

THE VOICE

Vol 30 Issue 23 2022-06-17

Minds We Meet

Interviewing Students Like You

A Healthy Body Image

How to Help Your Kids Develop it

EveryDay is Father's Day

Father Time and the AU Experience

Plus:

BLL: 2SLGBTQIA+ Literature

Political Will - The Driving Force

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, Alek Golijanin, 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!

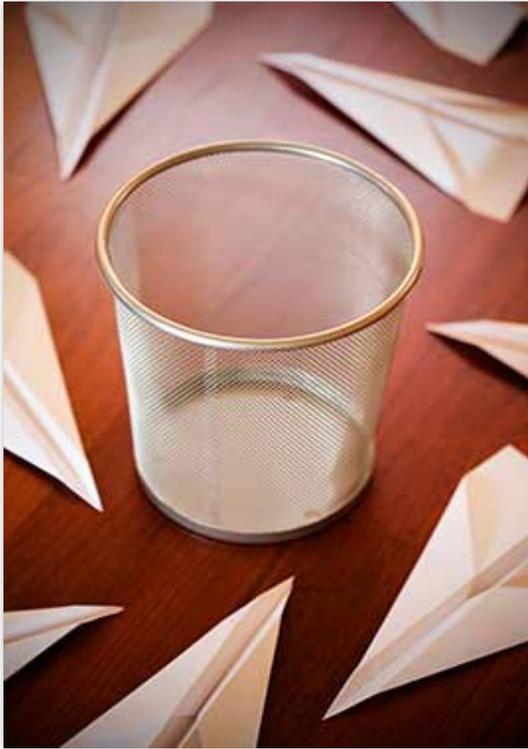
Hey! Did you know the Voice Magazine has a [Facebook page](#)?

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

Editorial

Undefined Father's Day

Karl Low



On Sunday it's Father's Day. The idea seems a bit odd to me now, a celebration of the paternal figure in your life, that is supposed to happen even if you're well separated from your father and rarely talk. Last year, my own father called to wish me a happy birthday. Which is nice, but he was a month early. He'd forgotten his son's birthday.

We had a laugh about it, but that's kind of emblematic of our relationship. We more or less know each other exists, and hope for the best for each other in a general sort of way, but we really don't have much connection beyond that anymore.

I've been thinking about that a lot this week, because as I mentioned last week, Corey Wren's story about grief hit very close to home as our own little dog was having issues. Unfortunately, on Wednesday, those issues culminated in us having to kill her.

People like to use softer language about that sort of thing: put her down, put her to sleep, let her go, but in my heart of hearts I can't avoid that blood-curdling knowledge that we killed her. Our little companion, our bundle of

unconditional love that trusted us and worshipped us for eleven years—we killed her.

And even knowing that it was the best decision, that the only other option was allowing her to live in suffering—suffocating in the air that her little lungs could no longer fully process—doesn't seem to give me any comfort.

How does this tie into my father? Because that happening, and the closeness of Father's Day, it made me realize that I essentially have no friends. Don't get me wrong, I know a lot of great people, especially the writers here at the Voice, but aside from my partner, who is of course dealing with the exact same issues and needs just as much support as I do, every relationship I'm in is a supervisory one in some capacity, either as employee or nominal supervisor. And I don't think it's appropriate to attempt to put this kind of pain onto them, even if they could, or would, accept or understand it.

But how does any of this tie into you, as an AU student? Well, while I've always been a strong proponent of distance education over brick-and-mortar, especially for people who are neurodiverse or suffering severe anxiety, it does have the downside that it makes it far too easy to avoid getting entangled with anyone else if you don't want to. And while most of the time that may seem to be a blessing, there comes a time when you look around and realize you've done too well at being the independent student, the isolated learner.

So you might want to take the time, here and there, to get to know some of your fellow students. You can start by reading this issue of The Voice Magazine, of course, where fellow students are putting forward their ideas and thoughts on all kinds of things, and where we can see, as we do in this week's interview, some of the amazing and varied people who've come to AU.

From there, maybe you want to consider writing for the Voice, and that way be able to join in our own little discord group of like-minded students and graduates. Who knows, maybe you'll make a friend as you enjoy the read.

MINDS WE MEET



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

The Voice Magazine recently had the chance to chat with Oxana Kabardina (she/her) from Fort Vermilion, Alberta, Treaty 8 Territory, currently completing her first year of a Bachelor of Science, with a major in Human Sciences and a minor in Information Systems. She stated, “I’m happy that even living 500 km away from the closest university I’m able to pursue my dream.”

Oxana “came to Canada from Russia in 2009, responding to the government call for skilled immigrants to join the Canadian workforce.” She explained, “It was a lot of paperwork, and I had to prove my skills by showing my education, work experience, as well as the knowledge of English and French.” She applied to a nursing program at Douglas College in Coquitlam, BC, right after her arrival. She dreamed of being a doctor, “unfortunately, the reality is that, for a new immigrant without

a Canadian background, it is close to impossible to get into a medical school.” She explained, “I was happy to get my nursing license after four years in nursing school because I really like working in healthcare, and taking care of people.”

Oxana is currently “taking courses that would help [her] to get ready for medical school.” She explained, “Unfortunately, none of my community college courses can be considered for medical school GPA calculation, so I’m starting from scratch. At the age of 43 it is a bit scary, but I get a lot of support and encouragement from my circles, especially from doctors who know me.”

She “live[s] in Fort Vermilion, Alberta and work[s] at the local hospital, and also sometimes pick[s] up shifts in nearby town La Crete.” She continued, “This area represents the underserved rural Northern area, where healthcare is scarce and resources are limited, but the nature and landscape are so beautiful that it is totally worth it to be enduring all the challenges related to being so remote.”



The natural beauty of northern Alberta as seen from my “campus”



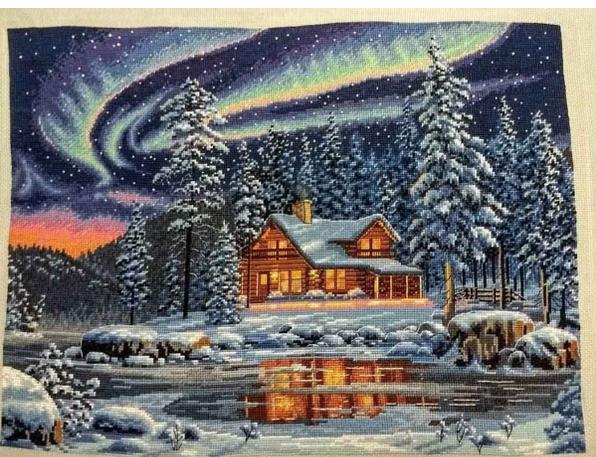
Although her free time is “very limited,” Oxana enjoys gardening. “I’m obsessed with growing my own veggies (my husband and I have been eating plant-based for eight years). I am very interested in the concept of Permaculture; however, there is not much information on the principles of Permaculture in the extreme North conditions. So, I guess I’m trying to come up with my own ways of maintaining a sustainable garden up North. I have been growing stuff that is not even considered for our hardiness zone 2, like eggplants and watermelons.”

She continued, “Also, I know a lot about wild plants, berries, and mushrooms, so whenever I see something interesting in the woods, I try to get seeds to plant in my garden. We forage and make delicious teas and soups using rosehip, nettle, dandelion, chokecherry, fireweed, and many others.”

