



THE VOICE

Vol 30 Issue 11 2022-03-18

Minds We Meet

Interviewing Students Like You

Common Questions I Get

Talking to a Clinical Pharmacist

Mindsets

The Importance of Positivity



Plus:

*HiB: French Toast
Dear Barb
and much more!*

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The Voice Magazine

www.voicemagazine.org
301 Energy Square
10109 – 106 ST NW
Edmonton AB
T5J 3L7

Email

voice@voicemagazine.org

Publisher

AU Students' Union

Editor-In-Chief

Jodi Campbell

Managing Editor

Karl Low

Regular Contributors

Barb Godin, Barbara
Lehtiniemi, Angela Pappas,
Jason Sullivan, Wanda
Waterman, Corey Wren,
Jessica Young, and others

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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

Total Acclamation

Karl Low



The election is over, and all candidates who were up for acclamation have been approved by the student body, though I've heard that this was decided by a fairly low turn-out of students.

Not that it's that surprising, because I've also been hearing reports from other students' unions that student apathy seems to be higher than normal, with low turnouts for nominations and elections, and even some students' unions that have had difficulty getting enough student leaders running to even make quorum.

Personally, I've always felt that voter apathy, whether student or not, comes from one of two reasons. Either the voting population is generally satisfied with how things are going and there's been nothing controversial found during the campaign period, or the people feel that their vote makes no difference one way or another.

Both reasons are dangerous thinking, in my opinion, because part of what gives the process meaning is participation in it. If people who feel that their vote doesn't make a difference don't

vote, then they'll surely find themselves proven correct, and, in the balance, make it harder for the rest of us to effect any change. Meanwhile, people being generally satisfied and so not bothering to vote is, in some ways, even worse, because it's that complacency that allows bad actors to creep in.

In this case, however, given that these low turnouts seem to be happening province wide, it may be symptomatic of something else. Perhaps students seeing the repeated and massive cuts to post-secondary education in this province are losing hope that any group will be able to effect meaningful change on their behalf. Perhaps, with all the other significant and worrisome events that are concerning—from COVID to the Freedom Protests to the Emergencies Act to the invasion of the Ukraine and the constant bombardment of all of this chaos on to us by a media ever hungry for an audience and advertising dollars, people simply have decided they don't have the head-space to concern themselves with more minor issues.

Whatever the reason, however, the process of democracy doesn't stop. So congratulations to all of those elected and acclaimed. Thanks for having the energy to step up, and the willingness to add something else to your already busy plates.

Meanwhile, in this issue of The Voice Magazine, we start it off with an interview with a student who moved to Canada from China in her 20s and is pursuing her CPA and her own accounting firm. Find out how this mother of two manages to juggle it all, despite being a self-professed "lazy person".

Also this week, we take a look at how positivity is an important trait—even when, or perhaps especially when it comes to that course that's been giving you so much trouble, requiring you fight your way through the readings and concepts. Finally we feature a look at a writer and former AU student in her current profession as a pharmacist. She answers some of the common questions she now gets and explains a little bit more of what this job entails.

Plus, of course, we've got all kinds of news, reviews, recipes, events, scholarships, reflections and more! Enjoy the read!

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karl". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

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 Jing Fei (she/her), from Fort McMurray, Alberta, the traditional Treaty 8 territory of the Cree and Dene, and home to the Métis Settlements and the Métis Nation of Alberta, Regions 1, 4, 5 and 6.

Jing Fei is currently enrolled in the Bachelor of Commerce in Accounting here at AU. Jing Fei obtained “a diploma in Finance from China,” before moving to Canada with her husband in their 20s. Although she did not have an opportunity to attend “university in Canada, which most immigrants would do,” she explained, “I was lucky enough to get work in a big oil sands company,” after obtaining her “1st payroll certificate 12 years ago.” She continued, “I was raising [a] family while working on my education. I had achieved the 2nd level of payroll certificate (CPM), and another 2-year diploma program with SAIT. I am

now in B.COMM - Accounting program with AU. My future goal is to get [a] CPA, and open my own accounting firm.”

She stated, “I am a mother of two young boys, and, like all the moms,” she makes daily decisions “based on their wellbeing.” She continued, “I am bit strict on their academic activities.” She is strict on herself as well, in terms of her education, which affords students knowledge, “but also shape[s] the way we think, the perspective among other things in our lives.” She continued, “I am a lazy person, but proactively lazy. I have found that it’s hard to pursue education while raising two young kids, and on top of that, I have a full-time job ... [that] require[s] my full engagement. So, I have found the way to balance them. Being proactively lazy does mean not doing things, instead, it requires planning things ahead ... [and] time management.”

When she is not studying, she likes “reading, workout, and hiking,” which are “part of [her] ‘being proactively lazy’ strategy to get relaxed.” She also finds time in her busy schedule to read. She has recently completed several works of non-fiction, including *Poor Economics*, *Educated*, *Atomic Habit*, and *Life Span*, and is currently reading *Social Psychology*. As for fiction, she is reading Paulo Coelho’s collections, *The Kind Worth Killing*, *Everything I Never Told You*, and has “a long list of books to read in 2022.”

