



# THE VOICE

Vol 28 Issue 36 2020-09-11

## AU Graduands

Interviews from the Other Side

## Digital Accessibility

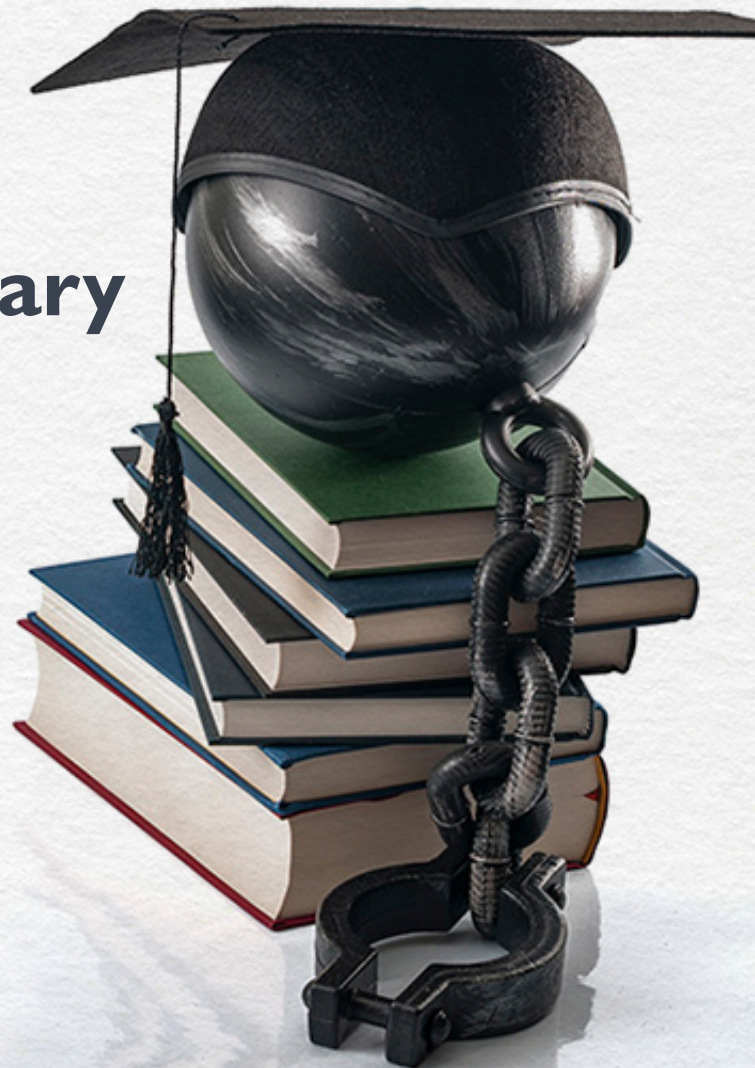
Education in Incarceration

## Reimagining the Library

Services in COVID-19

*Plus:*

*Four Tips for Productivity  
Council Meeting Report  
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](http://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

### 9/11

Karl Low



9/11. It's a number, a date, of great significance to those of us in North America, though even now it begins to fade into memory. It seems impossible that the terrorist attacks that woke the United States to their vulnerability to international terrorism were 18 years ago already. Today, there are adults alive who never knew a world that included the World Trade Centre, or airline flights with a full-sized bottle of shampoo.

I remember it being a reasonably nice day here in Calgary, we turned the TV on, mid-morning, and didn't leave its side until the dark of night, engrossed in the developing and looping coverage of the event. We saw the rush of the dust cloud pouring down the street a hundred times or more, watched rapt and helpless as the news gave us so much speculation and so little information on what had happened, what was happening. The terrorists had bombs, no, box cutters, the President knew ahead of time, didn't know at all. They hailed from Iraq, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, from within the US itself. We questioned what it meant for the world at large, the huge behemoth that is the US jabbed awake from its slumber. What would be the reaction now

that it seemed what European and Middle-Eastern countries dealt with on a regular basis might be happening here. Would there be a great coming together? A great fragmenting?

Turns out, in the long run, it meant very little but an acceleration of the trends that were already happening. Today, an explosion tears apart a large portion of Beirut and the news loses interest after a day or two. It's over there, not here, and it has no "side". Besides, over here we've got Trump admitting he's downplayed the seriousness of the virus purposely (although I'm not sure what the story is here, is it simply that they now have proof of what most thinking people knew?) We've got an ex-finance minister in breach of campaign regulations, a new leader of a conservative party that looks ever-so-much like the old one. You know, things that the ideologues love to scream at each other over about, driving hits, driving views, driving statistics that can be sold to advertisers to convince them to try to convince us to buy the things that a vast majority of us would never think of purchasing and an even vaster majority won't ever need.

If anything, the great awakening that some thought would come from 9/11 has almost turned into more of a soporific. We, and to a greater extent the United States, have simply used the events of 9/11 to add a level of existential threat that makes all these political arguments seem more important than they likely are. Social justice warrior, those who would fight for social justice, has become an epithet. As if someone who would waste time fighting for equality is missing the bigger picture of the danger that is presented by the always awaiting "other" outside our borders.

Had you asked me ten years ago whether the attack on the Twin Towers was successful, and I would have said "On the whole, no. We still go about our daily lives, we still interfere in other nations where it suits our ends. There is no terror." Ask me today, and I'm not so sure. It's been a very slow burn but the bombing of the towers seems to have lit a fuse within the western world, a fuse that is fed with our own fears against those not like us, whether that be in how they look, how they vote, or who they want to help first. Fortunately, what lies at the end of the fuse is up to us. Enjoy the read!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karl', with a stylized, flowing script.



## The Other Side

### Interviews with AU Graduands

*The Voice Magazine* will be regularly featuring upcoming and recent AU grads, as well as alums. If you would like us to showcase your journey in an upcoming article, feel free to reach out! This month, we were able to catch up with recent grad Lorri Lyster and recent alum Laura Nelson.

#### Lorri Lyster – Bachelor of Arts Anthropology Concentration



Halkirk, Alberta's Lorri Lyster graduated from AU's 3-year Bachelor of Arts Anthropology Concentration this past spring. Lorri's meandering journey to AU is quite unique: "I worked from right out of high school. I also had a band and dabbled in music for a few years. Then, in my thirties, I went back to my farm roots and began raising sheep, something I have been doing now for over 20 years. So what brought me to AU was that desire to educate myself, to prove that I could do it, and, as trite as it may sound, I wanted to LEARN things!" She initially chose AU for a similar reason as many students, stating, "When I decided to get my degree, I was working. Online self-directed study was really my only option. I looked at AU and immediately felt that it was going to work for me: the continuous intake, the work-at-your-own-pace system, it was just a perfect fit."

Lorri would definitely recommend the program to other students; her favourite part "was anything to do with ancient peoples—evolution, archaeology, etc., and also physical anthropology." Lorri especially loved

ANTH405: Special Topics in Archeology, stating, "I wrote a research paper about Neolithic Orkney. I am quite proud of that paper! I have been to Orkney twice, and I even used photos in the paper that I took myself. That paper pushed me!"

Lorri was quite successful during her time at AU, winning several awards, including the AU Award for Mature Undergraduate Student, the AUSU Balanced Student Award, the AU Award in Anthropology, and CASCA Outstanding Graduating Anthropology Student Award. When asked about how she stayed motivated, focused, and inspired during her time at AU, she stated, "I hadn't continued my education after high school, and I should have. At this point in my life, I just wanted to prove that I could do it. And *nail* it. Not completing the program was simply not an option!"

She offered current AU students a bit of expertise: "Unless you are one of those people who can dabble, and who can start something and not finish it and not have any qualms about it, then just push yourself. Yes, there will be times when you feel like you will never be finished, there will be times when your motivation is zero and you would rather do just about anything else than get to work on that class or that paper. So remember why you started, and use that to motivate yourself." As for future students considering online education, Lorri advised, "Embrace it! It is the future! And where else can you go to class in your PJs with a coffee and a cat?"

Natalia Iwanek



With no personal regrets, Lorri did wish that AU had offered the option of a Forensic Anthropology class. In addition, she stated, “I think I will miss that thrill of getting marks back.” She is also a little disappointed in this year’s online Convocation, stating, “I was so looking forward to convocation! So disappointed, so I am curious to see how this virtual thing is going to play out.”

As for the future, Lorri plans to “Keep raising sheep. And Bengal kittens. I am sort of job hunting, but I am looking for the job that looks interesting to me, that will challenge me. I have plenty to do at home, especially since we now have an annual production sale that takes up an enormous amount of my time.” In a year from now, she sees herself “Getting ready for next year’s production sale. Breeding sheep. Reading all those books I never had time to read when I was working on the degree!”

