

# the journal

Saint Mary's University's Independent Student Newspaper

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## Gender-Neutral Washrooms Another Major Step Towards Equity

**NAZIA SAZNEEN**

*News Editor*

Starting this Fall, Saint Mary's University has implemented "Gender-Neutral Washrooms" or "Washrooms For Everyone" — a much appreciated initiative designed for individuals that identify with any gender. Originally proposed by Collette Robert, former VP Equity & Wellness, this initiative was finally put in effect this year in collaboration with Lawson Morassutti, current VP Equity & Wellness and Caden Hebb, a student at large. When asked about

the goal behind such a big step, Lawson said, "asking our trans-students to use binary washroom systems place them in a position of vulnerability and exposes them to certain risks. The goal of the gender-neutral washrooms was to provide a space on campus that our students can feel safe [in]. We knew that it was time to make a change."

Although the trio had prepared themselves for any possible backlash concerning these changes, since the implementation of these washrooms, the responses from the students and staff have been astoundingly

positive. Reportedly, people are immensely supportive over this step and have also been very welcoming towards sharing this common space with everyone regardless of their gender identity. This shake-up has not only been applauded by the Saint Mary's University community but other universities' members across Nova Scotia have contacted Lawson to discuss this successful initiative. In light of this beautiful transition and hard work of these people, it seems that SMUSA is more than ready and proud to lead the way to equality.

## SMUSA AGM Serves Up a Full Plate

**ZAHRA DHUBOW**

*Editor-in-Chief*

On October 19th, SMUSA hosted their annual AGM and showcased to students what the Student Association has been up to over the past couple of months. A good portion of students showed up for the event, most likely in anticipation of the year ahead and of course for the much-promised pizza. Right after a brief introduction the MC of the night, VP of Student Advocacy Lexa Ali, went straight into what was outlined for the evening, followed by opening remarks by SMUSA President, Ossama Nasrallah, who outlined SMUSA's priorities for the coming school year. Ossama went on to highlight how SMUSA's major priority for the school year would be mental health. In line with priorities from the previous executive team, SMUSA has already hosted two mental health first aid workshops open to all students. Though, these workshops have had limited seats, the mental health first aid workshop has equipped students with a variety of skill sets to be able to adequately handle a mental health crisis. In addition to the mental health workshops, SMUSA has also had a relatively successful Wellness Week, which took off on Oct 16th and reiterated the attention being shed on mental health on our campus through various activities outlined for students.

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## Letter from the Editor



**ZAHRA DHUBOW**

*Editor-in-Chief*

Hello there! How are you? Wonderful? Stressed? Cold? Well, let me take a moment of your time to introduce myself. My name is Zahra Dhubow, I have an affinity for good conversations, cozy clothing, strong coffee and any good excuse to watch The Office. Also, I just happen to be this year's Editor in Chief for The Journal. I'm currently finishing up my final year at Saint Mary's University and I just have to emphasize what an extraordinary school Saint Mary's really is. Speaking honestly, I've developed and grown significantly on this campus, made life-long friends on this campus, and learned many valuable lessons at Saint Mary's. More importantly, I was blessed with being able to discover so many incredibly opportunities on campus that have not only furthered me in my skill set, but have also prompted me to discover a plethora of even more wonderful opportunities. And where do I even start in stressing about how much I've learnt in regard to discipline, time management and everything under-the-sun on how to be a successful student?

All this awesomeness that I've been lucky to have a dosage of, has really influenced my perspective on what it means to be a student on campus. Throughout the little time that I have been on campus, I've gathered the importance of being an active and participating student. When I say, 'active and participating student' I mean to highlight the importance of being an involved member on campus and really trying to take steps in reaching out and seeing what opportunities are available in our small community.

So, with regards to this year the team and I are taking a direction of positivity which aims to pull away from strictly adhering to reporting newsworthy material. We want to get creative and really embark on developing content that engages students on campus without being too dry. We want to be able to gauge feelings on campus and allow The Journal to be a platform for any feelings you'd like to share. Ya feel me? Now, if you are still reading this lengthy introduction be informed that this is the part of my spiel where I give you info on how you can contribute. Essentially, we are looking for people who want to talk about anything they feel that may pertain to our campus. Whether what you're hoping to contribute produces a rant, or just makes you want to go on and on about how an event sparked something of interest in you, it doesn't matter. It could be two sentences or two pages long, we'll collaborate to make it well suited to fit our student paper! All you have to do is email me your thoughts at: [editor.thejournal@smu.ca](mailto:editor.thejournal@smu.ca) and we'll go from there! Well, I'm really glad to be embarking on this and I anticipate a pretty exciting year ahead.

## SMUSA AGM...

Continued from Page 1

In addition to prioritizing mental health, the team also outlined a variety of other goals for the school year. These include; having gender neutral bathrooms, and supporting our indigenous students on campus. A particularly interesting set of goals include; prioritizing international students in setting them up with MSI as soon as they start their studies, having a reserved book at the library for every course taught on campus, and etc. There was also talk of having a transitioning course set up for high school students starting at university the following year. Ossama even flew out to California to gain some insight on the implementation of the potential transition course at Saint Mary's. There was also talk of a proposal that this course could hypothetically replace the mandatory English 1205 course. How that would be digested by students on campus hasn't really been gathered yet, but it would be an interesting discussion to start on campus.

There has also been talk of pushing for a longer winter break/reading week. Students at Saint Mary's University have the shortest winter reading week in comparison to other universities in Halifax (i.e. Mount Saint Vincent and Dalhousie University, which were granted an entire week off). SMUSA promises to bring up this issue to the senate and hopefully find a way to grant students an adequate amount of time off during the fall semester.

Now, for the exciting stuff planned by SMUSA this year, mention of a patio at the Gorsebrook has students buzzing. This large endeavour will definitely be costly, but it could potentially be financially beneficial for the Gorsebrook as well. Past years there have been issues with keeping the Gorsebrook afloat, but having an outdoor patio may be just the ingredient for an exciting and financially positive summer.

Despite talk of all these great initiatives, there was one large issue that wasn't on the forefront of discussions at the AGM.

