



THE VOICE

Vol 30 Issue 31 2022-08-12

Minds We Meet

Interviewing Students Like You

Learned Helplessness?

A Student Look at the AU vs UCP affair

It's Personal

The Thing I Can't Let Go

*Plus:
Chocolate Crinkle Cookies
Educational Theology
and much more!*



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



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

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

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

Editorial

Actions Have Effects

Karl Low



A bit of a furor has been aroused with Advanced Education's Minister's recent demands that AU move some 500 people and their families into the rural area of Athabasca. So much so that Minister Nicolaides has been coming out repeatedly to attempt to backpedal some of what has been submitted to the university, first claiming that the Alberta government would have been willing to provide financial help to move people, but that none was asked for, and most recently stating that the government was willing to be flexible on the number of staff required to move to the Athabasca region.

It sounds to me like what they thought would simply be another quiet lock-in for the Athabasca Lac-La Biche riding has generated far more attention than the Minister wanted, with even members of the town wondering how in the world the government came up with a number of people that there's simply no way for the town to be able to accommodate in such a short time-frame.

To me, the answer's obvious. They made it up because they didn't want to engage in any serious consultation with those who they were actually affecting, the employees of Athabasca University. After all the disdain of the UCP for higher learning has been evidenced multiple times, such as when Premier Kenney suggested that COVID-19 was merely "an influenza that does not generally threaten life apart from the elderly, the immune-compromised." I'm not saying they specifically want to hurt Athabasca University, but to the UCP, it seems fairly well established that the point of post-secondary education is merely to service the economy, ideally in an immediate and direct fashion, as that presents them with the best ability to garner votes in the next election.

The issue caught the attention of a student who was so motivated by it that he's written his first article for the Voice about it. His article not only gives a more balanced view of what's been happening than I personally think it deserves (and kudos to him for doing so), but also explores how it ties in to the larger trend in our society of the us vs. them, black-and-white mentality of over-reaction, and, more importantly, what might be the cause of that mentality. It's definitely worth the read.

We've also got a new interview with a student who's juggling a lot of demands but has perhaps the most useful advice I've ever seen given to new students. Check out our Minds We Meet with student Tenille Harris, especially if you're feeling a bit overwhelmed by your studies on top of everything else you've got going.

Plus, we're featuring a new article by Elisa Neven-Pugh as she delves into the cause of why she's fighting against the invisibility of the disabled despite there seemingly being so many things, including the reactions of her similarly abled peers, which seem to line up to attempt to stop her.

Of course, that's not all, as we also have recipes, scholarships, news, thoughtful takes on the meaning of academics, advice, future events and more!

Enjoy the read!

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karl".

MINDS WE MEET



The Voice Magazine recently had a chance to chat with Tenille Harris (she/her) from Medicine Hat, Alberta. She stated, “I honor and acknowledge that I am situated on Treaty 7 and Treaty 4 territory, traditional lands of the Siksika (Blackfoot), Kainai (Blood), Pikani (Peigan), Stoney-Nakoda, and Tsuut`ina (Sarcee) as well as the Cree, Sioux and the Saulteaux bands of the Ojibwa peoples. I also and acknowledge that I am on the Métis Nation within Region 3.”

Tenille is currently enrolled in the Bachelor of Professional Arts, Human Services major. “With this degree, I will be able to challenge the social work registration and hopefully obtain permanent employment as a Family School Liaison Worker,” she explained.

On a personal note, although Tenille, her husband, and her three children have made Medicine Hat their home, Tenille’s “roots are deep within a small town in Saskatchewan where [she] was born and raised.” She continued, “So small, that when I graduated high school, there were only ten of us total. Right out of high school, I

went to college and obtained my Disability and Community Studies Diploma and continued to work in the disability services field for over 15 years.

“In January of 2020, I decided to take a huge leap of faith and switch gears in my field of expertise. I decided to seek out employment working with children in a school setting and supporting them in overcoming their social and emotional barriers to learning. Currently, I am employed with one of our local school districts working as a Family School Liaison Worker in a temporary position.”

Tenille had some great study tips for students. “I best study with a quiet space (or coffee shop) and a good cup of coffee. Because I have three children and a full-time job, I seek solitude whenever I can to work on my studies. I find that knowing I have other commitments in my life motivates me to complete my course work when I have time, as I know it is sporadic and not often. I would not be able to achieve completing my courses if it wasn’t for the love and support of my husband. His work schedule and ongoing support provides me with opportunity to complete what I need to when he is on his time off,” she stated.

As for advice for new students and/or prospective students? “To grant yourself grace. As a mature student returning to school after having been working for over 15 years, grant yourself grace. The first few courses are always rocky in any new program but be gentle on yourself as we are all learning. I wish I would have known to look at all assignments in your course prior to starting the course material, so that as you work through and read the material, you are aware of what you are to be looking for in your assignments and can make notes accordingly.”

When she is not studying, she is “fully immersed in [her] role as a mother, teacher, and a friend.” She also “enjoy[s] paddle boarding in the summer, and snowboarding in the winter.” She added, “When I can, I try to get as much alone time as possible, this is what really fills my bucket when I am feeling deflated.”

Her family also enjoys travel, and Tenille described one memorable vacation, when she and her husband took their children to Disneyland. She continued, “I was newly pregnant with our third child, and we took our, at the time, then 2- and 4-year-old to Disneyland. Experiencing Disney through the eyes of your child is so magical. So much so, that we have plans to go back next year.”

Her best friend, Desirea has had the greatest impact on her desire to learn. “She has always been a huge advocate for lifelong learning and obtained her master’s degree at a very young age. I was always inspired by her and her ability to expand her knowledge and home in on her special gifts and abilities. Her success motivated me to seek my own,” she explained.

As for Tenille’s experience with online learning so far? “Online learning has had its challenges for sure. I would have loved to see more engagement between tutor, content, and learning. At times it can feel like you are on your own little island, but the freedom to complete and design your own educational path is very convenient for people with families or other commitments. Online learning has allowed me to work towards my dream of having a degree, right from my own home.”

Her most memorable course so far has been HSRV 322: Ideology and Policy Evolution, which “forced [her] to grow.” She explained, “It forced me to heighten my standards relative to everything I had previously known. It was not memorable as in interesting content, but more of memorable due to its challenges.”

As for communications with course tutors? “I have found that communication with course tutors it completely depended on their priorities. I have had tutors who were readily available and would responds to inquires quickly, and I have had others who have taken less than ideal time (over 3 weeks) for assignment markings and communication.”

If she were the new president of AU, her first project would be “creating more engaging course structure, meaning less reading, more teaching.” She continued, “At times I find AU needs to embrace more innovative learning ideas.”

When *The Voice Magazine* asked, which famous person, past or present, she would like to have lunch with, and why, Tenille chose Beyoncé, calling herself “a die-hard Beyoncé fan.” She continued, “I would absolutely love to have lunch with her and inquire about overcoming challenges and maintaining a growth mindset.”

Tenille also recommended an impactful book by another well-known celebrity. “Recently, I read *What Happened to You* by Oprah Winfrey. This book was so eye opening with regards to the situations and experiences that shape you. I always look to expand my personal growth and understanding within my own healing journey, but it also was instrumental in understanding how to support individuals in their struggles and traumas. I love trauma informed care!”

