



THE VOICE

Vol 28 Issue 48 2020-12-11

Minds We Meet

Interviewing Students Like You!

Fly on the Wall

As the Mercury Drops

Editorial

Bullet Dodged?

Plus:

*Vintage Voice: Poinsettia Day
Tools for School
and much more!*



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Even I don't look at it, it's
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



We love to hear from you!
Send your questions and comments to voicemagazine.org,
and please indicate if we may publish your letter!

Hey! Did you know the Voice Magazine has a [Facebook page](#)?

No kidding! We also do the [twitter](#) thing once in a while if you're into that.

Editorial

Bullet Dodged?

Karl Low



You might not know it, but things at AU came very close to grinding to a halt this year (those of you trying to connect with AU by phone recently might question that they haven't, but bear with me.) A [recent post at the AU Faculty Association site](#) talks about the battle with AU over de-designation—the university seeking to carve many of the members of AUFA away from the union by diktat.

And while the post notes that the AUFA seems to have won this round, as the university has backed down from automatic de-designation and has indicated it has no plans to follow through with directed de-designation, in the details is the statement by the AUFA president, Dave Powell, “This was our first round of bargaining under strike-lockout and, from the inside, I would say we came pretty close to a work stoppage.” He’s talking about an earlier round of bargaining, one that he suggests prompted the de-designation idea.

Powell notes in the post that the success of fighting back de-designation was made possible by assistance from various other unions at the university, and that AUFA needs to stand ready to support those unions with similar shows of staff solidarity when their turn for bargaining comes forward. Which, for students means that the bullet we dodged earlier may only have been the opening salvo.

As the other unions in AU begin their bargaining process, we need to remember that the current Alberta government is notoriously debt averse, and COVID-19 has forced it to take on far more debt than it ever wanted to even contemplate, and it’s done so with great reluctance. Reluctance so great that some say it may even have a cost in lives. It’s also a government that has already shown its indifference (if not outright hostility) toward post-secondary education with funding cuts and a drive toward “performance based funding” (that is funding based on what’s already happened, not on what needs to happen in future). So exactly how much flexibility is such a government going to have when placed between the demands of organizations that it already is hostile to and the black and white of the deficit it needs to deal with in the budget.

Or in other words, if a university or two is forced to close up for a while and people can’t continue their educations, is that really something our current provincial government would see as that bad a thing? This is why, if you’re a student in Alberta, you need to be paying attention. I would go so far as to suggest making a two dollar donation to the UCP just to get their attention, and when they call to ask for more, express your concerns about their proposed post-secondary policies and cuts. We dodged one bullet. The magazine isn’t empty yet.

Meanwhile, this issue of the Voice is the penultimate issue of the year. That’s right, next week’s issue is the last one for this year, so if you’ve got any suggestions as to what the best articles we’ve run this year are, please send them to me at voice@voicemagazine.org. There may even be some swag in it for you if you do, plus it will help me start off next year (on January 8, 2021) with a great Best of 2020 (is that an oxymoron at this point?) issue.

Enjoy the read!

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

MINDS WE MEET



Who are your fellow students? It can feel like you are all alone in your studies, but across the nation, around the globe, students like you are also pursuing their AU education, and *The Voice Magazine* wants to bring their stories to you. If you would like to be featured next, do not hesitate to get in touch!

The Voice Magazine recently had a chance to chat with Andrea Austin, from Quesnel, British Columbia, located within the traditional and unceded territory of the Lhtako Dene. Andrea is currently enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Applied Mathematics, with a focus in physics and astronomy. Her plan is to continue studying, stating, “I am looking at an MSc in either astronomy or astrophysics. After that I will be doing a PhD, with the ultimate aim being to go into research and teaching at a tertiary level.” She continued, “I joke about being a crotchety ancient professor teaching university in my 90’s and no one being able to get rid of me as I have tenure.”

Andrea emigrated to Canada in 2014 from South Africa, where she was born and raised, revealing “I love my adopted country and the opportunities I have here, like going back to school.” She stated, “I had been a therapeutic riding

instructor and horse trainer before going back to school, but needed a career change. During this period, I also started dealing with past trauma due to childhood abuse and sexual assault in my teens. I was diagnosed with PTSD and went through rough years coming to terms with this. Working through had a definite influence on me going back to school. I realized that I only have this one life to live and I am only halfway. I decided to live the second half to the fullest and follow my dreams; I enrolled at Athabasca in 2019 at the age of 48.”

When she is not studying, she is “an avid equestrian and spend[s] a lot of time” with her horse; “My daughter and I ride together.” She continued, “In summer, my kids and I ride bikes and kayak; in winter, we skate. I also homeschool my two teenaged children and that takes up a lot of my spare time.” In addition to this busy lifestyle, she is also a volunteer firefighter.

Andrea’s mother had the greatest influence on her desire to learn, “mainly because she gave up her career for her family and was bitter about having done that.” She continued, “I always swore I would never end up that way.” Other influences she mentioned: “Annie Jump Cannon and her work in astronomy when it was mainly a men’s field was an inspiration, as was Stephen Hawking, who achieved greatness despite many challenges.”

Her experience with online learning “has been positive,” stating “I have found the teachers to be supportive and helpful; one just has to ask. I mention this as it is easy to feel isolated when

studying online and not having access to a tutor in person. I do like being able to structure my studies around my kids and being home with them, but that positive also has its downside, as it is far too easy to get bogged down with other things and the studies take a back seat. I miss having classmates and being able to chat to the teacher as needed instead of waiting for a response to an email or a time to chat via the phone.”

