



THE VOICE

Vol 29 Issue 45 2021-11-12

Minds We Meet

Interviewing Students Like You

The Scariest Part of Halloween

Behind the Blue Bucket

Council Connection

October 21, 2021 Meeting

Plus:

*Literary Landscapes
Reality and Remembrance
and much more!*



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



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

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

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

Editorial

Working the Land Acknowledgements

Karl Low



This editorial may anger some initially. That's not its intention, I'm just trying to work through some of my own concerns with one of the more recent trends to hit various organizations, especially those in public institutions. So keep reading to the end.

I'm speaking about the almost inevitable land acknowledgment that seems to precede most meetings these days. Wherein the organization gives voice to the idea that the land they operate from, at least here in North America, was originally that of various Indigenous Peoples.

On the face of it, it seems a reasonable thing. A subtle reminder to understand our history, and to further consider how we currently treat Indigenous Peoples and the justifications we use for that.

At the same time, though, I find I wonder about the hypocrisy of it. In one meeting I went to recently the meeting organizer noted that he was working on the "stolen" lands of various Indigenous Peoples. I tend to think that when we know things are truly stolen, the

correct course of action is to return them to those who originally owned them.

Yet I somehow doubt his organization would be willing to even allow any current member of those groups to simply wander in and set up sleeping quarters and make use of the office space being rented as their own home. Were that to happen, I'm fairly confident that the organization would be doing whatever they could to remove the person—perhaps to other organizations that could provide assistance and shelter, but I highly doubt they'd concede that the person had any right to remain there. At what point does a land acknowledgement become simple lip-service, and when does it go from there to simply an excuse people use to avoid actually dealing with the issue and problems involved?

In AUSU's case, their land acknowledgement notes that "Athabasca University Students' Union respectfully acknowledges that we are on and work on the traditional lands of the Indigenous Peoples (Inuit, First Nations, Métis) of Canada. We honour the ancestry, heritage and gifts of the Indigenous Peoples and give thanks to them." And, on thinking about it, I don't mind that one. It doesn't go so far as to suggest any action that we obviously won't do, and current actions by this Council, such as creating the Indigenous Circle, indicate that they are taking the idea of honouring the origins seriously. So, okay, some uses of them can be good, reminding the group to take further steps.

But I'm worried that too often these statements are being used as simply a form of boiler-plate to avoid having to confront the issues any further. So if your organization has taken to adding these kind of things on, maybe stop and ask yourself, "Are we really doing anything about this?" And if not, maybe it's time to ask your bosses why not.

At any rate, our feature is an interview with student Selena Burke, we've also got the October council meeting report, and a look at one of the scariest parts of Halloween just past. Plus events, scholarships, you know the drill. Enjoy the read!

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

MINDS

WE

MEET



Who are your fellow students? At times, in an online learning environment, it can feel like you are all alone, but across the nation and around the globe, students just like you are also pursuing their Athabasca University (AU) studies! Each week, *The Voice Magazine* will be bringing you some of these stories. 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 Selena Burke (she/her), currently residing in Sudbury, Ontario, the traditional lands of the Atikameksheng Anishnawbek and the traditional lands of the Wahnapiitae First Nation.

Originally from Barrie, Ontario, Selena has lived in many different towns all over the province, as well as Newfoundland, before moving to Sudbury, Ontario. The thirty six-year old mother of three “beautiful children,” is currently enrolled in her first year of the Bachelor of Health Administration program at AU. She stated, “I am really excited about going back to school in the field of health care. Prior to this, I worked in technology and clothing retail for twenty years in a customer service role. I am eager to use my life experiences and give back to community in a health care setting.” She stated that in

today’s world, “we could all use a little kindness and understanding.”

Upon graduating, Selena hopes to work “with health care centres and the community.” She would like to improve “the experience for the employees in training, support systems, and staffing solutions,” believing this would create “a better experience for the patients receiving care.”

When not busy studying, she spends time with her children and partner. She explained, “We like to go on drives in the country, looking for new and interesting animals and plants and trees, etc. My children are very curious and have a thirst for knowledge about the unknown. We’ve learned so much about many things, because of their curiosity. If we don’t have the answer to the question, we look it up and learn together. We love to play video games as well as a family unit and are currently hooked on Minecraft. We also spend time doing science experiments on the weekends and having spontaneous fun.” She also enjoys “nature and baking and going spontaneous adventures with [her] partner.”

Selena also mentioned that she considers herself “a huge comic book/superhero fan,” explaining that she loves “to read science fiction and fantasy novels.” She is currently reading “a fantasy/sci-fi series by Caroline Peckham and Susanne Valenti called the *Zodiac Academy: The Awakening*” and is watching *The Witcher* and *Lucifer* on Netflix.

When *The Voice* asked Selena who in her life has had the greatest influence on her desire to learn, she chose both of her parents. She explained that during her childhood, her father was her world. She stated, “I was in constant awe of the things that my dad did from day to day. I would watch my dad create things out of wood and metal, using tools in his workshop, painting them, and making these beautiful items for everyone in the family. I watched my dad take the time to show us (I am the eldest of five children) how to build things with our hands—how to be creative and have fun with writing stories and using our imagination.” She continued, “My dad would write us these super imaginative stories, where my siblings and I were often the main characters on grand adventures. My dad has a love of reading and learning and figuring things out. He has a natural curiosity that I like to think my children and I inherited from him. He’s gone back to school in his adult years to learn new trades (Animal Husbandry and Truck Driving). My dad has always led by example and given a positive outlook on learning and schooling.”

Selena also spoke highly of her mother, stating, “My mom has always stood by and encouraged me through all my dreams and endeavors. She has been a constant source of encouragement, strength, and love. I’ve learned so much from my mom, in the way she treats others and how she is a constant source of support and harmony for our family. There is great strength and grace in her ability to see the bigger picture and to look forward to the future while respecting the past. My mom has also gone back for academic upgrading while raising a family.” She added that her mom was educated as a personal support worker and is currently employed at a retirement residence. Selena credited her mother with her own personal desire to enter the health care field, after “hearing her stories and desiring a change for everyone.”

She reflected, “With both parents cheering me, how could I not go on an adventure in academic learning with love and support like that. They are just as much a part of this journey as me.”

When asked about her experience with online learning, Selena replied that it has been great so far. She explained, “I like the interaction with the counselors, before choosing your programs or courses. I received a lot of feedback and support in a quick and timely manner. I love that there is a lot of resources for students on the websites and through the student account, as well as the AU app. Which I use quite regularly. I love that there is a sense of community, even though we are near and far around the world. I enjoy how the programs are laid out and find it easy to understand as well. Especially as it’s been quite some time since I’ve been in school or in an online setting for learning. I haven’t found much if anything to dislike so far. My overall experience has been great.”



Her most memorable course so far has been ADMN 232: Introduction to Management, because she found “it fascinating to learn all the management principles and theories and to see how far back it traces to Sumerian times.” She continued, “I find human culture and behaviors interesting, and I like to see the correlation to the ‘hows’ and the ‘whys’ that lead to today’s ways in which we interact with each other now. Humans are fascinating. I look forward to completing this course.”

When asked which famous person, past or present, she would like to have lunch with, and why, Selena chose Jennifer Doudna, “inventor of a groundbreaking technology for (called CRISPR-Cas9) editing genomes.” She explained, “With this type of research there is the possibility of curing cancer and other diseases, as well genetic anomalies. I would love to sit and have lunch with her and discuss her theories and what drove her to this discovery. ‘What’s her process and motivation?’ ‘What does she see next for herself and her theories?’ Its incredibly inspiring to see how far science is progressing and by strong women, paving the road for the rest of us, like her.” And as for the lunch, Selena chose “the most delicious Caesar salad with chicken and tomato soup.”