The most valuable lesson she has learned in life has been to “always trust the timing of things.” She explained, “I have learned many times over that what you think is to be true for you, is not always, and may be only a steppingstone toward something greater than you have ever imagined. I have been extremely disappointed in my life only to realize in hindsight that the failures led me to a much greater paths and outcomes.”

And her proudest moment? “The proudest moment of my life is too hard to define in just one moment. For sure I would say the birth of my three children, and witnessing their kindness, compassion, and empathy that they all possess towards others every day. Raising social and emotionally healthy children makes me forever proud.” Best of luck, Tenille!

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!](#)

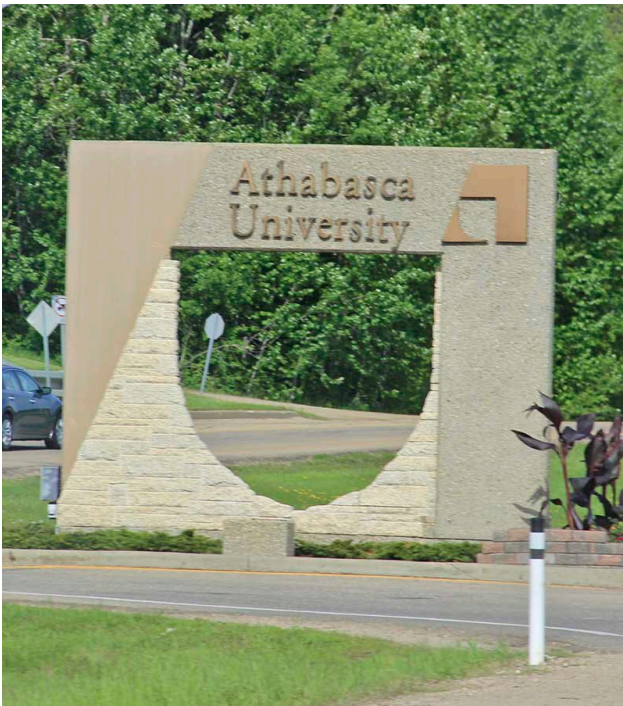
Natalia Iwanek (she/they) is currently completing her Bachelor of Arts in English with a minor in Political Science at Athabasca University.



Learned Helplessness, or Actually Helpless

Chris Cameron

Alberta's Advanced Education Minister provides AU students with a Case Study on Present-day Politics



When trying to understand the present negotiations between Alberta's Advanced Education Minister and Athabasca University surrounding the former's demand for the latter to increase employee headcount in Athabasca, I have found it helps to split the issue into two parts:

1. The publicly stated desires of the Advanced Education Minister, and
2. The underhanded methods by which the government is getting what it wants.

If you want a refresher of the issue, I believe [this](#) is a fairly comprehensive article on the lead-up to recent events, while [this](#) article is as recent as August 5.

In early 2022, with the prodding of the [Keep Athabasca in Athabasca University](#) group, Premier Jason Kenney and Advanced Education Minister Demetrios Nicolaides began to express their desire

for AU to increase its physical presence in the Athabasca region to drive economic development. It has also been said that economic development was the reason AU was first moved to Athabasca from Edmonton in 1984. Expressed a little less publicly are the claims that AU's near-virtual strategy is compromising the school's mission to be a distance education leader – a claim not made by Nicolaides himself (that I could find), but by other proponents of the Minister's plans, the *Keep Athabasca in Athabasca University* group most notably.

Initially, I was greatly bothered that money earmarked for post-secondary education was to be co-opted for economic development. My thought was that AU is supposed to be for *students* and that provincial money for the school should primarily be for their benefit. That the province would meddle in the affairs of a university as a means to their own ends felt hugely inappropriate. However, now I'm not so sure.

When a post-secondary institution is justifying its existence (which is more often than should be necessary), the benefit to the regional economy is an item probably in the top five. Since money given to the school benefits both students *and* the economy, how could a politician resist generous funding? If this was once the understanding between AU and the Alberta government, but now the government feels AU is no longer upholding its end of the deal, why isn't the government free to decline to give as much money? Perhaps that is what has happened: the government wanted 'A', AU wanted 'B', and without an agreement reached the government is reducing its funding for the school. If this is a rational world full of good-intentioned people, then that is all there is to it.

To me, however, it's obvious we're living in a political climate full of double-speak, underhanded dealings, and the desire to win at any cost. When the true goal on its own is too objectionable to stand in full view, it will instead be covered with the thinnest veneer of good intentions—a bucket of sand for those who, wishing to stay ignorant of the unsavoury dealings happening in their government, can stick their head in; a shield of plausible deniability for those willing to achieve their goals by dishonest means, and a cover to distract opponents who debate in good faith.

Demetrios Nicolaides provides us with an ongoing case study of this phenomenon. The veneer? Athabasca University should be in Athabasca to fulfill its purpose of providing distance education and as an economic driver in the community. That's why the school was moved there in 1984, that's what the UCP government has publicly stated should happen since the beginning of this year. AU is free to not stay in Athabasca, but the government is free to provide less funding.

The Means to an End – A Timeline

All dates in 2022

- *January* – AU president Peter Scott meets with the Alberta Minister of Advanced Education Demetrios Nicolaides. Scott says this meeting included a discussion of AU's near-virtual plan, at which time no concerns surrounding the initiative were brought up.
- *March 24* – Premier Kenney and Nicolaides announce during a town hall meeting in Athabasca that directives have been issued to AU which will help the community.
- *May* – Nicolaides replaces the AU Board of Governors chair Nancy Laird, who had rejected Nicolaides' March 2022 directives to, among other things, consolidate AU's executive and administrative offices in Athabasca.
 - Nicolaides' pick is Byron Nelson, a Calgary lawyer who ran for leadership of the Alberta PC party in 2016, and who supports the plans of Nicolaides.
- *June 30* – AU responds to the Advanced Education Minister's directives with a draft talent management plan, asking for the opportunity to meet. AU president Scott states no response was received until:
- *July 29* – Rather than responding to AU's request for input, Nicolaides makes more demands, setting deadlines and tying AU's funding to the school's progress with moving AU staff to Athabasca.
- *August 7* – The Advanced Education minister states that because what AU submitted hadn't provided any "financial asks" they were forced to "take a step forward" on their own. While painting a picture of an uncooperative university, Nicolaides still says he's optimistic and open to working with President Scott.
- *August 11* – Nicolaides signals he's willing to negotiate the proposed residency target, calling the previous 65% residency goal "a suggestion" which he is willing to chat about.
 - Scott believed that even if the school agreed to the terms of Nicolaides' original directives that the timelines were so tight the school would still lose funding. This may change now in light of the Advanced Education Minister's August 11th comments.

A Pattern of Behaviour

One could – and many proponents do – look at the individual events above and say “well, we don’t really know what their intentions are/were.” However, in the context of history, it’s safe to start making assumptions.

The above timeline fits a pattern of UCP behaviour towards AU, post-secondary education in Alberta, and public institutions in general.