Tuition fees. Such a major concern shared by all students and yet there was a lack of discussion surrounding what SMUSA is actively doing to counter tuition increases. Tuition for international as well as domestic students have incrementally rose over the past couple of years, resulting in unbearably high fees. There was brief mention of this hot topic, by the executive team and even more so by our VP of Equity and Wellness – Lawson Morassutti. Due to Lawson's involvement on representing students on the StudentNS committee, he was there to address work implemented by StudentNS and what work they've been doing alongside the provincial government to try to counter increases in tuition fees. Going forward students are certainly concerned with tuition fees and it should definitely be at the forefront of objectives set out by SMUSA.

It seems like SMUSA has a full plate of projects set out for the rest of the school year and we at The Journal are looking forward to covering these exciting initiatives.

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**The Coast**  
HALIFAX'S WEEKLY

**BEST OF HALIFAX**

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**13 YEARS IN A ROW!**

Good reviews from: RUNNER UP

The Coast (from 2009 to May 21, 2012)  
Daily News  
Halifax Metro (June 14, 2011)  
Chronicle Herald:  
"Good food, cheap and lots of it!"



## Questioning the 'Fair' in Fair-Trade



**ISAAC BERRY**

*Contributor*

SMU is currently in the process of becoming a bronze level Fair-Trade campus. I found out that this is something the IDS society had become involved with and discovered that the process had already been initiated by Aramark. But what is Fair-Trade? And why is there an initiative to become a Fair Trade campus?

Fair-Trade is a campaign to create a market for ethical goods. The idea is that if consumers choose goods that are ethically, environmentally friendly and sustainably produced, that the market will have no choice but to comply with the demand; thus solving the problem of exploitation. The assumption is that when purchasing Fair-Trade goods, the farmers are getting a fair income. This is the selling point of Fair-Trade and why people pay more for Fair-Trade products.

However, the results of Fair-Trade are mixed and unpredictable. Although there are success stories from select groups, many farmers still live in poverty and some are worse off under Fair-Trade standards, such as the case in Ethiopia and Uganda, as Dr. Gavin Fridell recently said in a talk directed at International Development Studies students. Farmers under Fair-Trade standards have environmental and labour standards that they need to comply with. Any extra money that they may get from being Fair-Trade is spent by the farmer on meeting the standards imposed on them.

It makes sense that universities take initiative to become Fair-Trade campuses, as they are places that seek to educate and make a difference in the world. So, they do this because it is their "moral responsibility" as a university to make this change. In order to become a Fair-Trade campus, it requires meeting a particular standard in which you then receive a

certificate. There are bronze, silver and gold level certificates, each requiring certain amounts of products on campus to be certified Fair-Trade.

The standard is a western invention, just like Fair-Trade itself. With the standards created to appeal to the particular ideal of what is "Fair" for the consumer. These regulations are put in place by corporations or by the independent Fairtrade International. Corporations seek to better their image for consumers, rather than the lives of anyone working under them. With the bottom line of maximizing shareholder wealth, there is an incentive to do the minimum required to keep consumers happy. Even under FLO (Fair-Trade Labelling Organization) standards, it is a market solution to a moral problem. Meaning that people will have to pay more and more to provide better circumstances for the farmers. Leaving Fair and ethical goods something only for the wealthy to enjoy.

To put it on the consumer's shoulders to provide the market for ethical goods seems off the mark. Some people can't afford these kinds of goods, so does that mean it is their fault for providing a market for unethical and cheaply made goods? Should we knock on the doors of the poor and criticize their consumer choices? Are corporations not to blame because they are simply fulfilling their duty to supply the demand?

Fair-Trade has become a title, and a reputable one at that. And although there are many issues within the world of Fair-Trade, the assumption that it always makes a good difference remains the common belief. It is of course, the entire selling point of Fair-Trade.

The reality however, as we can see, is messy and difficult. But this is the real world. And in terms of SMU becoming a Fair-Trade campus, other than SMU and Aramark receiving a title that benefits themselves, there will likely be limited benefits for farmers producing the goods. Which was the whole point of Fair-Trade in the first place.

the  
**journal**  
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## Province Welcomes Highest Number of Immigrants in Decades

NAZIA SAZNEEN

News Editor

Nova Scotia's Immigration Department has totaled up the count of newcomers from last year through this October and is reportedly now welcoming the highest numbers of immigrants in decades. Preliminary figures from the report indicate that the number of immigrants to enter the province has risen up to 4835 including about 1500 refugees, resulting from the vast inclusion of Syrians along with provincially nominated families and entrepreneurs.

This surge can act as a boost in the province's economy as it can spark improvements towards the blue-collar industry — as being foreseen by the corporate sectors. Besides increasing businesses, this diverse population growth will not only balance the province's

declining birth rate and emigration, but will also help spread greater racial and ethnic diversity throughout the province.

Initiatives and organizations like ISANS - Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia, and the Atlantic Immigration Pilot are welcoming various roles to attract immigrants to this province, providing them with all kinds of resources and jobs to help them establish their own successful lives in Nova Scotia. Furthermore, accredited post-secondary institutions like Saint Mary's University and Dalhousie University are recurrently organizing symposiums and immigration roundtable discussions to raise awareness among students to embrace newcomers and have also introduced several measures like expanded medical and dental care insurances, language programs, diversity orientated interactive programs and on-campus work opportunities.



## Man accused in Amanda Lindhout kidnapping found guilty

JENNIFER AFTANAS

*The Xaverian Weekly*

(CUP) – Antigonish In March of 2017, Amanda Lindhout visited StFX to give a speech as part of a lecture series for International Women's Week. Lindhout became well-known around the world after she was captured for 460 days while freelance journaling in Somalia. I interviewed Lindhout while she was visiting StFX and spoke to her about her kidnapping experience and the degree she received at the Coady Institute.

Her harrowing story has resurfaced because, almost 10 years since her kidnapping, RCMP agents were finally able to track down Ali Omar Ader, the man behind Lindhout's capture. The trial lasted 10 days and ended on December 6, 2017, where Ader was found guilty in one charge of hostage-taking for his role as a negotiator.