In addition, Oxana mentioned that she needs “something to do in those 6 months when the snow and ice are covering the ground.” She enjoys needlecrafts, and is “an avid cross stitcher,” explaining that it “is a truly therapeutic hobby that helps a lot with relaxation and stress management.”

She credits nature with having the greatest influence on her desire to learn, explaining, “The exposure to the natural sciences made me a life-long learner. Each new phenomenon in biology, chemistry, physics, [and] psychology leaves me in a genuine awe. I’m always hungry for more knowledge. I still feel like an elementary school student who was just shown the very first chemistry experiment—so excited to keep learning about the world.”

As for her experience with online learning so far? “I’m a big fan of online learning, which is probably related to the fact that I enjoy rural Northern life but at the same time I enjoy academic work. The fact that I don’t have to part with my lifestyle and my community makes me very happy.”



She continued, “My experience with Athabasca has been extremely positive. The challenges of not having an instructor giving you a 2-hour lecture of skimmed material with hints like ‘make sure you remember this slide for the exam’ leads to acquiring more mature learning styles, where you develop critical thinking that help to separate the knowledge into important and secondary. Also, you learn to integrate the knowledge yourself, because there is no one to spoon feed you these skills. Although this is extremely time consuming, I feel like I’m actually learning.”

Also the flexibility of this kind of learning can't be compared to anything else. When I decided to go on a humanitarian trip with a medical aid organization for more than 3 weeks to volunteer with Ukrainian refugees and internally displaced persons, I was granted course extensions so that my studies don't suffer. I can't imagine being able to do that with a conventional model of attending university."

However, like many AU students, there was a point that Oxana wavered about continuing her schooling. "I am actually at this stage right now. It is May 2022; the world is in an active political and economic turmoil and it is very hard to plan a few more years of full-time study. The sense of stability is slipping through my fingers, so I'm in the process of making some hard decisions. Unfortunately, being an immigrant puts you at disadvantage at the times of crisis since there is no family/roots support system."

Oxana's most memorable course has been CHEM 217: Chemical Principles I, because "They send you a crate with all the equipment, glassware, reagents, acids, and bases, and it was so cool! There were videos on how to perform the experiments. Very thought through, and I really learned a lot this way."

As for communications with her course tutors? "It has been quite effective for me, in cases I had to actually approach the tutors. But I did not have to seek clarifications a whole lot throughout my first year," she stated.

If she were the new president of AU, Oxana's first project would be "to concentrate on updating the courses with new materials, especially the courses on IT and health sciences. A lot of times we use old text books while the new ones are available."

When asked which famous person, past or present, she like to have lunch with, and why, Oxana chose Marie Curie. She mentioned that she "went to her museum in Paris and ... just can't comprehend how what we know about the radioactivity could have been discovered with the technology they had in the 1920s. The instruments in the museum look so primitive. It would be amazing to spend a lot of time with her just figuring out how her mind works." And the lunch? "Just coffee and some French pastry right in her lab, can't waste time dining out."

Oxana's most valuable lesson learned in life was taught "by a spider in [her] garden." She explained, "When its web was ruined by outside forces (clumsy humans stomping around), it made a new one, even better. It did not get frustrated, mad, angry, depressed. It did not go get doughnuts, grande latte, bucket of ice-cream, beer and pizza because it was so unhappy. It just started making a new web. This is the resilience right there. The best lessons are taught by nature." She continued, "That lesson came in handy when our house was severely damaged in [the] 2020 Peace River ice jam flood by 5 feet of muddy waters. I can't say it was easy, but there is no point in giving up, life must go on. Every day can be used to come closer to our dreams."

As for her proudest moment in life? "When my friend, a physician, told me that she was sick with pneumonia for the second time in a month, I told her to quit smoking." Although her friend was a doctor, Oxana still reiterated the dangers of smoking, and "she actually did quit! That was mind-



blowing. She hasn't been smoking for 4 years now. That makes me very proud, I'm so blessed to be in health care and have knowledge and skills to help people."

The one thing that distinguishes her from others is that she "used to speak Japanese pretty well, [and] even passed level 2 Nihon-go Noryoku Shiken at one point." Although she does not really speak now, she "still remember[s] some."

As a final note, Oxana stated, "I would like to wish everyone (and myself) best of luck with their academic journeys! I am very excited about what happens next in my life, despite all the uncertainty in the world." Best of luck Oxana!

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

Fly on the Wall Everyday is Father's Day for Time Management!

Jason Sullivan



If necessity is the mother of invention, then time management is surely the father of success. Insouciance being the stuff of lazy students, and, we being human and thus prone to that moniker, it can only aid our travails to pay homage to that great beckoning invisible clock that abides over and above our study regime. Distance education cuts to the core of time's reality with a razor's edge; nowhere else in life does the addition of something to *do* seem at first so doable and then so catastrophically challenging.

Many, myself included, have begun a course at Athabasca only to be mortified weeks later to realize how very little progress has been made. Time flew and papers rustled but precious little had been accomplished. Eventually time meets will and motivation ensues, it's a mix of mystical mystery and machine certainty this process of coming to terms with time. Self-discipline and attention span are indispensable rites of success.

Sadly, some students never do finish their initial course. Others have to pay for an extension and a third category, well, they drift away like sands through that eternal hourglass and quietly change the subject when asked how their education is going. They cancel AU out of their personal culture of popular conversation topics. In any case, while paying homage to our fathers and the other excellent males in our life, it's also worthwhile to consider some core realities of time itself, the great patriach (if you will) of existence for we human beings.

Raymond Tallis provides some bright and humorous considerations about the nature of time and how difficult it is to know and understand it: "We often speak poetically of the 'flow' of 'the river of time'. This is clearly wrong, because rivers, unlike the water in them, do not flow – otherwise maps would be continually out of date, with all rivers disappearing into the ocean."

"How *quickly* would it flow? The obvious answer, one second per second, demonstrates the vacuity of the very notion of 'time on the move'. Velocity or rate cannot have the same dimension on both the numerator and the denominator" (online). The notion that time flows as

fast as time does is pretty much the ultimate definition of a tautology. We at AU, however, know time most presciently by its consequences for good or ill.

However we map and parse time, the end result is that only our ability to self motivate will get us to where we want to be. And, realistically, our inner lazy bones lead by leaps and bounds in the evolutionary race for self preservation. Only when impelled by hunger or fear do creatures in nature truly put their best paw forward and, sadly, that implies that only with a certain deadline anxiety will we truly reach our academic potential.

On the other hand, having goals is itself a way to seize golden opportunities without feeling perpetually pressured not to fail. In fact, the whole idea of adult education is to study what we enjoy and not only what we are forced to. With cash and credit we all elect to be here so in some sense every course is an elective. And if that thought falls flat we can at least recall that we're privileged to be back in the virtual halls of a hallowed institution like post-secondary education at all.

Thinking About Time

Perhaps the way we think and plan about time leads us astray in our studies. Sometimes to stop having a schedule and to cease thinking in time increments can allow us to feel the whimsy of our study prowess spring into action. Just relax and let the brain juice flow, right. It's certainly worth a try, adopting an unscheduled schedule, because attempting to perpetually catch up to the goal of attaining a set number of study hours per week can be gratefully detrimental to the self esteem. We have to make peace with time and find a healthy relationship with it. After all, it's always there, just like the man (or men) who raised us and are our beloved fathers.