- The provincial government inserts itself into affairs that aren’t traditionally their place
Examples: as Nancy Laird believed when AU received its first set of directives; the UCP requiring post-secondary institutions to adopt free speech policies.
- Brazen replacement of public institution board members with individuals who agree with UCP views
Examples: UCP’s first house cleaning of 11 board members at Alberta post-secondary institutions in 2019, a move made before their terms expiring and many of whom were replaced by energy executives; Nancy Laird’s replacement with Byron Nelson in 2022; Alberta Health Services president Dr. Verna Yiu, a “lightning rod for criticism from rural UCP caucus members” being let go less than a year after her 2-year contract extension.
- Asserting that they support the very institution they’re meddling with
Example: Jason Kenney signing a novelty-sized contract promising not to decrease health care spending
- Implementing unilateral changes for which there was little to no consultation
Example: Taking control of the Alberta Teachers’ Association’s pensions, transferring their assets to AIMCo.

Much like a statistician – as new information emerges surrounding how the UCP operates, we must update the probabilities we assign. The actions of Nicolaides are likely not simply well-intentioned moves to help a University and rural town.

How has This Been Playing Out?

In the realm of public discourse there’s no winning or losing, just more “what abouts,” arguments with moved goal posts, contradiction, and general internet shouting. It’s not *just* about economic development now, it’s also about how bad remote work is, and that’s compromising AU’s mission! You see, remote working is both terrible and good, and which one it is depends exactly on what I want to be true. Administrative staff can’t work effectively remotely, but exemplary learning experiences can be had remotely. Appeals to authority are made: Elon Musk doesn’t like remote work, and he’s super rich!; a brazen willingness to make unsubstantiated statements, demands of proof used in the hopes the other side can’t deliver or isn’t dedicated enough to produce, menacing and demeaning language, etc., etc. In this environment, the principled participant is at a distinct disadvantage, and those willing to engage in these underhanded means of argument believe they’ve come out the victor.

There are of course people on each side of the issue, however, there are also those who stand off to the side. “They saw this coming,” “it’s always been this way,” “both sides need to work together,” “none of this really matters,” etc. To me, this attitude affords those who wear it the safety of not needing to pick a side, but also an air of superiority. This, I worry, is damaging and infectious, holding apathy up as an attitude that rises above bickering arguments, but allowing wrongdoing to carry on without a rightful chorus of condemnation.

In the situation AU finds itself in, we can see how this “off to the side” attitude is detrimental. Both sides are being called confrontational, with several saying they must reach a compromise. If your waiter brings you the “stewed-bug jambalaya” but you asked for a cheeseburger, are you

the one being confrontational if you decline to eat it? Well, now the other restaurant patrons are telling you to work it out and come to a compromise; just eat *a few* bugs, why are you being so confrontational?

In his August 10th video which addressed the ongoing discussions with the Alberta Ministry of Advanced Education, Peter Scott earnestly (apparently) suggested that *if only* the Minister had engaged with the school he would have seen how AU benefits—and plans to benefit—the Athabasca region. Scott ends his video by stating we're in a democracy and urged those who wish to help the school to voice their concerns. Generally, this appears to be the recommended response when people ask "what can I do?" But it presupposes that the government is acting with a sincere interest in what's best for its citizens. The mind boggles to think that anyone would believe, at this point, a government official would alter course due to a well-worded letter. But isn't this, in effect, what people are implicitly hoping for when they write to tell their elected officials about their concerns surrounding a government policy? Short of eliciting a tidal wave of disapproval, "voice your concerns" feels particularly impotent against the brash actions of a conservative government in Alberta.

Learned Helplessness, or Truly Helpless?

"Pick a side," "don't argue in bad faith," "the government's not going to listen anyway." What is it I'm suggesting? I don't know. I don't see a good answer.

What I feel has been most effective at motivating change is out-sized outrage. With their out-sized outrage over masks and vaccine mandates, "trucker" convoys mobilized and, in some instances, shut down border crossings or occupied downtown Ottawa, seemingly without significant repercussions. Similarly, "cancel culture"—for any definition of it I can think of—garners results from mobilized masses of outraged people (some or even many incidents may be justified, and thus not "out-sized," but the effectiveness of mass outrage is the point). It's not coincidental that the outraged side has a black-and-white view of the issue and no appreciation for potential nuance; such characteristics would slow the spread of outrage.

If others are anything like me, they believe there's intellectual dishonesty to making an out-sized-anything over an issue. These same people aren't going to be the ones saying they care about X while simultaneously destroying it; acting as though the world is made up of only black-or-white situations—asserting we've always been at war with Eastasia. In the political climate today, such people are at a distinct disadvantage when it comes to shaping the world. They're the kind of people who, in the face of a government-led existential crisis might say "voice your concerns."

Many bemoan voter apathy and lack of civic engagement. Some say you get the government you deserve. But I ask: is the problem lack of engagement, or that much of the power we're told democracy affords us is actually fiction? From the presidency of Donald Trump to today (and probably before, too), I've watched Americans tirelessly attempt to influence the direction of their democracy using all the methods we've been told are effective. I'm skeptical that the outcome achieved in the US represents a true "averaging" of the will of Americans. On a personal level, as a rural Albertan I write my MP and MLA, and invariably the canned responses I get back only tangentially reference what I wrote about before delving into "Justin Trudeau's Liberals" or "the previous NDP government." But I shouldn't worry, they're going to keep fighting for what's important to me.

This Lesson Isn't Over

While the methods Nicolaides is employing may be predictable, his desired outcome, at this point, is not. The situation the Advanced Education Minister has put AU in is so untenable that one wonders what outcome Nicolaides is actually hoping for. What I feel I can conclude is this – if the students come out on top in the end it'll be dumb luck, because the politics of today have

succeeded in creating a populace who, despite what they may want, are ineffective agents of change.

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Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: James Lee Foundation Scholarship

Sponsored by: James Lee Foundation

Deadline: September 15, 2022

Potential payout: \$5000

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be Canadian residents over the age of 16, and be non-professional creatives. (Fields of creativity include writing, art direction, film making, recording, illustrating, digital artistry, etc.)

What's required: A creative portfolio with a maximum of ten pieces, along with personal information and a paragraph (maximum 1000 characters) explaining how the scholarship funds would help you pursue your creative path.

Tips: Read the [Scholarship Rules and Regulations](#) carefully.

Where to get info: jamesleefoundation.com/scholarship/



It's Personal



Elisa Neven-Pugh

I was a very sensitive and caring child. So much so that “don't take things so personally” became a daily reminder from my parents. There's one thing I can't seem to let go though, and that's that many of the people I know in wheelchairs are being euthanized in their soul. Euthanized because discrimination against our people makes them feel invisible. I was made sensitive to this at a leadership camp for those with disabilities when I was 16 years old.

After gaining a certificate in crisis counselling, I recognize that what I experienced that week was the emotional version and symptoms of those who experience sexual assault: severe depression and anxiety, self-blame. (Richmond, Geiger, & Reed, 2013. pp. 443, 448, 450).

It was 10 years ago, and things have changed. Why can't I let go? I have support in advocating my point of view; my family has

always been there for me; my faith keeps me strong; so why can't I let it go?