When asked if she had ever wavered about continuing her education, Andrea revealed, “I haven’t really wavered since deciding to go back to school in 2018; I am very determined and, once I commit to something, I tend to focus on seeing it through no matter how long it takes. This year COVID-19 did leave me thinking I may need to re-evaluate my long-term plans and take longer to finish that I initially planned, so I now have a plan B in place to go back to being a riding instructor on a part time basis, or be a math tutor should the need arise.”

Her most memorable course thus far has been MATH216: Computer-Oriented Approach to Statistics, which she completed earlier this year. “For someone who loves math it was a shock, and a really difficult course. This course is also memorable as I was studying through the first COVID wave and everything was in upheaval.” She has found communications with her tutors positive, stating “Studying online has been an adjustment, but if have always had a positive response when reaching out.”

As for non-AU related reading material, Andrea is currently enjoying *Endurance* by Scott Kelly and *The Grand Design* by Stephen Hawking. Although she does not generally watch TV, she “recently watched *Interstellar* (mainly because of how realistic the scenes from space and black holes are).” In addition, “I also watched *Hamilton* (at my daughter’s request, she loves theater and musicals and is a fan of Lin-Emanuel Miranda).”

When asked what her first project would be if she were the new president of AU, Andrea’s answer was concise and something on the minds of many students: “Better funding for schools so that it is more affordable for students.”

AU-thentic Events Upcoming AU Related Events

Bannock and a Movie December Edition: Birth of a Family

Dec 1 to Dec 31, Online

Hosted by AU Nukskahtowin

indigenous.athabascau.ca/bannock/index.php

Access through above link

Talk to a Librarian Drop-in Session

Tues, Dec 15, 9:00 to 9:30 am MST

Online via Microsoft Teams

Hosted by AU Library

library.athabascau.ca/orientations.html

No pre-registration necessary; access through above link

MBA for Executives Webinar (Recording)

Tues, Dec 15, 2:00 to 3:00 pm MST

Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business

[news.athabascau.ca/events/mba-for-](https://news.athabascau.ca/events/mba-for-executives-webinar-20200910-recording/)

[executives-webinar-20200910-recording/](https://news.athabascau.ca/events/mba-for-executives-webinar-20200910-recording/)

Access through above link

MBA Application Webinar (Recording)

Tues, Dec 15, 2:00 to 3:00 pm MST

Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business

[news.athabascau.ca/events/mba-application-](https://news.athabascau.ca/events/mba-application-webinar-20201001-recording/)

[webinar-20201001-recording/](https://news.athabascau.ca/events/mba-application-webinar-20201001-recording/)

Access through above link

Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) Info Session

Wed, Dec 16, 3:00 to 4:00 pm MST

Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business

[news.athabascau.ca/events/doctorate-in-](https://news.athabascau.ca/events/doctorate-in-business-administration-dba-information-session-20201216/)

[business-administration-dba-information-](https://news.athabascau.ca/events/doctorate-in-business-administration-dba-information-session-20201216/)

[session-20201216/](https://news.athabascau.ca/events/doctorate-in-business-administration-dba-information-session-20201216/)

Access through above link

Talk to a Librarian Drop-in Session

Thur, Dec 17, 3:00 to 3:30 pm MST

Online via Microsoft Teams

Hosted by AU Library

library.athabascau.ca/orientations.html

No pre-registration necessary; access through above link

The Grad Lounge—Holiday Social

Fri, Dec 18, 1:00 to 2:00 pm MST

Online via Microsoft Teams

Hosted by AU Faculty of Graduate Studies

fgs.athabascau.ca/news/events/index.php

No pre-registration necessary; access through above link

All events are free unless otherwise noted



In response to which famous person, past or present, she would like to have lunch with and why, Andrea chose Amelia Earhart because “she was adventurous and a pioneer in her field as the first female aviator to fly solo across the Atlantic. She was a feminist and showed women that the sky in not the limit.” Fun fact: She even named her daughter after her! The lunch would be “[c]rab curry and loads of seafood.” She stated, “I love seafood and it is a fun meal to share when you want to relax and enjoy good company. Can’t be too serious cracking crab claws and making a mess.”

Although she prefers to stay away from dishonest or closed-minded people, Andrea’s most valuable lesson learned in life has been, “That no matter what happens, I am the only person responsible for my happiness and my decisions.” And her proudest moment? “Deciding that I have it in me to go back to school and follow my dreams.”

One thing that distinguishes her from other people is that she is outspoken and not afraid to stand up for human and animal rights.” She continued, “I also live my life fearlessly and am not afraid to be 100% myself. My favourite quote is: ‘You have enemies? Good. That means you’ve stood up for something, sometime in your life.’ Winston Churchill.” What few people know about Andrea is that she was an environmentalist in her 20s, “long before it became fashionable.” She was also “a member of Earthlife Africa, where we fought for animal and environmental rights alongside Greenpeace.” Best of luck Andrea!

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>.



Unearthing classic articles from previous issues of The Voice Magazine.

On the eve of Poinsettia Day, December 12, we dig back to find more uses for the best-selling potted plant in Canada and the U.S.

The Feng Shui connection. Laura Seymour channels the Poinsettia's fiery nature to spur some moments of fame. "I jumped up, flung my napkin over my head and strutted up to the dance floor." The Christmas Party, December 18, 2002.

Art that heals. Writer Janice Behrens explores the ways that creating or enjoying art can reduce stress. "For children or adults dealing with extreme stress or illness, tapping into the world of the creative imagination can be a source of psychological and even physical healing." The Good Life—The Power of Art, January 20, 2006.



Fly on the Wall

Jason Sullivan

As the Mercury Drops, Don't Drink the Kool-Aid!