Time may be more impersonal than a person but that's no reason not to adopt a healthy way of feeling about it. Phrases like it's always five o'clock somewhere and anytime is fun time spring to mind, and, academically speaking, study time *can* be like any spontaneous act: something that just happens and is enjoyable. Like, what if time was titled *ice cream* or *nachos*? How we think about anything goes a long way to how it is for us. Those who experience ambivalence about their own dad figures know this well. Anyway, making studying a more enjoyable time can be like renaming Mondays as Fundays and calling it a day. The attitude we take to our study time can make it less like something to corral, tame, or just generally endure, and more an opportunity to put our best brain forward.

Eternity?

So what about eternity, though, don't most things get done that are destined to be so? Well, to take a foreign reference in hand, George Bernard Shaw once said that "The English are not a very spiritual people, so they invented cricket to give them an idea of eternity" (online). If you've ever paused your netosphere surfboard and watched some cricket, not highlight reels mind you but a full real-time set of innings known as overs, you'll note what Shaw was on about. See, in cricket, there are literally ten outs per inning and batters can be there at the wicket swinging up to and including when the cows of dusk come home.

Crucial to us, studying is likewise the fact that, though exams may haunt our horizon, there will always be more extra readings and essay footnotes to read and write, and more hollow tunnels of library research to investigate, studious handheld candelabras of our lit imagination in hand. Studying can be as endless as our inquisitive minds allow— and that's a good thing—because time flies when we're having fun and/or our interest is piqued.

But affixing mere terms like study time to our mental processes doesn't really do justice to the magic of the AU experience. Maybe the tie that binds eternity and time for our purposes is that

we feel enough of a semblance of a oneness between ourselves and our studies that we can find peace and pleasure in both. Plato (360 BCE) for his part believed that the universe was held together by some Prime Mover or other who “resolved to have a moving image of eternity, and when he set in order the heavens, he made this image eternal but moving according to number, while eternity itself rests in unity; and this image we call time” (online). Connecting the loose tether of our desire to the raw necessity of our needs is core to maybe the greatest learned skill of all: attention span. Paying respect to father time as the arbiter of our success in many ways allows us to respect this noble reality of student life.

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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.



Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: Helen Bassett Commemorative Award

Sponsored by: Native Women's Association of Canada

Deadline: July 15, 2022, 11:59 pm EST

Potential payout: \$1000

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be an Indigenous woman, gender-diverse, or Two-Spirit person, be under 31 years of age, and currently pursuing post-secondary studies (priority given to students studying law or justice-related fields.) See [full eligibility criteria](#).

What's required: A emailed or faxed application form, including personal, academic, and financial info, proof of age, declaration of Indigenous ancestry, letter of acceptance, recent transcripts, one reference letter, along with a maximum 500-word essay outlining specific areas indicated on the [application form](#).

Tips: Read and complete all areas of the application form carefully, including the checklist of required documentation on the final page.

Where to get info: nwac.ca/scholarships-bursaries/helen-bassett-commemorative-student-award



How To Help Your Kids Develop a Healthy Body Image

Jessica Young



In our image-obsessed society, it's more important than ever to ensure that children view their bodies in a healthy way. Body image, or the way that we feel about our bodies, is linked to our overall self-image—how we perceive ourselves, what kind of person we believe we are, and how we believe others perceive us. Poor body image is linked to a variety of other mental health issues, such as depression, anxiety, body dysmorphia, and eating disorders. It is seriously concerning, then, that research has found children as young as three experience anxieties about their body image.

Research has also shown that by adolescence, parents have significantly less influence on our children—instead, teenagers are much more likely to pay attention to the opinions of friends, peers, and the media. As the mom of two school age children, conversations about body image have been a staple in our household since my children were young. Here are some tips on helping your kids develop a healthy body image:

Avoid Negative Self-Talk

If you are a parent, I don't have to tell you that children pick up on *everything*. Children internalize the dialogue they hear from their parents, and that dialogue eventually becomes their inner voice. When mom calls herself “fat” every time she looks in the mirror, that sends the message to her children that this is an appropriate way to talk about ourselves.

Model Body Appreciation and Comfort

While avoiding negative self-talk is a great first step, the second piece of that is modeling how to appreciate your body and how you feel comfortable in your own body. Of course, many of us don't *actually* feel comfortable in our bodies, but I feel that this is a “fake-it-till-you-make-it” situation.

If you're going to talk about your body, talk about it with gratitude—talk about your strength, how hard your body works, and what it allows you to do. You can also focus on talking about qualities that aren't appearance related in yourself, your child, and others. Talk to your child about the qualities that truly matter and how the way your body looks has little to do with who you are as a person.

Limit Media Exposure—And Talk About It When You Can't

Limiting access to social media and the Internet in general, as well as previewing movies, TV shows, and video games before your child sees them can help to ensure that they are not exposed to a constant barrage of oversexualized or “perfect” (re: photoshopped) bodies that promote unrealistic beauty standards.

Completely shielding your child from the influence of the media is nearly impossible—think about the advertisements displayed in store windows at the mall, magazines on the shelf next to the register at the grocery store, and TV screens basically everywhere—but being aware of the media your child is consuming means that you can have open discussions about what they've seen and what they think about it.

Get Active

Physical activity is good for both bodies and minds! Of course, some kids will naturally be more active or athletic than others, but requiring children to move their bodies for at least a few minutes each day is as important as enforcing teeth-brushing or cleaning their room. Getting active *with* your children is a great way to spend quality time, promote healthy habits, and improve mental health—riding bikes, going for a walk, swimming, playing a sport, doing yoga, or playing at the park are all inexpensive, accessible options.

Learn About Nutrition

Feeding your child a balanced diet—full of healthy fats, whole-grains, fruits, vegetables, and proteins—will help your child feel good physically and mentally, but being too restrictive about junk food or portion sizes can have the opposite effect. Let your child eat intuitively by helping them recognize when their body is telling them that they are hungry, thirsty, or full. Let them know that junk food can be yummy and fun, and there is nothing wrong with eating ice cream or cookies in moderation.

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



Homemade is Better Rice Pilaf

Chef Corey



To expand my repertoire, I've been trying to make more dishes that aren't a main. On my countdown to 100 recipes, I realized that I make a lot of main course dishes and not a lot of the other stuff. While I'll try to look at sides more often, I'll still include some mains in this column. I also need to return to my sauces and finish writing about the last sauce I hope to help you with.

Chances are you've had at least one version of pilaf in your life. Many countries around the world use this method of rice preparation. Pilaf, which is a North American spelling, is simply a rice dish prepared with spices, vegetables, and stock. In some countries, it also includes meats. When I think of pilaf, I think of middle eastern rice dishes. Probably because they are usually spiced with cinnamon and clove, they might have raisins and a sweet taste. But the pilaf I make is savoury. Some relatives to pilaf that you might know would be paella and biryani.