The kidnapping occurred in August of 2008 as Lindhout and her friend Nigel Brennan were pursuing a story. The two were held for a brutal 15 months and they were released upon payment of ransom. The multi-year police investigation established contact with Ader by developing a relationship with him by posing as a publisher and promising to help him publish his book about Somalia. The undercover mountie met with Ader in 2014 on the island of Mauritius where Ader confessed to taking Lindhout hostage for \$10,000 in ransom money. They met the next time at a fake book contract signing that came up in Ottawa where Ader admitted to the kidnapping again on Canadian soil. It was the following day that he was arrested.

In a 24-page ruling, Ontario Superior Court Justice Robert Smith found Ader's defence, that claimed he was forced to be

the main negotiator during the hostage taking, as "completely unbelievable" thereby rejecting many of the arguments made by Ader's lawyers, Trevor Brown and Samir Adam.

The Crown prosecutor's case was built on the series of recorded conversations Ader had with the undercover RCMP officer. In the correspondences, Ader admitted to volunteering to act as the main negotiator. In the court room Ader claimed he lied about admitting to being the negotiator just so that he could get a book deal. The judge waived these claims as nonsense and inconsistent to what he claimed in the recordings.

Lindhout testified that Ader was part of the group and stated "basically they saw me as a piece of property that they owned". Smith commemorated Lindhout for her courage during the "deplorable conditions and subjections to abuse". The judge also praised Lindhout's mother, Lorinda Stewart, who acted as the main negotiator during her daughter's capture.

Stewart was able to keep a level head during the negotiations and Smith added "she treated the accused so well during the negotiations that he began to believe she was his friend and referred to her as 'Mum Lorinda', she played an important role in keeping Amanda alive".

Prosecutor Croft Michaelson said the outcome sent a message around that world that "if you take a Canadian citizen, you are not safe". Ader, 40, has been charged under Sec. 279.1(2) of the Criminal Code, which focuses on hostage-taking. He faces the possibility of life in prison and will be sentenced next year.



# Anti-Semitic Group Claims Responsibility for White Supremacist Posters Found on UNB Campus

EMMA MACDONALD

*The Brunswickan*

(CUP) New Brunswick - The National Socialist Canadian Labour Revival Party (NSCLRP) has claimed responsibility for the white supremacist posters found at UNB on Tuesday.

In an email sent to the *Brunswickan* on Thursday evening, the author of the email, who claims to be the leader of the NSCLRP, but failed to provide their name, initiated contact with *The Brunswickan* to protest “misinformation” spread by *The Brunswickan* outlet in coverage of the event. The email denied that the posters’

“reference of ‘foreign invaders’ was a ‘veiled reference for Muslim immigrants and refugees,” as UNB professor Matthew Sears said in *The Brunswickan*’s initial report. “I find it incredibly disingenuous that it would be suggested through your publication [*The Brunswickan*] that we implied ‘islamophobia’ or referred to the Arab races as ‘The Enemy of Canada’ this is untrue,” says the email. “But given the fires of insanity stocked by the Left Wing media regarding such opinions it is only natural that you should attempt to use this to continue the atomization of Aryan races through the dissemination of your destructive propaganda.”

While the email claims that the intention of the posters was not Islamophobic, there are strong anti-Semitic undertones in the email, as indicated by the term “Aryan races,” and the claims that “Jew controlled media, entertainment, and financial industries which profit through the manipulation of our Volk”

are the ‘Enemies of this Nation.’” “Aryan” as a nationalist term gained prominence in the 20th century for its association with the Nazis, who interpreted it as meaning “white race.” White supremacist groups over the past several decades have used the term to identify their racist ideology. “Volk” is a German word for people and was used in Nazi propaganda to refer to the Germanic race.

**“The anti-Semitic theme is constant throughout the site, with blog posts, images of the Nazi symbol and a reading list that includes Adolf Hitler’s Mein Kampf and an entire section devoted to ‘The Parasitic Jews’.”**

The *Brunswickan* traced the email address to a Facebook page—sporting 44 “likes”—called “Nationalist Socialist News Canada,” which in turn provided a web address to the National Socialist Canadian Labour Revival Party’s blog, published on Google’s Blogger. The blog’s first post dates to Aug. 24, 2017 and the website itself has received 1185 views in total, according

to a counter at the bottom of the page. The Facebook page started posting on Aug. 24 as well. Both the blog and the Facebook page contained racist, discriminatory and anti-Semitic content. The content of both platforms does not appear to match the content found on the posters.

The blog contained posts under labels such as “The Aboriginal Question” and “The Jewish Issue.” The anti-Semitic theme is constant throughout the site, with blog posts, images of the Nazi symbol and a reading list that includes Adolf Hitler’s *Mein Kampf* and an entire section devoted to “The Parasitic Jews.”

One of their blog posts laments the end of South Africa’s racist apartheid, with the message that South Africa was in better condition when controlled by Europeans. On the NSCLRP Facebook page, they discriminate against women’s worker rights and state their proper place is at home taking care of the family. The blog provides access

to the group’s manifesto, which advocates for the dismantling of the RCMP, provincial and local police in favour of military reserves and the closing of Canada’s borders to refugees and immigrants indefinitely.

The manifesto also seeks to stop any anti-Canadian rhetoric that might be being spread by politicians or the media, by prohibiting any newspaper that criticize the government and banning any arts or books that support foreign ideas. The anti-freedom of the press discourse found in the manifesto contradicts the email received by the *Brunswickan*, which states, “I believe in journalistic integrity and I believe in the duty of the press to report.”

The email went on to say that it was a mistake of their New Brunswick chapter not to include their name on the posters,

and that two additional posters would be emerging “which address the poor journalism which has made a mockery of our intended message.”

The *Brunswickan* can find no evidence for the existence of a New Brunswick chapter of the NSCLRP. Nothing links the NSCLRP to the posters besides this email and a post on the blog.

A blog post dated to Jan. 18 claims that “The NSCLRP has been engaging in poster and flyer campaigns across the country in Vancouver, Hamilton, Toronto, Quebec, Manitoba and in New Brunswick. Our Campaign in New Brunswick was a spur of the moment decision after a member witnessed extreme Anti-European propaganda across their University Campus”.

## FOR THE HONOR OF OUR ANCESTORS



REJECT THE ANTI-WHITE NARRATIVE BEING PUSHED IN  
MEDIA AND ACADEMIA!  
STOP THE SLANDER OF THE FOUNDING EUROPEANS OF  
CANADA!

