer on the Oregon coast.

Out of the places you have been to, which was your favorite and why?

Honestly my favourite was the Oregon coast. Everyone needs to go there. It is absolutely beautiful!

What (non-AU) book are you reading now? Could you describe the book? Would you recommend it?

I just finished *Amish Celebrations* by Beth Wiseman. It is a fantastic collection of four short novels. I am fascinated by the Amish way of life. The book was very entertaining, and I would recommend it. Next up is *The Night Circus*. It looks like it should be a good read.

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

On Why Racism is Still a Thing and What to Do About It



Wanda Waterman

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Some people may have the misconception that racism is over and done with and so we don't need to worry our pretty little heads about it. The horrific crimes perpetrated by human beings against each other out of a sense of racial superiority are things of the past, and racism no longer exists except among a few narrow and ignorant people with whom we hope never to associate.

But lately it's been hard to ignore the signs. Every now and then something on the news or in our reading gobsmacks us with the harsh reality that racism is still thriving and that no amount of clever reasoning, open-mindedness, or enlightening entertainment can staunch its spread. And it doesn't take many ignorant marginalized people to do a tremendous amount of harm.

Besides, racism isn't just growing among the poor and uneducated. Racism appears among all classes, and wherever you find it you'll also find

some befuddled way of justifying it. But in the end the justifications are somehow all-of-a-piece.

The High Cost of Abolition

The BBC's recent documentary, *Britain's Forgotten Slave Owners*, is an illuminating account of the struggle to end slavery among British slave owners in the colonies. As hard as the abolitionists fought with the fervour of their righteous cause, the anti-abolitionists mounted a valiant defense, and despite that, in the end, slavery was judged unlawful in Great Britain and the colonies, the slave owners can be said to have won.

How? Because they demanded and received payouts to "compensate" them for the loss of every slave they owned, payouts that left them set for life and beyond. Indeed, many successful British businesses today were built on the fortunes gained from these compensation payments. (UCL Department of <u>History</u>)

And what were the freed slaves given to make amends for the terrible wrongs done them and to help set them up in productive independent livelihoods? Zip. If even a fraction of the payouts had been set aside to compensate freed slaves for the loss of their liberty they would at least have had a fighting chance at becoming the economic equals of their former owners. Somehow that just didn't seem important at the time.

Racism Historically Rooted in Slavery

Before slavery there's little historical record of racism toward blacks. There were people with black African ancestry holding wealth and positions of power all over Europe, and blacks figured in works of literature and art. Racism against blacks as we know it today is, I believe, firmly rooted in the propaganda generated by slave owners to justify slavery, to themselves and to the world. Tracts, books, cartoons and many other forms of media were created to deny the negro slave's depth of humanity and to denigrate blacks as stupid, lazy, ugly, and beastlike. This delusion about the inherent inferiority of blacks was propagated with such zeal because it was the most effective means of justifying slavery. Believing that black Africans were subhuman probably helped assuage the guilt for treating them like animals.

So Why is it Still Around?

Which brings us around to the question of why racism persevered after slavery had been abolished. There are several answers, but I believe they're all quite simple: 1) The recipients of slavery-generated capital still need to justify the fact that they've gotten rich off of dirty money, 2) the power still held by whites in the West can only be preserved if other ethnic groups can be denigrated, 3) non-whites are still being exploited as workers, and employer guilt wants appeasing, and 4) those areas of government and big business responsible for neglecting the needs of poor citizens use racist propaganda to deflect hostility from themselves and onto non-whites.

APA Style and What Students Need to Know

Tues, Dec 3, 1:00 to 2:30 pm MST Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Graduate Studies <u>www.eventbrite.ca/e/apa-style-and-what-</u> <u>students-need-to-know-tickets-</u> <u>82842422917</u> Register online at above link

Seasonal Cheer - Ottawa

Tues, Dec 3, 5:00 to 7:30 pm EST Prohibition Public House, 337 Somerset St West, Ottawa ON In person, Hosted by AU <u>news.athabascau.ca/events/seasonal-cheerottawa-2019</u> RSVP online at above link

Live chat - Doctorate in Business Administration

Wed, Dec 4, 2:00 to 3:00 pm MST Online Hosted by AU Faculty of Business <u>news.athabascau.ca/events/live-chat-</u> <u>doctorate-in-business-administration-</u> <u>20191204</u> Access through above link

AU Has a Library? Intro to Library Resources and Services

Wed, Dec 4, 4:00 to 5:00 pm MST Online Hosted by AU Library <u>library.athabascau.ca/orientations.html</u> No pre-registration necessary

Seasonal Cheer - Kitchener-Waterloo

Wed, Dec 4, 5:00 to 7:30 pm EST Nick & Nat's Uptown 21, 21 King St North, Waterloo ON In person, Hosted by AU <u>news.athabascau.ca/events/seasonal-cheerkitchener-waterloo</u> RSVP online at above link

Seasonal Cheer - Toronto

Thurs, Dec 5, 5:00 to 7:30 pm EST University Club of Toronto, Main Dining Room, 380 University Ave, Toronto ON In person, Hosted by AU <u>news.athabascau.ca/events/seasonal-cheer-</u> <u>toronto-2019</u> RSVP online at above link

All events are free unless otherwise noted

Of course, all of this can be summed up quite easily:

"For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs." [I Timothy 6:10 NIV]

Years ago, an economics student told me that all of racism was based on the drive to build capital, as Marx taught. I resented the claim; I felt it minimized the horror of racism, and I couldn't quite grasp that such a malignant social illness could be founded on something so comparatively benign as a love of wealth.

I've since come full circle; I find the historical evidence is damning, not so much for wealth itself as for those willing to compromise morality to get it. Racism is perhaps the ugliest symptom in the disease of avarice, and shows up how evil avarice is.