While I think pilaf is more often a rice dish, it doesn't have to be. Some countries also use bulgur wheat or orzo, which is more of a pasta than rice. Equally, many different places use different types of rice. While most countries prefer basmati rice, some also use arborio rice (used in risotto). Much of my culinary training was in French cuisine, and when we made pilaf, our cookbook simply used long-grain rice. At home, I prefer to use basmati for everything, and I like the fragrance and the taste compared to other long-grain rice.

In addition to basmati rice, I also use chicken stock. While you can use vegetable and beef stock, I find that chicken stock has a neutral enough flavour that it adds to and complements the rice rather than overpowering it. I also use onions and carrots, but you can use various vegetables in



a pilaf. For example, you can use green pepper, green onions, celery, mushrooms, olives, peas, and even spinach. The sky is the limit on what you can add to your pilaf. If you want to go international, many websites will give you ideas. Maybe you came to Canada from another country, and you have your variation, make sure you share it with people and let us all learn from you.

The key to making a good pilaf is time, followed by a few very simple steps. If you are using long-grain rice, make sure you give it a good rinse before cooking it. Add butter to a cold pan, and warm it up. Start cooking onions and garlic first with the butter. Then add the rice and toast it a little bit. You are trying to get the butter to coat the rice as well, though. This makes sure the rice is not sticky. Once you've followed these steps, then the rest is super easy.

Rice Pilaf

Ingredients

1/2 cup onion small diced
 1/4 cup carrot small diced
 1/4 cup celery small diced
 1 cup Basmati long grain rice
 2 cups chicken stock
 1 tbsp butter
 Salt
 Pepper



Directions

- 1) Measure and rinse rice.
- 2) In a medium-sized pot, add the butter and onions.
- 3) Sauté the onions until they start to turn translucent.
- 4) Add the rice to the pot and continue to stir until all the rice is covered with the butter, about 2 minutes.
- 5) Add the carrots and celery and stir for another minute.
- 6) Add 1 tsp of salt and ½ tsp of pepper.
- 7) Add the chicken stock and stir.
- 8) Bring the mixture to a boil, then reduce the heat to a simmer.
- 9) Continue to simmer until all the liquid is absorbed and none remains in the bottom of the pot.
- 10) Cover the pot and allow the pilaf to rest for 5 minutes.
- 11) Taste before serving, and add more salt and pepper if needed.
- 12) Serve and enjoy!

Corey Wren is a student at AU's school of business management and a stay-at-home-parent of three who graduated from NAIT's culinary arts program in 2007.



Council Connection—May 19, 2022 Meeting

Kent Provost



The meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm MST. Executive Director Jodi Campbell was announced as the accessibility officer. President Karen Fletcher read the land acknowledgement: “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 also recognize that our student members span across the lands we now know as Canada and abroad, and we acknowledge and celebrate these Indigenous histories, languages, and cultures. As an organization, AUSU is committed to decolonization, reconciliation, and conciliation efforts, acknowledging that there is much to unlearn. AUSU will continuously strive to build equitable relationships with Indigenous learners at AU, as well as Indigenous members and staff within AUSU, advocate with and for Indigenous

learners through consultation, and create spaces that are inclusive, respectful, and equitable.” All expected participants were present. The previous meeting’s minutes and the current’s agenda were unanimously approved.

Committee Appointments

Lorie Tran was unanimously reappointed to the Member Engagement and Communications Committee as the student-at-large voting member. Mr. Campbell said, “I’d just like to mention that Lori is a returning member. She’ll be super excited to come back.”

Vevangapi Katjamana was also unanimously reappointed to the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee as the student-at-large voting member. President Fletcher pointed out that Ms. Katjamana is returning to this committee again from the previous year. “She has been fantastically engaged in helping with Black History month and podcasts.”

Governance and Advocacy Coordinator Duncan Wojtaszek said, “There are still up to 2 student-at-large positions to be filled. Those will be advertised as per policy and also to gain interest. Those will come back to Council for approval, and if dozens of people apply and the Executive Committee puts forward multiple names, you might have to make a decision between competing interests.” President Fletcher added, “The process is that we put our Councillors on committees, then returning members who want to come back, and then we fill other spots.”

Policy Updates

Vice-President Finance and Administration (VPFA) Dur-E-Najaf Syed reported that the SU’s policy on email voting had changed. Point 2.16.18 was removed because it was considered redundant. This point read as follows: “A summary of AUSU council email motions will be made available via the AUSU website, social media, or any other medium deemed appropriate no more than three calendar days after an email motion is passed. Committee email motions will be made public if they are brought before council.” President Fletcher clarified, “The point of 2.16.18 is really just making sure we’re being transparent and making people aware of what’s going on. Social media has evolved, and it would be weird to be like, ‘Hey Instagram, we had an email vote

about such and such.’ That’s just not how people communicate. All the motions that are ratified by the Council are in our formal minutes, which are available. So we thought this would be a better practice to just leave it in the minutes.”

Director Campbell added, “You pretty much nailed it Karen. Communicating through social media or other deemed communication channels is only as good as the number of followers you have. If we’re only pushing it out to a few hundred people or a thousand people, that’s not really serving the entire student body. Relevancy was definitely part of the conversation.”

Someone in the chat was curious to know, “What is ratification?”

Coordinator Wojtaszek answered, “It means the decision, the motion, comes back to the Council. When they vote on it, it would be a question of whether or not the relevant process was followed. That being said, if you were opposed to the motion as it originally came via email, there would certainly be nothing saying you now have to vote in favour of it. It would come to the attention of our student body the same way any motion that gets put before the Council does. We don’t do a lot of ratifications or email votes; the business of the day is typically dispensed with the day it happens.”

President Fletcher said, “I think in my time there has been one email vote, and it was urgent. In the email voting process, if someone says they really want it to go to a Council meeting, that’s what we do. This means essentially nothing super contentious will happen through email voting.”

Reports

President Fletcher reiterated in her report that there was no faculty strike in April, which she said everyone was thrilled about. At the end of the month, AUSU met with the counterparts of other SUs in Alberta which was beneficial in terms of strategic planning and advocacy in the next year. The Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS) elected a President and Vice President. Last year, the government committed to a number of millions of dollars to study how sexual violence impacts students. President

AU-thentic Events Upcoming AU Related Events

AUSU Annual General Meeting

Mon, Jun 27, 5:00 to 6:00 pm MDT

Online

Hosted by AUSU

www.ausu.org/event/annual-general-meeting-4/

RVSP through above link

IDEA Lab Open Day

Tues, Jun 28, 9:00 am to 1:15 pm MDT

Online

Hosted by AU's IDEA Lab

news.athabascau.ca/events/idea-lab-open-day/

Register through above link

CHAT with AU Library

Tues, Jun 28, 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

Faculty of Business Undergrad Program Orientation for New Students

Wed, Jun 29, 12:00 to 1:00 pm MDT

Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business

news.athabascau.ca/events/faculty-of-business-undergraduate-program-orientation-for-new-students-20220629/

RVSP through above link

CHAT with AU Library

Thur, Jun 30, 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

All events are free unless otherwise noted.

Fletcher said, “We’ve really been a voice in making sure they know they can’t just include things that happen on campus, because if that happens it’s going to affect the person’s studies no matter where it occurred. Something that happens to you like that affects your whole life. Policies affecting survivors have to really look at their whole life; it’s not just the parts of their life that are closer to that assault.”