As a final positive note, Lorri stated, “I rarely had a disappointing tutor. Maybe it is because I needed so little help, but for the most part, I had such great tutors! People always talk about how challenging it is to complete these classes on your own, not in a classroom setting. Well, remember that the tutors are trying to cope with scores of students, and they are also not in that classroom setting! Assignments and exams are being submitted constantly, there is no set structure. My hat is off to you, tutors!”

### **Laura Nelson – Bachelor of Arts English Concentration**



This month, *The Voice Magazine* also had the privilege to catch up with Calgary’s Laura Nelson, a recent AU alum, having graduated from a Bachelor of Arts English Concentration in April 2018.

Like many students, Laura’s journey to AU was a bit unconventional. She stated, “I started my academic journey at Mount Royal College (It’s a university now) working on an applied degree in accounting. Numbers were not my thing and I was miserable. The only classes I was enjoying were my English electives. AU had a partnership with Mount Royal then to allow me to start my degree there and be in class. I am not sure if they have that anymore. When I started working full time, it was natural for me to move online and so I continued. AU is great for flexibility and control over your own schedule.” She continued that she did take a short break as well, “and wasn’t sure I would complete my degree.

“I fell in love and we decided to get married and there was just a lot going on. After our honeymoon though, I was feeling a little bit lost in the role as a wife (I think many newlyweds go through this as they take on a new role/identity). I remember one night over a glass or two of red wine deciding that life is about creating oneself and my identity wanted to have my degree. So I came back.”



She would definitely recommend AU's English program to students "if there is a passion for reading literature, analyzing literature, and writing about literature. I really loved receiving my 'text' books with each class as they were mostly works of fiction and I was really able to add to my personal library and become a more rounded reader. It was akin to receiving an amazon.ca or an indigo box in the mail. My TBR pile was always stacked." As for her favourite class, Laura "would probably default to Children's Literature as my favorite course. The 'text' books were a lot of old friends from my childhood that I connected with from an adult perspective. I also really enjoyed Post-Colonial Lit as this course introduced me to a lot of books from perspectives other than my own, and it helped expand my empathy skills, as well as question some of the works in the typical western canon. I have a soft spot for the jazz age (my wedding was designed to have that art deco extravagance of the 1920s), so when I enrolled in the Harlem Renaissance, I felt it provided me with authors to explore other than Fitzgerald and Hemingway."

When asked if she has any advice for current AU students struggling to complete their degrees, Laura stated, "One step at a time. Get a journal to write everything you need to get done at the lowest level and start checking that list off. Once you start seeing all of the checks it builds momentum. Take breaks. Use Youtube and podcasts to help learn the concepts you are struggling with. I am also reading the *5 AM Club* right now and *The Victory Hour* has been helping me keep on track with my master's program. So this might apply to other students too." As for future students considering online educations, she stated, "If you need the flexibility, online is a great choice. If you need to develop your willpower and self-discipline muscles, online can help with that. Online education used to be the future in school, I feel like the future is now. Plus, you don't have to worry about all of those pesky germs that lurk in classrooms when you're at home."

Laura spoke briefly about her proudest moments, stating, "Like so many AU students, I worked full time and completed my studies very part time. My four-year degree took about eight years. The final stretch, I really put my all into it and learned some wicked time management skills that I am using now."

"I am mostly proud of walking the stage. I had opted out of that for my high school graduation, which had been a regret of mine." As to motivation, "Being in courses that had books I wanted to read helped with my focus 100 per cent. My true motivation was the Christian Louboutin's I promised myself I would walk the stage in. It was a necessary school expense I had to add in."

She stated that she misses the AU Facebook group, stating, "I just lurk there now and don't have a whole lot to add. I also wrote for The Voice "Minds We Meet" column and I miss interviewing students like this and getting to know new people."

Unlike this year's graduands, Laura "did attend convocation in person." She revealed that, "It was a long drive, but something that I needed to do for me." She offered advice for this year's groups, stating, "It's unfortunate that it's online this year, but it's uncontrollable. I hope those graduating create their own awesome memories - walk the grocery store aisle in a cap and gown if you need to, pay for an amazing professional photo shoot with you in love with your degree. You worked hard and while COVID-19 disrupted many plans, don't let it disrupt your joy for your accomplishments."

*Natalia Iwanek is currently completing her Bachelor of Arts in English at Athabasca University and is also a freelance editor and writer. She can be contacted at <https://www.nataliaiwanekediting.com>.*





## Reimagining the Library Library Services During COVID-19

Adrienne Braithwaite



Course *Reimagine*: “to think about again especially in order to change or improve.”

In many communities, the library embodies a unifying space transcending socio-economic boundaries. The public library doesn’t just exist as a book depository, it offers programming for all ages, printing services, room rentals, and access to free computers and Wi-Fi. For students, the university library is often a central hub for knowledge—a space for connecting and socializing with peers, studying, obtaining print and digital course materials, and accessing computer labs for homework.

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced libraries to adapt to federal and provincial health restrictions while ensuring people have access to library resources. This fall term will look quite different in terms of what services are available for students at universities across Canada. Librarians and other library employees have been working hard behind the scenes to expand digital content and enhance online presence to address the diverse needs of patrons. The library of our memories may no longer be the same and we may need to consider the possibility that, moving forward, the

library may be permanently altered to fit the everchanging needs of our society.

### Browsing and Access to Library Materials

The days of wandering through the book stacks looking for references or books of interest have been put on hold for the foreseeable future. With the health and safety of library patrons being a major priority, most public and university libraries will remain closed to browsing library materials until at least December 2020. This closure includes some of Canada’s largest university libraries: the University of British Columbia, the University of Alberta, the University of Toronto, the University of Calgary, the University of Ottawa and Dalhousie University.

However, curbside pickup is now available at many libraries, and interlibrary sharing has restarted with limited capacity. Some universities, such as the University of Alberta, have chosen to consolidate library services for the fall term and only have one curbside pickup location on campus. AU’s library offers online resources, at-home mail delivery for books and provides students with borrowing privileges from TAL (The Alberta Library) and COPPUL (Council of Prairie and Pacific University Libraries).

In many cases, late return fees were eliminated for materials borrowed immediately before the pandemic and many libraries, such as the University of Winnipeg, have advised students to keep borrowed materials until the libraries have resumed service. The recommended health guidelines for returned books during the pandemic was shortened from an initial 6 days to 72 hours. Books returned to book drops are left untouched by library staff during this time and most late fees have been eliminated to account for the delay in the check-in of books.



## In-Person Library Services

If you want to go into a library, you will likely be asked to wear a facemask (or face covering) and will notice for public health reasons, seating has been removed, plex-glass barriers have been installed, restrooms are closed, toys and games are removed from children's areas, and computer terminals are spaced 2 meters apart. The current recommended maximum occupancy for many libraries is 25 people, but some university libraries, such as the University of Toronto, have expanded occupancy to a few hundred for the fall term.

Once many provinces reached Stage 2 in their pandemic response, public library boards were allowed to use their own discretion as to when their local library reopened for in-person services. As a trustee on my local library board, I realize the decision to reopen is not easy or straightforward. Library boards must factor in local COVID-19 policies, the current number of active COVID-19 cases in their community, the needs of the community, and consider the safety of the library's employees. In addition to limiting services, libraries have also reduced their hours with some offering "Browse and Go" (Strathcona County Library) hours. Many university libraries are opening exclusively for computer labs and study space (often requiring advanced reservations), with the exception of the University of Winnipeg whose physical campus is completely closed. In-person library services vary extensively due to regional COVID-19 guidelines; therefore, I encourage you to check your local libraries and universities for updates.

## Online Resources

I mentioned earlier we may want to reimagine our vision of the library to match our new reality. Libraries are molding their services and expanding online programs as the pandemic increased the demand for e-books and online self-help resources. Libraries are responding to this need by adding webinars, expanding their e-book collections and offering virtual tutorials and reference support. AU's Information Literacy and Resource Access Librarian Jennifer Remple, recommends AU's "Talk to a Librarian" sessions on Facebook and live webinars on a variety of thought-provoking topics. The University of Toronto Libraries' online services include: RemoteLab software, "Chat with a Librarian," videoconference research consultations, and how-to videos. The University of Calgary has announced a temporary emergency access to HaithiTrust Emergency Temporary Access Service which makes over 1.2 million online titles

## AU-thentic Events Upcoming AU Related Events

### Fusion Architecture: Approach to Designing Asian Identity and Culture in Canada

Fri, Sept 11, 4:00 to 5:00 pm MDT

Online

Hosted by RAIC Centre for Architecture  
at AU and Accès Asie

[news.athabasca.ca/events/fusion-architecture-approach-to-designing-asian-identity-and-culture-in-canada](https://news.athabasca.ca/events/fusion-architecture-approach-to-designing-asian-identity-and-culture-in-canada)