Because it's not right what's happening to us. It's not right that young women, even in a safe space, feel it necessary to crush the positive perspective of the youngest, whether by browbeating, or mocking physical differences—even though they share the same thing.

It's not right that they felt so crushed themselves that they did not speak up when a counsellor was being cruel by setting off my startle reflex for his own game, except for one quiet comment.

It's not right that “I'm going to learn to walk” is the only thing that stops the reality training.

It's not right that the response to me finding the strength to advocate following the depression is met with “I've lost my fight” from someone who actually took critical disability studies. Or feeling like a freak because my advocacy makes someone so uncomfortable that, even when I apologize for being pushy, I do not exist.

Why does this world make it so difficult for us to keep our hope?

I should not be having flashbacks just because my voice is becoming stronger. I should not be feeling like a freak because I actually have hope.

I want to live, not just to try to prove a point, but to love life.

When I was 16 in that camp I was emotionally assaulted, or rather, what I thought was going to be an intimate meeting of the minds turned to doing the dirty emotionally.

I've tried to go back to normal like it never happened. That it was for a good reason that I just don't know. But the simple truth is I can't go back. The Creator never meant for this to happen—people made choices.

I choose not to let this go.

I choose to fight because this is personal—people are dying.

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I'm Elisa. I have cerebral palsy quadriplegia. More importantly, I have a great family, wonderful opportunities, and a deep faith. I'm inspired to write to help others learn and conquer invisibility syndrome.



Local Shout-Out Edmonton and Area, Part II

Jessica Young



Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses (CFIB) estimates potential permanent closures of up to 222,000 small and medium-sized businesses, depending on how the situation evolves. That's 21 percent of *all* Canadian businesses. The corresponding job losses would range between 962,000 and 2,951,000 Canadian workers.

While most of us are struggling financially right now, it is extremely important to support local small businesses whenever we can. Not only is it stimulating our economy, helping each other is simply the Canadian thing to do. Over the last few months, I have been trying to be more conscious of where I am spending my money. Although it's not always possible for me to support local because—lets face it—shopping at Walmart or Dollarama is often less expensive and more convenient.

So, to support local business, I have compiled a list of small and medium-sized businesses that deserve a shout out.

Sea Change Brewing Co.

"There is something to be said about keeping a dream alive, and for a scrappy group of musicians, creatives and seasoned craft brewers, Sea Change Brewing Co. is that dream. All it took was decades of hustling, skill-building, and friendship cresting on a big swing in 2017 that launched the brewery. We started as a single-beer micro-brand and grew into an award-winning staple in the Alberta brewing scene thanks to our team's engrained D.I.Y. work ethic and creative approach to branding and community collaboration. But behind it all, what remains true from the dream to the pint glass, are diverse, unpretentious beers, crafted with care, true-to-style, and most importantly, great tasting. Cheers Nerds."

Sea Change Brewing Co. is located on Beer Street, in Edmonton's brewery district, with taprooms in both Edmonton and Beaumont, Alberta. They carry six "full-time" beers as well as a variety of seasonals. My absolute favourite is "Prairie Fairy"—a wheat ale with blackberry and raspberry flavours. Not only is it seriously delicious (and pours bright pink!), Sea Change partnered with the 2SLGBTQA+ non-profit organization, Froot Loop, to create this beer. A portion of all "Prairie Fairy" proceeds goes towards supporting the local 2SLGBTQA+ community.

Sugared and Spiced Baked Goods

"Baked from scratch, in small batches, in a back alley in the heart of Old Strathcona."

Sugared and Spiced offers a variety of cookies, cakes, meringues, cheesecakes, brownies, tarts, and Nanaimo bars. You can order online or visit one of the two Edmonton locations and grab a cup of Phil and Sebastian's dark-roast coffee while you're there. They also offer a subscription service called "Cake Club" and "Office Cake Club" where customers can prepay for three (or more) signature cakes on predetermined dates—perfect for a family celebrating many birthdays or an office that holds monthly birthday celebrations.

Audrey's Books

"Audrey's endeavours to provide the complete bookstore experience."

Audrey's Books is Edmonton's oldest bookstore, located on Jasper Avenue. It is owned by a husband-and-wife team whose daughter is now store manager. Audrey's hosts a variety of in-store readings and literary events as well as hosting author events in other community venues to fulfill their mission of connecting writers to readers.

I recognize that all these businesses are based in Edmonton, so if these aren't local to you, I hope this article can encourage you to research the small businesses and services available in your hometown. Let's work together to stimulate the economy, practice environmental responsibility, and support our communities.

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



Homemade is Better Chili

Chef Corey



I have previously stated, "there are a small handful of meals that are *always* better the next day. Lasagna is one of them, followed by coleslaw, pulled pork, and pizza". I also admitted that this isn't a list that cannot have edits, and I submit for you such an edit, an addition. I present to you my chilli recipe.

Before I get into further details, I must add that many people make chilli in many ways and with many different ingredients. While on a recent vacation, we stopped at a restaurant in Detroit. The restaurant is known for making Coney Island hot dogs, which, for those who do not know, is a hot dog in a bun covered with chilli. We in Canada know them as chilli dogs, but they are a particular item in Detroit.

Back to chilli. We've all heard of chilli cook-offs, where the cooks try to make the best or spiciest chilli possible to win. This recipe is not that! I hope that those who like chilli will enjoy this mild version. We like it in our house, which is hopefully obvious because I always test my recipes on my family before I write. But I've found chilli is also better the next day. It is also an excellent vehicle for leftovers.

I like to mix a few different items into my chilli. I used ground pork, ground beef, and loose Italian sausage as my meat base. I added some onion and garlic, a can of whole tomatoes with liquid, added some tomato paste, beef stock, spices, and a can of kidney beans. Cook it for a couple of hours, and viola, you have chilli.

Full disclosure as well, I have been working on this recipe for a long time, and with every iteration, I add something new or change a portion of an ingredient. I suggest you make this recipe at least two to three times before you experiment. It is good to get an idea of the starting point and make this recipe until you are happy with how it tastes, then start adding other ingredients. You could try smoked paprika, dry mustard powder, trade out the beef and pork for poultry, or make it vegetarian by removing the meat and adding more tomato or beans. It's your recipe now; play with the ingredients, but I warn you, start with small portions and build until you're happy.

I would never add a new ingredient without adding it in smaller amounts; for example, I might add sweet paprika, but I would start with one teaspoon and then build on it as the chilli is cooking. Perhaps I want the taste to be more present, and the one teaspoon isn't quite enough; I might add

half of a teaspoon next, then another half. I would add the new ingredient in smaller portions until I was happy with it; it is easier to add more but not as easy to take away. If you add too much, you'll have to figure out how much of everything else you need to add to balance it. If you get overzealous and add a tablespoon of ghost peppers, you'll have to figure out how much of the other ingredients you need to add so the spice calms down. Patients are key to experimenting with your recipes.

And now, we make chilli.