For her report, VPFA Syed mentioned that she got access to her accounts on April 23, and she spent 7 or 8 days transitioning into her new role.

Director Campbell said, “Obviously this last number of weeks has been dedicated to onboarding the new team. Najaf (VPFA Syed) and [Vice President External and Indigenous Circle Representative] Trish [Godoy-Contois] have been doing a great job getting up to speed on so many topics. The other thing I want to highlight is our upcoming Awards Committee meeting, which determines the awards given for the May cycle. We received 183 applications. I want to give a virtual high five to Jamie Mulder, our administrative assistant. She receives, compiles, categorizes, and qualifies the applications, then turning them into a spreadsheet which allows the Committee to make selections in a really clean, efficient way. She deserves all the credit for this. She doesn’t attend the meetings, but I will give her virtual thanks.”

Recognition and Acknowledgments

Vice President Community and Wellness (VPCW) Natalia Iwanek said, “I’d like to recognize Najaf and Trish for all the work they’ve been doing. It’s not easy coming into a team that’s already working. You’ve both been absolutely incredible. We’ve thrown so many things at you, such as meetings. It’s a huge learning curve. I also want to add that the work Jodi and Duncan have been doing on accessibility is fantastic. Anyone who will need it in the future will be very happy.”

President Fletcher said, “I want to thank everyone who has flagged problematic courses over the past year. We put these into a spreadsheet which is helpful to have going into General Faculty Committee meetings. I know [Councillor] Amber [McDuffe] has flagged a number of complaints people have had on Facebook. I think all of this will make a big difference when the University is working on course revisions. I also want to thank Duncan for making the Executive Committee retreat work with some people attending in person and others remotely.”

VPFA Syed said, “I want to give a shoutout to the Awards and Finance Committee members. The Awards Committee hasn’t had a meeting yet, but we started getting applications in about a week after we were all assigned to our new roles. Karen and Natalia, you’ve made it really easy to become comfortable in my new role. There’s a lot of stuff involved in being an Executive Councillor, and they’ve helped so much. I hope that helps if you guys are thinking about running.”

Q & A

Managing Editor of the Voice Magazine Karl Low was curious about which committee Ms. Syed attended that she had said was fun. “I was on a Student Academic Appeals committee. So, I can’t really say much about it, but yeah, it was fun.”

The meeting ended at 7:07 pm. The next meeting will be at 6:30 pm MST on June 16, 2022. Please email governance@ausu.org if you would like more information on the Council or how to attend the next meeting.

Kent has been pursuing his English Degree at AU when not writing up Council Reports



Visualization for Success

Marie Well



Visualization exercises are meant to transform you from great to magnificent. You are meant to grow more spectacular daily. Visualization exercises can take you to your golden triumphs.

Here is a step-by-step formula for visualizing your way to success:

Get into a hyper-relaxed state. This is the first step to visualization for success: relaxation. Put on some soothing nature sounds. Add some aromatherapy, if you have it, such as lavender essential oil. Turn down the lights; even burn a candle. Then, do deep breathing: in-breath for four seconds, hold for four seconds, out-breath for four seconds, hold for four seconds, and repeat. While deep breathing, focus on your body. Notice areas of tension and release them. Flex the tight spots to relieve stress. Once you feel incredibly comfortable, begin the visualization process.

Visualize your triumph. Once you've relaxed, then see yourself in the future. Pick a goal—any goal—and imagine yourself having achieved it. Visualize as many details as possible about the final victory. For instance, if your goal is to create something, imagine your creation in full scope: the look, the colors, the feel, the taste—everything. Imagine the great pride you'd feel and the accolades you'd receive. Imagine how others would benefit from your creation. Feel every aspect of your victory.

Visualize all the steps to get to the victory. After you've relaxed and discovered your triumphant moment, visualize each step in as much detail as possible. It's essential to go step by step. But don't worry if you don't know what the steps involve. Just imagine them to the best of your ability, based on prior knowledge or pure guesswork. You can always fill in the blanks when returning to the visualization later.

See yourself as if your actions are in a movie. When visualizing yourself, imagine you are starring in a high-definition film, rich with sounds, colors, excitement, action—you name it. The more compelling you can make your movie, the more inclined you'll be to watch it—and realize the benefits.

See yourself as changed at the end of it. The end goal of your visualization should transform you into a better person. You may end up richer, wiser, more accomplished, more successful, more balanced, or more spectacular in some other way. You should end up better off than you started--both in your visualization and real life.

Remember, pick one goal: cleaning, work, studies, relationships--whatever you most desire. Pick any inspiring objective. It's okay if it's not the most ideal--any goal will do. You can always pick a new one at any time. It's like flipping through the shows on Netflix. But it's best to watch an entire show to reap the full benefits.

Do these visualizations every night. They are powerful, like prayer, because they can bring your dreams to fruition.

So, visualize your starring role today—and enjoy the outcome!



Three Easy Herbs for Indoor Growing

Xine Wang



Expensive herbs at the grocery store aisle that are not always fresh

Recently I've been obsessed with growing indoor herbs. Now that the great growing weather is upon us, gardening centers at major retail hardware and gardening stores, and even most grocery stores have opened up.

There are so many options for indoor plants, why focus on an herb garden? First, from my personal experience, many of the "fresh" herbs from grocery stores packaged like the ones shown are not always fresh. Sometimes the herbs are wilted and are not as flavorful as you'd like. Second, they're fairly expensive. So growing your herbs at home helps limit your dinner budget. I find that when I have the right herbs for my meal preparation, I feel more confident that the food I make will taste delicious.

Now that I've convinced you to grow your own herbs, what are some good herbs for your indoor garden?

Parsley

One of my favorite herbs especially for Greek recipes is parsley. It can be pureed into sauces, pestos, and dips. Parsley can be pricey in the grocery stores, and I usually don't use enough to purchase the large stalks they sell, but at home parsley is easy. I like to water mine often as the topsoil I use dries out often. Healthy parsley leaves are green but if I put it in direct sunlight the leaves can turn yellow. Place it in a sunny area but away from direct sunlight.



Oregano

Another fantastic herb to grow at home is oregano. It works fantastic for bread, pizza dough, and lots of meats such as chicken. If you're feeling fancy, oregano can be paired with mozzarella cheese, and tomatoes. I prefer using fresh oregano to dried as it is more fragrant. It also does well indoors in the shade. I found that when I put my oregano in direct sunlight it would wilt. Many people have hydroponic gardens where herbs, especially oregano, can be grown in sand, gravel, or liquid. Typically these herbs need to be well hydrated so make sure you water often!

Rosemary

Rosemary is such a versatile herb; it can be thrown into soups, salads, and stews as well as other proteins to reduce the strong scent of pork, lamb, or other game meats. I love my rosemary with steaks as it has a pungent flavor profile. I used to use dried rosemary (with the sprigs detached) and the flavor wasn't the same. Fresh rosemary is easy to care for in the home. Rosemary should be placed near a window and have good drainage at the bottom of the planter. Many planters have no holes for drainage and can be a problem for many plants so choose the planters carefully!

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



Music Review—Vita Mors

Jessica Young



Artist: The Venomous Pinks

Album: Vita Mors

Arizona's punk-rock trio, The Venomous Pinks, have released their debut album, *Vita Mors*. The album is available for streaming anywhere you get your music.