“It’s freezing out there!” We’ve all been that person who bursts in from the cold, accompanied by a bracing gust of frigid air. Greeted by icy stares we slink away to our study corner. Winter is a challenging time for AU students as the indoor biped population increases. More people in the abode can mean more fun but along with that comes more distractions. Winter, like so much of AU life, is about what we make of it. Even the fact of temperature is not a given; like our favourite academic discipline, temperature is as personal and contextual as any other life experience. Like all tastes, preferences, and proclivities, temperature is a social construction, a pastiche of interpretations congregated around raw facts.

Much of our subjectivity, our sense of self, include assessments of temperature and the metaphors that guide our interpretation of what heat and cold mean. Just think of how your palms sweat when you sit down at an invigilated AU exam; ice cube, please! Yet cold seems to have a certain power over us; it gnaws away at our very being. Perhaps it’s no coincidence that both Celsius and Fahrenheit were invented in Northern European countries (Centigrade in Sweden, Fahrenheit in Poland and the Netherlands)

It's Always the Same Temperature in our Brain

No matter our reference scale, inexorable freeze is in the nature of a Canadian winter. Even our brains may feel like they’re slowing into a torpor. Our motivation to do our coursework seems to freeze over.

But those are feelings, not facts; education is about learning to separate intuition from cognition. There’s a reason that, for better or worse, the first grade of elementary school includes a lot of training of little ones to stay in their seat. Emotions and attention span are poorly matched and, hey, it’s easier to follow the whims of play than the dictates of cognition.

Summer fits makes all of this easier, however. Languid cricket songs, sultry and dreamy, induce a sense that anything is possible. And where comfort abides, temperature’s reality is never far behind. Whereas crickets can function like thermometers in warm weather, as the temperature dips we are reduced to using our conscience and core beliefs as our guide, and technology that abstracts nature into numeric symbolic form as our epistemic temperature chart.

The fullness and richness of an outdoor context alive with foliage, not to mention birds and bees, is far removed from the dull certainty of dropping thermometer readings. Likewise, our thoughts may feel darker and our study time more dreary as the cold outside brings a numbing loss of creativity to the cold light of our minds. Winter leaves us reduced to the mute certainty of reading numbers off a machine. The temperature news is usually grim and that means study breaks aren’t outdoor frolics in our skivvies, or at least not for long. We need not freeze off our creativity, however.

The Devil's in the Details, The Truth's More Than Numbers

Wherever numbers are implicated and deployed there’s a bigger story at work. Consider how many feelings are hurt by phrases like “so and so’s a 10, so and so’s a 6”. Numbers reduce, repress, and replace a full person as we know them with limiting judgements. It’s in the nature of all methodologies to reduce what counts to that which is chosen for measurement. As such, the

thermometer seems to force us to accept its claims without question. Our relative motion by outdoor exercise holds no place in the accounting procedure and thus, returning to indoor climes, we usually feel far hotter than anyone who remained stationary inside the entire time. Numbers on the thermometer also require discursive translation if we are to elicit a social response; brief phrases like “effin’ cold”, “cold as hell”, or “uninhabitable as Uranus” all come to mind. Emotions inhabit words and words are the stuff of life and the impetus to action.

So as we burst into a roomful of board gamers, their tabletop enterprise as yet unflipped in heated rage as a natural outcome of sedentary frustration induced by the game’s many and intricate rules and rigidly unforgiving demand for attention span, the crowd may nevertheless gape at us with a mixture of bemusement and annoyance. Of course it’s cold out there, they seem to say, and why state the obvious?

Whose temperature is it anyway?

Each of our personal realms almost feels under attack when someone states a temperature they don’t agree with; an apt response to the outdoor temperature is that it *was* cozy in here until *you* arrived. We’re all bearers of the personalized nature of temperature when we speak and especially when we feel; this is why subconscious flush indicators are key to social interactions. I’ve even heard it said that if a couple can’t agree on the thermostat setting then that bodes poorly for their future marital bliss. Likewise, as the comedian Larry David illustrates with hilarity, cultural differences impact temperature expectations.

Happily, it’s always cooler alone in the corner of a room, and, ironically, that’s also the best place to get your studying done! A big part of our success at AU is having supportive spouses, family, and peers who understand that our unique struggle is real. People care that we succeed even if their scale of priorities differs from our own. So, before we pronounce a temperature, it helps to recall that the greatest fires of inspiration, those that will serve us well as we accomplish our scholastic goals, are those we light from within.

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.



Homemade is Better Shredded Jerk Seasoned Chicken Tacos

Chef Corey



There is probably a shirt out there somewhere that says, “Either you like tacos, or you’re wrong!” I have one with that saying about bacon, so I’m sure a taco one exists.

This recipe is a fusion chicken taco recipe between Caribbean jerk seasoning and Mexican tacos. This chicken is not a traditional jerked chicken because when I was looking for our taco seasoning and couldn’t find it, I decided to use our jerk seasoning instead. It’s a little spicier but so good! We call it James’s Jerk Seasoning, after our son.

Considering how close these regions are, the jerk’s flavour is still unique, but one can tell where there is some Spanish influence in the area. Both Mexico and the Caribbean share some similarities in their influences. Spain is the common denominator for them, while the Caribbean also has Dutch, African, French, Indian, and other diverse influences. Mexico is

more native and Spanish influence. Both regions consume a variety of meats, but chicken is used consistently in each area. Since these regions share some relation, it's not a surprise that one can fusion some of the foods together.

We also made our corn tortillas for this recipe. I buy a premix from my local grocer called Maseca, and it has directions for how to make their tortillas. Our youngest loves making tortillas, so I enlisted her to help.

She flattened them and put them on the griddle, and I cooked them and removed them. If you don't have a device to flatten tortillas, you can just use a rolling pin. Store-bought is ok too, but I highly recommend you find a Latin store and get corn tortillas from them. Our local grocer has a decent product, so we buy those when we don't want to make our own.