Register through above link

### Talk to a Librarian Drop-in Session Library Orientation Crash Course

Tues, Sept 15, 9:00 to 9:30 am MDT

Online via Microsoft Teams

Hosted by AU Library

[library.athabasca.ca/orientations.html](https://library.athabasca.ca/orientations.html)

No pre-registration necessary; access  
through above link

### AUSU September Council Meeting

Wed, Sept 16, 6:30 to 8:00 pm MDT

Online

Hosted by AUSU

[www.ausu.org/event/september-2020-council-meeting/](https://www.ausu.org/event/september-2020-council-meeting/)

No pre-registration required; email  
[governance@ausu.org](mailto:governance@ausu.org) for meeting  
package

### Talk to a Librarian Drop-in Session Library Orientation Crash Course

Thurs, Sept 17, 3:00 to 3:30 pm MDT

Online via Microsoft Teams

Hosted by AU Library

[library.athabasca.ca/orientations.html](https://library.athabasca.ca/orientations.html)

No pre-registration necessary; access  
through above link

### The Grad Lounge

Fri, Sep 18, 1:00 to 2:00 pm MDT

Online via Microsoft Teams

Hosted by AU Faculty of Graduate  
Studies

[mailchi.mp/50ad89c19275/augsa-newsletter-sep-466096](https://mailchi.mp/50ad89c19275/augsa-newsletter-sep-466096)

No pre-registration necessary; access  
through above link

*All events are free unless otherwise noted*



available to their students. A new initiative by the Canadian Urban Libraries Council is advocating for improved experience for public library patrons including changes to more digitalized content. Their mandate is to address the emergent needs for library services and the “[a]ccelerated shift to digital over physical resources and to virtual over in-person service.”

### Community Access

The demand for online library services goes well beyond the traditional methods as libraries serve their larger community and reach many vulnerable populations. The face of libraries is changing, and public libraries now offer resume support, printing, free computer use to search for job postings, shelter in the winter, and adult programming on topics such as financial and estate planning. The Leduc Public Library offers free learning opportunities for literacy and foundational skills through a program called Leduc Adult Learning. The Regina Public Library offers both in-person and over the phone counselling sessions. The Edmonton Public Library has an entire department for outreach services to reach homeless or at-risk Edmontonians. I believe it is important for libraries to not only adapt during the pandemic, but to also serve the people in their communities who rely on their local library to live and thrive.

### Final thoughts

From walking the many floors of Rutherford Library at the University of Alberta to visiting my local library for supplemental resources, libraries have been an integral part of my post-secondary journey. I honestly can't imagine having to attend university without them. AU's library staff have said they are working hard to make sure AU students have access to all of their materials during the pandemic and will accept library requests via email. This is a season of change for many people, and the library will not look or feel like it used to, but many librarians are working very hard to ensure people have access to the resources they need during this pandemic. Happy Reading!

#### *Webinar Resources:*

**COPPUL:** How can non-Indigenous people advocate for Indigenous education? <https://coppul.ca/blog/2020/06/join-us-coppul-webinar-how-anti-racist-education-matters-academic-libraries>

\*COPPUL Library cards available for AU students

**YRL** (Yellowhead Regional Library): webinar on Mental Health Wellness and Support and an online blog for strengthening your positivity.

**AU** webinars: <http://library.athabascau.ca/orientations.html>

**The Education Institute** (in partnership with Ontario Public Libraries):

[http://www.thepartnership.ca/web/PARTNERSHIP/Event\\_Calendar/List\\_All\\_Sessions/PARTNERSHIP/Education\\_Institute/List\\_all\\_sessions\\_2.aspx?hkey=a7e22565-72bd-4635-b227-638f62e0f54d](http://www.thepartnership.ca/web/PARTNERSHIP/Event_Calendar/List_All_Sessions/PARTNERSHIP/Education_Institute/List_all_sessions_2.aspx?hkey=a7e22565-72bd-4635-b227-638f62e0f54d)

#### *COVID-19 responses at some Canadian university libraries:*

AU Library: <http://library.athabascau.ca/covid.html>

Dalhousie University: <https://libraries.dal.ca/covid-19-updates.html>

University of Alberta: <https://www.library.ualberta.ca/covid-19>

University of British Columbia: <https://services.library.ubc.ca/covid-19-response/>

University of Calgary: <https://library.ucalgary.ca/guides/covid-19>

University of Ottawa Library: <https://biblio.uottawa.ca/en/uottawa-library-service-updates>

University of Saskatchewan: <https://libguides.usask.ca/libraryupdates>

University of Toronto Libraries: <https://onsearch.library.utoronto.ca/covid-19/updates-library-services-and-operations>

*Adrienne Braithwaite is completing her After-Degree in Secondary Education at AU. She has a passion for literacy and cultural studies and hopes to pass on her enthusiasm to secondary students in the future.*





## Digital Accessibility for Canada's Incarcerated Students

Natalia Iwanek



The accessibility of online education is often a lifeline for many students, including those with chronic illnesses and disabilities, as well as familial and work commitments. However, for others, such as incarcerated students, online education can prove to be a barrier instead.

For example, AU's recent transition to e-texts has had a mixed reception from the majority of AU's diverse student body. Although some welcome the change, others, such as AU students currently serving sentences in carceral institutions, have been adversely affected.

With limited to no access to the internet or items, such as laptops and iPads's, AUs' University's eText Initiative, which is part of a longer-term initiative stating back to 2002 to "assist the university in attaining its commitment to being a fully online university and offering enhanced access and flexibility to quality learning," will negatively impact incarcerated students.

Further transition to a fully online environment, despite the acknowledgement of AU's online framework, will create increased hardships for those already struggling to complete a degree in less than ideal circumstances.

### Increased Visibility for Inmates

However, this issue is not limited to AU. Increased interest into incarcerated students pursuing higher education has come into prominence with the recent PBS documentary, *College Behind Bars*, which follows inmates who are part of the Bard Prison Initiative from New York's Bard College.

Carceral (ie. in prison) education in the United States has been a source of controversy throughout history. In 1994, incarcerated individuals became ineligible for the federal Pell Grants Program, which offered financial aid for low-income students. This "decimated the educational infrastructure inside prisons throughout the country, with universities withdrawing their programs because of a lack of financial support." In 2016, the Second Chance Pell Pilot Program came into being, as a way to provide grants to up to 12,000 incarcerated students. In 2020, the program has more than doubled the numbers of schools participating.

In Canada, while most incarcerated students are required to pay for their post-secondary education, there are also exceptions under certain criteria, such as when "participation is included as part of a larger federal/provincial arrangement to provide these programs within the institution," according to Corrections Service Canada.

### Canadian Prison Initiatives

On their website, AU states that its "goal is to remove barriers to university education for adults who are unable or unwilling to attend conventional campus-based institutions," which includes incarcerated students. They state, "Many inmate students are highly successful, but because of the difficulty of studying within a prison, many are not. Prison environments are noisy and dangerous, and there are serious obstacles to overcome. A student who does succeed is to be encouraged."



Similarly, The Ephesus Project allows federally incarcerated students to complete The King's University courses in a variety of disciplines, including English, history, theology, philosophy, and physics, mathematics. In this program, professors volunteer to teach incarcerated students in-person or via correspondence.

### **Benefits of Carceral Education**

For incarcerated individuals who pursue education behind bars, the rates of recidivism become much lower, with a variety of benefits including the creation of stronger communities, post-release employment, and a sense of purpose and self-confidence. According to the Prison Studies Project, studies have revealed, "higher education in prison programs reduces recidivism and translates into reductions in crime, savings to taxpayers, and long-term contributions to the safety and well-being of the communities to which formerly incarcerated people return."

Unfortunately, even for those with a degree or diploma, finding employment with a record can be difficult. It is feared that this further digitization of education will adversely affect an already marginalized population.

### **Canadian Incarceration**

In a statement to *The Voice Magazine*, Isabelle Robitaille, Communications Advisor for the Communications and Engagement Sector of Correctional Service Canada stated, "The Correctional Service Canada (CSC) is mandated to offer education programs that address offenders' educational needs. These programs aim to increase their literacy, academic and personal development skills. CSC prioritizes programs that assist offenders in obtaining a secondary school diploma or equivalent and also supports eligible offenders in their pursuit of post-secondary studies through accredited colleges and universities, such as the Athabasca University, in which a small number of federal offenders are currently enrolled."

She continued, "CSC is aware of the increase of digital technology in post-secondary programs and continues to explore ways of introducing technology to meet offenders' reintegration goals, including education. At this time, offenders incarcerated in federal correctional facilities have access to computers to complete assignments electronically. These computers do not have direct access to the Internet or e-mails; however CSC staff provide assistance to inmates in completing and submitting online forms, printing and providing course materials, collecting and sending completed assignments, scheduling and supervising exams, and so forth."