The band consists of Drea Doll on guitar and vocals, Gaby Kaos on bass and vocals, and Cassie Jalilie on drums. The Venomous Pinks describe themselves as Bikini Kill and T.S.O.L colliding with a Russ Myers movie—"an unapologetically, uniquely addictive, in-your-face punk sound."

Vita Mors, which translates to "life and death" from Latin, deals with subjects such as persevering heart-wrenching losses, fighting sexism, and social justice. Of the album, the band says, "Alright. You've got one life. One chance. Always do your best. Stand for what you

believe in. You're much stronger than you think. When you really want it, you are unstoppable. Hold on to what your heart speaks."

Vita Mors contains ten tracks: "Mercy"; "I Really Don't Care (featuring Bad Cop)"; "No Rules"; "We Do It Better (featuring The Last Gang and Brenna Red)"; "Cross My Heart and Hope to Die"; "Broken Hearts Club"; "Apothecary Ailment"; "Hold On"; "Todos Unidos (featuring Efreem Schulz and Death by Stereo)"; and "We Must Prevail". The song "Broken Hearts Club" has a music video on [YouTube](#).

The first thing I thought when I listened to *Vita Mors* was: all-female version of The Sex Pistols. Raw instrumentals, snarling vocals, and aggressive, in-your-face anarchy makes up The Venomous Pinks' sound.

"We Do It Better" is a feminist anthem, with lyrics like, "These rules I won't obey/So, listen to what I say/It's my life and my way/You'll never bring us down, man." While "Hold On" is a testament to the mental health struggles so many of us are familiar with. "Cross My Heart and Hope to Die" is definitely my favourite song on the album—a toxic relationship manifesto. I also thoroughly enjoy the addition of Spanish lyrics woven throughout many of the songs, such as the track "Todos Unidos," meaning "everyone together" in Spanish. Considering approximately 31% of Arizona's population is Hispanic or Latinx, it's great to see The Venomous Pinks representing their language and their culture in a genre that is most often represented by white men.

The music video for "Broken Hearts Club" looks like a well-produced home video of the band recording their song. It's raw, not too flashy, and showcases The Venomous Pinks being themselves. The video cuts and features a tribute to the band's loved ones (perhaps lost by suicide, but it's not specified)—Johnny Wilson, Bertha Sofia Jalilie, and Ozzy Gonzales—and a beautiful quote: But what is grief, if not love persevering? The music video ends displaying the number for a 24-hour suicide hotline. This music video obviously meant a great deal to The Venomous Pinks, and I appreciate their vulnerability.

Overall, I really enjoyed *Vita Mors*!

Check out The Venomous Pinks on [their website](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

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



Beyond Literary Landscapes 2SLGBTQIA+ Literature

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 2SLGBTQIA+ Literature, a reminder of some of the genre’s classics, and as an inspiration for further reading.

Some well-known authors that focus on the 2SLGBTQIA+ community include Ahmad Danny Ramadan, Billy-Ray Belcourt, Ocean Vuong, Joshua Whitehead, James Baldwin, Leslie Feinberg, Samra Habib, Audre Lorde, and Vivek Shraya.

What

Some popular works include Ramadan’s *The Clothesline Swing*, Belcourt’s *A History of My Brief Body*, Vuong’s *On Earth We’re Briefly Gorgeous*, Whitehead’s *Jonny Appleseed*, Baldwin’s *Giovanni’s Room*, Feinberg’s *Stone Butch Blues*, Lorde’s *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*, Habib’s *We Have Always Been Here*, and Shraya’s *I’m Afraid of Men*.

Other notable works include Vuong’s *Night Sky with Exit Wounds* and Feinberg’s *Drag King Dreams*.

Where

These works primarily take place in Canada and the United States, as well as in Syria, Pakistan, and France.

When

These books primarily take place during the 21st century.

Why

These works may be of interest for learners who are interested in topics, such as gender identity, sexual orientation; themes, including love, resistance, and pride; as well as the histories of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

How

AU’s wide range of diverse courses make it easy to study this topic in depth. Courses related to 2SLGBTQIA+ Literature are available in a variety of disciplines, including one’s that may fit into

your 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 may consider WGST 320: Gendered Bodies and Society, a senior-level, three-credit course, which allows students to “engage with poststructuralist, postmodern, feminist, and queer theory in order to critically examine not only gender norms but resistance and challenges to these norms.” Topics include, “The Social Construction of Gender,” “Performing Femininities,” “Performing Masculinities,” and “Gender Disability,” among others. (Note that WGST 266: Thinking from Women’s Lives: An Introduction to Women’s Studies (or an equivalent course) is strongly recommended prior to registration.)

In addition, learners can consider WGST 322: Sexuality in Society, a senior-level, three-credit course, which “presents the historical and theoretical underpinnings of Western colonial sexualities in Canada and the United States.” (No prerequisites are required for this course.) Happy reading!

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



Political Will

The Driving Force Behind Legislative Change

Alek Golijanin



Why do some laws get brought into effect over others? What type of thinking is involved when decision-makers are deciding whether or not to support substantive policy changes? Are there any limitations to bringing about legislative changes? These are just some of the questions that people might ask themselves when trying to understand how the laws of land come about. The go-to term used in academic circles is “political will” and it does a good job in generalizing the change-making process.

What is Political Will?

Although the term “political will” can be vague and fuzzy, it is generally understood to represent the desire of legislators to undertake actions to achieve a set of objectives and to sustain the costs of those actions over time.

I look at political will as the conditions required for legislators to bring forward change to the laws of the land in spite of resistance. The components required to create the necessary conditions for there to be a political will are dynamic in form. That means that various factors will change based on the scope of conditions. Most of the time it involves making a case against the status quo, why the way things are is no longer the way they should be. The best way to understand political will and the necessary conditions required to bring about progressive change is by applying it to real-world examples.

Zero-Tolerance for Substance-Impaired Driving

Every year we get tragic stories of the lives lost as a result of substance-impaired driving. It is so bad in Canada that the U.S. Centers for Disease Control published a report that ranked Canada first among wealthy nations for percentage of roadway deaths linked to alcohol impairment. More Canadians were dying each year due to impaired driving than homicides. It has been like this for quite some time now.

So, what is holding us back from zero-tolerance laws for substance-impaired driving? Many people are strongly against it, and naturally feel it's important to protect people from losing their lives as a result of substance impaired driving. So the ingredients are all available to bring about progressive changes to substance-impaired driving laws and to keep Canadians safe, but it appears that legislators are unable to face the resistance. The resistance put forward by driving under the influence 'supporters' is stronger than most legislator's feelings of conviction in preventing the unnecessary loss of life as a result of substance-impaired driving.

Organizations like MADD have been pivotal in changing the language used around crashes which are the result of substance-impaired driving. They argue these are not accidents and there should be zero-tolerance policies in place for driving under the influence of any substance. The right to live supersedes another person's right to drive impaired.

In the case of zero-tolerance laws for substance-impaired driving, the issue appears to be around the generally accepted belief that people can have a drink or perhaps smoke a joint and still drive safely. That belief would quickly be shattered if every single Canadian family was to lose a family member as a result of substance-impaired driving.