Maybe if we can remember this we'll be a little less likely to idolize those willing to stoop for acquisition's sake, those willing to justify labour abuses and environmental destruction in the name of the free market. But why did we ever think they were all that? Are they really better than you and me, or is that just what they wanted us to believe so they could go on stooping and acquiring? You tell me.

Additional References

Manjapra, Kris. "When Will Britain Face up to It's Crimes Against Humanity", in *The Guardian*. Retrieved from: <u>https://www.theguardian.com/news/2018/mar/29/slavery-abolition-compensation-when-will-britain-face-up-to-its-crimes-against-humanity</u>

UCL Department of History. Legacies of British Slave Ownership. Database. Retrieved from: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/commercial/

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

Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: Digital Excellence Scholarship

Sponsored by: iGotcha

Deadline: December 1, 2019

Potential payout: \$1000

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be Canadian or U.S. residents, and enrolled in college or university.

What's required: A two-stage process: first, submit a message to introduce yourself and describe your passion and involvement in the digital world. Applicants passing the initial screening will be invited to submit a 500-word essay on a topic to be provided.

Tips: Include proof of enrollment with your initial message.

Where to get info: igotchamedia.com/en/igotcha-digital-excellence-scholarship/

Porkpie Hat Down with the Foodies



Darjeeling Jones

Have you ever felt as though you were born in the wrong time period? I thought so! Me too. From my taste in music, fashion, and architecture to my views on political correctness, there are any number of ways in which I feel I am struggling upstream against the prevailing temporal currents. I have an anachronistic soul, completely out-of-touch with the zeitgeist.

One way in which this is brought home to me again and again is this whole undying obsession with foodie Of course, there have always been culture. gourmands, gourmets, connoisseurs and snobs. But in the past, I feel that those with deep interest and knowledge of the subject were specialists in a somewhat rarefied and esoteric area of knowledge, much like folks with an abiding passion for orchids, art deco lamps, 1970s jazz fusion, or French symbolist poetry. Taken in this spirit, I even enjoy listening to or reading about arcane gastronomical lore. (For instance, my copy of Between Meals: An Appetite for Paris, written by the wonderful pre- and post-Second World War New Yorker food critic, A.J. Liebling, is one of the most dog-eared and pored-over books on my shelves. Now, *there* was someone who could write about food in an engaging way.) Nowadays, though,

what with my plumber, my hairdresser, and my dental hygienist prattling on about "amusebouche," "mirepoix," "coulis," and "artisanal-whatever". I can't even ...

Don't get me wrong, I do enjoy a good meal, and I know my way around the kitchen. It's sort of my happy place on a Friday or Saturday night: music blasting, strip loins on the grill, the sweet smell of garlic roasting, blender whipping up its margarita magic. And, like most people, I enjoy a fancy meal in a restaurant whenever I can afford it; a perfect bordelaise sauce or an elegant duck cassoulet are a gift from the heavens. But, overall, I just don't give enough of a damn about food to be constantly analyzing it or posting pictures of every trendy forkful. I feel the same way about my chefs as I feel about my mechanics: I'm glad they do what they do, but I don't want to idolize them, emulate them, or cop their jargon.

And I don't even understand the point of wine, especially if beer and / or hard liquor are readily available. How can these self-proclaimed wine snobs make such ballsy claims about being able to sniff out a certain type of herb that wafted over the vineyards during a particular growing season. Do they know what those vineyards were fertilized with? How come they can't smell *that*? There may be the occasional nasal Rain Man or two out there, but can most people really tell the difference between one red wine and another? I'm pretty sure I could stir some food colouring into a Chardonnay and convince most people that it's Beaujolais.

Of course, I am willing to entertain other perspectives. Perhaps I am simply grumpy, churlish, and narrow-minded about all this. Nothing is more likely, and it's not exactly an unpopular theory amongst my circle of family and friends. What do you think, Dear Reader? I would love to have you weigh in on the issue. Have at it. And bon appetit.

The Fit Student What to Give when You've Got Nothing



If you've got no gift to give—or even to receive—for Christmas, it doesn't mean

Some of the richest families are the poorest. Rich in heart, not dollars. Dolly Parton's song <u>Coat of Many Colors</u> highlights how a raggedy coat sewn with love can bring magic to a child. <u>Paul Friedman</u> talks about how some of the happiest couples are amongst the poorest. People who have <u>near death</u> <u>experiences (NDEs)</u> report that the little acts of kindness—not the big things mattered most in their "life review." The most meaningful treasures are wrapped within your heart.

But what are these heartfelt gifts?

you're not rich.

Little acts matter, like smiling at a stranger or helping an animal. Virginia

Reeves, author of *Be Kind and Generous*, says, "A smile, a kind word, a willingness to listen, and an encouraging remark are within the realm of all of us" (10%). For example, she says you can "watch for and express out loud the special gifts, traits, or talents of other people" (22%). You can also encourage "positive self-esteem in people. This means you build up someone's feelings of worth and resist the temptation to give unwanted or unnecessary advice" (6%). As well, you can "affirm ... that you firmly believe in their potential ... that you believe in their dreams ... that whatever they are choosing to pursue is possible" (14%).

But what if you give heartfelt gifts but get nothing in return?

Take comfort: giving without expectation is one of the purest forms of love. And you can give to yourself—and your loved ones—plenty of free spiritual gifts. These gifts can be given by learning how to love unconditionally.

Once you learn to love unconditionally, extend that love to your higher power. Follow the teachings of it. Christians, for example, turn the other cheek, forgive people, treat others as they wish to be treated, love their neighbors, see the best in others, go the extra mile, and serve others. But, Christian or not, we all gain when we strive to think like a saint, act like saint, feel like a saint—in short, become a saint—according to <u>Paul Friedman</u>. To grow more saint-like, ensure your every thought and deed is driven by pure motives. If not, change your thoughts and deeds. It takes constant effort. Anything magnificent in life takes constant effort. That's the secret to rewarding relationships.