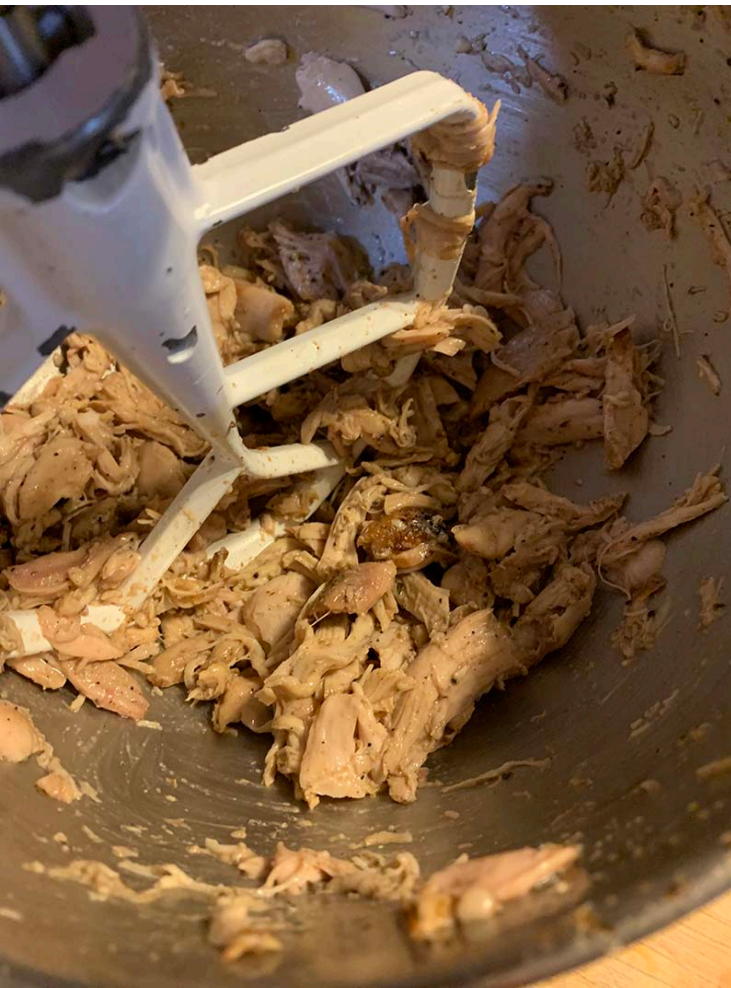
This dish is meant to a quick and easy Taco Tuesday recipe, so do what makes you happy. Make your own, or buy them, don't feel guilty! Just enjoy the food you eat.

Shredded Jerk Seasoned Chicken Tacos

Ingredients:

- 2 tbsp canola oil
- Corn tortillas (we made some using Maseca masa flour mix)
- ~1 lb b/s chicken thighs
- 2 tbsp James's Jerk Seasoning (recipe to follow)
- Pico de Gallo or another salsa
- Sour cream
- Guacamole
- Shredded cheddar
- Shredded head lettuce
- Diced tomatoes



**Directions:**

- 1) To make tortillas as we did, follow the directions on one bag of Maseca tortillas. Otherwise, store-bought is ok, but get corn for this.
- 2) Heat an ovenproof frying pan over high heat and turn on your oven to 350F.
- 3) Liberally season your chicken thighs on both sides.
- 4) Add canola oil to the hot pan and ensure it coats the bottom by swirling it slowly.
- 5) Add the chicken smooth side down.
- 6) Sear until they easily release. No, it won't burn; we've discussed this in a previous article.
- 7) Once the chicken releases, flip it over and sear the other side.
- 8) Put the frying pan into the oven if it is all metal; otherwise, once the chicken releases easily from the frying pan, move it to an ovenproof dish and bake until it reaches 170F.
- 9) Allow the chicken to cool for about 5 minutes.
- 10) Using a couple of forks, shred the chicken. Alternatively, if you have a stand mixer, you can use the paddle attachment and break the chicken up over medium speed.
- 11) Transfer to a bowl, and chow down!

James's Jerk Seasoning

Ingredients:

- 2 tbsp onion powder
- 1 tbsp garlic powder
- 4 tsp dried thyme
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- 2 tsp ground allspice
- ½ tsp ground nutmeg
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 2 tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp cayenne pepper

Directions:

- 1) Mix everything in a jar or container.
- 2) Write this recipe on a card, then tape it to the jar, so you remember how to make this in the future.

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



How to Forgive

Marie Well



If someone we love hurts us, we grow when we endure.

Our loved ones may hurt us, sometimes so deeply that the wounds burrow, raw, to our core. But the secret of forgiveness is to give a vow, a mental marriage vow, to each and every one of our loved ones: I will love you in the good times and the bad, for better or worse, in sickness and health—and stick to it. Real love endures all things; real love forgives all things.

If we feel horrified by an ill deed a loved one does, just pretend that deed was done amongst lions, even birds. Could we possibly hold a grudge against a lion who cheats on his lioness, against a cub who steals a piece of meat from another den, or against a bird that pecks its rival for a discarded box of French fries? No. We

might even find it cute. If only we could keep that level of equanimity with all beings, we'd never judge, but instead find forgiveness. I'm sure, if there exists a God, He views all of us with unwavering love and endless forgiveness, no matter how dire our deeds. We must forgive others, forgiving with great love, to truly embark on a spiritual path.

To forgive our enemies, we can write a glowing five-star review about them, even posting it publicly online if they own a business or work as a professional. We can then review it nightly, reminiscing about all of their finer qualities. It's impossible to hate when focused on love.

Instead of striking out at our offenders, try to find a way to celebrate them. For instance, if we want to write a tell-all book about our enemies, write, instead, a book about their finest traits.