Chilli

Ingredients:

1lb ground pork
1lb ground beef
350g Italian sausage without casing
One onion - diced
2 tbsp olive oil
Five cloves of garlic - minced
One can of whole tomatoes
1 13oz can of tomato paste
1.5 cups beef broth
2 tbsp chilli powder
2 tbsp cumin
2-3 bay leaves
One can of kidney beans drained and rinsed
Salt
Pepper

Directions:

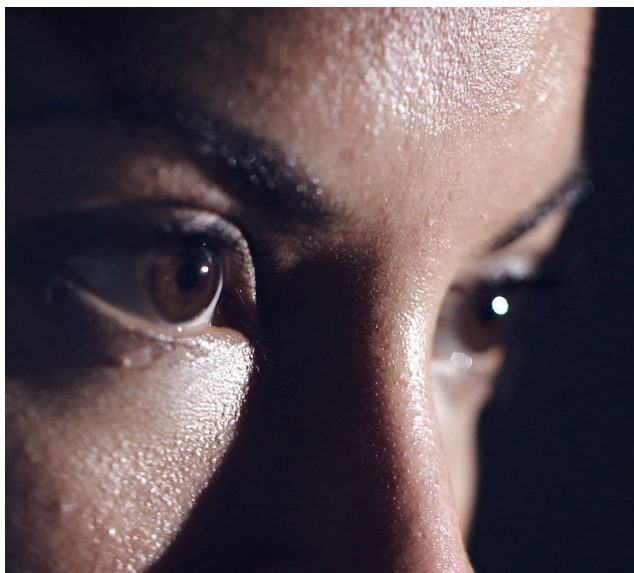
- 1) Get all your ingredients ready.
- 2) Grab a medium to a large pot with a tight-fitting lid, add the olive oil, then turn your burner to high heat.
- 3) After two to three minutes, add the meat, but don't overcrowd the pan.
- 4) Brown, each meat, add a few pinches of salt to the pork and beef but not the sausages, and then set all the meat aside.
- 5) Turn the heat down to medium and add the onions.
- 6) Cook the onions until they start turning translucent, then add in the garlic and cook both items for a few minutes to soften them and release their aroma.
- 7) Turn the burner heat back up to high and add the whole tomatoes and tomato paste. Stir and get those brown bits off the bottom of the pan.
- 8) Add the meat back in and cook for one to two more minutes.
- 9) Taste and add one teaspoon of salt and pepper if you think it's bland.
- 10) Add the beef broth, chilli powder, cumin, bay leaves and beans.
- 11) Stir the mixture a few times; once it starts boiling or bubbling, turn the heat to low and cover the pot with its lid.
- 12) Let it cook for at least one hour; two is also good, but make sure you stir it every ten to fifteen minutes.
- 13) Remove the bay leaves and serve it up!

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.



Using Willpower to Control the Mind

Marie Well



Willpower can make you a more successful student. But, of course, that begs the question, “How much willpower do I possess at any given moment? And how can I make it stronger?”

A Stanford University study by Veronika Job, Ph.D., and associates found that people who thought willpower was quickly depleted had less willpower. On the other hand, people who believed willpower was more unlimited had significantly more of it.

I’m of the view that willpower has no upper limit. After all, unlimited willpower is the means we can use to fully control our minds. And I believe controlling the mind is vital for evolving as human beings.

With that said, here are tips on how to strengthen your willpower:

Build your willpower like a muscle. The more you exercise your will, the more resilient it gets. That means, to block an intrusive thought, a habit of speech, or a pattern of action, the more we exert willpower, the more powerful our resolve grows.

To exercise your willpower, try spontaneous acts. For instance, you could walk backwards or write with your left hand if you’re right-handed. But that’s silly. Instead, try creating consistent positive habits like telling your spouse, every night before bed and first thing in the morning, that you love and appreciate him or her. Yes, consistent positive habits are the best way to build your willpower.

And if willpower has no upper limit, imagine how powerful you’ll grow when you use it to control your thoughts, speech, and actions. Nothing, not even stress, can then stop you from attaining your dreams.

Meditate to develop your willpower. Meditation relaxes you and heightens your focus. A stress-free mind cultivates the conditions for more incredible willpower. So, breathe deeply for five minutes to regroup and resist whenever temptation arises.

Exercise to gain willpower. When you search for images on willpower or motivation, you’ll often see pictures of people exercising. Movement has the fantastic ability to get you healthy and grow your will. Better still, the more consistently you exercise, the more you may grow to love exercise. Exercise can become an addiction, where you just can’t get enough of it, which is testimony that willpower may indeed have no upper limit.

Block out the temptation. This means avoiding or removing the temptation. For example, if you tend to enjoy sugar and it’s impacting your health, remove all sugary foods from your household. If you want to quit smoking and you’re on your fifth week of abstinence, don’t go to a lounge or spend time with a smoker.

Distracting yourself from temptation is another tool you can use. For example, if you’ve been drinking a green tea latte every morning but it keeps you awake at night, think about your next workout instead of thinking about the latte. Or, if you are tempted by a huge slice of chocolate

cake, conjure up images of you on holiday in Thailand, indulging in fresh fruit and coconut chicken instead.

Find a substitute for the temptation. One way to control temptations is to find a “workaround,” which usually means doing the opposite. But, of course, that means doing the positive opposite of a negative. For instance, if you can’t help but watch sitcoms instead of studying, perhaps unsubscribe from cable TV. Buy books related to your academic studies instead.

Keep your energy high. That means getting enough sleep to restore your power and eating fruit to boost your fuel. By keeping your energy high, you’ll have more of it to dedicate to controlling your mind. Willpower takes energy, so fuel up wisely.

Have the goal in mind. To exert willpower, set a goal. For instance, you could say, “I wish to become the best female companion for my true love.” Better still, break that goal into steps. For example, if you want to show your spouse genuine love and appreciation, then perhaps aim to make breakfasts for him. Then go fetch his favorite latte at lunchtime. Tell him you love him throughout the day. Never argue or criticize. Massage his aching back in the evening. Foster nothing but loving thoughts and sweet words, prioritizing his needs over your own.

And remember, 100% effort is more manageable to exert than 99%. So increasingly perfect control of temptations may just be the vehicle to realize that your willpower is unlimited.



Chocolate Crinkle Cookies

Xine Wang



I recently started experimenting with dessert recipes in my spare time. I now have a new recipe that is tried and true. It is especially great for people who don’t have a big sweet-tooth (like me). I’m a fan of low sugar sweets that don’t cause a massive sugar rush and also keep my diet in place.

Chocolate crinkle cookies are not just a Christmas favorite for many households. They’re popular all year around. For Christmas, my baker friend likes to add her special touch with some peppermint powder.

The decadent chocolate flavor of these crinkle cookies are absolutely the best part for me. I learned this recipe from a friend who bakes these regularly for her family. The recipe is so easy and makes it fun for both advanced and novice bakers alike. The cookies are softer than the harder bite cookies from Tim Hortons or Subways. If you’re into chewy and soft cookies that taste almost like brownies, these are perfect.

I found that when I baked these cookies without first chilling the dough in the fridge, it was too soft and melted all over the spoons and my hand. Make sure you thoroughly chill the dough for at least two hours before baking. I currently store the cookies in the fridge in a mason jar. You can store them at room temperature, but make sure they’re in an airtight container.