Robitaille concluded, "CSC prioritizes offender access to education to prepare them for a successful reintegration. As such CSC continues to explore opportunities to establish additional partnerships with universities, colleges, and agencies to enhance inmate access and capacity to pursue post-secondary studies."

It can be noted though that without live access to the internet, it can be difficult for incarcerated students to participate in any sort of interactive course elements, such as video chats, or even student forums.

*The Voice Magazine* also reached out to Dr. Alexa DeGagne Assistant Professor of Women's & Gender Studies and Vice President of AU's Faculty Association about what can be done to help incarcerated students complete their education given their limited online access and resources. In a phone interview, it was mentioned that a group of AU faculty members and employees who have interacted with and taught incarcerated students has been studying university policies and barriers to student accessibility resources. Some ideas brought up included the possibility of waiving tuition, including free courses and textbooks.



Dr. DeGagne stressed three main issues, the first of which was monetary access. Incarcerated students do not have access to income, which makes it difficult to pay for courses.

Secondly, a fully online institution is “a huge barrier for folks who are incarcerated.” The group has tried to “think of ways of printing off the courses” to send students materials, as an alternative to depending on unreliable and infrequent online access. An idea would be for the university to fund these printing costs instead of a reliance on family and friends, which “can be inaccessible if they don’t have the means.”

Thirdly, Dr. DeGagne mentioned the importance of accessible course design. Courses must be designed in a such a way to give all students access, including those who cannot go online, which applies to students living in rural areas as well.

Dr. DeGagne stated, “AU has had a long history of access for incarcerated students,” partly a result because materials were printed. Although AU is “trying to be more accessible,” in many ways, they are becoming inaccessible to a group that they have historically served. It is important to consider “how we can make it that students have access to courses that we are providing” and “make sure everything on our end is as accessible as possible.” This is a difficult topic, as all carceral institutions have different protocols on a federal and provincial levels; it can be a process navigating these systems.

### Further Information

For students interested in further exploring this topic, consider CRJS 491: Offender Rehabilitation, which considers “a variety of areas that contribute to offender recidivism,” as well as WGST 421: Advocacy from the Margins to understanding global injustices faced by marginalized groups.

*Natalia Iwanek is currently completing her Bachelor of Arts in English at Athabasca University and is also a freelance editor and writer. She can be contacted at <https://www.nataliaiwanekediting.com>.*

## Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

**Scholarship name:** CouponBirds' "Help to Save" Scholarship

**Sponsored by:** CouponBirds

**Deadline:** October 10, 2020

**Potential payout:** \$1000

**Eligibility restriction:** Applicants must be at least 16 years of age and enrolled an accredited university or college in Canada or the U.S. for the 2020-2021 academic year.

**What's required:** A completed online application, including contact and academic information, a survey on your shopping habits, and a link to a 3-5 minute video you've created about shopping habits.

**Tips:** Read step three of application process section carefully and be sure to complete all steps required.

**Where to get info:** [www.couponbirds.com/scholarship](http://www.couponbirds.com/scholarship)





## Council Connection

### August 19, 2020 Meeting

**Karl Low**



Eight of the nine councillors were present for the August 19, 2020 Council Meeting. Councillor Regan Johnson had provided her regrets earlier and was excused as the meeting started.

After the regular introductions and passing the agenda and minutes, the meeting started with a review of the newest budget. AUSU is looking at an increase in revenue of about \$60,000 based on the increases in enrolment that AU is expecting. This increase will be balanced by a corresponding increase in expenses.

The largest expense increases are that of staff salaries and associated costs (CPP, EI, etc) at \$47,000 (which will also accommodate the hiring of a dedicated social media manager for AUSU), an increase in the amount budgeted for office lease and parking of

\$5,000 as AUSU is nearing the end of its current lease term, an increase to the honoraria of the executive committee (and similar associated costs) of \$5,250, and an increase to the awards budget of \$3,000 concentrated in the area of emergency and computer bursaries that AUSU expects to see an increased need for given COVID-19.

Even with the increase in operating expenses, It was noted that AUSU still maintains a ratio of less than half of its funds being devoted to merely operating AUSU, with the rest being used for the projects, initiatives, and advocacy that benefit students.

There were also some significant changes within the budget, with the largest being AUSU moving away from physical mailouts to new students and instead moving toward digital content being provided. It was noted that this move has beneficial effects for AUSU's environmental foot print and provides a consistency of offerings to students, with most of what AUSU provides being online, so it making more sense for that first contact with new students to be in the same mode. An additional point noted was that collecting data as to whether students were making use of the physical mailout was difficult. With a mailout, AUSU had no way to know if students used it, or even read it, or perhaps even found it to be annoying junk mail and were throwing it out. By providing a package of digital content to students it is now trackable as to how effective the outreach is.

With the significant savings provided by this change (\$16,850) Council was able to repurpose that money to cover the increased costs of Linked-In Learning to maintain that program, as well as devote funds to anticipated projects such as the career services initiative for students, a food bank initiative, and a student energy project that is being explored to aid students in achieving desired environmental and sustainability goals, without affecting the larger budget. They were also able to slightly increase the amount available for contests and ProctorU codes to be provided to students.



During the discussion of the budget, a question was raised about how the budget for convocation had not changed, even though the new format for convocation is likely to be much smaller. Executive Director Jodi Campbell noted that the AUSU budgeting philosophy is to budget for the highest reasonable costs that might be expected for a project and then strive to come in under budget. With that in mind, and because so much about how the new convocation ceremonies will be working is still unknown, it was decided to leave that line unchanged from previous years.

The budget passed unanimously, and AUSU moved on to the Executive Workplans. The Executive Workplans outline the goals of the AUSU executives, and hence define what AUSU will be concentrating on in the coming year. The entire twelve pages can be found online at the link above, but part of what caught my ear during the meeting as the Executives briefly went through the plan were President Natasha Donahue's mentioning AUSU's COVID-19 response, and being sure to bring the concerns AUSU has heard to planning committees at AU to aid them with their own COVID-19 response, as well as working with AU to review the tuition and fees policy and attempting to develop new frameworks to address how students can pay tuition. She also mentioned significant outreach to other provincial student union associations, noting especially wanting to work with Quebec, and continuing to oppose voluntary student unionism across Canada. A final note was that an executive accountability process needs a proper framework developed for AUSU.

Vice-President of External and Student Affairs Stacey Hutchings put the spotlight on the development of an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee within AUSU, as well as ongoing mental health supports. Along with that she will be working to create an increasingly inclusive and welcoming AUSU, including supports for indigenous, LGBTQ2S+ students, and an awareness campaign for sexual and gender-based violence.

She also mentioned the development of a co-curricular record for AUSU students, noting that employers and graduate programs today are often seeking more than just grades, and at AU showing extra-curricular activity can be even more difficult than it might be at a brick & mortar institution. A co-curricular record is one method of dealing with this difficulty that some schools have adopted, in essence certifying extra-curricular activities that students may be a part of, and she hopes that AUSU can work to create one for AU students.

In addition was mentioned the development of student clubs, noting that with the mass exposure to Zoom and other virtual meeting technologies that have happened due to COVID-19, the notion of a virtual club may now be something that can be successfully implemented.

Finally, Vice President of Finance and Administration, Monique Durette spoke in particular of improving Career Services offerings from AUSU and AU, increased advocacy for students with disabilities, and of aligning AUSU with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Council unanimously accepted the workplans.

The next item on the agenda was a revision of policy 2.12, AUSU's anti-harassment and discrimination policy, which underwent "extensive editing" for "2020 reality". This entailed adding extra definition bringing the policy into line with various federal and provincial policies on discrimination and harassment, and removing points concerning false accusations. This passed unanimously.

The 2020-2021 AUSU Strategic Plan was the next item up for discussion. Executive Director Jodi Campbell mentioned how the new strategic plan was bringing in language referencing transparency and diversity. Councillor Darcie Fleming noted that the vision statement within the plan did not seem very clear and could use being more specific. It was agreed that this could



be re-examined. After the strategic plan was unanimously approved, Councillor Kathryn Hadden had to leave due to a previous engagement, leaving the meeting at 8:26pm.

Council then moved in-camera to discuss who would be selected for the Indigenous Representation Committee. When they returned, the decision was made to appoint Jo-Mary Crowchild-Fletcher, which was unanimously approved.

The meeting then moved to the reports section, which was longer than normal because they included work for both June and July as there had been no July meeting. One of the most significant things mentioned was during the Presidents' Report, where Natasha Donahue noted that AU is considering switching their course format from having six-month timelines to four-month timelines. This would require significant revision of many of their courses that are currently designed for a six-month time span. It was also mentioned that AU had mobilized some funds from AUSU, the AUGSA, and other stakeholders to create the AU Emergency Bursary. AUSU's involvement was able to ensure that 75% of the \$134,000 total funds were directed toward undergraduate students. Each award was worth \$1,000 and AUSU had donated \$15,000 to the fund. Also noted was the General Faculties Council meeting established an ad hoc committee to reimagine student assessments, questioning such assumptions as whether finals were needed and thinking of different ways to assess students.