We should remind ourselves that, if we walked in our offenders' shoes, we may have done exactly what they did, or worse. We all walk our journeys to learn lessons and grow. Forgive so that others and ourselves can more easily rise above.

Forgive, but also forget. When we say, "I forgive, but I will never forget," we are actually saying, "I still hold a grudge." Grudges create hardship and suffering for ourselves and others. Let go of grudges to free ourselves of every wound.

Don't bring up hurts to others. Others may rehash these tales, bringing the injury back to the forefront of our thoughts. Instead, let the injury go, replaced by the peace that is rightfully ours.

To forgive, think of the Buddhist monk who was hospitable to the burglar who kept on ransacking his home. The author of that story, Kelsang Gyatso Rinpoche, writes that the Buddhist monk found enlightenment. Even Christianity says turn the other cheek. Forgive to discover the divine.

Ask ourselves, "How would we prefer to be loved? By a loving father or mother, or by a vindictive soul?" Behave like that loving father or mother, but toward all beings, no matter how severely they harm us. Forgiveness is the answer, without fail.

When we forgive others, we come closer to forgiving ourselves for the wrongs we may have committed. Certain spiritual texts, like the Christian Bible and the Koran, even suggest that God will forgive us our sins, if we cover for the sins of our brothers.



The Study Dude

How to Memorize

Marie Well



U At times we need better ways to memorize facts than simply rereading texts, which can be cumbersome and, frankly, time wasting. What we need instead is the silver bullet of memorization mastery, called mnemonics. And, in the case not even mnemonics works, I've covered other methods of memorization for us to try as well.

I once interviewed a famous world memory champion on my study tips podcast. I had read his books and, during the podcast, begged him to rehash his example for memorizing the word "sycophant." To my embarrassment, the memory champ had forgotten the example, but quickly came up with a substitute.

A sycophant is a suck-up, a servile flatterer and subservient person. The memory champ, in his book, had featured a cartoon ant with giant, red, pursed lips and big eyelashes kissing up to the

reader. The memory champ, in his book, broke down the word sycophant into "sicko" and "ant" to make the memory device even more memorable.

I never forgot that memory device, otherwise referred to as a mnemonic. We rarely forget fantastic mnemonics, which is why these memory aids work wonders come exam time.

As another example, in a world music class, I received the top grade by associating a song with a mnemonic. The music was a Russian love song with roots in 12th century African culture. My mnemonic was a visual of my Russian professor, wearing her Russian fur hat, circled by twelve African cupids, each pointing their love arrows at her heart. Can we see the connections? Twelve African cupids representing a 12th century love song with roots in African culture, and a Russian prof representing the Russian song. I told a group of friends about this mnemonic, and they, too, got the question right.

Mnemonics are especially great for memorizing medical terminology, especially the long, obtuse words; those words that are impossible to spell and even more troubling to pronounce. If we

want to find handy medical mnemonics, there are books exclusively on the topic of medical mnemonics, thus saving us from the headache of crafting mnemonics from thin air.

In addition to visual and medical mnemonics, use acronyms. During a political science class, a bunch of my friends and I huddled over a table, each of us trying to figure out a way to memorize a list of four lengthy items. I suggested using an acronym. Acronyms abbreviate a list by taking the first initial of the most important word from each item on the list. We were stumped for an acronym that was easy to remember. The day before the exam, my friends and I reconvened. I shared with them my acronym, a poorly done one I struggled to remember. Once I shared it, my friend beamed. “I’ve got the perfect acronym,” she announced. “It’s P.I.M.P.” We howled. All of us went into that exam with that acronym in mind, and we easily got all the questions related to it correct.

I find the easiest mnemonics to remember are ones with funny, exaggerated, and upbeat visuals or wordplays. The hardest mnemonics to recall are the ones with disturbing content, the ones using visuals or words that weigh heavy on our hearts. The rule of thumb is to find a mnemonic that makes us laugh, smile, or even sigh. Avoid mnemonics that bring us to tears, although depressing mnemonics can be, for some people, equally effective.

Another way to memorize is to read something ten times, say it aloud ten times, and write it down twice. I saw this exact process listed on a Pinterest pin about memory aids. But an even better way to memorize is to read a list of typed-up facts, say them aloud and write them down, but also type them up a second time, but in our own words. This typed document forms the foundation for a script, which we could video record ourselves reading. The video allows us to teach the concepts to a YouTube audience. Teaching concepts cements learning perhaps even better than all the other methods listed in this article.

Educational videos can be easy to create. I saw a system for making video, in which we write our script, practice our first line until we’ve got it memorized, and quickly record ourselves saying it on video. And then, while seated in the same position, practice our next line, record, and repeat, until we’ve done the whole recording. Post the final recording on YouTube, and by the end of the semester, we may wind up with a YouTube following—and a perfect GPA.

Another example of a study aid is perhaps the simplest, but no less effective: writing out notes. People who learn best with movement, kinesthetic learners, may benefit from writing a concept down multiple times, until it’s burned into memory. This approach clearly uses hand movements. Handwriting notes offers greater intimacy with lettering than typing notes provides. But if you handwrite your notes, keep them in clearly labeled notebooks. A friend of mine, who used this system, ended up in a PhD program. She had piles of notebooks, her notes scrawled out, repetitively, in each one.

The hardest part of learning mnemonics, from my experience, is trying them out for the first time. But once we do, we fall in love. To apply a new memorization approach, spend some time trying out the technique, not unlike trying on a new pair of jeans. Once we find it nicely fits, we’re sold.



Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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



AthaU Facebook Group

Angey has an exam booked to write at a library and wonders if exams can be written a few days earlier than scheduled, before the libraries are closed in AB; short answer: yes. Zach expresses frustration about the delay in work-around phone access to AU; discussion follows which sheds some light on the challenges getting staff connected in non-urban areas.