We are made to believe that Residential schools were nothing but death and torture camps. This is based on selective testimonial accounts, to the exclusion of any testimonials which might disprove this narrative:

*“You may have heard stories from 7,000 witnesses in the process that were negative,” he adds. “But what you haven’t heard are the 7,000 reports that were positive stories. There are many very successful people today that went to those schools and have brilliant careers and are very functional people, very happy people like myself. I have a thriving international career, and it wouldn’t have happened without that school.”*

*—Tomson Highway, “Tomson Highway Has A Surprisingly Positive Take On Residential Schools”, Huffpost 2015*

While isolated cases of abuse did unfortunately occur, to say that they were endemic to the schools is historically disingenuous. Deaths which occurred in the schools were due to tuberculosis, which also

Overwhelmingly, Native Americans are beneficiaries, and not victims, of the society built by Europeans.

IN A DIVIDE AND CONQUER TACTIC, THE ENEMY OF CANADA IS NOW FOMENTING CONTENTIONS BETWEEN EUROPEANS AND NATIVE AMERICANS THROUGH THE DISSEMINATION OF HISTORICAL LIES. HISTORICALLY THE FRENCH HAVE ALLIED WITH THE NATIVES TO SECURE OUR MUTUAL INTERESTS AND DOMINION OVER THE LAND, WHICH IS NOW ONCE AGAIN UNDER THREAT FROM FOREIGN INVASION. EUROPEANS AND NATIVES MUST NOW JOIN FORCES AND FIGHT TOGETHER WITH EUROPEANS AGAINST THE THREAT POSED BY THE FOREIGN INVASION OF OUR LANDS!

Photo credit to Matthew Sears





## Prescribing a Cup of Coffee

**ZAHRA DHUBOW**

*Editor-in-Chief*

So, you know how Mom and Dad suggested that you should stay away from caffeine? And then you know how you followed suit by actually purchasing a coffee the moment you got a chance? Well, if you're still burdening any of those doubts implanted by your parents (or various other unnecessary health 'facts'), let me take a moment of your time to outline to you all the benefits associated with coffee. And when you go back home to visit Mom and Dad during the holiday break you can always present these following arguments that I'll outline. You go prove to Mom and Dad that their investment in your education was so worth it!

Studies have shown that coffee beans are derived from an actual tree called *Coffea* (not even kidding) and that specific fact my friends is the foundation for my first point, which is that coffee is derived from a green leafy thing, therefore making it a vegetable! Duh... you see where I'm going with this right?? Having a cup of coffee, a day is like having your portioned servings of vegetables. How about that for a valid argument?

Secondly, for my procrastinators out there and night owls... how else do we get PILES OF NONSENSICAL

(before you say chill... not yelling just emphasizing) PAPERS DONE? Coffee is to procrastinators what Bonnie was to Clyde, partners in doing the impossible. And more specifically in this case, being able to get that paper done you had due tomorrow, that you had notice for well before a month ago. Anyways, yes to procrastination and the simultaneous coffee-and-paper-is-due-tomorrow adrenalin rush.

Before I delve into my final point can we just take a moment and ask ourselves why café hopping isn't a thing?! Like seriously though, someone needs to plan out a day where we just drown ourselves in coffee and take a legit day off to recover. It needs to be a thing at SMU. Can you think of the nation-wide trend we would start? Or no wait... it is already a trend... abort mission folks. It's the thought that counts right?

Lastly, have you ever thought about what exploring different coffee beans might mean for our own development? What is one way you can make an effort to educate yourself on world affairs? That's right... a cup of coffee. And not just any regular coffee, but coffee that was derived from a coffee bean sprout plucked in Ethiopia. How about that for experiential learning? Give me a second, whilst I go and add 'well-rounded' as a skill on my resume. Coffee can take you places folks.

I rest my case... with a cup of delicious coffee of course.

## Women's Centre Outlines Concerns

**GEORGIA BARNWELL,**

*Coordinator, Women's Centres Connect*

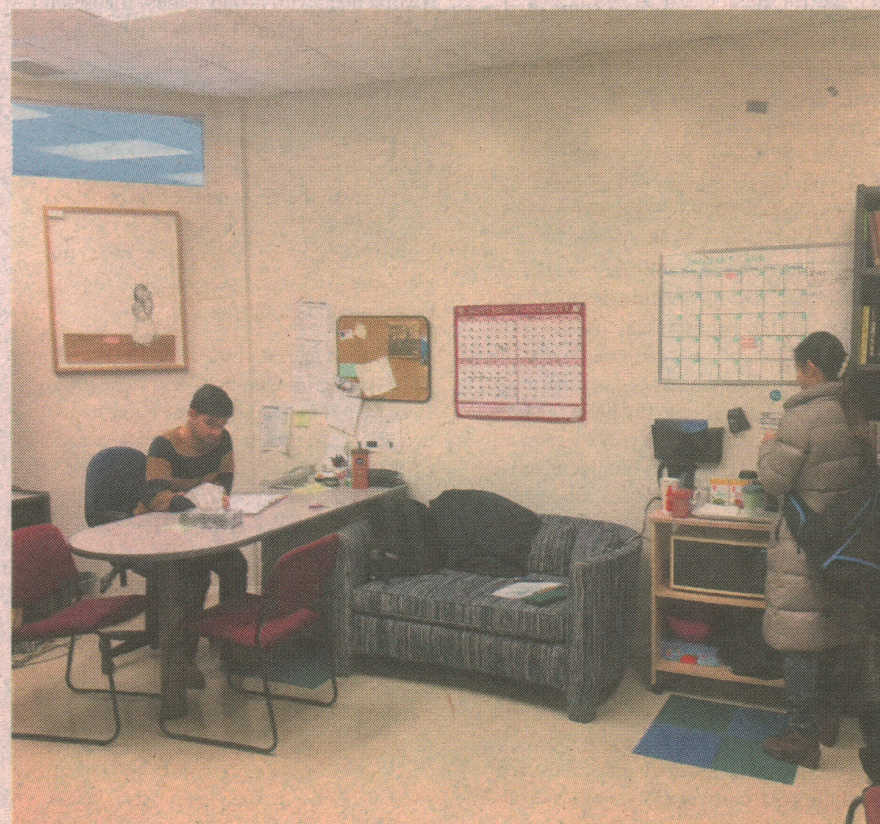
Transformation of Nova Scotia's social assistance system has been underway for over two years, but people living in poverty and their advocates say to date there has not been significant, meaningful change. A community coalition is calling for an immediate increase in benefits and program reform that ensures people are treated with respect and dignity.