It was also pointed out that AU is moving their integrated learning environment forward, and rather than it being rolled out slowly on a course by course basis, the decision has been made to replace the current Moodle system with a completely new system. They're currently doing a full course review to look at the length and pacing of courses, the process is set to take place over the course of the next year and a half, and then with the launch of the new system happening within six months of the review being completed.

It was also mentioned that AUSU has had a meeting with the Open UK Students' Association, where they found many common interests and challenges being dealt with, so she looks forward to there being more talks and joint action.

The Vice-President External and Student Affairs, Stacey Hutchings' report noted that AU would be using a system called Chime Live for convocation, and that AUSU has joined Public Interest Alberta, a non-partisan advocacy group, to be part of their campaign to see investments restored to Post-Secondary Education. It was also noted that while she's been trying to contact cabinet ministers for discussion, AUSU is currently being redirected to the deputy ministers. The provincial government has started on their consultation for the Alberta 2030 plan, but while they committed to including independent organizations in those consultations, at this point they've only included the umbrella organizations in Alberta (CAUS and ACTISEC) and AUSU is not a member of either. She's currently working to remain in the loop as to what the report is thinking in their direction of post-secondary education.

Many of the reports noted that the months had been quiet, with a combination of summer and COVID-19 meaning fewer meetings. In the Awards Report, Councillor Katy Lowe pointed out how the summer had been a quiet period, with a total of four computer bursaries and one emergency bursary reported. Finally, in the report from Member Services Coordinator, Donette Kingyens, it was pointed out that the Peer Course reviews already had 500 entries, and that people were rediscovering old AUSU podcasts when they were mentioned on Facebook or in stories in *The Voice Magazine*.

The meeting then moved to the question and answer period, where, after looking through the budget, I'd noted that while Executive Honararia had gone up, the amount budgeted for



Executive CPP had gone down. It was clarified that the amount budgeted for CPP in the previous year turned out to be more than needed. I also questioned the removal of anything about false accusations of harassment, and was told that a separate policy is in the process of being created to address this issue.

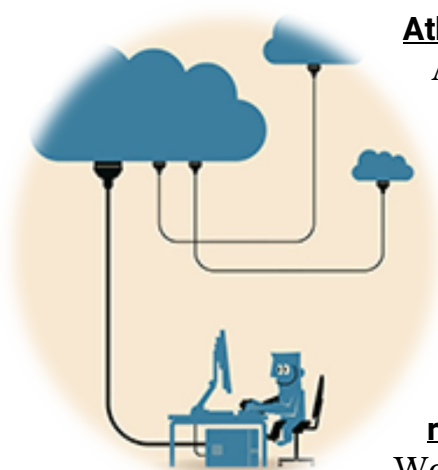
The meeting officially adjourned at 9:04pm, and the next Council meeting is scheduled for next Wednesday, September 16, 2020 at 6:30pm mountain time. As AUSU members, AU students are encouraged to attend council meetings via teleconference. Details can be found on the [AUSU website](#).

*Karl graduated from AU with his BA (English) (with great distinction, he likes to add) and now works as the managing editor of The Voice Magazine.*



## Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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



#### **AthaU Facebook Group**

Aroosha seeks insight into the AB student funding process; other students outline the steps needed. Meaghan posts the news that AU students can resume using third-party invigilators; great news for those not able to use ProctorU. First-time student Marielos asks how to access exams through ProctorU; a quick answer gives guidance on the process.

Other posts include course materials, the Statement of Grades letter, and courses ADMN 233, HIST 367, HLST 200, LGST 369, and PHIL 337.

#### **reddit**

Wowza: reddit stats show "There have been over 2000 visits to r/AthabascaUniversity in the past week." Recent conversations include taking courses as a non-program student, registration deadlines, and interim grades.

#### **Twitter**

[@AthabascaU](#) tweets: "Undergrad learners can now have their online exams invigilated by any 3rd-party invigilators who are approved by our Exam Invigilation Network, in addition to ProctorU. We encourage use of ProctorU if they can, but understand this may not be accessible [t.co/q7i9buyDvy](https://t.co/q7i9buyDvy)."

[@austudentsunion](#) tweets: "AUSU wants to find out whether [#AthabascaU](#) students want a Student Paid Health and Dental Plan. Take our survey for a chance to win one of 3 prizes worth \$350+ each, and tell us if YOU want a health plan! <http://studentvip.ca/ausucare/>."



## Fly on the Wall

### This is Taking Forever and I'm not Getting Anywhere



Jason Sullivan

### Impossible Distances Between Time and Eternity

The end of summer: it's hot, it's sticky, it's sultry. Study time melts over the edge of reality like it does in the famous Salvador Dali painting. Drip, drip, drop, splat; a metronomic rhythm resounds as our motivation slows to a crawl. But what if time stopped completely, what then? Our modern industrial psyches recoil in horror: perish the thought that time were to cease without being replaced by some other metre of measurement, of counting, of productivity, of efficiency, of purpose.

Yet, as the title of Jim Morrison's famous biography puts it: *No Out Here Gets Out Alive*. Neither time nor space is immune to limitation; the hottest days of the year remind us that time knows nothing of context, whereas we are certainly not immune to a cavalcade of contextual concerns.

Our AU life happens over years (if not tears) and courses (if not diplomas). Empirical evidence accompanies our every motion, like the wake of a great cargo ship carrying untold tonnes of trashy junk to Wal Mart. Yet nothing countable can contain that which we are within our study brain. So for a moment let's just lie back and ponder the whir of a ceiling fan or the leaves of a tree, and consider the nature of where we're going with our education and how we'll know, really know, in our very soul, that we've arrived. Join me, won't you, as we hark back to the Ancient Greek colonies of what is now the Italian peninsular boot. With an ethereal whir we are about to enter the prescient mind of a philosopher called Zeno of Elea.

### Going Somewhere?

Time and motion were no guarantee for Zeno. Thinking down through the labyrinth of rational thought he considered how one might get from point A to point B. Motion is not all it appears. At AU we conduct our coursework even as our actual bodies remain plunked at our desk. And when on a hot day we feel that we aren't getting anywhere in our studies the struggle is real!

We don't go anywhere and yet we travel vast distances within our academic minds. Arriving at our contract date we write an exam or submit a final assignment before waiting patiently (tick, tock!) for our composite mark to arrive by mail. At this temporal juncture signifying finality, a thin swath of paper fails to express all the struggle and success signified by a mere letter grade. There's no expressing our jubilation or dismay when the time of our reckoning with a given course *in toto* arrives. We're not in Kansas anymore once we get rolling at AU, although our spatial surroundings may remain the same.

### Cobwebs, Spiderwebs and Woolly-Headedness: Splitting Hairs and Pedantic Palindromes

Zeno illustrated his paradox of movement over space and time by imagining a footrace between a speedy Achilles and a soporific Tortoise. They embark on their timed excursion and the following ensues (Summarized and paraphrased from Harries, Pp. 372-3):

- 1) Achilles leaps ahead like an interior decorator hanging curtains on a mock-up set design.



2) The tortoise lopes along like some late 1970s *Saturday Night Live* actor pretending to be on Quaaludes

3) Soon Achilles appears to be halfway to the end goal. But wait! Upon closer inspection we notice that he must first arrive at the tiniest parsec of a point halfway between his beginning point and the first point of arrival along the marked track. And even before that he must cover countless increasingly-hairsplitting distances between ever-tinier points A and B. His speed sends him down a hall of mirrors of infinitely receding distances that he must traverse. No measurable space is so small that it evades the fact that there will be an ever-smaller area of space between any two points. Achilles, said Zeno, will find himself for all intents and purposes going nowhere.

Meanwhile, the tortoise, while going less than half of the first possible distance between points A and B will actually be ahead in the race because he'd not made it down to the ever-smaller increments Achilles in his haste has arrived at. By being laid back between the first and larger distance covered between A and B, the Tortoise is actually leading in spatial terms. Time, as on a hot study day, evaporates as its realm is overtaken by the facts of getting to a point when innumerable smaller points must be covered.

Zeno concluded that the senses fool us into believing that motion is possible and the senses deceive us in believing that we can cover any given distance. In fact, he said, nobody is going anywhere simply because to do so would require endless splitting of distances into ever-tinier points A and B such on for eternity. And eternity, being immeasurably vast, does not allow us to finish what we started. Sounds like a recipe for cosmic procrastination to me! In this sense, the notion of being outside time in that haze of summer heat comes to fruition as a transcendental truth. We really are only ever where we are in any given moment, no matter how productive or indolent we feel in a given second, hour or lifetime.