Other posts include late exam fees, appealing a grade, research essays, and APA citations.

reddit

One student wonders if they retake an AU course, can they re-use the same assignments submitted previously; responses suggest checking with the course tutor.

Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: "We're 186 days away from Convocation! Convocation 2021 will be held virtually on June 11. <https://bit.ly/3497OaP> #AthaU21."

@austudentsunion tweets: "AUSU Peer Course Reviews give students a confidential way to rate their course experience at AU, and to provide feedback for fellow @AthabascaU students! Complete one today for your chance to win a \$250 Amazon Gift Card! More info: <https://bit.ly/36vibHg>. #CourseReviews #AthaU."

Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: Canadian Women in Municipal Government Scholarship

Sponsored by: Federation of Canadian Municipalities

Deadline: January 15, 2021

Potential payout: \$1000

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be female Canadian citizens currently enrolled in any year of study at a Canadian secondary school or CEGEP.

What's required: An online application, along with a 3-minute video regarding your contribution to school council or leadership activities, written answers of 300 words each or less to specified questions, and two letters of reference.

Tips: Read the application form carefully and fill out all required information.

Where to get info: www.fcm.ca/en/about-fcm/awards/wilg/canadian-women-in-municipal-government-scholarship



Tools for School and Work

Karen Lam



Studying, working, and family commitments can be a handful. Having a good routine and organizer is essential to help us remember and keep track of important tasks, dates, and commitments. Here are some useful tools for both school, work, and family commitments!

Trello

Trello is a project management tool where you can create tasks and cards under various categories and set reminders, list of tasks, and due dates. It is incredibly useful as you can easily drag and move around tasks and view everything through a calendar as well. I discovered this through my manager at work, and have been using it for everything since. I use it for designing a study and assignment schedule, adding deadlines, family commitments, and managing emails and tasks for work. There is also an app for phones, tablets and even laptop/computers. You also have the option to access it through the browser. If you haven't tried it, I highly encourage you to give it a try. It works amazing for highly complex planning and busy people.

Microsoft OneDrive

We all know storage is not free, only a small amount of it is. For those who need cloud storage, being an AU student gives you a large cloud storage through your Athabasca student email. I use mine to keep all my assignments, notes, letters and documents. It is very handy as you can access all your files anywhere and on any device.

Microsoft OneNote

I used this back during my first University degree a few years ago, and loved it. If you're someone who likes writing on a tablet and trying notes, this is a free app and resource that allows you to do both. It also offers an easy option to print your notes. Being an AU student also means you get this for free when you download your free Microsoft Office package.

Evernote

Evernote has existed for quite some time now and is a very useful study tool. It allows students to create notes and access them in various devices with the option of sharing notes with others and allowing them to edit. I used this during my first degree where I had lots of group participation, but this is handy regardless if you study alone or with someone else.

Quizlet

Quizlet is an amazing tool that I use for creating quizzes and flashcards. For courses where a lot of memorization is required, this online tool is amazing. It also features the ability to create multiple choices quizzes, written, and options to help you learn the content before you test yourself.

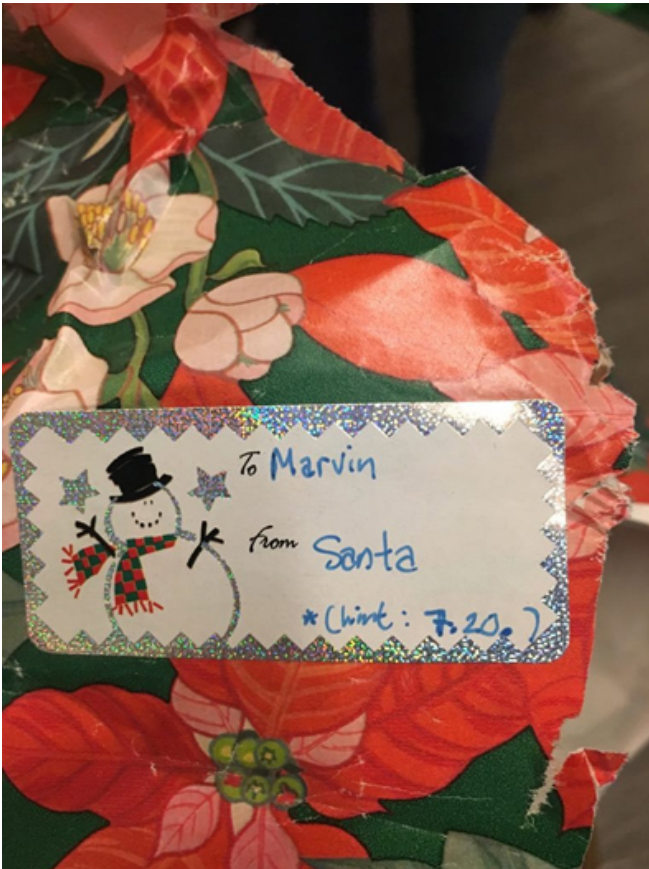
Working from a distance can mean setting your own schedule, making your own study plan, and finding the resources to help you follow through with it. Hopefully, some, or all, of these tools will help you do just that and complete your courses and degree.