The Voice Magazine asked Jing Fei about who in her life has had the greatest influence on her desire to learn. She stated, “Believe or not, I don’t have someone to admire in my life. Sounds

crazy, but what I really mean is that everyone comes from different families, backgrounds, and sometimes there is no common area for me to learn from them. From my very young age, I knew that I only compare with myself. Learning from other people would [mean] first comparing yourself with them, and that would make us feel unconfident. I compare myself from last week, last month, last year, last 10 years.”

Her experience with online learning has “made [her] dream come true.” She explained, “I am able to pursue education while having a job” and raising a family. As for dislikes, “it would be the lack of interaction with professors, who would provide more insight on the subjects or perspectives on all different subjects.”

As for her communication with course tutors? She has found using Student Support as the “best way to communicate with course tutors,” since this allows her to address a problem properly, and also obtain “feedback in writing for [her] future reference.”

When asked about the most valuable lesson she has learned in life, Jing Fei stated, “Be patient, resilient, and fair to others.” She believes that in our current situation, “we need to be patient.” She added, “We have to wait [for] the good moment come and it will be.” Best of luck Jing Fei!

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



Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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

AthaU Facebook Group

Sometimes AU's ears are listening. A student laments that AU courses don't make use of Teams for current students and an AU insider passes that idea up the line for consideration. Maybe a better study-hall option than social media?

Discord

Rules refresher and hike hints. The admins post updated #rules for the student server, while over in the #coffee-shop-lounge channel students swap hiking trail tips.

Twitter

@austudentsunion tweets: "President Stacey Hutchings has resigned from Executive Council at AUSU to accept a position at Athabasca University. She served AUSU for 2 years as a member of the Executive Committee. We are so excited for your new journey Stacey, but you will be missed! <https://bit.ly/3HSP688>."

Youtube

AU is age-less. Laverne Wells shares the intimidation of returning to school in her 50s, in My Virtual Boss is a Jerk, episode one of AU's Go the Distance series.



Common Questions I get as a Clinical Pharmacist

Xine Wang



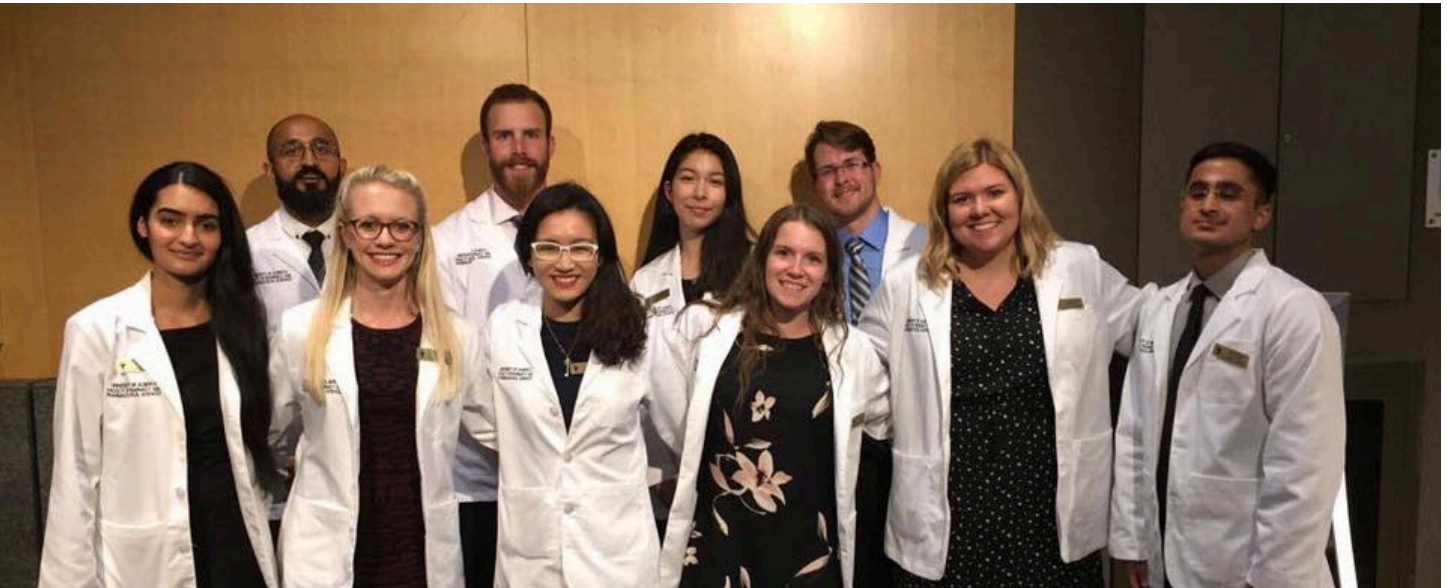
On As a tribute to Pharmacy Awareness Month, I decided to write a little about myself. I've been practicing as a pharmacist since July 2021. I graduated from University of Alberta and took many exciting courses at Athabasca University that I would have never had a chance to take as a part of my regular program. I love Athabasca University for giving me the opportunity to enroll in classes such as epidemiology and developmental psychology on my own time. These courses greatly enriched my learning throughout my clinical years.