One of the mistakes I made the first time I made these cookies was to not pack them away right after baking. To preserve the soft, melt in your mouth texture of the cookies, make sure you store them away from open air. Dry cookies just don’t taste quite the same.

Ingredients:

1 cup all-purpose flour
1 tsp baking powder
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup granulated white sugar
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup brown sugar
2 eggs
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup oil
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cocoa powder (unsweetened)
1 tbsp vanilla extract
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup icing sugar



Make sure you coat the outside of the dough balls with ample icing sugar. It will make the crinkle more prominent when they come out of the oven!

Preparation

1. Mix together oil, eggs, brown sugar, white sugar, vanilla extract and cocoa powder
2. In another bowl whisk together flour, salt and baking powder
3. Add flour mix to the sugar mix and combine both until smooth
4. Chill in the fridge for about 2 hours (this is a key step and should not be missed!)

Baking:

1. Use an ice cream scoop or two spoons and roll dough into about 1 inch sized balls. Then roll the balls into the icing sugar and coat generously
2. Transfer the dough balls onto a baking sheet lined with parchment paper or tin foil
3. Bake for 10 minutes and cool for 3 minutes before serving.



One of the mistakes I made the first time baking these cookies was not packing them away right after cooling them from the oven. They became hard and dry. Don't make the same mistake as me!

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



Fly on the Wall

Educational Theology

Jason Sullivan



Meaning in life need not be religious, but when life feels worthwhile that feeling can carry an almost mystical quality. As our AU journey unfolds, we evolve into a new version of our self. No matter how many facts, theories, and concepts we absorb the holistic benefit of our education surpasses the details. Inspiration guides us in ways we'd have never thought possible. We become, in our essence, *educated* as some switch in our minds is flipped and we learn to see the world as academic learners. The whole experience can feel downright miraculous.

Jacques Derrida discussed the way that meaning can be perceived outside of actual words. The term he referenced was "*negative theology*" and, like many a guru or yogi or apostle or salesperson, the implication

is that by gaining a certain new understanding one will become with certainty a new sort of person.

Language and learning carry this promise of growth. Athabasca may not change all of our lives, perhaps only some back corners of our minds, but rest assured that the more we learn and the more courses we conquer the more we will grow and flourish in the core of our being. And this growth surpasses words. Derrida wrote that "negative theology consists in regarding every predicate, or even all predicative language, as inadequate to the essence, that is, to the hyper-essentiality of God, and that, consequently, only a negative 'apophatic' attribution can claim to approach God, and to prepare us for a silent intuition of God" (146). In other words, more is said in the unsaid than we'd realize.

To assume that knowledge is a series of terms misses the educational imagination. The concept of divinity implies its presence in the smallest moment of pondering and the largest instance of life-altering sublimity. Being open to both and becoming able to consider and analyze what it all means is core to an academic education.

Post-Modernism is Reality?

Derrida's career occurred amidst the burgeoning postmodern theory movement, one that preceded the internet but reflected how consumer culture and lifestyle identities were now taking precedence in importance over and against one's sheer relationship to the means of production. Whereas, say, Lucille Ball's character struggled to not be swept away by a factory conveyor belt, postmodern subjectivity implies that we are lost in a hall of mirrors no matter what sort of work our day jobs entailed. As such, discovering a meaningful existence is harder than ever as the seams between leisure and labour are torn apart to reveal a gaping maw of nihilism under the surface.

Derrida, far from partaking in navel gazing insouciance, stood for the realization that within texts and thoughts there was something so magical and empowering that it might actually be a core to what had hitherto been called God. Perhaps secular fulfillment is just waiting to be seen, or not seen so much as felt, as the unspeakable and unspoken baseline of all symbolic communication. In any case, negative theology implies that wherever something absent becomes present outside

of literal words then new mysteries may be revealed. In education this means that we learn more than the literal material in our syllabus.

Derrida thus described the ambiguous root of learning as a base component of human experience. “God is not merely the end, but the origin of this work of the negative” whereby textual omissions are themselves the origin of meaning. Perhaps it’s syllabic utterances *not* spoken that allow to be revealed the phonetic reality of a verbal sentence whereby, “one thus arrives at a kind of proof of God, not a proof of the existence of God, but a proof of God by his efforts, or more precisely a proof of what one calls God, by the name of God, by effects without cause, by the without cause” (146). What’s invisible transcends each moment and utterance and paradoxically becomes a part of us as we see the world through a new academic lens.

To me Derrida seems to say that language is a gloss over our human essence that for millions of years hunted and foraged and created and imagined without the rigours of cultural rituals like writing. Maybe learning how to learn is about channelling this essential inquisitiveness so that all of the world becomes a playground of discovery. Athabasca is a great place to make life a place of *learning by being* rather than learning as a thing we *go and do*.

Learning as Living

Our efforts thus stream onward academically as an output of the great unfolding that is the consciousness of our species. Yearning for knowledge, not as a list of facts and figures but as a way of becoming fully who we are, comes to be transformed into a generalized approach to life. AU, being potentially a part of any aspect of life where we bring our coursework, is in this way a boon to our being. Certainly distance learning can provide perspective on what matters to us, on what truly *needs doing* in our days and in our minds.

Symeon the New Theologian (born 849 CE, died 1022. CE) a thousand years ago (so new in name only) wrote that “if you know that all visible things are a shadow and all pass away, are you not ashamed of playing with shadows and hoarding transitory things? Like a child you draw water with a bucket full of holes; do you not realize it and take it into account, my dear friend? As though there were nothing more serious than appearance and illusion, as though reality has been taken from them.” (online). When we graduate we find ourselves with a sheet of paper to display but so much more within us to feel. And that feeling is inspiring.

Far from ephemera, education gives us a gift that’s beyond ordinary knowledge. We become almost changed animals, humans plus an invisible academic appendage. And, unlike hard and fast meanings, like how to change a tire or how to fill out a form, we learn to think flexibly and creativity.

Meaning itself can be transitory, most assuredly in popular culture but also in the paradigms that guide our academic disciplines. Beyond trifles, such as what view on a topic is currently in vogue, the capacity to combine academic concepts is itself part of seeing the world in new ways that transcend literal meanings. We are changed as we learn because we learn to change our views, to try out new mantras of meaning and truly taste what feels right in our life. After all, to think outside of a box would happen without the box but first we have to be aware of where the

AU-thentic Events Upcoming AU Related Events

Looking ahead...

AUSU Chats With Accessibility Services

Wed, Aug 24, 5:00 to 6:00 pm MDT

Online via Zoom

Hosted by AUSU

www.ausu.org/event/ausu-chats-with-accessibility-services/

No pre-registration necessary

All events are free unless otherwise

boundaries are. In words and core beliefs we may previously have resided in doltish comfort, but education leads us to wander away from preconceptions both within and without us. To know where the four geometric edges of our metamorphic box are is to begin to find out what all is out there. The universe of the mind awaits!

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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.