User-Friendly Environments in the Fight Against Addiction

The Province of British Columbia recently announced that they planned to decriminalize the small possession of hard drugs. It was the first of its kind policy in Canada and one that changes the context in which we interact with individuals struggling with substance use. The province's legislative assembly realized that harsh consequences, punishments, and shame were not having their desired affect on people struggling with addiction and they decided they needed to do something different.

So, what is holding back the rest of Canada from following suit? Again, many people are strongly in favor of creating the conditions required for those struggling with addiction to overcome their illness. But for many, they do not accept that this can involve allowing people to engage in the addictive behavior. Not unless they have personally seen the impact addiction has on someone. And for many people, dealing with this is simply not that important, as it's not something that affects them.

Despite the government of Canada having estimated in the [2012 Canadian Alcohol and Drug Use Monitoring Survey](#) that 20% of Canada's population met the criteria for a substance use disorder, there still exists a denial and stigma around the topic. Having to convince the vast majority of people that a legislative change is necessary to help a small minority can be a daunting task.

Being uncomfortable about an individual's decision to take part in substance use is understandable. The health impacts of various substances are scary. However, using personal feelings to justify being against the user-friendly environments that have shown to be effective in the fight against addiction is not okay.

Mental Health Care Coverage Under Health Care Coverage

Jack.org is a Canadian non-profit organization that has been a major advocate for comprehensive mental health care. They have been vocal about the status quo and how at any given time one in

five children is suffering from a diagnosable mental health disorder. Many of these children suffer alone because they and their parents lack the information they need, and it results in only one out of three getting treatment. In Ontario, access to mental health care is not covered under the provincial health insurance plan and it often requires out-of-pocket expenses.

So, what is the hold up in including mental health care coverage under health care coverage? Is mental health a hot-button issue of great importance? Without a doubt.

The challenge to passing legislation that includes mental health care coverage under the provincial health insurance plan has to do with money. And yet the costs of doing nothing far outweigh what it takes to jump-start access to mental health care supports.

Poverty is, arguably, the single largest determinant of health and so poverty and health are inseparably linked. For families that are unable to afford access for mental health care services, individuals struggling with mental health challenges will suffer significant challenges—including struggling with school or work, addiction, or even finding themselves on the far side of the law. Having access to mental health care supports can be the difference between identifying underlying causes and preventing a lifetime of negative health outcomes.

The World Health Organization has signalled the alarm stating that the biggest threat facing adolescents has to do with mental health and wellbeing, and Canada is not immune. Life has value and we can not cheap out on people.

Creating Public Value to Facilitate Political Will

Back in 2021 I had the opportunity to participate in an executive education program that focused on the idea of creating public value and the various components involved in being able to bring about lasting impacts. The term “creating public value” was first coined by Harvard Kennedy School Professor Dr. Mark Moore. The term itself is a concept that focuses on practical reasoning and finding various ways in which we can bring about positive changes across society.

If you want to go about creating public value then you need to start with a strategic triangle that connects public value, legitimacy and support, and operational capacity. This triangle helps us imagine what might be possible and how we can go about creating public value.

The previous examples of issues that were identified as requiring legislative actions but lacking political will are legitimate issues with support behind them, and all that is required is minor legislative changes. British Columbia showed it could be done. If they could activate the federal branch of government responsible for the criminal code, and then use that to follow through with legislative changes that can change how society interacts with individuals struggling with substance use, then so can others.

Leveraging Activism to Create Public Will

Activism can also serve as a spark that creates political will because activism has long been a way of activating the public will that often drives change. However, today’s version of ‘pop activism’ detracts from bringing about lasting impacts as it deviates from building narratives that embrace the necessary values to create political will to the expression of rage or over-the-top characterizations.

Bringing about legislative change often requires navigating a political system that can be exhausting and requires a great deal of persistence. For this, building a narrative of interconnectedness between people across all lines of difference is a must. There are key fundamental values that should connect us all, like the idea of helping people when we are in a position to do so, and the idea of leaving nobody behind. These should be the key drivers behind our actions.

Creating political will by activating public will does not require any sort of self-compromise, but the way in which ideas are delivered can be the difference between them gaining mainstream support or being rejected. The challenge to that is much of popular opinion would have people believe that it is uncool to treat people with respect and that disrespecting others is acceptable if they disagree with you.

Proving people wrong is a lot harder than proving people right. Live your values, but always start from a point of respect, open-mindedness, and tolerance.

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



Grow a Little Better Each Day



Marie Well

You always have room for improvement. But the best kind happens every single day. It can help you find a cure, achieve a goal, or solve a problem. And when you see the benefits materialize, it's a reason to celebrate.

Students are constantly stretching and growing, but there are additional ways to enhance one's performance.

Develop better daily habits. We can't just wish for better practices; we must act every day. Exercising daily, even if just walking the hallway for 30 minutes, is a good habit. Eating super healthy is the basis of another good pattern. Brushing and flossing daily, cleaning house regularly, and making to-do lists help, too. To super-charge your to-do list, make a large comprehensive daily plan jammed with routine actions to ensure you are constantly growing. Then, review your daily activities to see where you could improve and where you shone.

Focus. Memorization activities can peak your concentration. So, spend at least fifteen minutes daily memorizing facts to strengthen your focus. Also, playing chess, even if for just ten minutes a day, enhances your ability to focus. Exercise and house plants can heighten focus, too. Eating nuts, blueberries, salmon, 100% dark chocolate, flaxseed, and other brain-healthy foods are all said to enhance focus. Try just one of these actions to improve yourself today.

Or do what Warren Buffett advises: write down your top 25 career (or educational) goals. Then, circle your top five goals, and avoid the remaining twenty at all costs.

Perform at peak. Time and measure your performances. For instance, if you study for a math exam for four hours a day for nine days straight, record your performance time. Also, take notes on how focused you were, how many distractions you faced, and other intricacies. And when your grade comes in, even if it's a 95%, aim to beat your performance next time. It's a constant fine-tuning. After all, the best person to compete with is yourself.

Strategize. Research strategies for bettering your performance, whether they be overcoming anxiety, learning study habits, adopting marriage-building behaviors, or whatever you desire.

Visualize success. Write your top five goals on index cards and review them every day. Then, visualize yourself accomplishing those goals. As your daily visualization becomes more sophisticated, write down sensory experiences from your visualization on the back of each cue card. Finally, ask yourself what it is about the goals (and subsequent visualizations) that genuinely make you tick? For instance, is creativity or entrepreneurial excellence inspiring you to strive for those goals?

Learn. Read daily, whether it be fiction, nonfiction, or spirituality. Each book has its own merits: increased creativity, skills development, and self-development, to name a few. Watch a course. Go to a seminar. Hire a coach from Fiverr.com. But remember Warren Buffett's top-five-priorities rule and try to choose learning materials that advance your five ultimate goals.

Be empathic. Strive to be generous whenever you have the means to do so. Show compassion and mercy to people, whether you are a debt collector, prison guard, or chocolate-shop cashier. And always, always forgive. Even better, feel love for everyone—friends and enemies alike. That way, your world is alight with an abundance of friendships.

Getting better each day is fun, challenging, and exciting. So, pick just one action today to become an even more magnificent you!



Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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

AthaU Facebook Group

GPA variants. A student notices a difference between GPA on a transcript and GPA on DegreeWorks; responses point out that the transcript GPA calculation includes all courses, while DegreeWorks bases its calculation only on courses pertaining to the student's program.