When asked about the most valuable lesson she has learned in life, Selena told *The Voice*, “Be open and honest, be your most authentic self. Be open to criticism and new ways of thinking. We are always growing and learning. It’s okay to be wrong, if you move on with knowledge, understanding and growth.”

Selena revealed that her proudest moment in life has been “becoming a mother, three times over.” She continued, “My children are my greatest joy. Getting to see the world through their eyes is life changing and so innocent and pure.”

And the one thing that distinguishes her from other people? “I would say very few people know how much I love to read and write. How I love to learn and go on what like to call ‘going down the rabbit hole’ on Google. I get fascinated by a subject and then I need to be an expert in it. I love to learn everything I can about a topic and then share my knowledge.”

As a final note, Selena had some advice for fellow students: “I would like to encourage others to take a leap of faith on yourself and follow your dreams; there’s no time like the present. Go for what you want and enjoy life!” Best of luck Selena!

Natalia Iwanek (she/they) is currently completing her Bachelor of Arts in English with a minor in Political Science at Athabasca University.



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

As if it being Friday isn't enough, Friday, November 12 marks Happy Hour Day! The concept of happy hour has expanded beyond discounted drinks, as our writers have observed.

Mosquitoes are thirsty, too. Katie D'Souza continues her account of five weeks spent in India, with a look at critters and community spirit. "You have no idea where they are in the room, or what location their bite will be in. They are tiny, noiseless, and evil." Indian Winter – Part II, May 10, 2013.

Does attending happy hour advance your goals? Columnist Hazel Anaka examines the Pareto Principle, and how it can apply to different areas of life. "From a time-management perspective, at work or personally, it behooves us to analyze those activities or behaviours most beneficial to us." From Where I Sit – Pareto's Principle, February 19, 2010.

The Scariest Part of Halloween For Parents of Children with Disabilities

Jessica Young



Halloween this year was a daunting time for me. My son was excited about the Batman costume he picked out, but I was unsure if he was going to be able to wear the mask all night. He loves carving pumpkins, watching *Hotel Transylvania*, cutting out pictures of ghosts at school, and all things “spooky”—but would he be able to handle the flashing lights and scary costumes that would be everywhere on Halloween night? Would he have a meltdown if he couldn’t immediately eat the candy that was put in his bag? How many houses can we go to before he gets overwhelmed? Will his fingers let him open and close his treat bag repeatedly? Will he be able to say trick-or-treat? Will people be nice to him?

My son is six years old. He is sweet, silly, full of energy, and wants to be included in everything. He loves superheroes, dinosaurs, and Pokémon. In many ways, he is a typical six-year-old boy. He also has autism, some developmental delays, and is mostly non-speaking. That last part

doesn’t matter very much to me or the rest of his family—we see him and love him for who he is—but society was not designed for people with disabilities. Holidays like Halloween underscore the differences in what my son can do and what society expects him to do, and, unfortunately, brings out some discriminatory beliefs in others.

This discrimination is why the blue-bucket movement for Halloween gained traction on social media a few years ago and remains in circulation today. The idea behind the blue bucket is to signal that the trick-or-treater has autism or another disability that may prevent them from speaking, wearing a costume, or any of the other societal expectations for Halloween. Some people see the blue-bucket movement as a positive way to help children with disabilities and bring awareness to autism. I know the people who suggested it to me this year had the best of intentions. However, I refuse to participate. My son should not have to loudly proclaim his medical diagnosis to the entire neighborhood in exchange for some chocolate (or some kindness).

Post-Halloween, I came across several articles or social media posts either from parents heartbroken that their child was denied candy or from posters complaining that children were not saying “trick or treat” or “thank you” when receiving candy like this one. It is difficult for me to grasp that in 2021 there are still many people who don’t understand that not everyone has the same capabilities; that having abilities outside of the “norm” shouldn’t disqualify a human being from participating in society. If we are comfortable denying children with disabilities candy on Halloween based on the principle that children should be able to speak—what else are we comfortable denying them? While the issue of candy on Halloween may seem small, it represents the denial of basic kindness, compassion, and empathy for others; and that is unacceptable.

Jessica is completing her Bachelor of Human Resources and Labour Relations degree while pursuing her passion for writing and drinking coffee.



Council Connection

Oct 21, 2021 Meeting

Karl Low



Administrivia

The meeting convened at 6:30pm with Councillors Jesse Poriz and Regan Johnson absent. Jesse had sent in his regrets and Regan arrived slightly later in the meeting. Vice President External (VPEX) Karen Fletcher read the acknowledgement of operating on traditional lands, and noted that “as an organization, AUSU is committed to decolonization.” It was also pointed out that individuals can find the treaties and tribes involved with the place they live by going to <https://native-land.ca>.

The action item from the last meeting was discussed, to review the period between AU course reviews, and Vice President Finance and Administration (VPFA), Almigdad Eldoma told Council that the Executive had heard from AU that if there is a course that has obvious red flags,

such as wording or phrases that are non-inclusive, those things don’t have to wait and contacting the course-coordinator or Dean of the faculty will lead to it being adjusted right away.

VPEX Fletcher also pointed out that she maintains a spreadsheet of courses and problems with wording and other items in them. “It’s a very depressing spreadsheet.” President Stacey Hutchings also noted that meetings with AU senior management are ongoing.

New Business

Council then moved on to the new business, with the first item being the Oath of Office that was delayed from last meeting, as they had wanted to receive the Indigenous Circle’s (IC) input on it, before having the IC’s representative, Jo-Mary Crowchild-Fletcher swear to it. However, now with the input received, Council looked at it and had some questions and concerns as to the new wording, noting that it suggested Council’s main work would be decolonization, and that another section seemed to be an incomplete sentence. So once again, Jo-Mary goes without having her oath available.

Policy Updates

Accessibility and Accommodations

A new policy regarding Accessibility and Accommodations was placed before Council and Vice President Community and Wellness (VPCW), Natalia Iwanek spoke to the rationale for it, explaining that the executive had been trying to identify areas of policy where gaps may exist, and had found this area was one such gap. She noted that the hope is that this policy makes AUSU as an organization more accessible for the disabled, chronically ill, neurodiverse, and others, and that this policy is just the start and that it expands further as required.

Staff Hiring

The next policy on the agenda was about staff hiring, and a lot of discussion erupted on this policy as Councillor Amber McDuffe noted that the added word “compatibility” could be seen as highly subjective in the policy line reading “Selection shall be based on the candidate’s skills, experience,

availability, compatibility, and experience, as ascertained through the candidate's resume, interview and reference checks."

Executive Director Jodi Campbell noted that the actual manner in which people are hired has not changed and would not change if that word was or was not present, noting that "any of us who have been part of a hiring committee, a lot of the times what you're looking for is a good fit, and you're right, that is a very subjective thing, however it's also extremely important, and I think when you're looking to fill in members of your team, fit is important, compatibility (whether that's the proper term we should be using) is important."

VPCW Iwanek added, "For me, compatibility can be taken in the sense that ... AUSU as an organization has certain values that we stand for and certain things that we advocate for and if someone is against what we're trying to accomplish, that could be a bit of a conflict. It's difficult."

President Hutchings noted, "When I think about compatibility for hiring at AUSU, it's important that the person values and is passionate about education, because that's the sphere we're in. To me that's what compatibility is, someone who really values being in it."

There was also discussion going on in the chat that runs alongside the Zoom meeting of Council, where Councillor Leah Campbell noted that "Compatibility with the organizational culture is a huge HR trend."

"I just think," explained Councillor McDuffe, "that it's really important that our wording comes across the way we want it to come across. Maybe we can elaborate more on that line, just to make sure that we are going to be taken the way we want to be taken. So that nobody can use that against us or take it out of context."