I've gotten a lot of questions lately about what it is like to be a pharmacist in 2022. There's so many myths and misconceptions that I'm always excited to share about my own experiences thus far.

Are pharmacists just cashiers or businesspeople?

This is one question I hear a lot. Many seem to think that we simply run the till and check your medications out. While this is true in many countries, in Canada pharmacists play a large role in your health. We are a self-governed profession,

meaning that our college oversees our licensing and performance. We are each held liable for the responsibility of ensuring your medications are safe, efficacious, and adhered to. Even though many work in large corporate chains such as Rexall or Shoppers Drug Mart, each pharmacist is responsible for the patients' care only, without any conflicts of interest.



Do you know all the medications that exists?

I get this question a lot from people outside our field. I definitely recall how rigorous the pharmacy program is. The program is a minimum of six years with four professional years and two years of pre-requisite courses such as biology, chemistry and statistics. In the professional years, we learn medications based on body systems. For example, in cardiology block we learn about all the cardiovascular medications, the mechanisms in which they work in our bodies, side effects and much more. As a whole, we are expected to know every medication available in

Canada. However, new medications always come on the market and we're expected to update our knowledge accordingly.

Why does it take so long to get my medications filled?

This is by far the most common question I get from both patients and the general public. Prior to starting my program I also thought that it took an extraordinary amount of time for pharmacists to fill our medications. From intake when we see the prescription, pharmacists are assessing the appropriateness of therapy, the dosage correctness (we fix these a lot!), and the instruction correctness. Many medications run through insurance which can be a complicated process as each insurance has its own challenges during billing. Lastly, many pharmacies have a backlog of prescriptions and, depending on the time of day, it can take longer than expected. Pro tip from me is to go to a smaller, less busy pharmacy.

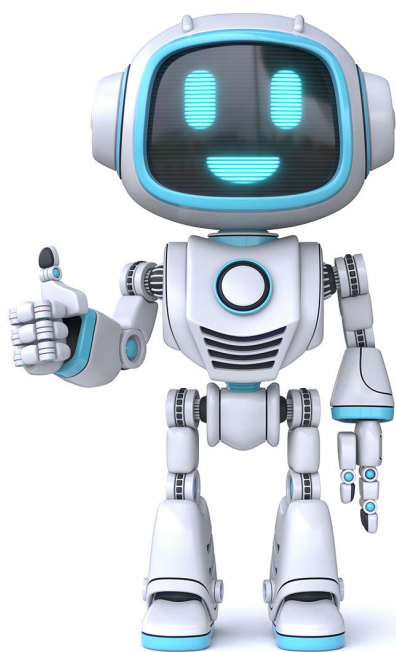
Xine Wang is a post-graduate health-science AU student, aspiring clinician, globe-trotter, parrot-breeder and tea-connoisseur.



Mindsets

The Importance of Positivity and Curiosity

Alek Golijanin



How important can having a positive or curious mindset really be? According to Chris Voss, a retired FBI hostage negotiator with over 20 years of experience and who now trains other professionals while also teaching at Harvard, it is critical. Chris quotes research that has shown that a positive mindset and the positive emotions associated increase your IQ capacity and improves your frame of mind. Seeing how life is a constant negotiation, it also helps when it comes to asking the right questions and being able to dig deeper. The two traits are interconnected at a deeper level than we imagined.

A Positive Mindset

With the increasing speed the world is moving, the pace can really wear people down and have a significant impact on our interactions. Chris Voss explains that most negotiations are emotional and irrational interactions, but that the academic approach focuses on rationality. A positive mindset contributes positively towards emotional intelligence, and it allows you to keep the odds in your favor. In addition to the impact that being positive has on the psyche, it has been shown that positivity also keeps individuals in better physical health

by reducing stress hormones and the body's physical response to them and their ability to give way to chronic health problems.

A positive mindset is powerful. It is an ideal state of mind for optimal brain function. But eliminating emotions altogether is the wrong approach rather we need to remove the negative ones while leveraging the positive ones.

A Curious Mindset

Being curious has always been considered a positive trait, and our greatest advancements are the result of “what if?” hypotheses. However, rarely does anyone get directly to the desired answer, and it is the persistence and pursuit of that hypothesis the gives way to the breakthrough. The most relevant traits to curiosity all have to do with positivity like being persistent and not giving up when things do not go your way. Chris Voss describes this as being “antifragile”, not letting things take you off track and explains how it is impossible to be mad and curious at the same time. Simply put, allowing yourself to be overcome with negative emotions will hold you back from doing what needs to get done to get to where you want to get to.

The Art of the Deal

When it comes to making tough decisions with no right answer, the importance of positivity and curiosity is key. Having the ability to look beyond lose-lose outcomes has long-term importance for both personal and professional development and you can identify the least undesirable outcome through thought shaping questions. Think of it like this, whichever decision you end up making you will regret, but which regret would you rather live with? You have the ability to shape your reality, but you can also shape the reality of those around you, so stay positive and be curious.