Many of the women we work with live in poverty, and are struggling to support families without adequate income. They must choose between spending money on rent, utilities, heat or food. In this season, charities are busy, trying to help those living in poverty. That being said, charities will not fix a broken

system.

Poverty is maintained by policies that fail to adequately address it. We need a system that meets the human rights and practical needs of those living in poverty. Although the government announced on Dec 17, 2017, that they will fund community agencies to address poverty, by putting more money directly into the hands of people who need it, they most likely will fail to substantially reduce poverty and the hardship it creates in people's lives.

We support the community agenda for reform, released on Dec. 14, and the need to increase Income Assistance benefits now. We look forward to working in collaboration with policy makers, service providers and those living in poverty to develop a system that is truly transformative.





## Traveling to Uganda as a Queen Elizabeth Scholar



### NIKOLAS SHYMKO

#### Contributor

I will share all of my experience as a Queen Elizabeth Scholar and some of the realizations I came to while in Uganda and how this experience disrupted my future self.

As expected, in Uganda, I experienced a newfound appreciation for many of the things us Canadians take for granted on a daily basis such as running tap water, access to electricity, adequate national healthcare, a transparent legal system, and the list could go on. This is not to say that Uganda does not have these resources but that there is an issue of unequal access and distribution across the country.

Instead of focusing on the social and economic challenges currently facing Uganda, I wish to tell you about the inspiring people I met during the course of my internship and the knowledge we exchanged. Living on campus at Uganda Martyr's University and working with saving and lending groups in rural villages, I was surrounded by an array of people. Some of these people were mothers, fathers, students, aspiring entrepreneurs, business owners, and community leaders.

Most importantly these people are change makers. They are people focused on improving their lives and the well-being of their families, communities, and respective countries.

I had the chance to befriend students at Uganda Martyr's, hailing from Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, and Kenya. These students, rather friends, are committed to creating a university environment that uplifts each student inspiring them to become leaders in their respective countries or origin.

I worked directly with the leaders of 40 saving and lending groups. Together, we developed a report highlighting the most prominent issues they faced. With the guidance of my supervisor, Francis, I developed and facilitated training workshops with group leaders focused on mitigating late loan repayments, preventing price exploitation of their produce, and taught group member's effective techniques setting and achieving goals. It was incredible that together, we used their practical experience coupled with my academic background to create something that could facilitate positive change.

Since leaving Uganda, I remain in regular communication with Francis and was delighted when he informed me that groups began implementing strategies from the workshop.

In Uganda, I came to an important realization. The exchange of knowledge, perspective, and experience facilitated by opportunities (or programs) like this, have the potential to create real positive change. Allowing future global leaders, the chance to learn from each other and use that shared knowledge to create appropriate change is amazing. I am proud to be a QES scholar and intend to continue working on an international scale throughout my life.

## Piecing together The Journal

### ZAHRA DHUBOW

#### Editor-in-Chief

I know what's on your mind. You're probably asking yourself, why has it taken The Journal nearly half a semester to put forth a publication? Well my dear friend, to be honest it's a long story that includes a lot of moving pieces. As the Editor-in-Chief, The Journal has been an especially challenging learning curve. It's been quite a challenge having to publish articles, without having all the moving pieces set in place.

Normally, a team is set in place before the start of the new school year, but for some reason this past summer there were no hires for all the vacant Journal staff positions (which include every position on The Journal), despite the fact that there was evident interest to fill these positions.

After last year's elections, it fell on The Journal Board and SMUSA to appoint and initiate interviews for the vacant positions within The Journal. And this year, it fell under the jurisdiction of Denis Amirault, the VP of Communications. Due to various other priorities, The Journal was cast aside and it wasn't until October of 2017, that there was any indication of hiring for The Journal.

It seems as though SMUSA and the Journal Board did not prioritize in making sure The Journal be adequately prepared before the start of the new school year. That being said, the VP of Communications, who also happens to simultaneously take on the position of Chair on The Journal Board had these words to say, "we were faced with a situation where we realized during the spring that none of our operations staff were returning in the fall, and there was very limited interest in the Journal at the time. Fortunately, we're now in a position where we've garnered enough interest from our operations team, contributors and even prospective readers to produce a series of quality papers throughout the semester."

Being a levied society, I think it is incredibly crucial that The Journal Board and SMUSA prioritize the upkeep of The Journal on a year to year basis. Without fully supporting

an on-campus student publication, how will students be able to vocalize their thoughts on activities taking place on campus? Without a media outlet, where do students channel their concerns?

Honestly, there is no concrete basis to put blame on any one individual or organization, it's just a matter of accountability on every member directly involved with the paper, including myself. This means that Board members, the Director/Chair, and Operational staff, all work hand in hand to holistically put together this puzzle. I am a firm believer in student media and its conservation, and I believe that we definitely have a stellar year ahead of us.

It is especially important that there be an emphasis on how The Journal is handled by SMUSA in the following school year and with elections coming up, I think it's ever more important that students hold any form of administration directly involved with The Journal accountable.

On that note, if you're interested in contributing and sharing your thoughts with students, via The Journal, email me at: [editor.thejournal@smu.ca](mailto:editor.thejournal@smu.ca)

Here's your chance to know all about



Saint Mary's University's most intercultural society.

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A SHORT HISTORY

We started out as an Erasmus project in 2013 to then become a ratified society. In 2015, we won the Most Improved Society of the Year award! Our success got us featured in Yahoo News, CBC, and local newspapers too!



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WHAT WE DO

Our mission is to build a bridge between International and Canadian students, to allow a sharing of cultures and ideas. We hold fun, low pressure events that allow students to make friends, learn new skills and gain volunteer experience.