Karen's taking her Computing Science degree at AU, learning French and Korean, and is into K-pop, SF, and politics



Connecting While Socially Distanced for Christmas

Xine Xu



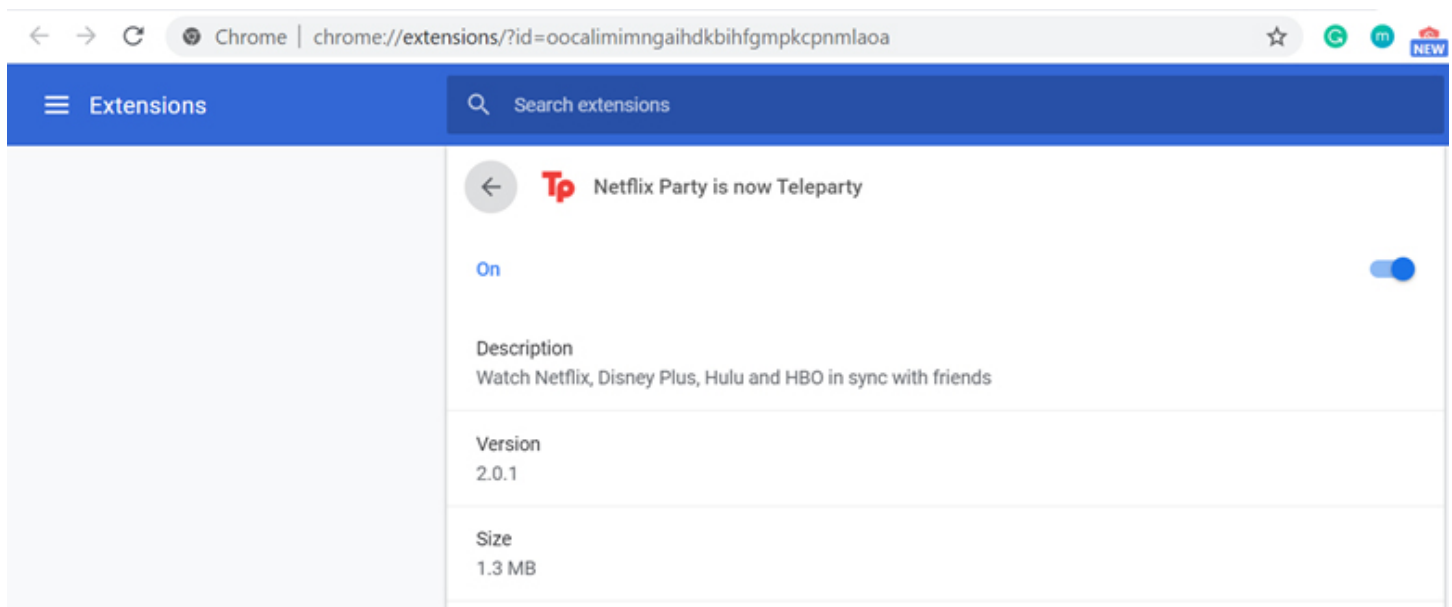
One of the challenges since the start of the pandemic in March was still maintaining some semblance of a normal social life while being socially distanced. While some of the public health regulations have transitioned from fairly strict to moderately strict and now back to full lock-down for wave two of the pandemic, many of us will be spending the holidays away from loved ones. So how can we still stay together while being apart and enjoy the festivities in this strange, incomparable holiday season?

I found that over the past year, I've learned a number of handy tips to continue hosting exciting events online. Even though it's not a replica of what holidays would be like in person, it can still help lift the spirits of you and your loved ones.

Watch Netflix Together

Despite having discovered this fairly late, I have enjoyed every second of this Chrome extension that can unite friends and families via Netflix. If your folks have access to Netflix, adding this

Chrome Extension will allow everyone to watch at the same time in real-time. Recently having re-subscribed to my Netflix account, I was able to bond with friends overseas and in the United States for a Netflix party while hanging out on a Zoom call. If you're a sucker for holiday movies like I am, this is a must try!



Stream Your Board Games and Play Together Remotely

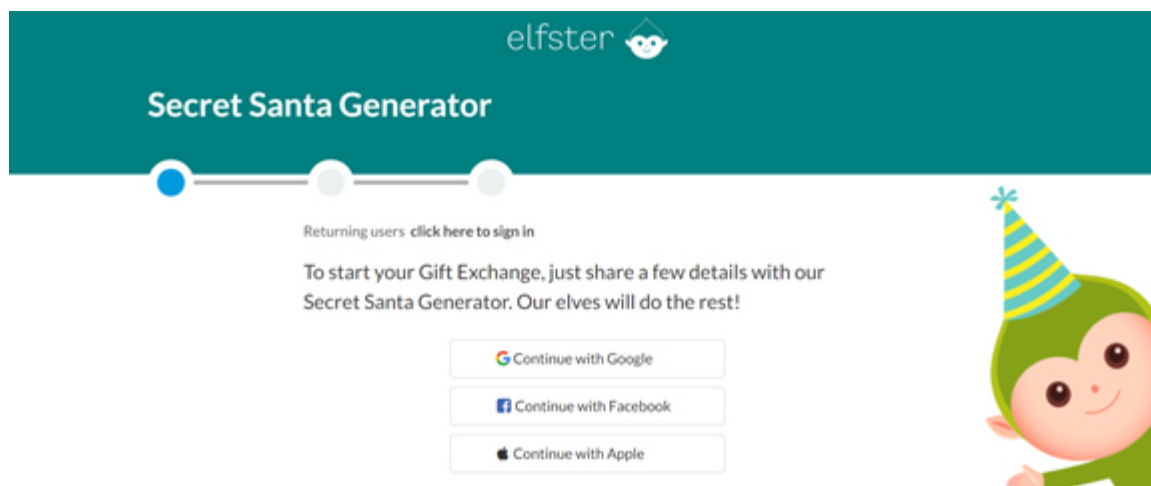
One of my favorite go-to activities with friends during the pandemic was hosting boardgame evenings virtually. Streaming (also known as share-screen) allows your friends to visualize your computer screen such that if you are playing a group board game such as Codenames, others can collaborate with you and move some virtual game pieces. This may require some coordination and knowledge of where to find online board games. One great website I've come across is <https://en.boardgamearena.com/> There are many free board games available to enjoy with your friends and family. However, creating an account is required. Other options include purchasing some board games such as Jackbox via the Steam Application



Virtual Secret Santa

While Secret Santa Gift Exchanges may not look the same as in previous years, there are still many options that friends, colleagues and family members can enjoy a good gathering. There are various excellent secret Santa applications that will help match individuals in a group anonymously. Elfster is one website that my circle of friends have used in the past to help match individuals for a secret Santa event. If you're looking to socially distance for holiday shopping, online deliveries are an excellent option as well. Then when the big day comes, be sure to create a Zoom or Skype meeting with your recipients and open the gifts in front of your friends and families.