What I have learned from listening to Chris Voss on communication and negotiation is that the way we think about how to get what we want is probably wrong. A person that is trying to apply negotiation principles they learned from *Art of the Deal* is in for a major reality check. The “real” in reality TV has no connection to the “real” in real life, so try not to let a person’s bravado convince or mislead when you know better. Instead, I recommend reading Chris Voss’ *Never Split the Difference: Negotiating As If Your Life Depended On It* and learn from someone who has saved countless hostages from people—people with mean streaks who you and I would not want to have anything to do with.

Alek Golijanin is an AU alum who considers himself a gentleman first, a scholar second, and a combat sports fanatic third. In that order.



Unearthing classic articles from previous issues of The Voice Magazine

World Sleep Day on March 18 comes at an appropriate time, since many of us have spent the past few days staggering through the adjustment to Daylight Saving Time.

Put a sock in it. Columnist Hazel Akana muses on that often-annoying impediment to good sleep: snoring. "Another, not often discussed, danger to the snorer is the very real risk of being smothered by your spouse. Trust me, I've considered it." From Where I Sit – Getting Some Sleep, March 26, 2010.

Studying can be bad for your health. Debbie Jabbour focuses on student-specific health threats, including weight gain, headaches, alcohol (over)use, and sleep. "For a while earlier this year I was finding myself falling asleep in front of my computer, in the middle of an essay, suddenly too tired to go on." From My Perspective – Students & Health, October 2, 2002.

Homemade is Better

French Toast

Chef Corey

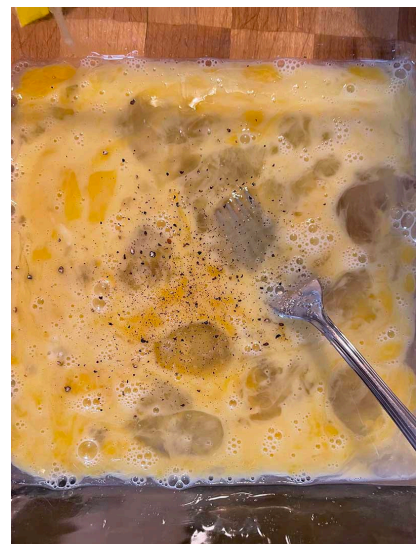


My kids love French toast; we don't make it often, but it is popular when we do. One of my favourite reasons for making French Toast is to use up those leftover bread ends. I've found dried bread is the best for French Toast. It soaks up the egg mixture and gives you a complete flavour profile. If you're an extraordinaire in the kitchen, you could make your own French loaves and add maple syrup to provide the unique taste our syrup has. This will, of course, pair well when you pour that same syrup on the French Toast! If that's too much work for you, then follow this recipe. Dried bread or not, you can still make French toast.

My recipe is inspired by my time working at Moxies. They used to have Sunday brunch on Calgary Trail in Edmonton when they were open. I'm sure most locations do this, but that's the location I got my start at. I loved brunch; it was a great mixture of foods. We might make French toast or

pancakes, and then we're making a Clubhouse sandwich or one of their other lunch items. I worked the flat top griddle for about a year, and I was also doing prep some days and trying to work my way through the stations to learn from my co-workers. I miss the people and the stress some days because it was always busy, and we always had something to do. Once I applied to culinary school, I started an apprenticeship on the side. You can get your hours and do school at the same time. I had my first year done working at a pizza place before going into restaurants. Moxies was easily in the top three places I've ever worked. My other two top places are when I worked at the Northlands Coliseum and being able to write every week for all of you. I am approaching my 100th article soon; I'll have to make sure I mark that milestone. I have enough recipes I could release a cookbook!

I chose to use loaf bread and not dried French bread because this recipe is part of another recipe I will release soon. So, stay tuned, but keep calm and French Toast on for this week.



French Toast

Ingredients:

- 4-5 slices of good quality bread
- 4 eggs
- ½ tsp cinnamon
- ½ tsp nutmeg
- ¼ tsp kosher salt

Directions:

- 1) Get a griddle and heat it to 350F or a frying pan and set your burner to medium.
- 2) Grab a 9"x9" or close glass dish.
- 3) Crack your eggs into the dish, add the salt and spices.





- 4) Mix everything.
- 5) Add bread slices, one at a time, to your egg mixture.
- 6) Fry until the bottom is golden brown, flip and cook for the same look.
- 7) Once cooked, enjoy with butter and maple syrup.

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



Climbing the Ranks with Diplomacy

Marie Well



Do you (like me) want to climb high in the office ranks? I hope to one day become a CMO. I used to cut strings at a disability employment shelter for \$5 total for two forty-hour workweeks. I've since set my sights higher.

But the communications lately from everyone at my office place have been more conflictual. So, I reached out to my brother who earned over half a million dollars each year in a director role. I asked him how I should behave in a CMO role. He said that female executives do very well if they are either very friendly or very formal. He said, "Judging from your personality, you should be very formal." I'm typically the office cheerleader, too friendly.

But I wondered yesterday, how can I become a leader of people in a way that is uplifting and, well, downright positive?

That's when I opened The Positive Trait Thesaurus and found the answer: lead with diplomacy. Here are my favorite ways to lead with diplomacy. The direct citations from The Positive Trait Thesaurus are in bold. My responses are in plain font.