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OUR JOURNEY THIS YEAR

This year we've had 5 events with an average attendance of around 100 since September. We were also part of the first ever SMU International Mental Health Week! We're launching a poster campaign highlighting International Student Issues. A lot more to come!



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HOW TO JOIN SPEAK UP?



It's completely FREE to join Speak Up! All students are welcome to our events and if you want to volunteer, just reach out to us. Follow us on Facebook for all our updates: [facebook.com/speakupsmu](https://www.facebook.com/speakupsmu)





SWEATER DRESS: FOREVER21 | FAUX FUR VEST: FOREVER 21 |  
LACEUP BOOTS: CALL IT SPRING

## 10 (Stylish) Winter Wardrobe Essentials

### EUNICE YIDANA

#### Contributor

Hello lovely SMUdents, I'm Eunice, a 4th year student pursuing a Bachelor of Arts degree in International Development Studies with a minor in French. I am the Founder of the Fashion & Lifestyle Blog (ChicBeauty In & Out). During my leisure time, you will either find me browsing to broaden my horizon or reading novels. Go ahead and check out my blog posts on [www.chicbeautyinandout.com](http://www.chicbeautyinandout.com) and oh, don't forget to subscribe and join the fab family and be the first to know when there's a new post!

I'm spilling all the beans on 10 winter wardrobe essentials. Let's continue, shall we?

1. Wool coat: Think of colors such as black, gray, camel or olive to help you look chic and definitely help you stay warm.
2. Turtleneck sweater: It is good to be worn as a layer. Pair it with knee high boots, leather pants and girl you are going to be cozy, plus look stylish during winter.
3. Beanie or ear muffs are key essentials for winter. You do not want your ears to get so cold, right? So, get yourself a beanie or ear muffs to protect you from the chill. Buy any color of your choice.
4. Socks, scarf are a must!
5. Handwarmers/gloves/mittens: Select a pair that gives you the comfort to text on your phone and also keeps you warm while waiting for the bus!
6. Lace up/knee-high boots: Look for colourblocking accents or black/brown to add a classy look to your outfit.
7. Faux fur vest is just an elegant way of staying warm.

8. Sweater dresses why not be cute, warm and classy. It's a win-win.

9. Snow or rain boots: A necessity that can become a fashionable accessory.

10. Puffer coat: Stay warm, cozy and cute.

P.S: Check out how I style a sweater dress, lace up boots plus a faux fur vest below!

I hope you are fully ready now to start your winter and you are inspired to also stay chic. If you have any questions, you can be sure to reach me out at [chicbeautyinandout@gmail.com](mailto:chicbeautyinandout@gmail.com). All the best in your exams and stay winning.

FB page: ChicBeauty In & Out

With Love,

Eunice





## Three Simple Tricks to Help Raise your GPA

**SARA LITTLE**  
*Alumna Contributor*

### 1. Get Off your Computer and Take Notes

Technology is fantastic and has become an excellent tool for education. Having your laptop handy is useful in case you have to research a quick fact, exchange information with your classmates, or use dictionary.com if your professor uses words like “ad-hoc” or “ubiquitous” (like, okay we get it, you know fancy words). Though if you truly want to retain information, you need to switch from a keyboard to a pen.

The countless studies that have been done surrounding the benefit of taking notes by hand is ubiquitous (did I use it right?). It undoubtedly helps you retain information more than taking notes on your laptop. I can speak from personal experience that the classes I did better in were the ones in which I took hand-written notes. Even though the notes were smudged and left my left-hand tattooed with black ink, I ultimately did better on exams and assignments.

### 2. The 8-Hour Rule

Chances are, if you were anything like me during my years at SMU, being in university challenges your time-management skills. It feels like you are constantly busy, always self-doubting yourself because you feel like you haven't studied enough, and feel guilty every time you binge watch netflix for a few hours instead of studying. These thoughts can leave you with a knot in your stomach that is, quite frankly, bad for your self-esteem and stress levels. A simple trick I didn't learn until I was in my senior year is the “8-Hour Rule”.

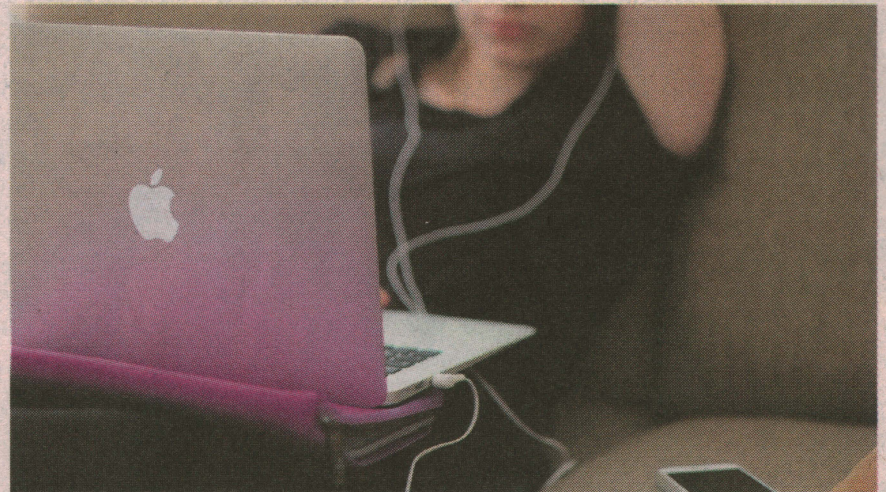
Think about when you graduate: you are

more than likely to get a job where you go to work for eight hours and get to come home, cook a meal, and not have to think about work until 9am the next day. Sounds nice right? Well, it is not all that impossible in university, too. The trick is to only do work eight hours a day, no more and no less. This includes class-time, studying, volunteer work, and other school-related activities. If you also have a job like I did during university, you can factor in those hours too if it works for you. The point of this is, once you have successfully completed eight hours of work, I can guarantee you will feel less guilt when you take a few hours to yourself.

### 3. Challenge your Professors for Higher Marks

Too many times in your academic career you are going to get an exam or an assignment back where you will look at it and go, “What? Why is that wrong!” or “Ugh, that's definitely a trick question!”. It is quite a painful experience, especially when you were confident in your answers and you invested \$20 in a coffee and a ceasar wrap at Just Us so you could study a little longer on campus. What is even more painful is when a professor gives you a low participation mark. Like, I was here wasn't I?