5) So to summarize: the tortoise, still sauntering clam-like towards the first part of the first half of the race, is in fact far ahead because his first halfway point between points A and B is far larger in diameter than the ever-smaller increments Achilles has reached by being faster in speed.

6) Thus, there can be no arrival at the finish line. In fact, there cannot be any progress at all because there are unlimited tiny distances to cover between an original point and any point of travel out in any direction. Jim Morrison's infamous line that no one here gets out alive booms out over a loudspeaker and the race is declared over.

This all might seem a bit mystical or nonsensical. Yet, it's our ordinary sense of reality that is stymied by the hottest of days when our normal academic abilities lose traction on that slippery and countable slope of time. A bit of transcendental perspective is in order.

### **Prophets and Oracles: Being There Now and in the Future**

As we have seen, Zeno was a flummoxing prophet in opposition to common sense. After all, you don't have to be Usain Bolt to know that a biped will be faster than a turtle in every measurable meaning of the word. Yet Zeno was speaking as an oracle; that is, he was mystifying normality while being slyly complicit with accepted epistemic frameworks. He used rationality to overcome common sense and induce mystery or the uncanny. Just think how it sounds to speak one's voice into a whirring portable fan and hear oneself resonate back with alien-like mystery. The stuff of wonder often feels more real than do mere facts. The same rings true with inspiration and accomplishment. If we simply show someone our diploma on some future afternoon they will only receive a shrouded and distorted view of the blood, sweat and toil (ok, hopefully not blood) that went into our AU studies. No quality of time conveys the immeasurable distances we cover as we attempt to complete our coursework on a hot day.



At some level when we feel that we aren't getting anywhere, we really aren't. Not because we don't move or progress, but because, as the saying goes, wherever we go there we are. Whenever we succeed it's because of inner conditions more than what's externally measurable. When we feel stymied by summer heat just remember Zeno: the last shall be, if not first, at least perpetually in the running. And at AU as in life, we're competing above all with ourselves in our distance education. Time may arbitrate our reality but that doesn't mean it can conquer all that we do and feel; for that, we are the deciders.

#### References

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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 Creative Spark

### Five Best Sounds for Students

Marie Well



How As an AU student, do you ever write anything that needs to be spoken? Communications students surely do. But you might, too. This is where you might find euphonics useful. What are these creatures of verbal delight?

According to Rayne Hall, euphonics are “certain sounds [that] have certain effects on the psyche. By using words which include those sounds, you influence how the reader feels ... In print, the effects are very subtle, serving only to enhance what's already there, and need to be combined with other techniques. But if you plan to perform author readings or release an audiobook, the euphonics will hold listeners enthralled with poetic power” (Hall, 4%).

Let's examine four sounds that apply to students:

#### H-sounds:

Notice the H-sounds in the following passage:

Students can hone themselves as higher education heroes, right? Hard work helps. Here's how students harness study

habits.

What subtle effect might these H-euphonics trigger?

The H-sound “may signify lofty aspirations: hope, hankering, and virtuous attitudes:(helpfulness, honour, happiness, honesty, humility, heart)” (Hall, 2015, 17%).

But there are particular times to use the H-sound. One case of “when to use the 'H' sound: ... when writing about a character's ambitions, especially if those are either idealistic or castles in the air” (Hall, 2015, 17%).



If you've got a heavy, hard workload, you likely have high ambitions.

### **Now for P-sounds:**

Listen for the P-sounds in what follows:

Students beam with pride when they get a perfect grade. Some perk up with just a pass. Pretty much all puff their chests and pounce on the next assignment after a proud grade.

What does the P-sound represent?

Rayne Hall shares, "Displays of authority and of personal pride ... often have a 'P' sound: parade, palace, portal, pose, display, pomp, peacock, prance, preen, pretend, imposter, importance, impress" (30%).

Squeeze in the P-sound in specific cases: "When To Use 'P' Sounds:... to portray a proud or pompous character" (Hall, 2015, 31%). Peter propped his pocketbook on his proud chest.

As Rayne Hall says "To portray a pompous haughty character, combine the 'P' and 'H' sounds in the same paragraph" (31%). Peter propped his handsome pocketbook high on his proud chest.

### **Next, STR-sounds:**

Can you guess what the STR-sounds stir up?

The strict teacher gave the student the strap. Stricken, the student strutted out of the room, strung-out, struggling, and defiant.

So, when should STR-sounds come into play in your writing?

"The 'STR' sound suggests that someone is in full control while someone else must obey or suffer punishment: instruct, strict, strong, strain, strive, strenuous, stress, straight, straddle, astride, stop, constraint, struggle, strafe, strap, strangle, strike, stronghold" (39%), says Rayne Hall (2015).

There are certain times to use STR-sounds. Rayne Hall (2015) outlines when To Use 'STR' Sounds as when you want to display merciless authority, or for relationships based on unequal power: assistant/boss, student/teacher, apprentice/master, child/parent, grunt/officer," (40%).

Strict teachers shouldn't strangle struggling students.

### **Z-sound**

Can you hear the oozing sounds of the Z-euphonic?

The dazed, zany student zeroed in on the zealous zombie. The zombie sneezed and then dozed.

What emotions do you think the Z-sound draws up??

Rayne Hall says, "The 'Z', although pronounced almost the same as 'S', has a different effect. It suggests that the character is disoriented or confused: dizzy, haze, puzzle, fizzle, woozy, swizzled, sizzled, crazy, bamboozle, bizarre, sozzled, maze, dazed, puzzled" (43%).

If this article zapped you dizzy with all the euphonics, don't puzzle. Consider it a zesty, budding writer's prize.

### *Reference*

Hall, Rayne. (2015). *Euphonics for Writers*. [Kindle Unlimited]. Retrieved from amazon.ca.





## Homemade is Better Smoked Spareribs

**Chef Corey**



Ever since my Dad and I bought a smoker together, I keep wanting to cook as much stuff on it as I can. A few weeks ago, I put on an eye of round and smoked it for a few hours, and it tasted too good! Today I was inspired to smoke some ribs I had bought at my local grocery store. I picked up some side ribs while shopping for back to school, thinking it would make a great Sunday meal.

When looking for ribs, how many times have you looked at them as asked yourself what the difference is? I know I've been guilty of this! Spareribs, side ribs, back ribs, Country-style ribs, really, what is the difference? The answer is simple. Think about the ribs in your chest, the ribs that are in front that protect your lungs would be considered spareribs, it would go from about your armpit towards your chest. Spareribs would be the largest, but the toughest because of the work they do to when your lungs fill with air. Then the back ribs would be considered the most tender as they don't move as much as the others. Side ribs and spare sides are the same things.

The ribs I've chosen are spareribs removed from the St. Louis Style. St. Louis Style is a straight set of ribs that are longer rib bones than back ribs. Country style is taken from the loin and are the last four ribs with some of the loin meat left on them; they are part of the back ribs. Baby back ribs are the back ribs, sometimes cut into smaller pieces.

Ribs benefit from a long slow cooking process because they contain connective tissue, which requires heat and time to break down. When you cook them for extended times, they will soften and become "fall off the bone" tender. As with many of the

muscle groups that are "worked," they start getting stronger as the animal moves and breathes. This toughness can vary depending on what animal we are talking about, and where on the animal it is. With ribs, we are looking for tenderness that allows us to pull the bones away from each other, and to do this we have to extract collagen through the cooking process. Collagen is the Jell-O looking substance that you see when you cool the pork in the fridge; it's that translucent jiggly stuff. It seems a lot like Jell-O because that's what it is. Gelatin is collagen, and while it's processed, it is still from animals.





Back to the ribs, though. If you don't own a smoker, you can still cook these ribs in your oven. Follow the directions but use a sheet pan or roasting pan for cooking the ribs. Once you get to the part where you wrap them, you can just cover the container they are cooking in. You will still follow the directions as stated on the bottom. Low and slow, that's the best way to cook meat like ribs.

I hope you enjoy this recipe, and next week we'll talk about lunch. I know this is an unusual time for back to school, and those of us with school-aged kids are going to get tired of making sandwiches by November. I'll come up with some alternatives that are easy to make and enjoy!