Discord

All on the same page. In the #general channel, students discuss how to find out what materials are permitted during an exam, and how to ensure the invigilator also knows what materials are permitted.

Twitter

@austudentsunion tweets: "Snap a photo to show us how you are celebrating PRIDE Month and tag us! OR like and comment on the post to tell us how you're celebrating! Win 1 of 5 prizes - a \$50 Amazon Gift Card, \$50 Quilt Bag Gift Card, or 1 of 3 Proctor-U exam codes! Contest closes at 11:59 MST PM on June 19."

Youtube

Check out a "new way of doing research virtually using cloud computing" with AU's IDEA Lab: Redefining research.





Dear
Barb

Barbara Godin

Facing Separation

Dear Barb:

Hi, hope you are doing well. I am in my early forties and my wife and I have been married for 12 years. During the last few years we have begun to drift apart. We each have different interests and therefore developed our own group of friends. Initially it seemed like a good idea for us to branch out, plus it gave us something new to talk about. However recently my wife has been very withdrawn and uninterested in discussing what she does with her friends. I have a strong suspicion that she has been seeing one of the men in her bowling league. She goes bowling almost every day, even on off league days, (or so she says.) I love my wife very much and do not want to end our marriage. I was the one that suggested we get involved in other activities and now I'm regretting that. I am not sure whether I should confront her or will that just make matters worse. Looking forward to your advice.

Thanks, Ben.

Hi Ben:

Thanks for the email. Sorry to hear of your dilemma. I would not suggest you confront your wife since you don't know for a fact that she is having an affair. It seems you are simply suspecting she is seeing someone, while it could be any one of a number of other things. You need to have a discussion with your wife and find out if something is bothering her. Perhaps

she is not feeling well or experiencing depression. The worst thing you can do is jump to conclusions. If she assures you that nothing is wrong, then just leave it be for a while and see what happens. If you truly believe she is seeing someone else, ultimately you may have to confront her with your suspicions. At that point you will know what you are dealing with and what you need to do. Best of luck Ben.

Dear Barb:

I recently had to put down my 15-year-old dog. I cannot believe how much I miss her. I cry all the time and even sleep with her stuffed toy. Is what I'm feeling normal, or do I need to get some help.

Thanks, Sad and Lonely in Ontario.

Hello Sad:

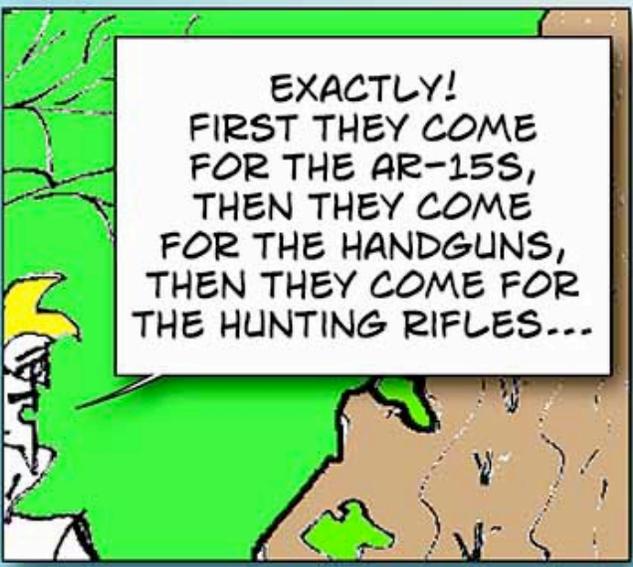
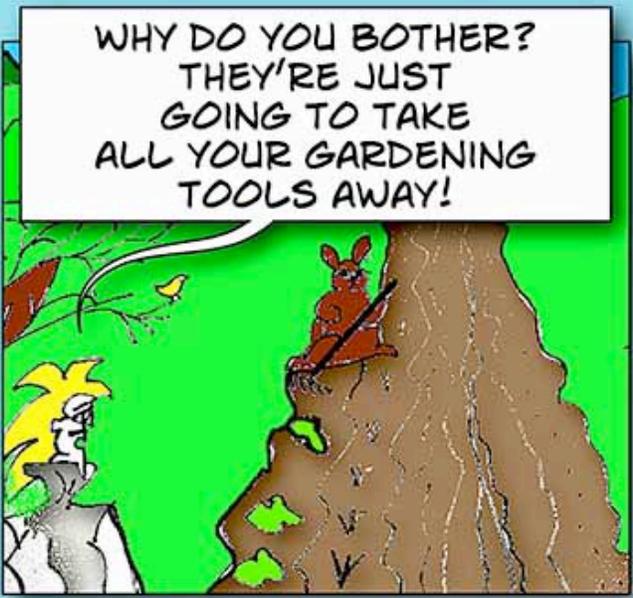
I think what you are feeling is perfectly normal. I assume your dog has been by your side for 15 years, and it is going to take time to get over the loss. Losing a treasured pet is like losing your best friend. Grief is different for everyone so take the time you need to remember your special friend. Thanks for sharing.

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
First They Come from the AR-15s

Wanda Waterman



This update is provided to The Voice by AUSU.
Contact ausu@ausu.org with questions.



We also wanted to send out a reminder that Athabasca University (AU) Counselling Services and the AU Students' Union are offering this free online career development workshop for current students and alumni. Engage with AU counsellors to help plan or change your career!

You could win 1 of 5 FREE ProctorU exam passes or cool swag just for showing up! This workshop is an opportunity to engage with AU counsellors and ask questions about planning or changing your career, developing skills, marketing your skills and abilities, and preparing for an interview. Join us for this informal chat about your career questions!

Date and Time:
June 22, 2022, 5:00 – 6:00 p.m. MT
[RSVP on Eventbrite](#)

AUSU invites you to our Annual General Meeting (AGM) on June 27,



2022. Executives and staff will meet over Zoom at 5 pm MST to present the 2022 Annual Report, which includes the AUSU audited financial statements and highlights from the 2021 fiscal year. Students are invited to attend and will be given the opportunity to ask questions following the presentation.

Simply [RSVP on Eventbrite](#) and we'll see you then!

Please send your valuable opinions, feedback, and suggestions regarding our AUSU Update to ausu@ausu.org. We are committed to providing quality content and look forward to hearing from you!



AUSU Pride Week is a wrap, but the month isn't over and there's still plenty to celebrate! Here's a sample of what we put out this week:

First, we want to remind everyone that applications are still being accepted for two 2STNBGN Student Bursaries of \$1000 each, open to any 2STNBGN undergraduate student at AU!



[Click here](#) to view full details about the award and how to apply. Qualifying applicants are Two-spirit, trans, non-binary, or gender-nonconforming undergraduate students currently

studying at AU and have completed at least one 6-credit course. The application process is easy and the bursaries are going to someone – why not you?

The deadline to apply is June 30, 2022, and recipients will be selected in July. If you have any questions, please email ausu@ausu.org.

Next, listen in as we sit down and talk about what Pride means to the team while reflecting on our work and Pride Week events.



Starring: AUSU VP Community and Wellness Natalia Iwanek, Executive Director Jodi Campbell, Communications and Member Services Coordinator Ashley Janes, and Governance and Advocacy Coordinator Duncan Wojtaszek

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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