But what if you've got so little this Christmas that your belly aches with hunger?

Again, take comfort. Once, when I went to sleep hungry, God fed me a buffet during my dream. French toast and cheese—my cravings that night—filled my plate. And a single mother reports the impossible: that <u>an angel fed her and her children a Thanksgiving dinner</u>—when they were stricken with starvation. The day after the meal, the single mother went to thank the angel. But

the hotel staff stated the angel's room had been barren for months. Not one piece of furniture. The single mother, deeply moved, later set up *The Angel Network* to help families in need.

But what if no angels or buffet dreams feed you this Christmas?

You'll still get your spiritual fill. Meditate on a meal you'll someday share with your positive higher power. In the end, I believe, you'll be served a buffet of pure love.

So, if Christmas is barren, look to your soul for your worthiest gifts.

References

Reeves, Virginia. (n.d.). Be Kind and Generous: Affect and Influence, Surprise with Cleverness, Start a Ripple Effect, Treat Yourself Well, Share Happiness. E-book.



Course Exam

Brittany Daigle

<u>ASTR 205</u> (Universe—The Ultimate Frontier) is a three-credit introductory astronomy and astrophysics course that describes the universe as we now understand it, explains how our current understanding came about, and shows how the scientific method forms the basis for both the tools and the theories of astronomy. This course has no prerequisites and has a <u>Challenge for Credit option</u> if students are interested. ASTR 205 is offered as an individualized online study with a video component.

Students should note that registration into AST 205 includes an e-textbook, a telecourse student guide, and a spectrum viewer to view the video component of the course. Supplementary video lessons are available as streaming videos through the course website. Alternatively, the videos can be borrowed as DVDs from the Athabasca University Library.

Universe—The Ultimate Frontier is made up of five parts: the sky, the stars, the universe of galaxies, the solar system, and life. There are also two assignments that weigh ten percent each, two multiple-choice quizzes worth ten percent each, four short-answer quizzes weighing a total of twenty percent, and a final examination for forty percent. Throughout this course students will learn about topics such as light and how it carries information to us, how stars group together into galaxies, how galaxies are distributed, and the characteristics and origins of the planets and other bodies in our solar system. To receive credit for ASTR 205, students must achieve a course composite mark of at least a "D" or fifty percent and a grade of at least fifty percent on the final examination.

The final examination for this course must be taken online with an AU-approved exam invigilator at an approved invigilation centre. It is your responsibility to ensure your chosen invigilation centre can accommodate online exams. For a list of invigilators who can accommodate online exams, visit the <u>Exam Invigilation</u> website.

Karen Fletcher enrolled in the Bachelor of Science major in Mathematics program at Athabasca University in May of 2019 and completed ASTR 205 recently. She provides a bit of an introduction, stating "I'm from Ottawa, and I have three kids (ages 2, 4, and 6). I received a Bachelor of Arts when I was younger but as my kids will all be in school full-time in the next couple of years, I'm looking to do something a bit different, and have recently returned to school to get my Bachelor of Science in Mathematics. I work part-time designing knitting patterns for magazines and yarn companies and when I have free time I love to sew or play board games with my husband."

When asked to explain the course to students, Karen states "I loved this course. ASTR 205 is an introduction to astronomy including our solar system, the history of the universe, types of stars and other stellar objects, how telescopes work, and the history of astronomy. It was really interesting, and both the textbook and video lectures were fantastic."

As for the structure of the course, she states "There are twenty units, each with a chapter of reading, a video lecture, and some questions to work through. There are two major assignments, one involving multiple evenings of observations of the night sky an hour after twilight (so maybe do not take this in the dead of winter), and then an analysis of the movement of the moon and planets you observed. There were no minimum word counts but to answer all of the questions took me several thousand words."

Karen continues "The second assignment was to analyze a piece of popular culture for good or bad astronomy and that had a maximum of 1500 words. Then there were four short-answer "quizzes" of six questions each, which was more like an assignment. Each quiz took me about 2000 words. Then there were two multiple-choice quizzes and a multiple-choice exam. I found the multiple-choice quizzes and final exam to be very difficult. It seems the questions were taken from Pearson's Mastering Astronomy course, which does not100% line up with the content of this course (but many people who have taken that course put their study notes on Quizlet which helped me prepare enormously."

Karen would recommend this course, stating "I loved this course and I would totally recommend it with the caveat that you likely will not be able to rush through it. I would also like to see all the multiple-choice questions changed to reflect the content of the course."

As for tips and tricks, she explains to "Look up the questions from your multiple-choice quizzes on Quizlet, save the sets they are in and study those for your exam!"

When asked how communications with her tutor has been, she states "I had David Lyder for my tutor. He was friendly and approachable, and marked the quizzes pretty quickly. For the assignments, he printed out, wrote feedback on them, then mailed them to me (which is fine but I was not expecting that), so it seemed like it took a while to get the feedback but that is because it went through the mail."

Whether ASTR 205 is a degree or program requirement of yours, or the topics mentioned above are of interest to you, this course will have you learning a lot of interesting material surrounding the topic of the universe.