VPFA Eldoma noted he was in favor of taking the word out and revising the policy with better language at the next round of policy revision.

However, Councillor Cassandra disagreed, noting that "I definitely feel if we don't change the wording than we should leave it as is, because taking it out altogether might impact anyone who happens to read it more than leaving it in."

After some general polling of the group, it was determined that the word would be removed before the policy was voted on, at which point it passed unanimously.

Scholarships Awards and Bursaries

The final policy on offer tonight was a revision to the Awards and Bursaries policy, and this policy also caused a lot of discussion among the Council, as the policy was being changed so that the emergency computer bursary would not have applications accepted during the regular award application periods, due to the large amount of work these applications caused staff during the regular awards period with very few qualifying students.

It was quickly pointed out that emergency computer bursaries could still be made, but students interested would be directed to talk to the Executive Director before submitting an application, so as to lessen the number of students who were applying to "just see what they could do."

Councillor Amber McDuffe again lead the concerns noting that she was "not a fan of shutting down the computer bursaries on certain months," noting that "many students only look at awards during the awards season."

VPex Fletcher responded that “Noting that our staff time is a limited resource, especially during those months, this works to help reduce the time staff will have to spend during the busy season with applications that are not qualified.”

Executive Director Campbell explained, “We’ve been reviewing this for three to four award cycles, and a lot of conversations have been happening with Jamie, our admin assistant. She’s part time and helps to administer the awards program. I would not have proposed this change to the Awards committee if it wasn’t something that the committee seriously needed to review.”

He noted that Awards Committee should consider “Jamie’s ability to process upward of 270 award applications as the Awards Committee doesn’t even see many of the ones that she addresses. If the Awards Committee as a group is looking at 200-250 award applications, Jamie and the staff have looked at 300 or more.

“The month Jamie joined, we had over 32 computer bursary applications submitted, with many of them just students seeing what they could do. Four ended up being approved. ... Organizationally, this is something I would seriously recommend for Council to consider, it’s not about creating barriers, but rather about trying to make the awards program more efficient.”

Councillor Dur-E-Najaf Syed noted that Jodi had convinced her a bit, as she doesn’t want to give someone a whole lot of extra work, but that “I just feel wrong about pausing the applications ... because AU is entirely computer based, and a lot of students might feel stigmatized or ashamed about having to apply for these things, and, like Amber said, it does feel like a kind of extra step.”

Councillor Eva Notter responded “I don’t see it as much of an extra step. But if it was me, and I actually needed a computer, I wouldn’t see it as paused, because the very next sentence says they can still be considered by contacting the executive director.”

Councillor Meredith Charlton added, “If we’re basing it off of how previous award cycles have gone, how the majority of applications had not been emergency situations, we should base it off that. ... We don’t have to make this permanent, and if we see problems we can revert back but I don’t think it would hurt to try it. I don’t see it as too much of an extra barrier if you really need a computer.”

Councillor Cassandra Mackay pointed out that “Everyone’s definition of emergency is different. There could be people who really are in emergency situations and decide they’re not because there’s others with greater needs than them. There could also be individual, as we’ve seen, who think they have an emergency when they don’t. Either way, there’s a negative but I’d rather read an application that doesn’t meet the criteria rather than know someone who really needed a computer didn’t apply because they didn’t consider their own case an emergency.”

Meredith then wondered if a compromise could be made advertising that an inquiry to the Executive Director could be made.

AU-thentic Events Upcoming AU Related Events

Surviving the Ethics Approval Process Unscathed

Mon, Nov 15, 1:00 to 2:00 pm MST

Online

Hosted by AU

news.athabascau.ca/events/surviving-the-ethics-approval-process-unscathed/

Register through above link

All events are free unless otherwise noted.

VPEX Fletcher felt that anybody sitting there wondering if they qualify as an emergency would not be further put off by having to contact the Executive Director as opposed to just filling out an application.

Councillor Leah Campbell expressed that “All awards and bursaries come with eligibility criteria. Having to email to describe your eligibility is not a far cry from standard eligibility tests. It seems like a fair compromise.”

Councillor Syed maintained “I don’t like the idea of having to ask for permission to apply. I agree with what Cassandra said”

Councillor Katy Lowe reminded that students who are going through a crisis or emergency are encouraged, both by AUSU and the other students, to contact AUSU. To her this did not seem much different, and noted that AUSU should be using evidence from the applications they’ve been receiving and noting how many are truly emergency applications. “What we need to do for a decision like this is to look at the data.”

Amber countered, “We have to remember that, yes, staff time is important, but this is their job.”

Cassandra added “If they don’t have a computer for financial reasons, they may not even have a cell-phone,” pointing out that simply receiving an email back from the Executive Director confirming that they should apply for the bursary may be difficult for them, if they have to trek to the library for their email use, for example.

Councillor Regan Johnson noted that students are going on to the website to see if the application is available for the computer, “I don’t feel that’s any more of a barrier. We’ve received plenty of applications but we’ve maybe only approved a dozen, if that.”

The question was called, and the policy did pass, although Councillors Amber McDuffe, Cassandra MacKay, and Dur-E-Najaf Syed voted against.

My two cents? I was surprised that nobody stopped to ask “What gets delayed if we don’t do this, and is leaving students be free to submit without contacting the Executive Director to see if they’re just wasting their (and staff’s) time worth it?”

Updates and Reports

Executive Director Campbell provided an update to the awards program, noting that, during this meeting they were currently right in the middle of the awards application period, once again being able to double the number of awards given. For this awards cycle, that doubling was made possible by a donation from Athabasca University of 90,000 that would be split between the awards and the virtual food assistance program. “So once again for this year, we’re really, really proud to be able to say that our Awards Committee is going to be really busy.”

He noted that with 120 applications already in half way through the month, there were plans to significantly increase promotion of the awards so that the money could reach the students.

VPCW Iwanek provided an update on Pride Week that took place on October 25-29, noting events had been planned with the 2021 Writer in Residence, Joshua Whitehead, as well as Dr. Tobias Wiggins. There would also be Pride Theme Podcasts and special editions of the AUSU Newsletter created.

Most of the reports flew by, as I’m sure most of Council was fairly tired by this time, but Executive Director Campbell did point out during his report that the new course review system was doing excellent, as the old system had received about 800 reviews over five years, but the new one, supported by some additional prizes, had amassed over 1,600 reviews in a single year.

Recognition and Acknowledgements

A shout-out was given by Councillor Leah Campbell to those who did the development of the Accessibility policy, with VPEx Fletcher noting that it was Natalia's work, "She'll say it was a team effort, but the team was mostly her."

Thanks were also given to Karen and Katy for their work on the podcasts, to Regan for her running of the AU Awards Committee, as VPEx Fletcher noted, "I serve on a small AU committee, and I can't tell you just how organized AUSU's committee is by comparison."

Acknowledgements were also put out for the Indigenous Circle, and to those who helped make the Pride events a possibility and those who helped put together the AUSU survey.

Also Amber gave thanks to Jo-Marie for pointing out some materials and research to help her with a situation she is having at work.

President Hutchings also wanted to thank absent Councillor Jesse Poriz, noting that he had resigned from Council, "I want to acknowledge the work and service he put in in his short term here, but he's moving to New Guinea and got some insane opportunities there soon."

With that, and another long meeting in the books, Council adjourned until this Thursday, November 18, 2021.

If you're interested in attending a meeting in person (and I should note that there's often more that actually happens during the meetings, I just try to keep these reports contained to the stuff pertaining to actual Council business) you can contact governance@ausu.org for a meeting package.

And if you're interested in earning a bit of extra cash, then you should also contact me at voice@voicemagazine.org as I'm still looking for someone willing to write up these reports about the meetings.

Karl Low graduated from AU with his BA (English) a long time ago. He's been involved with AUSU for entirely longer than is healthy, and now is the Managing Editor of The Voice Magazine.



Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: Allied Van Lines Scholarship

Sponsored by: Allied Van Lines

Deadline: December 15, 2021

Potential payout: \$1000

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be Canadian citizens or permanent residents; be enrolled or enrolling at an accredited Canadian university or college in a full-time undergrad degree program in the Logistics or equivalent field; and have a GPA of 2.5 or greater.

What's required: An online application form, along with a current transcript, verification of enrollment, and a 400-800 word essay on logistics/supply-chain management.

Tips: Reading the Entry Requirements section carefully for info on essay requirements.

Where to get info: www.alliedvanlines.ca/scholarship



Get Every Possible Edge In Your Studies or Your Career

Marie Well



An object in motion stays in motion. Have you ever discovered that the busiest people are the ones who always have time for more projects? They get stuff done. They're efficient. They're creative. One guy I know worked full-time, did a master's degree, and trained hard in the gym—all at the same time. Busy people achieve more than most.

Why? Because they're moving. Movement has created the world.

Deep thought is movement, no different than developing a muscle. And your role in work or studies can benefit from the following tips on how to be super productive yet also ultra-focused daily:

Tip #1: Don't spend time on frivolous things. Trivial tasks take away from productive thought and activity.

Tip #2: Add in productive fun that strengthens your work or study objective. For instance, spending the weekend studying at a coffee shop is fun work. Or learning work-related skills can advance your goals.

Exercise is another way to bring you long-term productivity. If it's fun but study or work related, then live it up a little!

Tip #3: If you volunteer, volunteer at a place that will help advance your school or work aims. For instance, medical students might volunteer at hospitals. Math students might volunteer teaching troubled kids math. A business student might volunteer doing marketing projects for charities. Just make sure you're doing good that gets you ahead.

Tip #4: If you like reading, read books that give you an academic or work edge. A communications student might read about theory relevant to the discipline. Business students might read biographies of successful business people. Physics students might read the theories of Einstein. Bookworms that are also geeks really do get a significant academic edge.

Tip #5: For social outlets, join a meetup in your respective field. If you are an English major, join a playwriting meetup. If you're a physicist, join a group that maps out residences on the moon. If you're a dance major, join a dance group that performs live. If you're a communications student, join Toastmasters or a communications association relevant to your field. Hone your craft with like-minded souls.

Tip #6: Focus as much as possible on your key task. If you want a math degree, squeeze in every bit of time possible studying math. Make your world so math-focused, you dream equations.

Tip #7: Buy your kids toys that reflect your study or work focus. If you want to be a chemist, get your kids the periodic table, each symbol, number, and name on a separate matt-like footprint that you can place to the floor. Or buy your kids microscopes and science gadgets. If you are an English major, buy your kids books, Scrabble, and poetry wall-hangings.

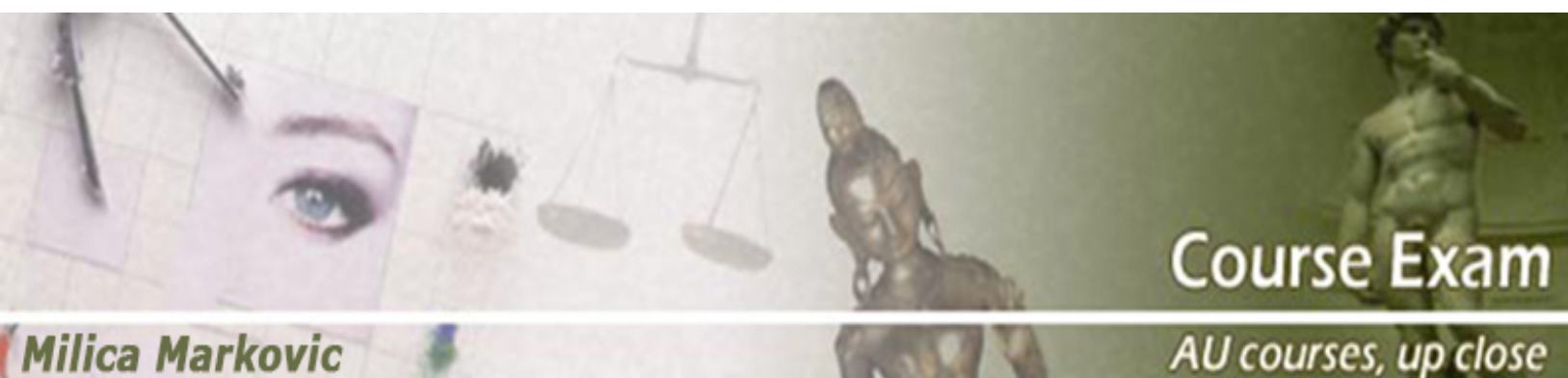
Tip #8: Bring your studies to the gym and read while stationary cycling.

Tip #9: When the mind wanders, think immediately about what you had studied. Or map out your studies for the day. Or come up with an exciting idea for an essay or project. Don't let the noodle go into downtime. That is, unless your thoughts bring you pure joy. And, yes, you can manufacture joyful thoughts anytime by controlling the mind.

Tip #10: Find a career or work-related hobby. If you want a computer science degree, make your hobby robotics. If you want to become a marketer, make your hobby digital art. And if you want to become a scientist, make your hobby experiments. And if you want to become an English major, write a book.

A professor asked me what I read or did outside of school. I said, "Nothing." She replied, "It's going to be tougher for you finding a thesis topic."

Hyper-focus is best when mixed with hyper-focused fun. After all, mastery is a game we are meant to play.



Course Exam—HIST/INST 370 **The Métis**

Milica Markovic

If you have a course that you would like to see a Course Exam article written about or you recently took a course that you would like to recommend to other AU students, please feel free to reach out with the course name and number, and any questions or feedback you may have. We'll be happy to write about it in our next Course Exam article.

HIST/INST 370 deals with the Métis experience from the fur trade era to the present day. It explores complex discourses on Métis identity, modern Supreme Court rulings, and initiatives concerning social justice. Dr. Frits Pannekoek, who is the course coordinator, course tutor, and course author, hopes that students will enjoy the units on Métis culture that cover clothing design, beadwork, music and literature. As the readings follow the twists and turns of public policy and identify systemic racism, this course will also introduce students to the Métis and Métisse heroes and heroines of the twentieth century.

This three-credit, arts/humanities course for individualized study has no prerequisites, although students are advised to take three credits in either Indigenous studies or Canadian history. As HIST/INST 370 is available for enrollment under two separate disciplines, you can only take the course for one of them. It also offers a Challenge for Credit option.

Who Should Take This Course and Why

Dr. Pannekoek says that HIST/INST 370 "should appeal to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students." He adds that the course aims to facilitate intrigued students' exploration into Métis history, identity, rights, literature, music, and culture by broadening their understanding of these

subjects. Students will learn from, among others, “readings by the most recent historians, and videos of famous Métis musicians,” Dr. Pannekoek explains.

Course, Assignments, and Exam Details

The course is comprised of four units: *Métis History and Identities*, *Métis Rights and the Law*, *Leadership and Métis People*, and *Métis Culture*.

Students must complete four assignments – each worth 10%, 15%, 15%, and 30% respectively – and a final exam valued at 30% to receive a credit for HIST/INST 370.

Course Tutor’s Advice for the Course

Dr. Pannekoek encourages students to, above all, embrace the content and flexibility that HIST/INST 730 has to offer. Unlike many other courses, he stresses that the carefully selected, quality videos and images are not supplementary materials, but rather mandatory for student learning.

Special attention, he continues, should be paid to AU Elder in Residence Dr. Maria Campbell’s autobiography *Halfbreed*, which is an essential reading for the course. Dr. Pannekoek elaborates that Dr. Campbell’s work has been instrumental to the development of Indigenous education in Canada.