Music Review

Cruel To Be

Jessica Young



Artist: DARKO

Album: SPARKLE

Single: Cruel To Be

UK-based punk rockers, DARKO, have announced the release of their new EP, *SPARKLE*. The album will be available anywhere you get your music on October 21, 2022. In the meantime, the band has released a single from the album titled, "Cruel To Be". The single is available for streaming now and the music video is available on [YouTube](#).

DARKO's mix of melodic hardcore and techy skate-punk is inspired by bands like Protest The Hero, Rise Against, and Mastodon. The band consists of Tom West on vocals, Rob Piper on guitar and backing vocals, Chris Brown on guitar and backing vocals, Karl Sursham on bass and backing vocals, and Andy Borg on drums.

According to the band, "Cruel To Be" is a scalding attack on the "#BeKind" movement. Of the single, Tom West says, "We're often lectured about how much nicer the world would be if we were all 'a bit more kind.'" It's a lovely sentiment, but if we aren't standing up to bullies, we aren't being "more kind" at all, we're just being cowards and hypocrites. Calling out a bigot doesn't make you as bad as the bigot.

He continues, "Often the worst bullies use their massive platforms to attack marginalised groups, and then claim they're the ones being bullied when people fight back. Cruel to Be is dedicated to anyone who's fed up with being told they're overreacting to being smeared and dehumanised by professional antagonists with enormous wealth, reach and influence."

Before I got into the music, I had to find out a little more about the “#BeKind” movement that DARKO apparently has such a problem with—and frankly, I’m a little confused. The Be Kind movement was started by Lucy Alexander in 2016 after her 17-year-old son, Felix, took his own life due to online bullying. Lucy became an ambassador for the children’s mental health charity, Place2Be, and founded Felix’s Campaign of Kindness at his former high school to help teachers spot the signs of a student who is being bullied. Lucy’s story is one of tragedy, bravery, courage, and compassion. While it sounds like this movement may have been hijacked by celebrities, influencers, and corporations simply trying to escape the consequences of their actions, I would advise DARKO to be aware of the origins of a movement before they publicly slam it.

Knowing this made it a little difficult to enjoy the song, as the lyrics are quite abrasive, such as “Be kind all you like, but does it nullify their cruel, barbaric policies/We all know something that other people don’t/So be kind, but draw a line/Being nice is nice but doesn’t make it right.”

Otherwise, “Cruel To Be” was a decent song. I definitely heard the Rise Against influence on their sound. Tom West has a great voice, although I thought the scream-singing seemed out of place in this track. The music video was also well done—high quality and simple—featuring only the band playing in what looks to be one continuous take.

I’m looking forward to hearing what else DARKO has to offer when the rest of SPARKLE is released.

Check out DARKO on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

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



Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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



AthaU Facebook Group

Not everything has a fee (yet.) A question about fees for dropping out of a program elicits responses confirming there is no fee to leave an undergrad program or switch to another.

Discord

Channel surfing. The discussion around the current spat between AB and AU dominates both the #general and #politics-discussion channels. Meanwhile, a new channel has been created for #clubs-and-study-groups.

reddit

Stay the course. Amidst threads about the AB-AU spat, students seek feedback on BIOL, COMP and FREN courses.

Twitter

@aulibarchives tweets: "We have lots of great resources for @AthabascaU students & researchers to use! If you are stuck or don't know where to go, Contact Us! <https://ift.tt/t9FvhKL> #AULibrary."

Youtube

AU president, Peter Scott, addresses the ongoing discussions with AB's Ministry of Advanced Education in the 12-minute video, On the proposed changes to Athabasca University.

Beyond Literary Landscapes Greater Toronto Area

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.

Who

This week, instead of a specific focus on an author, genre, or theme, we take a look at a specific setting, namely the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and beyond. Specifically, the GTA refers to Toronto, including Scarborough, North York, and Markham, as well as Durham, Halton, Peel, and York regions.

Authors who write about the area include David Chariandy, Eternity Martis, and Silmy Abdullah. Additional authors include Austen Clarke, Zalika Reid-Benta, and MG Vassanji.

What

Some well-known novels located in the general Greater Toronto Area include *Brother* by David Chariandy, set just east of Toronto in Scarborough, *They Said This Would Be Fun: Race, Campus Life, and Growing Up* by Eternity Martis, taking place in Toronto and London, and *Home of the Floating Lily* by Silmy Abdullah, with many short stories taking place in east end Toronto and Scarborough. In addition, students who would like to read more about this area may also enjoy *Feel Ways: A Scarborough Anthology* edited by Adrian De Leon, Téa Mutonji, and Natasha Ramoutaroronto.

Other examples of locally set books include *We Have Always Been Here* by Samra Habib, *Saga Boy: My Life of Blackness and Becoming* by Antonio Michael Downing, *No New Land* by MG Vassanji, *Scarborough* by Catherine Hernandez, *More* by Austen Clark, and *Frying Plantain* by Zalika Reid-Benta.

Where

Many of these works take place in the Greater Toronto Area, particularly Toronto, Scarborough, East York, North York, as well as further in London and Hamilton, Ontario.

When

Many of these works take place during the 21st century.

Why

These works may be of interest to readers who would like to read about their city (and surrounding areas), or those who would like to know more about the area.

How

AU's wide range of diverse courses make it easy to study this topic in depth. Courses related to novels set in the Greater Toronto Area 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 ENGL 351: Comparative Literature I, a senior-level, three-credit course, which examines "the national literatures, the voices of women, national myths and stereotypes, regionalism, and immigration." The current course revision includes works by Austen Clark and MG Vassanji. (Please note that ENGL 211: Prose Forms and ENGL 212: Poetry and Plays are required prerequisites. This course also requires prior course coordinator approval.) Happy reading!

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



The Study Dude

Marie Well

How to Write an Argumentative Essay



There are four types of essays you will commonly write at a college or university: argumentative, narrative, expository, and descriptive. Let's examine how to write an argumentative essay. Argumentative essays use research to support and form an opinion. So these essays rely heavily on data-driven citations to craft a view.

As a disclaimer, some argumentative essays can be funded by lobbyists, the government, industries, or businesses with vested interests in a specific research conclusion. That doesn't mean, however, that you are not entitled to your opinion. It just means that you should know it's not ethical to publish biased views based on funding from those with vested interests. However, some of the literature has evolved from such biased research.

So what are the differences between argumentative essays and other similar types? First, the difference between argumentative essays and their close relatives, expository essays, is that the argumentative essay takes a side and attempts to convince, whereas expository essays should

present both sides of the argument without bias.

There is also a difference between argumentative and persuasive essays, and it is that argumentative essays are opinions driven by facts and data, whereas persuasive essays are more emotion-premised.

With that said, let's explore the structure of an argumentative essay:

First, introduce your thesis statement. As argumentative essays are attempts to convince, they often have an overt or hidden "should" in the thesis. For instance, you could say that "Mental health days are valuable to companies due to lower employee turnover, better workplace culture impacts, and long-term company cost-savings." The hidden "should" is "Companies should offer mental health days."

Second, present your claims. Here you give your claims. For example, you could say that "mental health days are invaluable for several reasons" and then list the reasons.

Third, support your opinion with data. After you present your claims, find quotes in the literature that support them. You'll want at least one quote to support each claim, but three is even better. For instance, one paragraph could start with your opinion that mental health days contribute to a better sense of work-life balance, and then you support it with three citations that suggest the same.