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

Fly on the Wall Yoga and the Rush to Enlightenment



Jason Sullivan

The practice of yoga (literally yoga translates as "the practice") would appear to go back millennia as an Indian tradition. Yet, in historical terms, what we now know in the West as yoga actually parallels, only a couple decades later, the gold rush of the Yukon. Just as modern education was wheedling its way across North America and springing up in rural schoolhouses, and just as mine claims were staked throughout the West as new veins of gold were discovered, yoga was imported to socialite parlours in big East coast cities. "Export

Yogis" distilled, in a means akin to a cultural sluice box, what the masses wanted: physical activity spliced with spiritual enlightenment. (<u>https://www.yogajournal.com/yoga-101/yoga-s-greater-truth</u>)

Back in India "postures such as those we know today...were not the dominant component" of the practice of yoga. But in early 20th Century North America, brimming as it was with "an unprecedented fervor for physical culture" the physicality of yoga fascinated and tantalized an audience hungry for the exotic. Incorporating western physical fitness regimes like wrestling, Indian teachers were more than pleased to utilize the term yoga for any "strength-building regimes" that matched the "physical culture zeitgeist". Shortly after gold was sought in the Yukon, a cultural corollary was the desire for a fit specimen of a body that would serve to bridge the Cartesian mind-body split. Like alchemists of centuries past, the mystical goal was to create gold, or a golden life. This North American "harmonial movement" led to the yoga we know today; anthropologically it's what's known as a "syncretic process" whereby different cultural beliefs combine into new and delightful forms. As this *Fly on the Wall* can attest, yoga can certainly induce a form of growth.

Between a room of silent yoga practitioners (why is yoga not termed in English "the practice" while the posture known to almost nobody as "adho mukha sadvasana" gets the name "downward dog"?) and a series of mine claims, each with their gold miners tilling asunder, there remains in common an element of silent toil. Like we at AU, slumped or erect over our desks but certainly applying our best principles of studious practice to construct edifices of academic erudition and clairvoyant charm, yoga and Yukon depend upon a near-silent environment.

Silence: Where Learning Rushes In

Some say that silence is compliance, but I forget who because their stream of verbiage left me feeling vaguely annoyed. True silence opens up vistas of sound where real nuggets of inspiration may emerge in the mind. Where else but in a yoga room would you find thirty specimens of enlightened vigour sharing space without chit-chat? Perhaps yoga is the ultimate placebo leading to enlightenment; if so, the gold in a gold rush functions in the same way: as a draw towards the silent appreciation of life itself. For better or worse, gold prospectors experienced a life changing

time up there in the Klondike. And, like we at AU whose personal growth is hard to chart on a report card, that process might be the biggest discovery of all.

Nature implies a certain non-symbolic, extra-linguistic, level of learning and appreciation; silence seems a language unto itself. Max Picard once claimed that "the forest is like a great reservoir of silence out of which the silence trickles in a thin, slow stream and fills the air with its brightness. The mountain, the lake, the fields, the sky – they all seem to be waiting for a sign to empty their silence onto the things of noise in the city of men." (<u>https://johnzerzan.net/articles/silence.html</u>). Far from city noise, or right in the midst of it, we at AU learn to learn in the midst of a necessary serenity. AU is about holding space for our authentic selves, not our selves that simply need a restful release from the daily grind, but our selves that yearn for new inputs of information and new combinations of ideas, our selves that hunger for the divinity within us that is piqued by the silent reading of distant discourses. Silence is a space of growing and, as yoga participants and outdoor enthusiasts attest, silence "is a primary, summoning presence of itself so it's a connection to the realm of origin" (<u>https://johnzerzan.net/articles/silence.html</u>).

Not All Time is Equally the Gold Standard

Parallel to plain comprehension (if it's ever plain as day, or pure as gold) is the fool's gold connection of time with productivity. Gold rushes are all about time accelerated. Sometimes a moment askance, where the second hand on your wristwatch (try wearing one, it makes for a different world in terms of study increments of 6, 12, 18 minutes!), is what matters most. To study, perchance to think new thoughts and uncover that holy grail of inspiration; we have all the time in the world once we realize that our destiny has arrived: AU is the dream we've been waiting for and things have panned out in our favour!

Discovering that the Sound of Silence is the Sound of Success

So next time your head feels jumbled with life activities piled on top of study demands and stern headlines of 'must-do', let's recall that there's a timeless space of silence beckoning us to relax and discover the harmony and joy of learning at learning's natural pace. As Annie Dillard said "At a certain point you say to the woods, to the sea, to the mountains, to the world, Now I am ready. Now I will stop and be wholly attentive. You empty yourself and wait, listening" (<u>https://johnzerzan.net/articles/silence.html</u>). The Yukon will always a be a potential, a captivating and distant place to the north of Alberta and BC, and yet its spirit lives within us all waiting to be discovered. Tranquillity can be fleeting as so-called progress marches on, as the Boulder, Colorado-born singer Jello Biafra intoned thirty years ago (with the help of Vancouver band DOA):

"Had enough, I moved back home
To the mountains where I belong
But ski resorts have tamed the wild west
The hills we used to roam
Now they're privately owned
And scarred with cheezy suburbs and cement
The `Tracts For Sale' sign promises
`Deer in your back yard'
If the deer somehow get past the fences and guards
And the industrial `park' "
"Looks like I'll have to move to Yellowknife!"
http://www.songlyrics.com/jello-biafra-with-d-o-a/thats-progress-lyrics/

Be it the NWT capital or Dawson City (or any other seemingly-distant point North), the key to creative discovery here in our AU life is to remember to imbue ourselves with the rush that made the journey back to school exciting to begin with. Freedom to roam, like adverts for Woodstock in 1969 that claimed there'd be plenty of open space to roam around, is both a physical and spiritual conception. For most of, sequestered in our ivory tower the better to edify our minds and acquire top marks, inhabit a sanctum of indoor silence. The essence of silence is simultaneously out in literal nature and within our inquisitive nature. Perhaps that's what we tap into, inner wellsprings of serenity, when things interlock in our mind and our coursework truly goes well. There's gold in them thar hills; our AU studies are the bounty we've been waiting for!

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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.

Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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



AthaU Facebook Group

Lindsay asks for feedback from students about how courses from AU and TRU compare; early responses suggest AU courses compare favourably. Jordynn is curious how much time to expect to devote to each AU course; plenty of great advice from students with different study styles. Kayla seeks tips on which courses similar to COMP 210 can fulfill a science requirement; a flood of tips, many of which include the word "easy."