The first assignment is intended to be short. It allows Dr. Pannekoek to identify areas of improvement so that students can internalize his feedback and perform well on the subsequent assignments.

Questions?

If you have any further questions regarding the course, please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Pannekoek at fritsp@athabascau.ca. Happy learning!

Milica Markovic is a Toronto AU student enrolled in the MA-IS program with a BA in criminology and political science.



Fly on the Wall

Reality and Remembrance



Jason Sullivan

A Spectrum of Freedom

As we remember those who fought and died in past wars, we could easily feel like all of this carnage happened in far away places and times, in landscapes sequestered into monastic cells of historical periods where the rest of our life need not tread. Or at least not for more than the morning of November 11th. *In Flanders Fields* makes clear the fact that symbolic remembrance is not the same as real appreciation of sacrifice: “If ye break faith with us who die. We shall not sleep, though poppies grow In Flanders fields” (Mcrae, online). Wearing a poppy and taking a single moment of silence are only two aspects of Remembrance Day. It behooves us as AU students

to take our history seriously lest we lose a sense of our social context as citizens.

Like a bookshelf of unread tomes bought to make the owner appear literary, the reality of our acts and feelings requires an inquiry into the nature of reality itself. Paul Doolan summarizes how reality requires context and, succinctly, a sense that living in the world (and living in world history, wars being the most shattering instances of reality placed in time):

“The next time you’re tempted to suggest that teachers, politicians, or others should focus on ‘real world issues’, ask yourself, whose ideology is being served in the way ‘the real’ is being picked out? In fact, when you use the term ‘real world’ you are speaking nonsense. ‘Real’ can never predicate ‘world’, for what is ‘real’ is produced and exists *within* the world, not the other way around. And recognising what is real is itself not without problems.” (Doolan, online).

Even the difference between soldier and civilian is tricky; anyone who has an older family member who was on the home front knows that war makes itself real for everyone and that the catharsis of remembering front line fighters aids the unity of all members of society. War and peace are just another binary framework and no matter how many flags or spectrum shades are added the key to reality is either difference and displacement or unity and belonging—and even that is a binary, so what can we really ever say? Sometimes nothing at all, and that’s why Remembrance Day works to allow us to give thanks, not with our brains alone, but with our hearts in moments of silence and gratitude. Where we enact boundaries we forget the reality that our thoughts make our reality and in parallel how our heart feels its way through the cognitive labyrinth of self and society. As the post-punk band Gang of Four once sang: “each day seems like a natural fact, but what we think changes how we act” (Gang of Four, online). Honouring veterans and appreciating our freedom can be an extension of us appreciating the liberty to achieve educational success.

Self and Society: Remembering Those Whose Sacrificed Their Place

War isn’t only a reality that occurs far away. Those who fight and suffer carry their experiences with them with manifest maladies such as PTSD. Likewise, education can be traditional in a classroom or cutting edge in an online forum. Where is the real world or is IRL just a phrase? Things are simpler and cut deeper for real soldiers, though. We at AU, to this end, embody a certain element of Schrodinger’s cat; at each learning moment we can conceivably claim that we’re in two places at once. Our classroom can also be our bedroom for instance. And our bedroom itself can be a crash pad or a love nest or a place to pile up our laundry.

Key to making our world feel like a place where we feel at home is how we define our terms and our selves. Some soldiers, and all veterans, have not been so lucky as to live a carefree life. We are lucky to make our identities out of crepe paper and imagine our subjectivity as an eternal flow. Life is only ever a heartbeat away from ending and, when bullets are around, stable reality takes a pounding too.

To be sure, we all share a sense of creating ourselves within our life’s roles. An authentic sense of reality involves spacing between self and other. On November 11th the distinction between war and peace becomes especially clear. Most of us will probably never be called to literally risk our lives in an overseas war. Yet are we every fully engaged in conflict or fully at peace in society? To preclude one option is to over-estimate the other. Each element of existence may be said to contain the kernel of its opposite. For instance, the battle for good grades is ongoing no matter how many decent or excellent marks we accumulate. And, for so many people, daily life can seem like at least a metaphoric struggle between life and death.

Remembrance Day is powerful because it shines the light on the relative nature of reality; few of us dodge bullets or dive into foxholes, other than perhaps in a video game context as we avoid so-called adult responsibilities. Whereas, unlike every other Holiday with avowed pageantry and peons to family, country, and history, Remembrance Day recollects in our hearts a sadness and loss that we can only reflect upon within our lived realities. That's why it's so important to know or speak to some real veterans and to attend November 11th services. What makes service real, and history including our own, is the capacity to pause and reflect. Wherever we are going we will get there differently if we know where we've been.

For veterans and their families war was, and is, very real. In a small way this parallels the nature of our education: AU studies are ephemeral in that our keisters remain *in situ* in the same spots we play on the internet or watch random nature videos. And AU becomes an all-too real battle (though hopefully a fun one) when the crunch of deadlines and the pall of pedagogy casts a shadow over the flighty play of our life. Our freedoms, to study and to live and to think and to speak, are never as free as we might imagine.

Others came before us to establish these often-invisible assumptive apparatuses of civil existence. And, again only in microcosm, the fact that we must apply our proverbial boots to the ground of our studies, illustrates some of this reality. So let's get down to work; we have great expectations to live up to!

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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.



Beyond Literary Landscapes Postcolonialism

Natalia Iwanek

Part I: Theory and Criticism

From my early beginnings as a young introvert, the public library has always been a bit of a refuge. Years later, not much has changed, albeit with an additional affinity for endless hours spent scouring second-hand bookstores to add to my ever-growing "to-read" pile.

From one bookworm to another, this column can serve as an introduction for those unfamiliar with these works, as a refresher for long-time aficionados, and maybe as an inspiration for readers to share their own suggested topics. Do you have a topic that you would like covered in this column? Feel free to [contact me](#) for an interview and a feature in an upcoming column.

Who

This week's topic is a bit different, as it serves as the first of a two-part guide to the Postcolonialism genre, which can be broken down into Postcolonial Theory and



Criticism and Postcolonial Literature. Those interested in a brief introduction to this large and complex topic may consider beginning with the works of a few well-known authors, namely Frantz Fanon, Aimé Césaire, and Edward Said. In addition, readers interested in further study could also look into Homi K. Bhabha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak.

What

The umbrella term Postcolonialism, or more specifically Postcolonial Theory and Criticism (as well as next week's Postcolonial Literature), is a "critical analysis of the history, culture, literature and modes of discourse" on the Global South, as well as the study of colonization, decolonization, and neocolonization. Specifically, Postcolonial Theory and Criticism examine "issues of power, economics, politics, religion, and culture and how these elements work in relation to colonial hegemony." (Note that an ongoing debate regarding the spelling of "post-colonial" versus "postcolonial" continues.)

Some examples of Postcolonial Theory and Criticism include Said's *Orientalism* and *Culture and Imperialism*, Césaire's *Discourse on Colonialism*, and Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* and *Black Skin/White Masks*.

When

Although a long historical process, the brutal legacy of modern colonialism, as seen through the policies of various European states, began in approximately the 16th century. Over the years, hard-won decolonization efforts by formerly colonized peoples occurred throughout many geographical areas including Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, Oceania, and Southeast Asia. In various ways, the process of decolonization is still occurring to this day. The above-mentioned works, in particular, mainly take place during the late 19th and 20th centuries.