Defusing high emotions by remaining calm and reasonable. When someone lashes out at me, I like to

pretend it's not meant for me. It's not mine. I try to find the value—a way I can grow—from the outburst. But sometimes my emotions run wild. If I just stay, at the very least, quiet, I'm better off than had I fired back a rebuttal. And if possible, I aim to never cry or express anger. These emotions are part of a victim mentality and should be avoided.

Showing kindness when correcting someone's misconception or mistake. I watched a video today where someone was given constructive criticism. The criticized person had a big purple monster grow out of his back with each criticism until it became a giant angry octopus. The

octopus detached from the person's back and attacked the criticizer. Of course, it was a cartoon on diplomacy, but it told me to avoid criticizing people. Instead, we need to be diplomatic to emphasize the person's strengths as much as possible.

Offering honesty—but in a way that won't cause offense. In the cartoon on diplomacy I watched, it was advised to be honest, not give false hope, with matters such as ending a relationship, firing someone, or rejecting someone's project. I saw some merit in that, but I believe we come to a point in any relationship with a person, institution, or corporate entity, where we must commit—with pure positivity. For instance, when we have children, we must commit to our marriage for life, I believe. After our first full ten courses at AU, we must commit to graduate. Similarly, after a year with a corporation we feel great about, we must stay and grow for as long as the company will keep us. That's just my bias. Commitment to another helps us grow more richly than had we abandoned our cause. And once at that stage of commitment, I believe we should withhold all criticisms and complaints.

Being highly aware of people's emotions and working to avoid hurt feelings. I know the triggers for most everyone. They are (1) being confronted, (2) being criticized, (3) listening to complaints, (4) being the object of ridicule, and (5) feeling someone's anger, whether it be sulking or outright aggression. If we can avoid doing these things to others, our relationships significantly improve. I've also learned that everyone has faults, especially me, so I try not getting offended or judgmental when someone strikes out at me. I try to humbly shoulder the anger in a neutral way. And I try to avoid the actions that triggered the person in the first place, or simply accept any negativity as part of the person's developmental phase in life.

To truly lead people, diplomacy is a must. After all, no-one wants a fearful, angry, or critical employer. But everyone loves a leader who builds us up.

Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: Financial Future Scholarship

Sponsored by: InvestmentZen

Deadline: April 1, 2022, 11:59 pm GMT

Potential payout: \$1000

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be actively enrolled full-time in an accredited university or college.

What's required: A completed online application form, including contact and academic info, and a 500-1500 word essay on one of three specified topics.

Tips: Read the [Official Scholarship Rules](#) carefully for info on application requirements.

Where to get info: www.investmentzen.com/scholarship



Fly on the Wall Just Because



Jason Sullivan

Kindness and Joy in the Minutest Moments

A rising tide raises all boats. Except for the leaky ones. And trickle-down economics states that we all benefit when those at the top get rich. Unless we live near toxic runoff from tar-sand projects or major in academic topics not sanctioned for lavish remuneration by the powers that be. Wherever there are causes there are effects, and the looped connections between them often flow both ways. It's up to us to decide our priorities and take into account the consequences of our academic and life choices.

Our agency, the decisions we make, is key to our success. Distance education depends on our ability to have foresight in our priorities and to plan not only for success but for actual enjoyment of the labour of learning. Reactions and outcomes are obvious to us at AU: if we shirk and skive and avoid coursework it's going to bite us in the scholastic tail.

So, lest we become akin to the mythological Ouroboros (a snake biting its own tail, implying the circular dynamics of nature and the cosmos) it's important to know where we are going. And for that we have to know where we are at and where we came from. But what about those extraneous details, the reminders and the notes lost in the shuffle of essay outlines?

Sometimes things happen just because. Not every moment or gesture is created equal. A spastic motion that might seem like a fit of outrage could just be the natural response to a shock of static electricity, for instance. Yet meaningless moments can also be magical moments. Meaning, after all, is in the eye of the beholder.

The Gift of a Moment

Nothing expresses caring like gifts for no apparent reason. Take a bouquet of flowers, for instance. Rebecca Solnit remarks that "it may be the very uselessness of cut flowers, beyond the pleasure they give, that has made them a superlative gift, embodying the generosity and anti-utilitarianism of gift-giving" (Solnit, 17). As a seasonal forestry worker who's always admired the combination of hand-eye dexterity with an eye for beauty endemic to the trade of floristry, it's appealing to see things just as they are rather than perpetually what they will be used for. So much of life is numbingly utilitarian and distance education is no different. Often, and even perpetually, like a perennial plant that sprouts back year after year like a kitten ever on the pounce, the abiding question is asked of students everywhere: what are you going to do with that?

Intention and Meaning; Make of it What You Will!

Questions about intended outcomes are like the existential leftovers that gnaw away at our intentionality and ability to live in the moment, sort of an "are you going to eat your pickle?" aside to the main course of life itself. To avoid the pickle of a life dodging the pitfalls of such queries implies a certain philosophic outlook on life that embraces the sheer act of learning and growing and pondering. In the end, hopefully many decades away, it's the little meaningful moments that will matter most. And often we'll only recognize those in the distance vision of our mind's rear-view mirror.