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





Dear
Barb

Barbara Godin

A Marriage of COVIDness?

Dear Barb:

This is going to sound like a crazy thing to do in the middle of a pandemic, but my boyfriend and I want to get married. It's crazy because we just met when the pandemic started, so we've been together ever since. Obviously, we haven't been socializing with very many people because we are trying to respect COVID-19 safety measures. Jason and I get along really well, and so we thought why not take the plunge and get married.

I was all on board initially, but now I am not so sure. For one thing we would not be able to have a traditional wedding, and I really want my family and friends to be able to see me get married in person, especially my parents. The other thing I have been thinking about is that maybe we are still together because we were kind of forced into the situation, since we couldn't go out and meet other people. I haven't mentioned my feelings to Jason, and he hasn't shared anything with me that would make me believe he feels the same way. We have been living together for the last three months and get along great. My mom thinks I am out of my mind to even be thinking about doing something like this in the midst of all the uncertainty in the world. What is your opinion, am I way out there?

Looking forward to your response, Alannah.

Hi Alannah:

Getting married in the middle of a pandemic, or at any time actually, requires careful thought. You can't just "take the plunge." If you are having second thoughts, then it's probably not the right thing for you to do right now. I am not saying it is the wrong thing to do, but the stress we are all feeling from this pandemic is having a great impact on society, and some of the choices we are making. You and Jason should have a discussion about how you are both feeling; he may be having second thoughts as well. Since things are going well and you said you are living together, then what's the rush to get married. Take your time and see how you both feel once life gets back to normal. We are beginning to see the light at the end of the tunnel as far as the pandemic goes. When this is over you will be able to have the wedding you want with your family and friends around. For now take this time to get to know each other.

Thanks for your writing Alannah.

Email your questions to voice@voicemagazine.org. Some submissions may be edited for length or to protect confidentiality; your real name and location will never be printed. This column is for entertainment only. The author is not a professional counsellor and this column is not intended to take the place of professional advice.



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IMPORTANT DATES

- **Dec 15:** [Jan degree requirements deadline](#)
- **Dec 20:** [Deadline to request exams for Dec. end date](#)
- **Dec 21 – Jan 4 –** AUSU Holiday Closure
- **Dec 24 – Jan 4 –** [AU Holiday Closure](#)
- **Jan 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Feb 1](#)
- **Jan 14:** [AUSUnights Virtual Student Social](#)

AUSU Award Winners

AUSU is pleased to announce some of the award winners from our Fall 2020 Award Cycle. While we wish we could give awards to all students that applied, AUSU is proud to have given over \$50,000 in awards and bursaries to AU students in the Fall (*to our November and Year-Round award and bursary applicants*).

We doubled the number of awards available to students for our November cycle, and will double them again for our May awards cycles, so stay tuned!

Academic Achievement Award:

Melony Jackie, Michele Mrkvan, Jenna Nickerson, Kimberly O'Neill, Cynthia Sneath, Shelley Wiart

Balanced Student Award:

Lisa Bussieres, Alysha Carachi, Chanelle Courville, Adam Grendys, Ashley Grimes, Melodie Palyga, Samita Sarkar, Tanis Thomas

Returning Student Award:

Shirley Barton, Sandra Benholm-Cheung, Joanna Brownlee, Zuhur Dualeh, Alison Gash, Matthew Kingdon, Duniya Maiwand, Kathleen Stahler

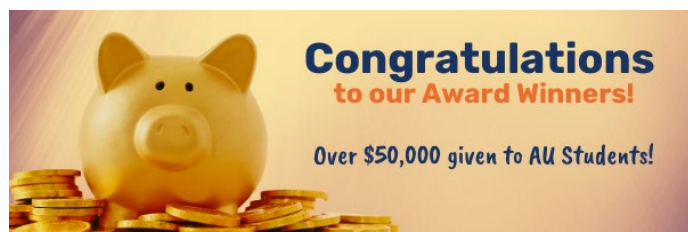
Student Volunteer Award:

Courtney King, Allyson Koch, Sabrina Niesman, Afroz Sabah, Fe San Jose, Cleopatra Sarantakos

#Igo2AU Award:

Elijah Buchan, Eva Notter, Van Phan, Eben Vankoughnett

AUSU provided many other awards and bursaries, but not all winners are announced for confidentiality reasons. For more info about AUSU awards available, visit our [website](#).



AUSU Executive Blog

In our latest AUSU Executive Blog, our new VP External and Student Affairs Natalia Iwanek outlines some of the equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) initiatives that AUSU has underway. She also talks about the recent change to our executive team and some of the other projects and advocacy the executives are working on.

"In many ways, 2020 has revealed historical injustices that continue to present day and applying an EDI lens to future policy and initiatives is something we consider crucial. We will move forward as an organization that values equity, inclusion, and proper representation of our members." - Natalia

Check out the latest Executive Blog [here](#).



Mental Health Help over the Holidays

The holidays can be a stressful time of year, especially this year. If you are struggling this year, AU has supports in place for students including free counselling.

**For immediate support, 24/7,
call Homewood Health at 1-800-663-1142.**

For more info visit the [AUSU website](#).



CLASSIFIEDS

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

THE VOICE

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