Fourth, present the counterclaim. Here you indicate the opponents' views. For example, you could say, "Mental health days lead to lower productivity in the short term" and "can reflect poorly on the employee's reputation and perceived competence."

Fifth, disprove or invalidate opposing viewpoints. Use research to support your rebuttal of your opponent's views.

Sixth, conclude. Summarize key arguments while supporting your thesis. Also, restate your thesis. Try to end with a thought-provoking comment or an indication of what your findings mean for the greater good. "The widespread adoption of mental health days may not just impact corporate culture but also help alleviate stigma."

You don't have to stick strictly to this structure. For example, you could combine the counterclaim and invalidation of the counterclaim in one paragraph. Then you'd present the next counterclaim and rebuttals in the next paragraph, and so forth.

To strengthen your argument, have more arguments in favor of your view than against it. But if your essay has no clear winner, you may want to structure your essay as follows:

First, introduce your thesis statement. For example, you could say in your thesis, "While proponents of mental health days suggest work-life balance, employee satisfaction, and employee turnover are beneficial, opponents cite cost-savings, stigma, and ineffectiveness as critical disadvantages. Despite this seeming duality, both sides of the argument may be in agreement when considering a long-term perspective."

Second, present the opponent's argument.

Third, present your argument.

Fourth, support both arguments while finding balance. For instance, you could say the following about workplace mental health days: "Proponents of the view claim that several psychological benefits arise, while opponents of the view focus on the detriment to business cost-savings." And then support each side without tipping the scale in favor of one over the other.

Fifth, end with a conclusion that finds a middle ground. You could say, "Although opponents of mental health days rightfully cite short-term impacts on cost-savings, mental health days in the long term can lead to greater profitability due to the prevention of the onset of stress- and anxiety-related mental health conditions."

Lastly, when writing your argumentative essay, ensure it's premised on facts rather than emotions. For example, choosing neutral words such as "Opponents of this view suggest that ..." rather than, "The opponents make the ridiculous claim that ...".

But before we go: more on the disclaimer. If you get funded by a tobacco company to give your perspective on the safety of smoke-free tobacco, consider sitting in a room filled with smoke-free smokers before committing to the study. If your lungs can withstand the smoke, only then is the paper worth writing.



Dear
Barb

Barbara Godin

Finding Bottom

Dear Barb:

I am the mother of a thirty-five-year-old son who is a drug addict. He has been on drugs since he was a teenager. I have always hoped that he would be able to get off drugs, but through the years it has only become worse. He will get clean for a few months at a time, but he always goes back to it.

My husband and I have tried to talk to him about his addiction and he always assures us it has nothing to do with us. There were no traumatic events in his childhood, he says he just likes to get high. He has not been able to keep a job longer than a month at a time. We have even paid for expensive treatment but to no avail. Family and friends tell me to let him go, he has made a choice for his life and there is nothing I can do. My question is how can I turn my back on my son? My husband feels the same as I do. We don't know what to do, but we don't want to sever ties with our son. Do you have any advice for us? Thanks so much, Angela.

Hello Angela:

You are in a position that no parent ever wants to find themselves. You have probably done everything you can to try to help your son, now it is time to help yourself.

You obviously realize you must stop enabling your son, as it is very difficult to see your child struggle with addiction. But it is important to realize that you cannot save your son, he is the only one who can do that. You need to step back and allow your son to face the ugly realities of his addiction. It is time to stop making things easier for him such as by helping him out financially, or providing other ways to make his life easier. He must hit rock bottom and face the consequences of his addiction.

Set boundaries around yourself and your finances and tell your son you will not under any circumstances help him. You may have said this in the past and not followed through on it, but this time you must show him that you mean it. It will be difficult, but unless you stop enabling this behavior, it will be unlikely your son will find a way out of this lifestyle. When your son comes to you for money or help, instead offer to help him get into a treatment facility, make it known that this is the only assistance you are prepared to provide.

Discuss the situation with an addiction counsellor and find out what options are available and present them to your son. Do not keep rescuing your son, because all you are teaching him is that you do not believe he can take care of himself. It is also important that you seek help for yourself. Addiction affects the entire family and there are support groups and resources to help family members dealing with addiction. Check in your area for Nar-Anon groups. Nar-Anon is a 12-step program for family and friends of addicts. Hope this information is helpful, best of luck to you and your son Angela.

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
Texto Incognito

Wanda Waterman



AU SU

UPDATE

COMMUNITY. RESOURCES . SERVICES



Celebrate with us July 11-15th as we turn 30!

We have a fun-filled week planned, including contest giveaways, a special AUSUnights Virtual Student Social: 90s Retro Edition, and an in-person AUSU Birthday Bash with Student Council at Hudsons on Bourbon St. in West Edmonton Mall!

[RSVP to the AUSU Birthday Bash!](#)

Date: July 16th, 2022

Time: 7:00 p.m. MST

Venue: Hudsons

Bourbon Street—WEM

Contact: ausu@ausu.org



Did AU Know?



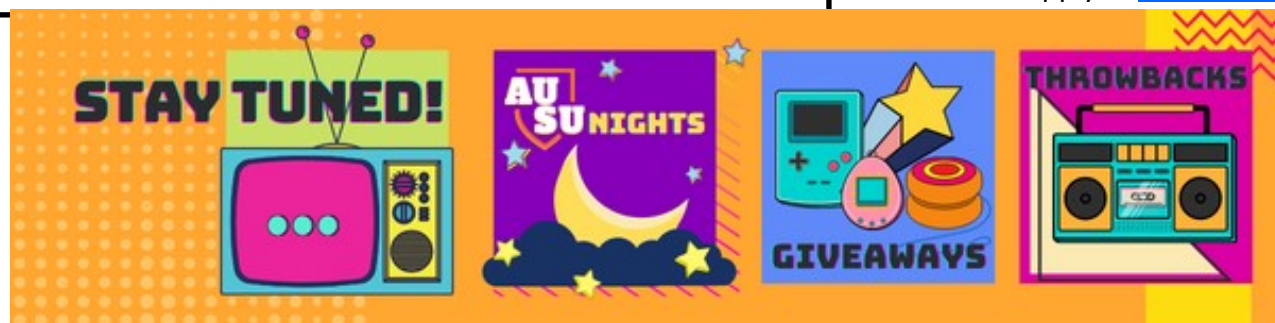
**Athabasca
University**

**Compassionate
Grading Policy
Extended**

AU recently announced they are extending their temporary compassionate grading policy until at least Dec. 31, 2022.

The policy, introduced last Aug, supports students whose studies have been disrupted by the pandemic by allowing them to select one course to go unweighted and not included in their GPA, recorded instead as a pass.

Find more on the flexible grading option and how to apply at athabasca.ca.



Provided by

ausu@ausu.org

**AU
SU** Athabasca University
Students' Union

Please send us your valuable opinions, feedback, and suggestions. We are committed providing quality content and look forward to hearing from you!

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

THE VOICE

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Jason Sullivan, Wanda Waterman, Xin Xu and others!

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