Few philosophers in history better express this broader viewpoint of meaning than the fifth century Roman, Boethius. Likely imprisoned for being a Christian, although trumped up charges to do with business dealings provided a useful pretext, he was sentenced to death. While awaiting his execution Boethius focused his energies and, like a distance student shuttered in her study nook for a weekend of catchup, wrote a book titled *The Consolation of Philosophy*. In it he remarks and extolls the virtues of difference and fulfillment, virtue and meaning. A key moment is when he puts life and culture in epistemic perspective; after all, when in some distant day we ponder our memoirs we'll each be answerable to our own conscience, our personal *raison d'être*.

"Finally, since every reward is desired because it is believed to be good, no one will consider a man endowed with goodness to be without reward. But what kind of reward? The greatest and most beautiful of all...Goodness is happiness, and therefore it is obvious that all good men obtain happiness in virtue of their being good. But we agree that those who attain happiness are divine. The reward of the good, then, a reward that can never be decreased, that no one's power can diminish, and no one's wickedness darken, is to become gods." (Boethius, 129).

Such mystical epiphanies can arise from a single passage in our studies, especially if we are on the lookout for them in both mind and spirit! A gentle openness to newfound joy in meaningless moments opens our creative mind to new possibilities. This can allow greater fluidity and flexibility amidst the rigours of our studies. And as winter dawns into spring and birds begin to chirp we may, just may, find greater kindness peace in life and coursework.

As Jewel, the bohemian 90's singer-songwriter (who famously had grown up in a VW van with her mother in San Diego), once sang: "in the end only kindness matters. And to be happy we must be kind, not only to others but also to ourselves. Forgiveness, for missed deadlines or even a failing grade, is divine. And through such a balanced perspective we can truly reap the benefits of work well done as distance students.

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 Solnit, R. (2021). *Orwell's Roses*. United States of America: Viking.

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.

AU-thentic Events Upcoming AU Related Closures

CHAT with AU Library

Tues, Mar 22, 10:30 am to 2:30 pm MDT
Online

Hosted by AU Library
library.athabascau.ca/page/ann
 No pre-registration necessary; access through CHAT link on home page

AU's Three Minute Thesis (3MT ®) competition

Wed, Mar 23, 12:00 to 3:00 pm MDT
Online

Hosted by AU
news.athabascau.ca/events/aus-2022-three-minute-thesis-3mt-competition/
 Register through above link

CHAT with AU Library

Thur, Mar 24, 10:30 am to 2:30 pm MDT
Online

Hosted by AU Library
library.athabascau.ca/page/ann
 No pre-registration necessary; access through CHAT link on home page

Recognizing and avoiding investment scams

Fri, Mar 25, 12:00 to 1:00 pm MDT
Online

Hosted by AU and AUGSA
news.athabascau.ca/events/recognizing-and-avoiding-investment-scams/
 RSVP through above link

All events are free unless otherwise noted.

Music Review

Everyone I Know Will Die

Jessica Young



Artist: Kulick

Album: *Everyone I Know Will Die*

Pennsylvanian singer-songwriter, Kulick, has released his latest album, *Everyone I Know Will Die*. The album combines heavy rock music with ultra-catchy pop melodies, resulting in a sound that he calls “all his own.” *Everyone I know Will Die* is available anywhere you get your music.

Of the album, Kulick says, “Without going into too much detail, this album practically wrote itself with life (and death) experiences. I have always been obsessed over “why are we here, what is the point, and why do we die” since I was young. It was the first topic I found myself writing about.

“I was forced to dive into it a lot again this

year for the first time since then. For certain reasons, I found myself in doctors offices and hospitals a few times a month, surrounded by others struggling with their own health. I found myself being a caretaker to someone I couldn’t imagine losing. I found myself having massive anxiety attacks about the health of my loved ones and myself.

“After months of struggling (and I naturally continue to still) I really started to realize that I have to accept that we have no control of anything besides our perspective, resilience, and attitude. And then I wrote an album. As I say in the last few lines of the last song of this album; ‘appreciate your time, cause everyone you know will die. Say goodbye and kiss goodnight cause everyone you know will die.’ We are here until we aren’t, and that’s okay. It has to be. Make it worth your time. Spread love. Have gratitude. You are loved and you are strong, even in moments you may not feel it.

I hope this album helps anyone going through any type of struggle, pain, or existential dilemma. My music is not made to sit with and stay in personal dark times, but to visit those dark times for a moment and then see through to the other side.”

Everyone I Know Will Die consists of seven tracks: Necessities; The People I Know (Don't Like Me); For Once in My Life; All I See is Red; Don't Think About Me; Time to Go; and Everyone I Know Will Die. Kulick has also released [a music video](#) for the title track.

I loved this album. Kulick’s sound and perfectly pop-punk vocals remind me of Blink-182 or Simple Plan. Kulick certainly found the balance between ensuring that every song is interesting, distinct from all the others, and creating a seamless flow to the album. “Don’t Think About Me” is that must-have acoustic track for any pop-punk album, while the song

“For Once In My Life” is slower, almost like a ballad. “For Once In My Life” is very reminiscent of Simple Plan’s “Untitled.”