Other posts include pen readers, APA publication manual, course syllabi, and courses CRJS 493, IDRL 308, and MGSC 301.

<u>Twitter</u>

<u>@austudentsunion</u> tweets: "Need to improve your Office skills? Looking for training on a specific program? Get FREE LinkedIn Learning access through your AU students and learn on the go! <u>https://ausu.org/services/learning/ #igo2AU</u>."

<u>@AULibArchives</u> tweets: "Missed our Wikipedia Webinar? You can find our checklist for evaluating Wikipedia articles as well as information on Wikipedia on our new Wikipedia LibGuide! <u>https://libguides.athabascau.ca/wikipedia</u> <u>#AULibrary</u> <u>#LibraryResource</u>."

Council Connection



Karlee Kapler

The October 17th council meeting was called to order at 6:34 PM. President Brandon Simmons was not in attendance initially as he was flying home from business in Toronto. The meeting attendees were informed that hewould try to call in around 7 PM. With no outstanding action items, the meeting promptly moved forward to discuss the policy revisions.

Since the last meeting, the council had seen quite a few policies that needed to be revised. The edits made to several of the policies were minimal and were done to make each concise. Most of the councillors agreed with the revisions except when it came to Policy 2.08, which governs how Council deals with meeting absences. While the rest of councillors in attendance agreed on the revisions made to this policy, Councillor Alice

Namu opposed. When *The Voice Magazine* later asked her to explain her opposition, Councillor Namu replied,

"I objected to *Policy 2.08: Council Governance Meeting Attendance* because the changes that have been made to the policy are not fair and place unreasonable demands upon councillors. According to the policy, a councillor's absence from an AUSU council or committee meeting will result in the councillor being marked as absent. This is regardless of whether a councillor provided advance notice to the president or not. Furthermore, if a councillor accrues 3 absences within the first *or* second year, the councillor's attendance and participation in the life of the AUSU is subject to discussion at the executive council meeting.

I find that this policy is too punitive and does not consider the personal emergencies that come with the challenges of juggling one's academics, career and/or academics. It does not provide a reprieve for instances in which a councillor could be ill or must deal with any other form of life emergency. Therefore, according to the current interpretation of the policy, a councillor could provide - for example - three weeks advance notice for not being able to attend a meeting and will still be marked absent. So, you are damned if you do, and damned if you don't.

Furthermore, the fact that it is up to the executive council to determine whether a councillor deserves to remain on the council or not, is a decision making process that places too much subjective decision making power to the executive council, and I am concerned this subjective decision making process has the potential of being misemployed."

I feel the point that Councillor Namu makes is fair. In the event of an emergency, or with a certain amount of notice, I think a councillor should be marked excused instead of absent. I don't believe it's fair to expect a council member to balance all their obligations perfectly all the time. It's understandable that the policy is put in place to deter those on council from missing several

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meetings, but I think the policy should be revised again to include exceptions. There was some discussion that during the pre-meeting discussion Council held, there may be a need for more revisions to this policy, so if council discusses it again at the next meeting, it will be noted in the next Council Connections article.

When asked to contribute his thoughts on Alice's comments, President Brandon Simmons stated:

"The revisions to policy 2.08 were not taken lightly, we discussed the policy at great length with council on multiple occasions and the revisions were eventually approved unanimously. We found that the old policy was not able to accomplish its original purpose of ensuring councillors were actively fulfilling their duties. The old policy could allow a councillor to give advanced notice and miss almost every meeting of their term with no consequences. At the same time, it severely penalized councillors for unexpected emergencies and faced them with harsher consequences.

Previously if you missed two meetings total an automatic motion for your removal would be placed on the next council meeting. So, someone who got into a car accident the night of a meeting and was then severely ill the following meeting would find their name up for removal. With the new policy if a councillor does miss meetings instead of having a motion directly put on a council agenda it first goes to the executive committee for review. If the councillor is fulfilling their duties and doing their best to attend meetings, then no further action is required. So, someone who runs into a couple of emergencies and did their best to notify council will have no direct action brought before them. Alternatively, if a councillor shows a consistent lack of interest in fulfilling their council duties the executive committee can put forward a motion for council to remove that individual. A 2/3 majority of council would still need to approve the motion for that councillor to be removed.

Overall the new policy is a lot less harsh for councillors who are doing what they were elected to do."

At the time of this meeting, the Get out the Vote campaign was doing exceptionally well. Since September 15, 2019, AUSU, along with CASA, had been working to get as many students as possible to pledge to vote in the Canadian Federal Election on October 21, 2019. To establish initiative in students, AUSU had developed a competition in which students who pledged to vote would automatically be entered to win a free undergraduate course.

Council was informed that the goal to have at least one student in every province pledge to vote had been met, but the goal set for number of pledges had not. The committee was hoping for at least 200 more pledges. The success of that goal will be discussed at the next council meeting in November. It was noted that the momentum of this campaign was fierce, and a lot of hard work had been put into it. Athabasca University had surpassed other schools greatly and had an excellent approach with the number of individuals from staff to executives that jumped right in with all-hands-on deck. The overall success of this campaign and competition will be discussed at the council meeting in November, once all the numbers were in and finalized.

President Brandon Simmons joined the meeting at approximately 7:30PM and had some interesting news to discuss in the AUSU Executive report. In October, there had been a graduate research conference and undergraduate students were invited to attend. For the first time, it was promoted to undergraduate students who are interested in pursuing graduate research. This

invitation was an opportunity for these students to meet graduate students already doing so and gain a little insight into what graduate studies are like at Athabasca University.