Where

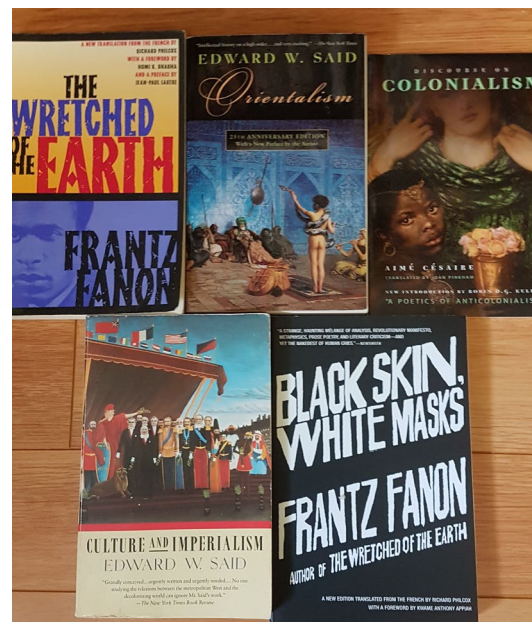
Although Postcolonial Theorists and Critics can be found in all parts of the globe, readers may learn more about certain geographical locations, including that of Said, a "Palestinian American academic, political activist, and literary critic," Césaire a "Martinican poet, playwright, and politician," and Fanon, a Martinican "psychoanalyst and social philosopher" through the above-mentioned works.

Why

For readers who are attempting to gain a deeper understanding of the effects of the colonial system, its continuing legacy, as well as resilience of communities and peoples, Postcolonial Theory and Criticism is a starting point. During the course of their readings, students may also learn a bit more about certain Postcolonial terms and concepts, which are increasingly being used in academia, such as Othering, the subaltern, mimicry, hybridity, and double consciousness.

How

AU's wide range of diverse courses make it easy to study this topic in depth. Courses related to Postcolonialism are available in a variety of disciplines, including one's that may fit into Degree Works. (Always check with a counsellor to see if these particular courses fulfill your personal graduation requirements!)



AU students interested in learning more about this topic are recommended to look into [ENGL 316: Approaches to Literary Theory and Criticism](#), a three-credit senior-level course “designed to familiarize [students] with a variety of critical perspectives and help [them] understand literary works more profoundly by integrating literary theory in [their] response to these works.” Happy reading!

Natalia Iwanek (she/they) is currently completing her Bachelor of Arts in English with a minor in Political Science at Athabasca University.



Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) Tips to Help You Through Our Long, Dark Winters

Xine Xu



It's no surprise that living in a northern climate can affect our mood, sleep, and energy levels. But you may not be unfamiliar with the term Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)—a mood disorder that leaves many feeling lethargic, agitated, and unmotivated during the winter months. While the general condition refers to changes in season, for many it's a situation of coping with the “winter blues”. Trust me, I feel it too. Especially in Alberta when our winter months can be longer and cooler. Rather than brushing it off as a Canadian thing, let's address it face on. What should we understand about this condition and what can we do about it?

Experts say it is related to changes in our biological clock, which regulates hormone release, metabolism, and other important biological processes in our body. When seasonal cycles change, along with the exposure to sunlight, temperature and day-light saving time (yes,

this can create some biological rhythm confusion too!), our bodies sense the change and respond accordingly. When less sunlight is sensed by the body, chemicals in the brain can become imbalanced and create mood swings. Our sleep is also regulated by a variety of hormones that can also become imbalanced when day-light saving time kicks in.

So, what are some ways we can combat these seasonal chemical changes without having to move to a southern climate?

- 1) To fully understand the extent of this condition, visit your family doctor for a complete review of your lab work. This can help eliminate other conditions that may be contributing to your physical and mood changes.
- 2) Light therapy: this is something that I have personally tried. It involves a specialty light of 10,000 lux (brightness level). For fall-onset SAD, this helps to replace some of the missing light that triggers changes in brain chemicals. I place this lamp about 6 feet away from me while I am working or studying and it has been effective for early hours of the morning in winter darkness.
- 3) Vitamin D Supplementation: sometimes vitamin D deficiency due to lower exposures to sunlight can be a contributor to SAD. While no complete evidence is available whether

Vitamin D is helpful in preventing or treating SAD, deficiency has been cited as a cause. For myself, I take a Vitamin D supplement each day (1,000 International Units) to help combat the deficiency.

- 4) Exercise: One of the best ways to fight depression, regardless of whether it is seasonal in nature, is to engage in physical exercise. Whether it's yoga, high-intensity interval training, or dance lessons exercise helps release endorphins and other brain chemicals that improve mood. If you're feeling lethargic and emotionally upset, sometimes the best therapy is some exercise.

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



Homemade is Better Tuna Melts

Chef Corey



Recently, one of my daughters was asking for tuna melts. I cannot recall why; I think they were off school that day, and we were trying to come up with a lunch or something. My spouse and I have made a trade with meal planning; she plans the meals, and I execute them. What a weight lifted off my shoulder; half the battle is what to eat. I may choose to make something different from the meal plan, but having the backup is excellent because it doesn't involve much thinking.

The tuna melt sandwich is a standard recipe in our house. You can choose to serve it closed face or open face; we usually do it open face on a hotdog bun. That's how my mom used to make it. The secret to a great tuna melt is the bubbly brown cheese and a great tuna salad mix. Then you grill it in the oven to crisp up the bread and brown the cheese. I prefer mozzarella for tuna melts, but a lot of cheeses could work for this recipe. You want to stick with a mild cheese that compliments the flavours of the tuna, like mozzarella, cheddar, swiss, or Havarti. You could even use marbled cheese if you'd like. However,

stay away from pungent cheeses like blue cheese, parmesan, or brie. I find these cheeses can conflict with the flavours of the tuna. If you like these pairs, though, knock yourself out (not literally, though).

The tuna itself is an interesting specimen. Depending on who you ask, you will get some interesting answers about what tuna to buy. I like to be picky with my tuna. I try to get skipjack when I can, and I make sure it comes from a company that upholds sustainable fishing.

Greenpeace.org puts out a list of sustainable, conscious companies every year. If you are not a supporter of Green Peace, I get it. I don't appreciate some of their methods. However, this report is thorough and tells more about the top 20 brands in Canada. You can at least know that what you are buying is supporting sustainable fishing. Pole and line fishing is the best as it guarantees quality tuna and a slimmer chance that they are catching dolphins instead.

With that out of the way, let's get to making a great tuna melt!

Tuna Melt

Ingredients:

1-2 hot dog buns – cut in half

One can quality flaked tuna

1-2 TBSP mayonnaise

1 tsp Worcestershire sauce

Salt

Pepper

1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese (or a cheese of your choice)

Directions:

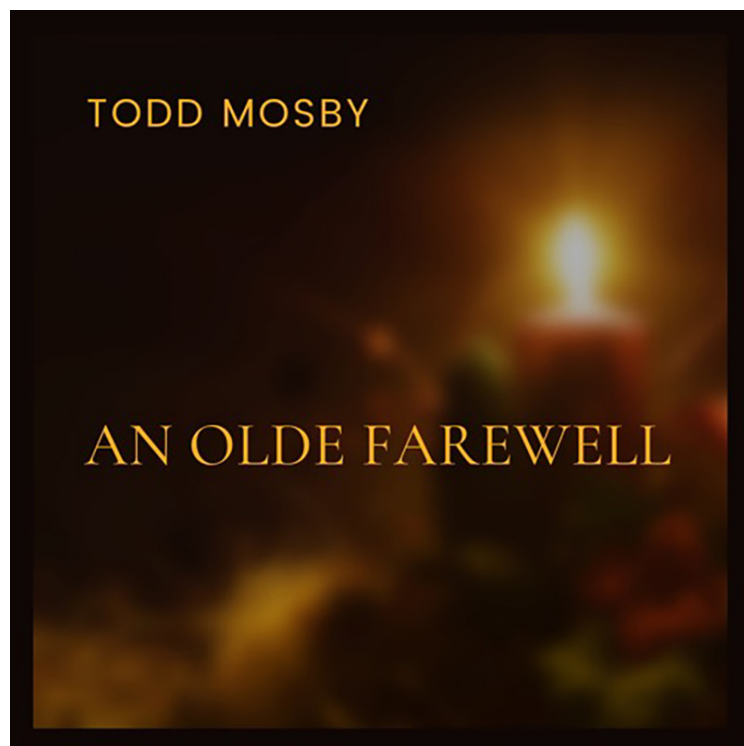
1. Preheat your oven to broil.
2. Grab a sheet pan.
3. Split your buns and lay them flat on the sheet pan.
4. Drain the water from the canned tuna.
5. Put the tuna in a mixing bowl.
6. Add the mayo and mix; add more mayo if you like it slightly wetter.
7. Taste a small amount, add in the Worcestershire (don't pronounce it, no one can) sauce.
8. Mix, taste, add salt and pepper and repeat.
9. Spread tuna on the buns.
10. Top with cheese and broil in the oven until the cheese is melted and golden brown and enjoy!