The title track “Everyone I Know Will Die” is hands-down my favourite song on the album. I especially love the lyrics, “Don’t pretend that everything is fine cause everyone you know will die/Appreciate your time cause everyone you know will die/Say goodbye and kiss goodnight cause everyone you know will die.” This song perfectly captures the feelings of grappling with the uncomfortable fact of human mortality. The music video for this song features Kulick in a retro home, surrounded by his Brady-Bunch-esque family. While his elderly parents dance in their bedroom, his wife happily films a TikTok, and his son plays baseball, Kulick looks morbidly into the camera singing about how they’re all going to die. My favourite part is that Kulick’s real-life girlfriend (and inspiration for the album) is featured in the video as his wife.

Overall, *Everyone I Know Will Die* is a phenomenal album with a beautiful meaning behind it. Check out Kulick on [his website](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [Twitter](#).

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

Beyond Literary Landscapes Naguib Mahfouz

Natalia Iwanek



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 will be underscoring and outlining various literary genres, authors, and recent reads and 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 column serves as an introduction to the works of Naguib Mahfouz, a reminder of some of the author’s classics, and as an inspiration for further reading.

Born in Cairo, Egypt in 1911, [Mahfouz was an](#) “Egyptian novelist and screenplay writer, who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1988.” Throughout his lifetime, he wrote more

than 45 novels and short stories and 30 screenplays and plays. His works were written in Arabic, with translations in a variety of languages now widely available.

What

Some of Mahfouz's well-known works include *The Cairo Trilogy*, including *Palace Walk*, *Palace of Desire*, and *Sugar Street*. The trilogy covers "three generations of the Abd al-Jawad family and extends from 1917 to just before the end of the second world war."

Other popular selections include *Midaq Alley*, *Miramar*, and *Arabian Nights and Days*.

Students may also be interested in other post-colonial authors, such as Moroccan Tahar Ben Jelloun, author of *This Blinding Absence of Light*.

Where

Many of Mahfouz's works take place in Cairo, Egypt, as well as in ancient Egypt.

When

These works mainly take place in the mid-19th to 20th-centuries, including both World Wars, as well as during Egypt's struggle for independence from British rule. Several of his earlier novels take place during ancient times.

Why

These texts introduce readers to a variety of themes and topics, including family sagas, love, revolution, social upheaval, military coups, social realism, colonialism, and post-colonialism. In addition, the novels may be of interest to students interested in ancient and modern-day Egypt.

How

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

AU students interested in learning more about this topic may consider ENGL 341: World Literature, a senior-level, six-credit course, which "introduces students to literature from around the world. Students will read literary works from the ancient world to today in a variety of forms," including Mahfouz.

Students may also be interested in HIST 209: A History of the World in the Twentieth Century: I, a senior-level, three-credit course, which "introduces students to twentieth-century world history." In particular, the "primary objective of this course is to help students to understand the major economic, political, social, scientific, and technological developments in the twentieth century. The course is based on four broad themes—global interrelatedness, identity and difference, the rise of the mass society, and technology versus nature." Happy reading!

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





Dear
Barb

Barbara Godin

Beyond Retirement

Dear Barb:

Hi, I am writing about my mom. She's in her sixties and is alone. My dad passed six years ago. I have one brother who lives on the other side of the country, so we do not see a lot of him. My mom and I are close, and she was always very active in my kids' lives, taking them to sporting events and dance class etc. This year my kids have both gone away to college and university and are busy with their own lives. I am finally enjoying time for me, but my mom seems to be lost. She does not have a lot of friends, as that is not something she cultivated during her life. She appears to be sad or lonely, not sure which. I want to help my mom, but I really do not know what I can do for her. Do you have any suggestions for us? Thanks so much, Christina.

Hi Christina:

Thanks for your email. Your mom is in a tough place right now and needs to find a new focus for her life. This is something she must do for herself—which is not to say you cannot offer her some advice. There are various things she can do. For instance, many seniors find they have too much free time on their hands so will take on a part time job. Aside from giving your mom something to do, she will make some extra money.

Another suggestion is that your mom can investigate volunteering. If your mom is interested in volunteering, it is important that she discover which causes are most important to her. Your mom can begin her research at <https://www.volunteer.ca> which is the

Volunteer Canada website. Depending on your mom's skills, there are several fulfilling opportunities available. From there she can search for opportunities in her area.

If your mom is a less social person, there are even opportunities to volunteer virtually. The Volunteer Canada site has [a listing of reputable places](#) that provide volunteer opportunities across the country.