I can tell you from personal experience that asking your professor to reconsider the grade they gave you works four out of five times. While it seems terrifying because you are putting yourself in such a vulnerable position, if your argument is reasonable enough they are going to work in your favour. In case you forget, your professor wants you to succeed and if you put enough effort in to challenge them, they are going to respect you for it (yes I have done this, and yes it works). If you believe you deserve a mark, then ask for it.



## The Catch 22 for Students

**MOHAMAD EL-ATTAR**  
*Alumnus Contributor*

University can be a great learning experience where you develop a variety of skills that can shape you for the better, and most importantly can help you decipher what crucial skills are needed in the real world. Now, depending on the degree you pursue some graduating students can be more equipped with ‘real world skills’ than others. For instance, business, nursing and engineering students tend to have courses that are more than often practical in comparison with Philosophy, English or Religious studies, which all tend to have a more theoretical approach. But, we still constantly hear about the rift between the education acquired through university, regardless of the degree, and practical experience needed in the workplace. University will always teach you the theory behind concepts, methods and techniques, while the workplace teaches you to apply them. Some may argue this is due to an outdated educational system, others argue that a university's main rule is to provide you with text book knowledge not acquired in the workplace and offer co-operative education programs to provide students with an opportunity to apply that knowledge in the workplace. Regardless of which view point you

hold, we know what the market deems valuable: a university degree combined with relevant work experience. Employers are so adamant about having a list of qualifications outlined that don't necessarily pertain to students. So, how do students close that gap? And how can students continue to obtain a university degree and stay up-to-date on any recent trends in their respective areas of study?

The top three ways to stay updated are:

1. Recent News updates
2. Articles/journals
3. Podcasts

For example, if you are an accounting major planning on pursuing a CPA designation, it is important to check news updates on changes in accounting policies in the CPA Handbook (e.g. Review standards), Tax changes proposed by the government, and any mergers/acquisitions that took place recently. Podcasts discussing certain topics, recent news, and experts' opinions can provide further insight into the industry.

Applying the above example to your desired area of study can keep you updated with recent trends in the market, provide you with a better understanding of the market and even create some key discussion points you can bring up in an interview for a potential job.





## The Case for ENGL 1205

**MATT BRISBY**

*Vice President SMU English Society*

Recently, at the SMUSA general meeting, SMUSA President, Ossama Nasrallah talked about developing a new course for first year students, a course to help the transition between high school and university. Sounds like a great idea. But the problem for me came in his second statement “it might replace English 1205” to which members of the audience applauded, raised their arms in fist pumps and performed “hallelujah-esque” gestures. Ossama responded with his own fist pump, and my hopes sunk.

The purpose of my letter is not to put Ossama on blast at all, he’s a nice guy and a great SMUSA president, and I think he is well intentioned. But I find this whole incident incredibly problematic, not only does there already exist a high school to university transitional course, “Introduction to University Education” EDUC 1000, but The SMU English Society was not even invited to the general meeting where the future of our department was discussed. Ossama also suggested that a Linguistics course be substituted for ENGL1205, which I think people who already don’t

like 1205 will dislike even more. Trust me, Linguistics is generally pretty dry. Compare talking about grammar rules to talking about *The Watchmen* (as is taught in Mark Barr’s 1205 course).

The incident at the general meeting, is indicative of a larger problem here at SMU, the disdain among the student body of English 1205, and veiled desires of the administration to discontinue the course, or even downgrade the department.

As an English major, I find this all very disconcerting.

From the student’s perspective, the hate that gets leveled at ENGL 1205 is something I find incredibly unwarranted. I understand that people dislike English, but one of the goals of Saint Mary’s is and has always been to create well rounded students. As an English student, I still have to take some science and at least one math or logic course, subjects that are not my strength as much as English is not the strength of others. It honestly baffles me sometimes, how dismissive people are towards 1205, people just refuse to try and learn how to do it because they don’t think they can. During my 1205 class I had someone show up to the final exam (which

was an in-class essay on Charles Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol*) who told me they hadn’t read a page of the book, or even watched any of the literally dozens of film adaptations of the story. I had people come to me and try and get me to “explain this book (it was *War of the Worlds*) to me” and when I asked if they read it, they said, “well, no can you just tell me what it’s about?” How does me saying “Religion” or “Materialism” help you? Yet, it seems to me that people like this are the loudest opponents of 1205.

We all have to take courses we don’t like. It was hard, for me, to learn about geological rock formations, and logical equations, it’s not the way my brain is set up, it’s not the way I like to learn, and a lot of the time I wished that I didn’t have to take those courses. But you know what? I did them, I rose to the challenge and came out with a better appreciation for both of those things. I put in the extra effort I needed to, sought help where necessary, and passed with the grades I needed to. The Business faculty has a course in which the pass/fail rate is something like 50% (40/60 on the first midterm)) and yet for some reason, no one is trying to replace Finance 2 as a mandatory class for most business majors. English majors have to read Geoffrey Chaucer, you don’t see us trying to get that kicked out of the curriculum. You have to put in effort and be challenged in University. If you want everything to just come easy to you, I’ve got news, it’s not going to. And even if it did, if every single class on business or science or [insert your preferred subject here] came easy to you, one first year course that makes you work a little bit harder can’t be that much of a burden. You can do it. It may be difficult, but there’s the writing centre which is almost criminally underutilized and I guarantee any English prof would gladly help you understand the material if you go talk to them. They’re super nice people.

The English department has some of

the best and most inspiring profs in the country, published authors, who genuinely care about their students. I have friends

who have taken English degrees at Dal, for instance, and they are stuck in classes of 100-300 people, with a prof laying out theory from a power point for an hour everyday, profs who it’s impossible to get an appointment with. At SMU, we get real, one on one attention from our profs who engage with us in class every day. I have meaningful discussions

around gender, class, oppression, racism and human complexity every day with my profs. Professors who know me, and my fellow students by name simply from attending classes with them. That should not be dismissed. Removing 1205 from the curriculum will prevent many who would have been inspired to pursue English from ever doing it at all, and our department suffers as a result.