## Smoked Side ribs

### Ingredients

Big Daddy's meat rub (see recipe in my [Pulled Pork article](#))

¾ cup Apple juice

¼ cup Crown Royal (or other whiskeys)

¼ packed brown sugar

¼ BBQ sauce

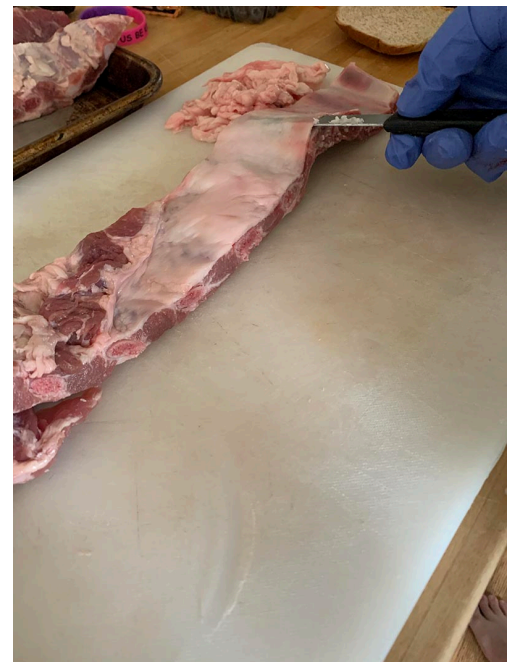
6 – 10 lbs Ribs



### Directions

- 1) Sprinkle ribs with meat rub and massage it in, leave for 30 minutes to 2hrs.
- 2) Heat smoker or oven to 250F.
- 3) Mix apple juice, whiskey, brown sugar, and bbq sauce.
- 4) Place ribs in smoker or oven once it has finished preheating.
- 5) Split the sauce in half and reserve one half
- 6) Cook for 1 hour, then brush on one half of the sauce every 30 minutes for 2 more hours.
- 7) After 3 hours of total cook time, removed the ribs and wrap them with tin foil before closing the foil, pour the remainder of the sauce in and wrap tightly.
- 8) Place back in smoker or oven for an additional 2 hours.
- 9) Carefully remove the ribs making sure not to spill out any juice that might still be in the foil packets.
- 10) Let rest for 20 minutes.
- 11) Cut up into serving portions and enjoy!

*Chef Corey is a student in business management who first graduated from NAIT's Culinary Arts Program in 2007*





## Four Tips to Being Productive when you Don't Feel Like it

Xin Xu

One of the most challenging parts of working from home—or studying from home—is the challenge of staying motivated. Ever since the start of the quarantine, much of the separation between work, school and personal life has blurred.

My workstation is also the same location as my entertainment centre where I binge watch Netflix or complete my workout routines. However, over the past few months, a few things have helped me stay productive and motivated at times when I felt least engaged. For students entering a different online learning setting, it can be challenging to learn, work, and relax all in the same areas of the home. Here are a few tips to get you started:

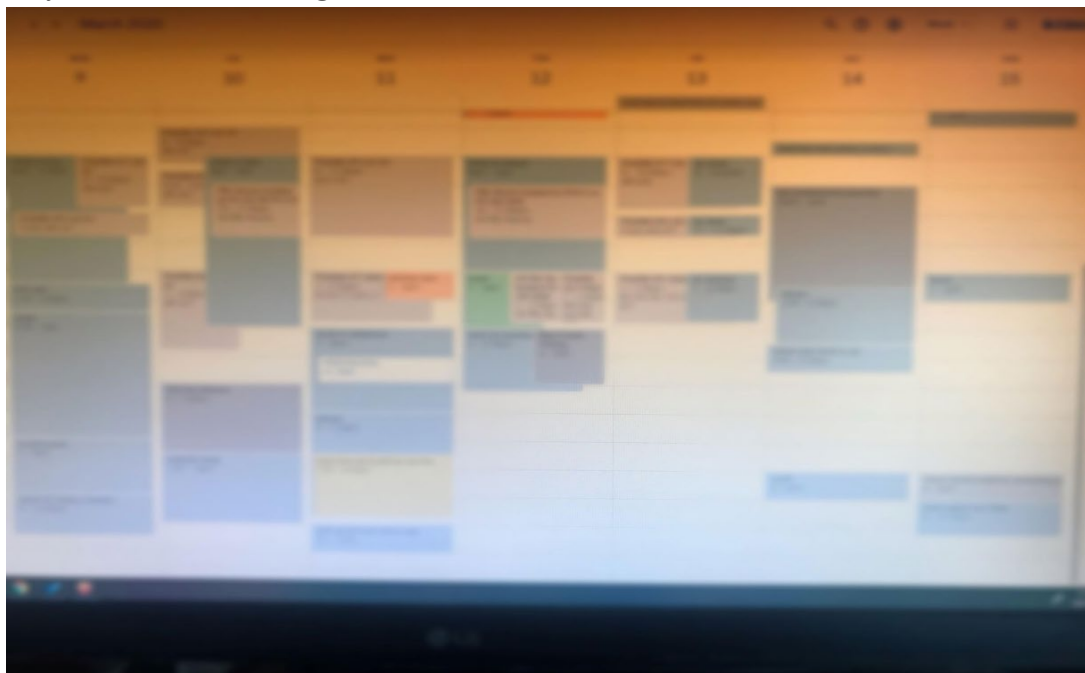
### Make a plan:

Even while our daily routines can feel mundane at times and repressive, making a list of things to complete in the day helps mentally prepare ourselves for action.

The small task of simply writing down or using a calendar to organize our thoughts will be valuable in tracking our progress, but also in setting the stage for more productive work. For myself, I find that keeping an active agenda has also been useful in tracking small milestones over time. Prior to creating task lists I mentally kept track of my progress, which did not create the atmosphere and mindset required to be productive, thus causing unnecessary stress when things were missed.



*Taking the time to exercise and take care of ourselves mentally and physically helps with productivity more than we think.*





### Refresh your routines:

Change helps rewire parts of our brain and keep us engaged with remote work or online studying. For example, I've tried various studying techniques, including the Pomodoro technique whereby studying or working hours are divided into smaller 20 or 30 minute segments that compartmentalize work and help us stay motivated. Another addition that has been vastly helpful to my daily routine is exercise. While the pandemic has kept my gym membership at bay, I've managed to keep a gym routine of only 15 minutes a day. Even for this short period of time, I feel more energetic and refreshed after each school and workday.

### Remove distractions:

Some of the distractions that AU students may be prone to while working or studying from home is social media. While social media has its merits in keeping us connected during this time, it also has the potential to affect our productivity. Especially when digital content is being uploaded at a higher rate than ever before. For myself, dealing with this meant simply placing my phone in a separate room while I worked or turning off distracting notifications from my laptop. At the end of each work hour, I would reply to messages from social media which helps me to focus on the task at hand.



*Removing distractions and creating an atmosphere conducive to work or study helps us mentally prepare for the task at hand.*

### Exercise mindfulness:

Mindfulness has been a key factor in motivating myself to work at times when I feel the least energetic to cross the next item from my to-do list. How does mindfulness work? Mindfulness is about being aware of your attitude, surroundings, and stimulus that your body takes in at any given moment. This directs our attention to some of the attitudes that may be preventing us from working or studying more effectively. For example, a few weeks ago, I faced challenges in motivating myself to meeting certain deadlines because of negative attitudes for the type of task involved. Understanding the root of this emotion helps separate ourselves from the emotion itself. Reframing the task at hand and giving ourselves positive affirmations will help us overcome even the least desirable or challenging tasks at hand. Ultimately, this space and perspective will help us work more effectively and give us time to enjoy more of what we love.

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





## Combat Sports – The Art of Fighting

Alek Golijanin



To me, combat sports are the pinnacle of all sports, yet somehow the IOC decided to remove wrestling from the Olympics.

In some sports, like basketball and soccer, you will sometimes see players blaming judges when they lose. One thing that irritates me to the core is constant complaining, whether it is in the sports world or in the real world, and people who refuse to take accountability for their outcomes. With combat sports, there is no flopping nor does one have anybody to blame for their performance. When I watch how basketball and soccer players react to the tiniest amount of “contact” I find myself wondering if I am watching a soap opera or sporting event. I would be worried if any of those athletes tried to transition into full contact sports like football, not to mention combat sports.

The art of fighting, of combat sports, can be traced back to the ancient world including Egypt, Greece, India, China and Japan. Artifacts exist that date back to these ancient societies where the hieroglyphs resemble what appears to be boxing and wrestling, and it was one of the earliest sports in the Olympics.

The term used for combat sports these days is Mixed Martial Arts, and it refers to a wide variety of fighting styles that incorporate striking and grappling.

The next time you go to the shopping mall, make sure to look at the people around you, because people from all walks of life sign up to learn combat disciplines. If you ever get a chance to visit a fight-training gym, of any discipline, expect to see people of all shapes, sizes, and color. The common message you will find in these gyms is that it is a home for everyone. There are various reasons why people decide to commit themselves and they can range from exercise and better conditioning to helping increasing self-esteem.

While training boxing, jiu-jitsu or wrestling does help people get in better shape, the biggest benefactors of combat disciplines are children. While some children are signed up by their parents’ self-desires, others are typically signed up by parents after they find out they are being bullied. Everyone knows that bullies typically psychologically intimidate those they pick on, something that is likely a coping mechanism for their own troubles because bullies tend to get bullied themselves.