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



Music Review—An Olde Farewell

Jessica Young



Artist: Todd Mosby

Single: “An Olde Farewell”

Award-winning composer and guitarist, Todd Mosby, has released his new single “An Olde Farewell”. The song is a jazz, new age, and fusion re-imagining of the holiday classic, “Auld Lang Syne”, and is available for streaming anywhere you get your music. It features Todd Mosby as composer, as well as acoustic and electric guitars; Lola Kristine on vocals; Steve Davis on drums; and Ben Coen on acoustic bass.

According to [his website](#), Todd Mosby is an Indian and jazz guitarist, and “is the only guitarist to become a member of the famed Imdhad Khani Gharana of musicians, India’s most prestigious family of sitar musicians dating back 500 years to Tan-Sen and the Moghul courts. Encompassing elements from jazz, raag,

classical, folk, bluegrass and jazz, Mosby has created his own musical syntax. The result creates a distinct style which is unique to Mosby’s sound and sense of composition, transcending known genres of music. His dedicated 13-year study of classical North Indian music with Ustad Imrat Khan led to the development of acoustic and electric versions of the Imrat guitar, a hybrid sitar-guitar bridge instrument for crossing musical platforms and cultures”.

On why he chose to re-imagine this particular song, Mosby states, “The melody has a feeling of timelessness which lends itself into interesting areas of reharmonization, development and improvisational concepts [...] I find the melody the most intriguing aspect of this song. It has a haunting, distant beauty with very memorable qualities.”

Mosby goes on to credit the unique history and mythology surrounding the iconic “Auld Lang Syne” and its origins in Ireland 12,000 years ago. As Irish legend has it, the song was carried by remnant survivors of an ancient civilization called Atlantis. Crossing the sea in search of new lands, reflecting on acquaintances lost but not forgotten, along with a strong spirit of hope, they landed in what is now present-day Ireland. In remembrance of that time and event, this song has been handed down through the millennia.

If you’re still unsure exactly which classic holiday song is “Auld Lang Syne” is (I’ll admit I had to look it up)—the song is featured in several classic movies such as *It’s a Wonderful Life*, *Forest Gump*, and *Elf*. It is also the subject of Billy Crystal’s famous rant at the end of *When Harry Met Sally*. “Auld Lang Syne” has become synonymous with Christmas, the New Year, and new beginnings in Western culture.

“An Olde Farewell” is a very pleasant jazz song. It begins with a lone guitar and slowly builds to add more instruments, and finally adding haunting lyric-less vocals in the last minute of the song. Unfortunately, I don’t find it to be anything special. In the nearly four-minute song, it sounds like Mosby is playing the same chords on repeat. There are not any solos or anything to add

interest to the song other than the slow build of instruments. In my opinion, you just can't compete with the classics.

Overall, I didn't feel that the re-imagining did "Auld Lang Syne" any justice. "An Olde Farewell" would make for lovely background music to your next Christmas party, study session, or wait at the doctor's office.

Check out Todd Mosby on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Jessica is completing her Bachelor of Human Resources and Labour Relations degree while pursuing her passion for writing and drinking coffee.



The Study Dude Go for the Gold

Marie Well



I won the silver medallion in Communications Studies. It wasn't the gold, but it was close. But as you can tell, I don't write like Shakespeare, not even like a mainstream one-book wonder. So, how did I do it?

I did have a talent for math and was the star student in every math class but one. But my pencil was dull when it came to writing essays. The writing you see here is substantially better than what I churned out in grad school, just less formal. And grad school was in communications, not math.

But I had a secret weapon.

I came up with systems. Once systems are in place, academic success becomes a breeze. Grueling hard work, nonetheless, but a breeze when it came down to earning A's. And it must be grueling hard work to be successful.

The following is a summary of the systems I used:

I used timers for studies and breaks. I'd study for thirty minutes and follow up with a fifteen minute

break. I studied from about 2 pm to midnight or later every day. I could've studied an extra two or three hours for optimal performance.

I took eight courses a year: three fall, three winter, one spring, and one summer. I zeroed in on the calendar for due dates and milestones every single day. I packed all my bags and books and double-checked them the night before class. I had a separate binder for each subject. I numbered every page. The day my binder busted open and all my papers fell to the floor, I was able to quickly put them back in place.

I studied the math topic prior to the actual math lecture. Thus, the math lecture served as a strong reinforcement of knowledge. I did each math question homework at least three times until I got every question right.

I bought the course books the day they became available and read at least one chapter from each book prior to the course start date. I wrote down everything the professor said, while substituting

symbols for some words and using the margins to highlight acronyms, questions, or important ideas.

I hit the library the day an essay was assigned. I used a cue card system for writing essays. I used at least three citations from three different authors in each essay paragraph. The cue card system made this possible. And profs loved it. I gave myself at least three days for final edits on a paper. A perfect paper had to have zero spelling or grammar errors before I felt confident submitting it. I bought a corkboard to pin my completed essays on.

I learned how to implement memory devices, such as mnemonics. I memorized before every exam by typing off and printing off a list and having my partner quiz me on it, over multiple days, until the list was burned into memory.

I prepped for exams nightly at least ten days prior to the examination date. I took five to fifteen sharpened pencils, two calculators, and two or three erasers to the exam room. I got a reputation for being geeky, but when one calculator died during an exam, I felt vindicated. During exams, I asked for lots of scrap paper. I used up the full exam time, redoing every question I was unsure of, followed by every question I was almost sure of, followed by a quick overview of the questions I was confident were right. (I used checkmark, question marks, and x's to denote each category). And then I'd repeat until the test time was up.

All the above doesn't cover the scope of my systems, but it does highlight some strategies. You might want to copy or tweak some of my systems mentioned within these Study Dude articles. I've also read plenty of books on study tips, in case you were unsure of my study dude wisdom.

But whatever you do, always go for the gold.



Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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

AthaU Facebook Group

Shouldn't they just give a free pass for that blunder? A student struggles through an exam (after having been denied an alternate format from disability services), only to be told the wrong exam was provided. An AU student union rep offers assistance in sorting out the mess; other students pitch in with possible solutions.

reddit

Bypassing the prereq. A student from another uni wonders if it's possible to enrol in a course without meeting the prerequisite; responses suggest it depends, but it's worth asking.

Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: "Not only was @AU_Press was the first of its kind in Canada and among the first open presses in North America, but they continue... AU Press has become a leader in open access publishing and expanded the reach of many important voices <https://bit.ly/3jCyHeN> UPweek #KeepUP."





Dear
Barb

Barbara Godin

Sister Acting Up

Dear Barb:

My sister and I do not get along! It seems like she is always competing with me, even about things like our childhood and who had it the most difficult. Our parents divorced and my sister went with my dad. My mom and her did not get along, while I got along great with my mom. She says I don't see my mother as she really is, but I could say the same to her.