Every English major I know at SMU decided to declare their major because of 1205. Take that away, and many of us would not be where we are now.

Beyond that, it’s worth it. English 1205 teaches essay writing and literature appreciation, which are central disciplines of University education. Essay writing is a particularly important skill in university, you will, with a very high degree of probability, have to write an essay at some point. Learning how to do that competently is as important as making sure you understand how to fill out a multiple-choice exam. Being able to formulate a formal argument, and prove your position with evidence is an extremely useful skill.

I understand that my opinion goes against what seems like the majority of the student body. I understand it’s an unpopular class, and that people don’t like English the way I do. I’m not asking everyone to love it all of a sudden; but I am saying that

**“Every English major I know at SMU decided to declare their major because of 1205. Take that away, and many of us would not be where we are now.”**

Continued on Page 11



## Huskies Face AUS Ordeal

DAE AL

Contributor

Saint Mary's University experienced quite an ordeal on November 9th, after eligibility concerns arose regarding the Husky player Archelaus Jack. Atlantic University Sport (AUS) officials claimed that Jack was ineligible to play due to a suspected violation of a Canadian Football League (CFL) ruling. Apparently, if a university player is affiliated with the CFL, passed the August 15 deadline, they are conditioned to not play for a Canadian university for up to a year. Sources extracted by CBC claim that Jack was limited to not partaking in any university football tournaments until Oct 11, 2017. Contrary to this ruling, Jack apparently played with the SMU Huskies for a total of 5 times up until the Oct 11th deadline. The Huskies were set to play the Acadian Axemen on November 11, 2017, but AUS decided to step in and cancel the Loney Bowl which would automatically advance the Axemen.

Saint Mary's University lawyers moved in swiftly to challenge the AUS ruling and after 2 days of court hearings, it was decided that SMU would be able to play Acadia. A statement was released shortly after by Margaret Murphy, the University Vice President of External Affairs, in which she says, "Saint Mary's University is pleased with the prompt action of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia and the decision of Associate Chief Justice Deborah Smith. The decision reinstates the Loney Bowl, the final game in the AUS Conference that determines the conference champion". This decision by Judge Smith prompted a game to take place the following Tuesday in which the Axemen won, beating the Huskies 45-38. And because Jack was relieved of any restrictions on playing (which are temporary), he was pulled off the bench to play in the Loney Bowl. Even though it wasn't necessarily a victory for the Huskies on the playing field, it was certainly a win for the Huskies in the court room.

## The Case...

Continued from Page 10

this flippant attitude towards one of the core curricula of academia is misguided and frankly, out of place at a prestigious post secondary institution. English is a discipline that I would argue carries a much greater value than the Saint Mary's student body is willing to attribute to it. There is more to life than knowing enough math to get a job in an office to make money. I'm not saying we all have to be poets, or authors, or that we all should be able to quote Shakespeare verbatim, but I am saying that if you're going to go through 4 years of university, you should have read at least one or two novels or a play or two, maybe a couple poems. Creating students that are only good at one discipline has never been something our University has tried to do. Would you rather be only good at one thing, or good at one thing and

have a working knowledge of how others work? Why are we fighting the accrument of knowledge at an institution of higher learning?

One of the main complaints against 1205 is that often students don't really know what they're in for. Perhaps a solution could be to create more options for students, require a 1000 level English course, with various options to choose from, such as Drama, Poetry, Literature, perhaps Creative Writing or Film classes, so perhaps the subject matter will be a little more inside each student's comfort zone. But, this decision to cut out 1205 will cost the English department enrollment, it will cost many students TA jobs, it will be a disservice to our student body, and it will be a major blow to a small, but incredibly valuable part of the SMU community.

## Healthy Minds Team reflects on a busy year



TESSA O'DONNELL

Member, Healthy Minds Team

The Healthy Minds team has been busy so far this year bringing students a variety of first semester favorites. The team aims to continue spreading a message of mental health awareness, stigma reduction, and wellbeing on campus.

In both September and October, therapy dogs visited campus to help reduce stress. More amazing therapy pets will return next semester!

For the third consecutive year, the Healthy Minds team encouraged visible mental health awareness and support through the Green Ribbon Campaign. Team members distributed over five hundred green ribbons across campus, encouraging students to display them on backpacks or coats as a sign of solidarity, that mental illness is not an experience one must go through alone. In the following week, team members watched for students wearing their green ribbons, and passed out ballots for a prize giveaway.

Also aiming to spread awareness, the Lead the Pack campaign returned this year to feature the inspiring stories of more real SMU students who have displayed

incredible strength in the face of mental illness. Stay tuned and be sure to follow SMU Healthy Minds on Facebook and Instagram, as this social media campaign will continue throughout the academic year! Healthy Minds team members also visited Halifax West High School in November to give a presentation on mental health, wellbeing, and transitioning from high school to university life. This provided the team with an incredible opportunity to encourage and support the wellbeing of youth and future students as well as current SMU students.

Knowing well the value of supportive friendships, making new friends, and having fun, the Healthy Minds Team also offered a Speed Friending event again this year. Students had an opportunity to meet and chat with new people in a friendly, funny, and safe space within the Gorsebrook Lounge. Better When You're Laughing week also returned this year to spread a spirit of positivity across campus through a series of awesome events. To begin the week, the Healthy Minds team welcomed Jim Dalling, a local leadership coach, Gestalt Nova Scotia counsellor, and ex-performer for a fantastic talk on "Riding the Waves of Change", transitions, and the university experience. On November 9th, two more great events rounded out the week, with an improv workshop hosted by Adrienne Gagnon of Mission Critical Comedy, offered in partnership with SMU Peer Support's Art for the Soul initiative. Later that evening, Mission Critical Comedy graced the stage of the Gorsebrook for a hilarious improv comedy show.

Also in November, the Healthy Minds Team brought the Semicolon Project back to SMU, seeking to encourage mental health awareness with a focus on suicide prevention. East Coast Airbrush visited campus to offer airbrush tattoos with a theme of strength, healing, and solidarity.

The team looks forward to offering students more great events, and can't wait for an exciting second semester!



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WANT TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE  
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