The effects of getting bullied have the biggest impact on a child’s confidence and self-esteem, due to the feeling of being helpless. Teaching children how to defend themselves from an early age helps them feel more confident in confronting bullies, and bullies will often pick individuals who “accept” being bullied. Even in the later years, research indicates that learning how to fight for the purpose of self-defence increases confidence and self-esteem (Vertonghen, 2010).

One quote that I have implemented as a philosophy while competing is from MMA great Burt Watson, whose quote is also popular among UFC fighters, “Don’t leave it to the judges, they’re



going to make you cry.” If you live by this philosophy and put 100% effort into everything you do, you will not leave anything for the “judges”, and you will therefore never cry.

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## Scholars, Start Your Business

### Three Business Costs to Cut

Marie Well



Which negotiation strategies are most successful? Whether you're a student or business owner, you gain when you negotiate. Want a higher grade? An extension on your assignment? A sale of your textbook? Ah, negotiation can come in handy.

Steve Mariotti (2014) says, “Negotiation is about compromise, not about winning. Compromise is sacrificing something you want so that an agreement can be reached that is acceptable to you and the person with whom you are negotiating” (32%).

So, here are four tips to turn you into a negotiating powerhouse.

#### Tip #1: All you need is a price and a dream.

Steve Mariotti (2014) advises, “Let the other person name a price first. When discussing a price, try to let the other person make an offer first. This will reveal his or her position” (33%).

A friend once said, “We should pay for what we value.” I believed her. So, I never learned to wrangle. Later, I rounded up animators for a project I had in mind.

“How much?” I asked them. “A third a million,” they said. I didn't wrangle. Instead I asked, “What happens if I can't raise the money?” “We'll sue you,” they said.

I wish I had thrown out, “How does \$50,000 sound?” and worked up from there.

Never knowingly name your price.

#### Tip #2: The best way to start is with extremes.

Steve Mariotti (2014) suggests, “Try extremes. If the person won't reveal his or her position, throw out an extreme figure—very high or very low. This will force the other person to come forward with some type of response that will guide you” (32%).



Once, a teen knocked on my door, selling chocolates for charity. I asked, “How much?” He tossed out a ridiculous price, well over a hundred. When I shut the door, he knocked nonstop. So, I opened the door. “Ten bucks,” I believe he said. So, I gave him my last ten.

Extremes get us excited.

**Tip #3: Bargains can't be beat.**

According to Steve Mariotti (2014), “Demonstrate your willingness to bargain. As negotiations proceed, respond to each counteroffer by giving up something you already decided in advance that you could afford to give up” (32%).

Yes, those animators high-balled me. The project came to a halt with the words, “We’ll sue you.” But I could've low-balled them and offered perks. For example, I could've offered \$150,000, but if that wasn't achievable, I'd offer 90% of all funds raised. It's impossible to sue someone on those terms.

If they disagreed, I could've offered to supply all their paper needs, too. And if they disagreed again, I could've dropped another bone.

It's good to talk bargains.

**Tip #4: Go for the spirit of silence.**

“Use silence as a tool,” says Steve Mariotti (2014). “After you have initially stated your case, don't say anything for a few moments. Your silence can prompt the other person to say something that you can turn to your advantage. Do your best to keep silent until the other person speaks. It'll happen eventually!” (32%).

My mentor was the master of silence. She'd ask you to devote 10-hour days to her projects, no pay. And then she'd go silent. I'd stammer a bit. And she'd remain silent. If I said no, she'd continue to stay silent.

Silence is uncomfortable when you're being pinned for a favor. Eventually, I gave in.

If only everything in life was as reliable as silence.

**Tip #5: Just ask for more!**

Steve Mariotti (2014) says, “Always ask for more than you are offered. When the other person wants you to pay back a loan in ten days, for instance, ask for fifteen. You may have to settle for twelve, but that's better than the original demand” (32%).

Your prof gives you a two-day extension on your assignment. Ask for ten. Your prof offers you a B instead of a B-. Ask for an A-. The bookstore wants to give you \$10 for your textbook. Ask for \$40.

Ask for more for a brighter future.

Now you've got a wrangler within waiting to bargain. If you ask a carpet salesman, “How much?” and he replies, “Don't worry. We'll take good care of you,” don't get taken in. Lowball him.

*Reference*

Mariotti, Steve. (2014). *The Young Entrepreneur's Guide to Starting and Running a Business*. New York, NY: Penguin Random House LLC.







Dear  
Barb

Barbara Godin

## The Next Step

Dear Barb:

*Hi, I have been involved with this guy for the last five years. Everything was good between us for the first year, but then it kind of went downhill. We started arguing about everything and nothing, but we continued the relationship and even moved in together. Initially everything was great but, in retrospect, I think that was the honeymoon phase. Within a couple of months, we were at it again: disagreeing on everything and not being able to let things go. I'm not claiming to be right all the time. We are equally to blame for most situations. After a year of living together, Jay decided to move out.*

*I felt relieved to get a break from the fighting, but then I began to miss him. Since we have many mutual friends, it was hard to keep a distance. Following a party at a friend's house and too much drinking we ended up at my place in bed together. Things evolved and Jay moved back in. Within a few weeks we were at it again, fighting and arguing. I suggested counseling, but Jay was not interested. I know this is a bad relationship, but I can't seem to end it, and neither can Jay. I really don't know where to go from here. There is something between us that is fairly strong, but we just can't seem to get along. Do you have any suggestions, besides counseling, since Jay refused to go? Thanks Renee.*

Hi Renee:

Ending a relationship is always difficult, but it seems for you and your boyfriend it is particularly difficult. There are many reasons why people cannot end unhealthy relationships, beginning with low self esteem. Often individuals who have low self esteem stay in unhealthy relationships because they fear they will not find someone else and they do not want to be alone. So it is essential to regain your confidence and begin to feel better about yourself. Counselling may help you to learn skills to build yourself up again. Obviously you both have feelings for each other, but often that is not enough. When you have two strong willed people who are not willing to compromise, love will not be enough to fix the problems.

Couples counselling may be able to provide tips for you both to be able to react to each other in a healthy manner, rather than arguing and fighting. Your childhood is also a big predictor in how you are going to react in a relationship. If your parents' way of resolving issues was to argue, that's what you have learned. On the other hand, if you grew up in a single parent home, you may not have learned how to work through normal problems that all relationships encounter. The only option you both have at this point Renee, is to seek counseling. If Jay won't go, then you need to go yourself. Best of luck in the future.

*Email your questions to [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto: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**  
**Deep Throat Skunk**

**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](mailto:services@ausu.org) with any questions about this article.

## IMPORTANT DATES

- **Sep 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Oct 1](#)
- **Sep 15:** [Sept degree requirements deadline](#)
- **Sep 16:** [AUSU Public Council Meeting \(Zoom\)](#)
- **Sep 24:** [AUSU Virtual Student Social](#)
- **Sep 30:** [Deadline to apply for course extension for Oct](#)
- **Oct 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Oct 1](#)

## AUSU Virtual Student Socials

AUSU is hosting Virtual Student Socials on the last Thursday of every month! Great opportunity to connect to fellow students through Zoom, play some fun trivia games, and get a chance to win some swag from AUSU!

### Upcoming dates:

- Thursday, Sept 24, 2020 at 6:00pm MT (7:00pm ET)
- Thursday, Oct 29, 2020 at 5:00pm MT (7:00pm ET)

RSVP to [ausu@ausu.org](mailto:ausu@ausu.org) if you wish to attend!



## AUSU Open Mic – Episode 32

### [Exploring Grad studies at Athabasca University](#)

Ever wonder what it takes to get into graduate school and what is involved in pursuing a graduate degree at Athabasca University?

AUSU works closely with the Athabasca University Graduate Students' Association (AUGSA) to provide the best possible representation and advocacy for all students at AU, whether they are undergraduate or graduate students. In our latest podcast episode, we chat with AUGSA President Mary-Anne Parker and AUGSA Executive Director Meaghan Sullivan about AUGSA and what is in store for AU grad students in the coming year.

[Click to Listen to this Episode](#)

## NEW AUSU Strategic Plan

AUSU council is in the process of developing a new 3-year strategic plan! The strategic plan is the master plan for the AU Students' Union, addressing our overall organizational objectives as a whole (in accordance with AUSU bylaws).

Council will be voting on the second reading of the motion to approve the new Strategic at our [September council meeting](#). **All members are welcome to attend!**

The meeting information will be posted on our website [here](#) at least 3 business days prior to the meeting.

Find out more online [here](#).



**Starring:** AUGSA President Mary-Anne Parker, AUGSA Executive Director Meaghan Sullivan, and AUSU Executive Director Jodi Campbell.

Check out all Open Mic episodes [here](#).

AUSU Open Mic is also available for free on [Spotify](#), [Apple Podcasts](#), [Google Podcasts](#), and [Pocket Casts](#) (search "AUSU Podcast"), and featured on [VoicEd](#).





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Contact [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org) for more information.

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