Every time our conversations turn to my mom, which is quite often, we end up in a big blow up. I am so tired of it that I find it easier not to talk to her. I don't want to be estranged from her, but I do find it difficult to be with her. Do you have any advice for us? She will probably be angry that I wrote this and not see things the same as I do, but I thought it was worth a shot. Thanks, Michelle

Hi Michelle:

Thanks for your email. According to Merriam-Webster dictionary, the definition for sibling rivalry is simply "competition between brothers and sisters." According to your letter, that is what you and your sister are experiencing. Sibling rivalry begins when a new child enters the home, and the older children feel the parents' attention is taken away from them. At this point, the parents need to step in and resolve this by assuring the older children that they still have their place in the family. Otherwise, this resentment will be directed towards the younger child. Sibling rivalry does not

disappear, steps must be taken to resolve it or it will last into adulthood.

There are some noticeably clear signs of sibling rivalry in adults. For example, jealousy, or reminding the sibling of their unhappy childhood, and being perceived as the fault of the other sibling's unhappiness. Also being competitive as adults. For example, who had the best life, or even the worse life; who had the best relationship with particular family members; which child was the favorite? Any number of things can trigger jealousy and envy and make each person feel like they did in childhood. There are ways you can work towards managing sibling rivalry in adulthood. Begin by reminding yourself that you and your sister had a different relationship with your parents. You were both born at a different time in your parent's life. While you may remember a strict cold parent, your sister may remember a warm and loving parent. Parents learn and change throughout their lives. You both need to respect the other's view of parents and other family members. When a sensitive topic is brought up, move on, do not engage the other, and remember it takes two to create an argument. Focus on what you can do to improve the relationship. If nothing helps, you may need to visit a counsellor.

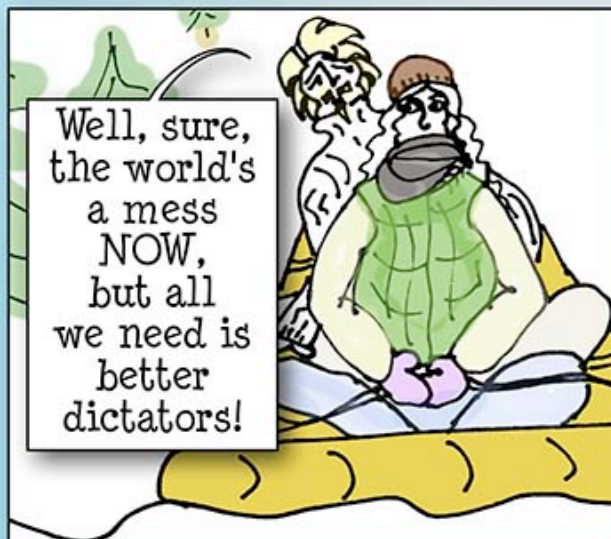
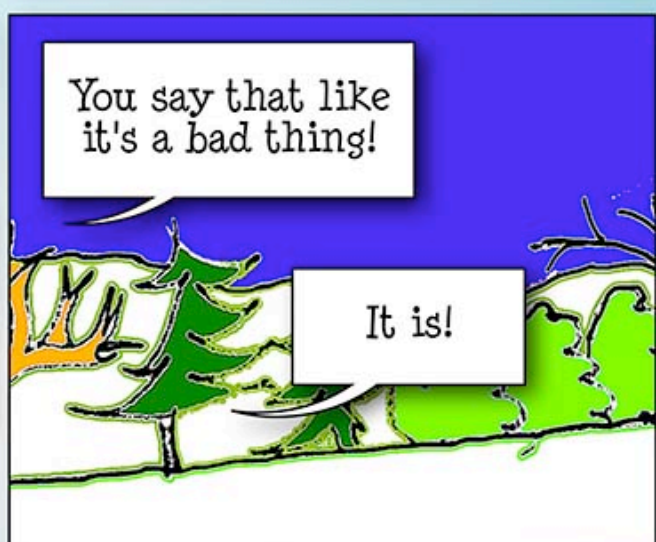
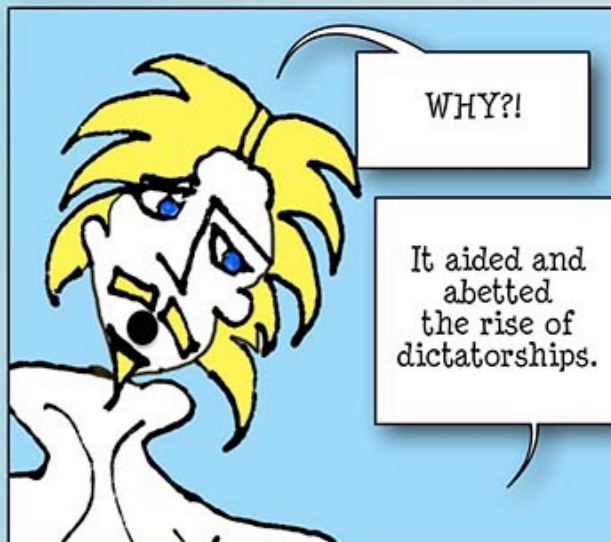
Best of luck Michelle.

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



Poet Maeve Better Dictators

Wanda Waterman





AUSU values your opinions! We want to know how we can best serve our student members and help you have a positive student experience while studying at AU.

Please fill out our [2021 AUSU Annual Student Survey](#) – it should take no more than 7-10 minutes to complete, and all your answers are confidential.



AUSU is giving away more than \$2500 in prizes to members who complete our survey. Prizes include:

- 5 x \$200 Amazon Gift Cards
- 5 x \$100 Amazon Gift Cards
- 10 x \$50 Gift Cards to the AU Store
- 10 x ProctorU Free Exams

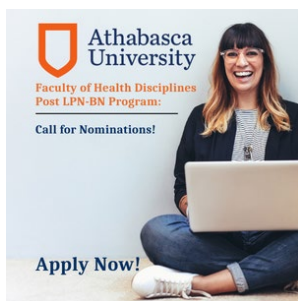
Winners will be selected after the deadline on **Nov 22, 2021**. Thanks for your feedback, and good luck!

[Take Survey Now](#)

The Faculty of Health Disciplines Post LPN-BN Program invites nominations for the role of Learner Representative on two committees, the BN Clinical and BN Curriculum Committees. There are two seats available per committee, for a total of four amazing opportunities.

The ideal candidates can demonstrate leadership and community involvement or aspirations thereof, strong communication skills, a desire to give back or volunteer for their workplace and community and are comfortable using Microsoft Teams and public speaking.

The deadline for nominations is **Nov 26, 2021**. Send your resume for the [BN Clinical Committee](#) to Jacqueline Mann at jacquelinemann@athabascau.ca and for the [BN Curriculum Committee](#) to Kristin Petrovic at Kpetrovic@athabascau.ca.



[2021 Canada Career Month](#) has begun!

Check out [AU's second of four posts](#) outlining 3 ways to leverage past experience into a new career for AU students.

Watch for more career advice from AU throughout November.



[Listen in](#) as AUSU sits down with two AU students who are also parents to talk about the challenges and rewards of simultaneously raising children and taking classes. Many AU students are also caregivers, and Karen and Katy share how to find the best balance and the most success with these two important roles.

Starring: AUSU VP External Karen Fletcher, Councillor Katy Lowe, and Executive Director Jodi Campbell



By now, many AU students know that AUSU provides [free access to LinkedIn Learning](#) as part of your membership simply by using your @athabasca.edu email address to log in and get started. But are you familiar with the amazing video content LinkedIn Learning offers to help you along your learner journey?

[Log in](#) now and check out incredible resources like [Tips for writing an A+ paper](#) that will wow your professors!



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

THE VOICE

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