After a quick discussion about that, President Simmons went on to elaborate on a virtual co-op program being launched in the Faculty of Business. He noted that it is planned to be a requirement for the Bachelor of Commerce program in the future, and it will allow students to interact in simulated work environment, dealing with simulated conflicts and clients. This type of program is the first of its kind at Athabasca University, and AU is excited about the launch. President Simmons has been invited to participate in initial testing and is looking forward to providing the council with updates.

If the course and the technology prove to be successful there is a potential of expanding it to other programs, which would open more opportunities in the future for AU students! He noted it would be quite beneficial for students who are studying in areas of Canada or internationally where it wasn't possible to gain work experience in a regular setting. This will be another unique way to make education accessible and flexible to students at AU. The October 2019 meeting came to an end around 7:41 PM. The next meeting was held on November 21, 2019, and The Voice apologizes for the delay in getting this report out, but wanted to ensure we had full information on the councillor absence issue. Look for the report for the November meeting out very soon.

The Future of Technology

Francesca Carone

What will the future hold? No one is sure about anything, but I am pretty sure that, unless we get attacked with an EMP weapon, technology will play a very important role. From online schooling and exams, to connecting with doctors and controlling your appliances, technology shapes our society.

Currently, we're using technology to do simple banking, calculation, shopping, tasks like completing bachelor communicating, and master's degrees, and others. But what will technology look like in the future? Well, according to author Daniel Franklin, executive editor of "The Economist", food will be one of the most important needs and tasks in the future. With population growing the way it does, keeping up with food demands will be tricky. So, he believes that technology will be better utilized in farming. With solar and wind becoming more popular, he also believes that most homes will be power banks

instead of being on the grid. Computer capacity will grow and more people will store information on clouds (Morgan, online).



Also, according to some articles I read, virtual reality will continue to grow and we may eventually be able to control all our appliances and electronics from one single device (Colon <u>& Grifith, online</u>). They also mention about how High Definition will get even better, and we will see images that cannot be distinguished from real life using "synchronized cameras surrounding a field of view or generated by 3D rendering equipment that then must be projected in a free-floating format" (Coughlin, online). The use of wires may disappear in order to make the TV screen appear to be invisible (Galeon, online). I like to think that most people would be able to afford a robot friend or robot worker in their homes, but, just like how computers were not affordable when they first came out, so too are robots, now. New technologies in TV's are also booming as well. Things like where you don't have to scroll for a channel, but just tell your TV where to go (like Echo and Siri technology). I also think more and more students will be using computers for high school, college, and university courses, not like we do now, but increasing to where we wont even need a teacher for each classroom anymore. Already, many more professions are accepting online degrees and I think the credibility of online schools will continue to improve as the technology does and becomes more used in early schooling.

No one would have believed 50 years ago that we would have a computer in our pockets, but here we are. It has not taken very long since the emergence of the first IBM computer in 1955—less than 70 years—and we have evolved so much. The future seems limitless. I believe we may eventually reach a point where we have everything we need and ever want. According to an article by Ezra Klein, *"Everybody knows* technological innovation is reshaping the world faster than ever before. The proof is in our pockets." He continues, "Data from the <u>American Time Use Survey</u> suggests that, on average, Americans spend about 23 percent of their waking hours watching television, reading, or gaming. With Netflix, HDTV, Kindles, iPads, and all the rest, these are certainly activities that look *drastically* different in 2015 than they did in 1995 and can easily create the impression that life has been revolutionized by digital technology."(Klein, online).

Many believe that technology has made many people more anti-social or removed from society. I, for one am happy to use technology because it makes life easier. If it helps us increase knowledge, stay connected with others, help people, and get jobs, I am okay with it.

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The Study Dude Make Memorization Part of your Higher Calling



Whenever I read study tips, I long to start a new degree program. I feel this deep, immortal craving, like a voice beyond human perceptibility pleading—almost toying—with me, offering the promise of a greater purpose.

Rest assured. Your education is part of a higher calling. Some academic fields lead to rich spiritual service: ones such as counseling, nursing, teaching, and ministry. But I believe all disciplines have potential for immense beauty. Mathematics' fractals contain images—like

butterflies or snowflakes—that repeat for eternity. Communications Studies looks at how spaces, like nightclubs versus libraries, impact our life journeys. Biology looks at the need for survival of each of your cells: tiny life forces dependent on you for their optimal health.

Seek out the wonder in whatever you study. Find the greater meaning. Learn how you can contribute to the welfare of other beings. That's your higher calling.

But why seek the positives? A positive mindset can catapult you to top performance. In other words, turn your studies into fun to motivate you. For example, "You can find a way to make the study enjoyable and interesting. One thing can change depending on the way we look at it. If our attitude is gray and we feel that the study is like a burden on our shoulders, everything will become more difficult for you. On the other hand, if we make a change of attitude we can see the tasks that lie ahead with different eyes" (58%).

And there are tricks to making memorization part of your higher calling. Specifically, there are two terrific techniques for memorization that can tweak you toward enlightenment.

The first technique is called mental palace. "If you are a fan of the Sherlock TV series, you will have heard his protagonist talk more than once about his mental palace. This method consists of using visualization as a way of remembering information. To do this you must imagine a room, multiple rooms or even a palace, in which you store the information. In each part of that place, you store the information and organize it depending on its category. You must imagine walking through that room or palace to deposit the information and picking it up whenever you need it" (45%). But why settle for a dingy room or an earthly palace? Make your mental place heavenly. I've heard near death experience accounts of visitations into heaven. Some of these heavenly places contain crystal palaces with grass and flowers so alive that they communicate with you telepathically. But maybe that's over the top for you. If so, imagine a heavenly jungle where the colors blind you with beauty, where everything is safe, where nothing can ever harm you. Wouldn't you rather study in profound beauty rather than despair?