Numerous seniors reach a point in their lives where they want to give back and share their skills with the younger generations. With approximately 75,000 volunteer opportunities across Canada, covering an expansive variety of fields, such as sports, arts, culture, human rights, support for new Canadians and many more, there is probably an opportunity available that she may find appealing. You can find

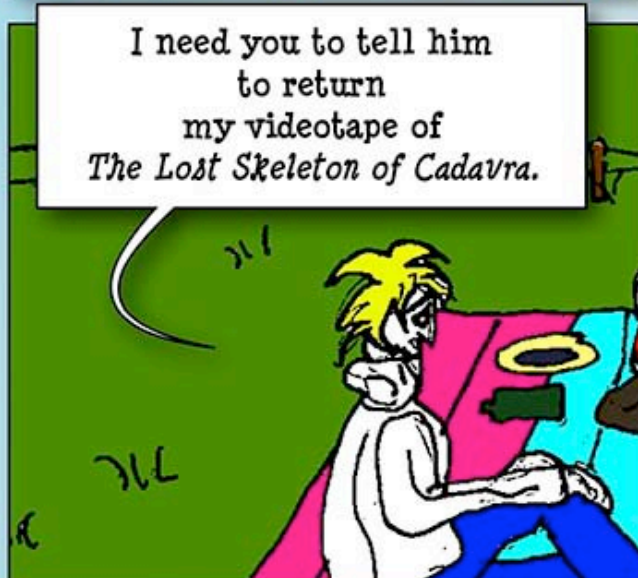
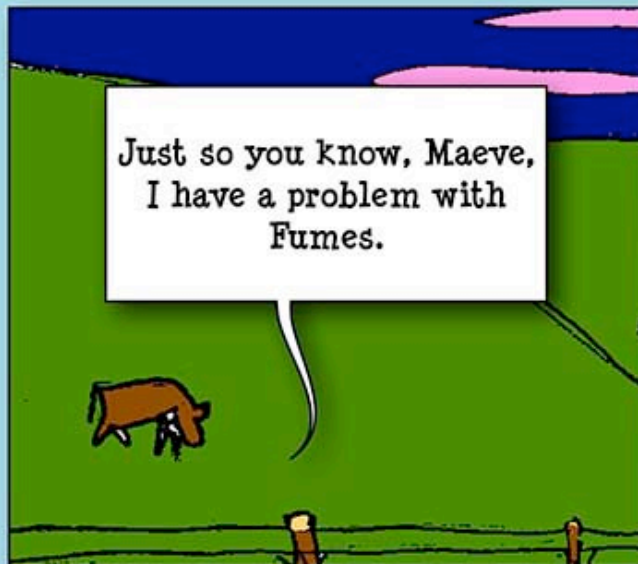
Volunteer Canada even has [a handy form](#) where you can enter the types of things that might appeal to you as a volunteer, whether it's a particular cause you'd like to support, people you want to serve, or maybe even she'd like to develop a new skill. These are places you and your mom can begin your search. I do not believe your mom will have any difficulty in finding fulfilling ways to enjoy her senior years and help others. Best of luck in the future.

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 Mave Malignant Triangulation

Wanda Waterman



AU GENERAL ELECTION TIME TO VOTE

March 10-14

Voting only takes a moment so find the digital ballot in your email today and elect your next student reps!

Sacred Circle of Squares for Indigenous Students ✨

To honour the seasonal change & continued community care, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences is hosting another Sacred Circle of Squares for **Indigenous Students**. This offering will be led by Indigenous faculty members, Dr. Josie Auger & Dr. Melissa Jay along with special guest, Dr. Fyre Jean Graveline.

What to expect:

Current living conditions can leave us feeling cut off from our Bodies, our Hearts, our Ceremonies, our Lands, and our Relatives. We can reStory our Connections to our own Beingness, our Relatives and All Our Relations through Natural Materials Bricolage. Together we will



embrace Earth Mother as Teacher and Healer and deepen our Capacities to be more SustainAble and to reConnect to our Blood Memory of Ancestral Resiliency.

Day & Time:
March 21st, 2022 from
1:00pm-3:00pm MST

We welcome Indigenous students to **RSVP to Dr. Melissa Jay** at mjay@athabascau.ca by **March 17th, 2022**.

Voting is open March 10-14 to elect the next AUSU Students' Council and, for voters who self-identify as Indigenous, the [Indigenous Circle at AUSU](#). Election questions? Email Duncan at governance@ausu.org.



March is Women's History Month and AUSU is highlighting amazing women everyone should know about. Each has left a mark on Canadian history, clearing the path for future influential women. [Follow us](#) (social links in Linktree) to learn why Jean Goodwill became a nurse, what Maayan Ziv founded to enhance inclusion, and how Dr. Roberta Bondar earned a Space Medal!



Check out AUSU's custom learner pathway, [Learning to Excel](#). In video tutorials and demonstrations, Excel expert Dennis Taylor walks you through the program's essentials, including productivity tips and keyboard shortcuts that will help you get the most out of this powerful tool.



AUSU President Accepts New Position at AU!

March 4, 2022 was President Stacey Hutchings's last day on AUSU Student's Council and the Executive

Committee after submitting her resignation in late February to accept a position at Athabasca University within the Student Financial Aid Office. She served AUSU for two years as a member of the Executive Committee, with her first year as the Vice President External and Student Affairs and the current year as President.

CLASSIFIEDS

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

THE VOICE

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

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Editor-In-Chief	Jodi Campbell
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Regular Columnists Barb Godin, Barbara Lehtiniemi, Corey Wren
Jason Sullivan, Wanda Waterman, Xin Xu and others!

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