The second technique is called create a story. "Create a story consists in uniting concepts in a way similar to a mental image that you create in your head. Let's say that you are creating a story

in your mind that will help you memorize the concepts you are studying better, with this technique you can memorize the sequence of the images and the order of the elements to study more effectively" (47%). My greatest stories are where I care for another being. In these stories my soul becomes one with the person I help. Perhaps you could weave facts into a story that helps someone on the road of life. A velocity problem, for instance, could help a paramedic arrive at the site of your loved one's heart attack, resurrecting your loved one just in time. By making such stories, you prepare yourself for grad studies when the "so what?" question gets asked. If your thesis holds a story of helping others, you've answered the "So what?" beautifully.

And while you memorize in your mental heaven, shower the people you love with love. Then create stories that stir up that love, answering the "So what?" question.

That's what I call higher education.

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The Not-So Starving Student DIY Asian Dumplings from Scratch



For many of my close friends, the first item ordered from the appetizer menu is gyoza, or dumplings. These delicious morsels of filling wrapped in a thin dough are one of my favorite items to make for a family Ever wondered how to make dinner. authentic Asian dumplings in your own kitchen? Look no further, because we have a fantastic recipe to share with AU students. Not only is it fun to make, it also creates an excellent bonding opportunity among friends and family. As a child, I recall the numerous times our family would gather multiple generations together to speed up preparation. It not only united multiple generations together but also created a tradition that would be passed on for many decades to come. The ingredients are simple, and the cooking process is even

simpler. If you're into trying new recipes, this would be a fantastic Asian cuisine to try at home.

There are two key steps to making an outstanding Asian dumpling. First, creating the perfect texture of dough and then blending the right ingredients for the perfect filling. Personally, I find that using pre-minced meat for filling to be perfect as it significantly cuts down the amount of work required.

Tools:

- Rolling pin
- Meat blender or hand-held blender if you're using pre-minced meats like beef or chicken

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Xin Xu

Dough Ingredients:

- 500 grams of all purpose flour
- 250 mL of room temperature water

Filling Ingredients: (makes 4 cups)

- There are various fillings possible, so it's okay to be creative! I recall my fillings have ranged from pork and chives to vegetarian
- Pick your favorite protein and use 3.5 cups of the amount
- Half a cup of your favorite veggie
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp pepper
- 1 tsp garlic



Filling preparation steps:

- 1. Use 3.5 cups of your favorite protein blended with a meat blender (ideal to use pre-minced protein)
- 2. Add 0.5 cups of your favorite grated or thinly sliced vegetables. My favorite vegetables to use in dumplings include chives and cabbage.
- 3. Mix the protein and vegetable evenly
- 4. Add 1 tbsp of soy sauce, 1 tsp of sugar and 1 tsp of minced garlic
- 5. Add salt, pepper to taste
- 6. Mix all ingredients evenly
- 7. Set filling aside to marinade for 30 minutes



Dough Preparation steps:

1. Use a large bowl to prepare the dough. Add 500 g of flour and mix with water slowly

2. Mix the water and flour evenly and begin kneading firmly

3. When the dough feels firm, add a pinch of flour to ensure a non-stick surface

4. Transfer the dough to a flat surface and allow it to sit for 2 hours

5. After resting the dough, the texture should be soft

Making the dumplings:

1. Slice $\frac{1}{3}$ of the dough off and place the rest back into the big bowl

2. Roll the dough into a stick like shape and ensure even thickness of the stick

3. Cut the stick of dough into 10 smaller dough bits 4. Dust off the sides of the small dough bits and

press using a rolling pin into a round disc of dough

- 5. Continue to roll the disc of dough until a flat 2 mm thin pancake shape is achieved
- 6. Add 1 tsp of filling to the dough and fold the thin pancake-sized dough into a half moon shape
- 7. Seal the ends of the half moon shape with a small amount of water (similar to adding a drop of water to seal an envelope)
- 8. Set finished dumpling aside and repeat steps 5 through 7 until all dough has been used up.

Cooking the dumpling

- 1. In a boiling pot of water, add all dumplings at once
- 2. Allow dumplings to simmer at medium heat for 10 minutes
- 3. After 10 minutes, scoop dumplings out from water
- 4. Serve!

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





The Defense of Marriage

Dear Barb:

My husband and I have been married 15 years and we keep having this reoccurring problem. He is from a big loving, close family. I have always felt like an outsider, with my inlaws, but I'm not sure they do it on purpose. What really drives me crazy is when my in-laws are critical of me and my husband sides with them instead of me. For example, at times my sister-in-law makes negative comments on how I raise my sons, and often criticizes my housekeeping. If my husband is nearby, he will agree with her and comment that maybe I should try my sister-in-law's suggestions. This infuriates me! I have told my husband how I feel, but he still continues to do it. We have had numerous arguments about this, but he says that's just the way his family is. I think a husband should defend his wife, before his family, do you agree? Anxious to hear your opinion.

Thanks, Tara.

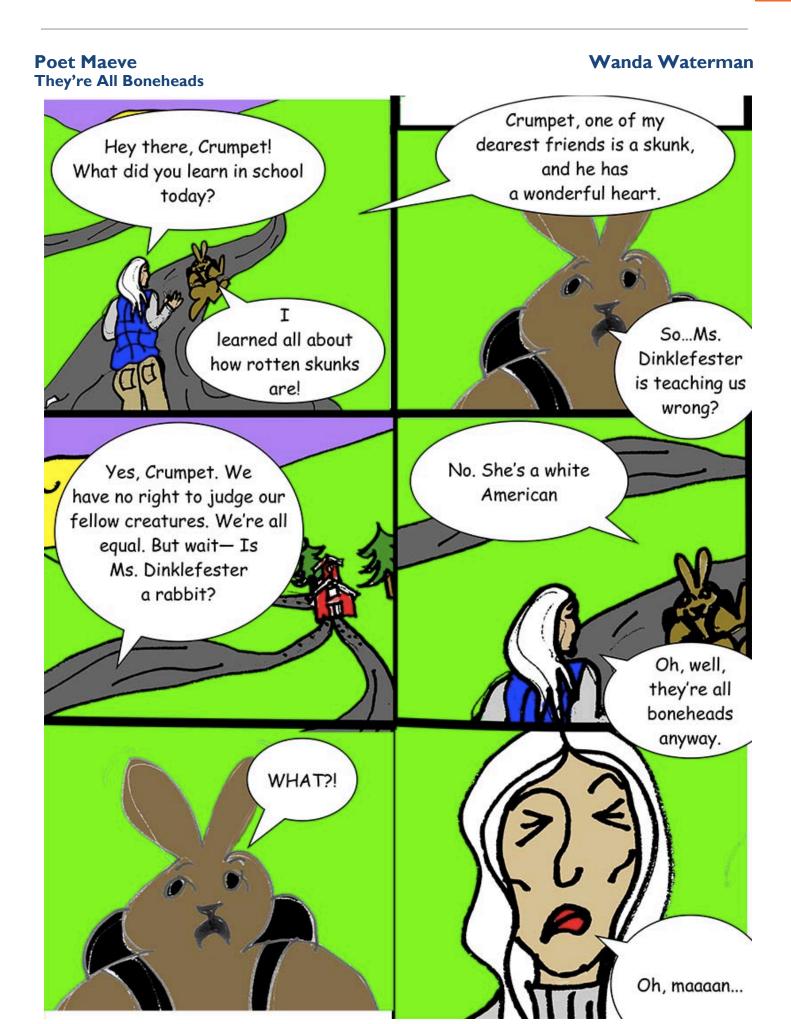
Hi Tara:

I agree with you that a husband should support his wife at all times, even if he sees some merit in the criticism that is being directed at her. This would be an issue that would be discussed privately, not in front of the person doing the criticizing. A marriage is a union dependant on loyalty and trust. Either partner should be able to trust that their spouse has their back. If a husband doesn't agree with his wife in public, he should at least take the time to listen to her point

of view they are alone. On the other hand, if you have a mother-in-law who is speaking negatively about you or your parenting skills or whatever, and she does this on a regular basis, your husband may not want to get into constant confrontations with his mother, as this will lead to stress at most family gatherings. An alternative would be for your husband to quickly change the subject, as this is a way of avoiding giving weight to what his mother is saying. By not acknowledging the criticism your mother-in-law should be able to accept the fact that no one is interested in that kind of behaviour.

On the other hand if your husband is joining in with the negative behaviour that is being directed toward you, it may be something worth delving into further. Your husband may have a deep resentment towards you or your marriage, or he may feel intimated by you and see this as an opportunity for you to be put in your place. If either of these issues arises, you may consider having a deeper discussion with your husband and perhaps looking into marriage counselling. Following is an interesting quote I came across and it just about says it all: "A husband who can't manage to recognize that an attack on his wife is an attack on him is missing the heart of what family is all about." Hope this helps Tara.

Email your questions to <u>voice@voicemagazine.org</u>. 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.



AU Athabasca University SU Students' Union

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

IMPORTANT DATES

- Dec 10: Deadline to register in a course starting Jan 1
- Dec 10: <u>AUSU Bylaw Revision Consultation</u>
- Dec 15: Jan degree requirements deadline
- Dec 16: <u>AUSU Public Council Meeting</u>
- Dec 20 Jan 2: <u>AUSU Holiday Closure</u>
- Dec 31: <u>Deadline to apply for course extension for Feb</u>

AUSU Bylaw Revisions

AUSU council will be voting on revised bylaws during the January council meeting to make it more accessible for Athabasca University students to run in the AUSU election. AUSU is proposing these changes now so that students who want to run in the upcoming 2020 AUSU election can do so without worrying about requirements that have been a barrier in the past for otherwise qualified members.

View the proposed bylaw changes online here.

In accordance with the current bylaws, AUSU will arrange numerous ways for the membership to provide feedback on the new bylaws.

Ways to Provide Feedback:

- 2 Membership Consultations by teleconference
 - o <u>Dec 10, 2019 at 5:30pm MT</u>
 - o Jan 10, 2020 at 5:30pm MT
- 2 Public Readings of the Bylaws
 - o <u>Dec 16, 2019 at 5:30pm MT</u>
 - o Jan 16, 2020 at 6:30pm MT
- Online Forum for discussion

Upon a successful vote at the second public reading on January 16, the proposed amendments to the bylaws will become official.

Visit our website <u>here</u> for more information on the bylaw revisions and membership consultations.

Please email governance@ausu.org with any questions.



AUSU Open Mic Podcast -How Students are Making Mental Health a Priority

AUSU chats with fellow students Cole Baker and Natasha Donahue about mental health and tips for taking care of yourself while studying.

Check out our latest podcast here.

Starring: SAMU VP External Cole Baker, AUSU VP External and Student Affairs Natasha Donahue, Governance and Advocacy Coordinator Duncan Wojtaszek

Open Mic is also available for free on <u>Spotify</u>, <u>Apple Podcasts</u>, <u>Google Podcasts</u>, and <u>Pocket Casts</u> (search "AUSU Podcast").



AUSU Pharmacy Discounts

Did you know the AU Students' Union provides members with discounts on prescription costs, pharmacy purchases, and free prescription delivery, across Canada?

Find out more on our website <u>here</u>!



CLASSIFIEDS

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THE VOICE

301 Energy Square - 10109 - 106 St NW - Edmonton AB - T5J 3L7 Ph: 855.497.7003

PublisherAthabasca University Students' UnionEditor-In-ChiefJodi CampbellManaging EditorKarl Low

Regular ColumnistsBarb Godin, Barbara Lehtiniemi,
Jason Sullivan, Wanda Waterman, Xin Xu and others!

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