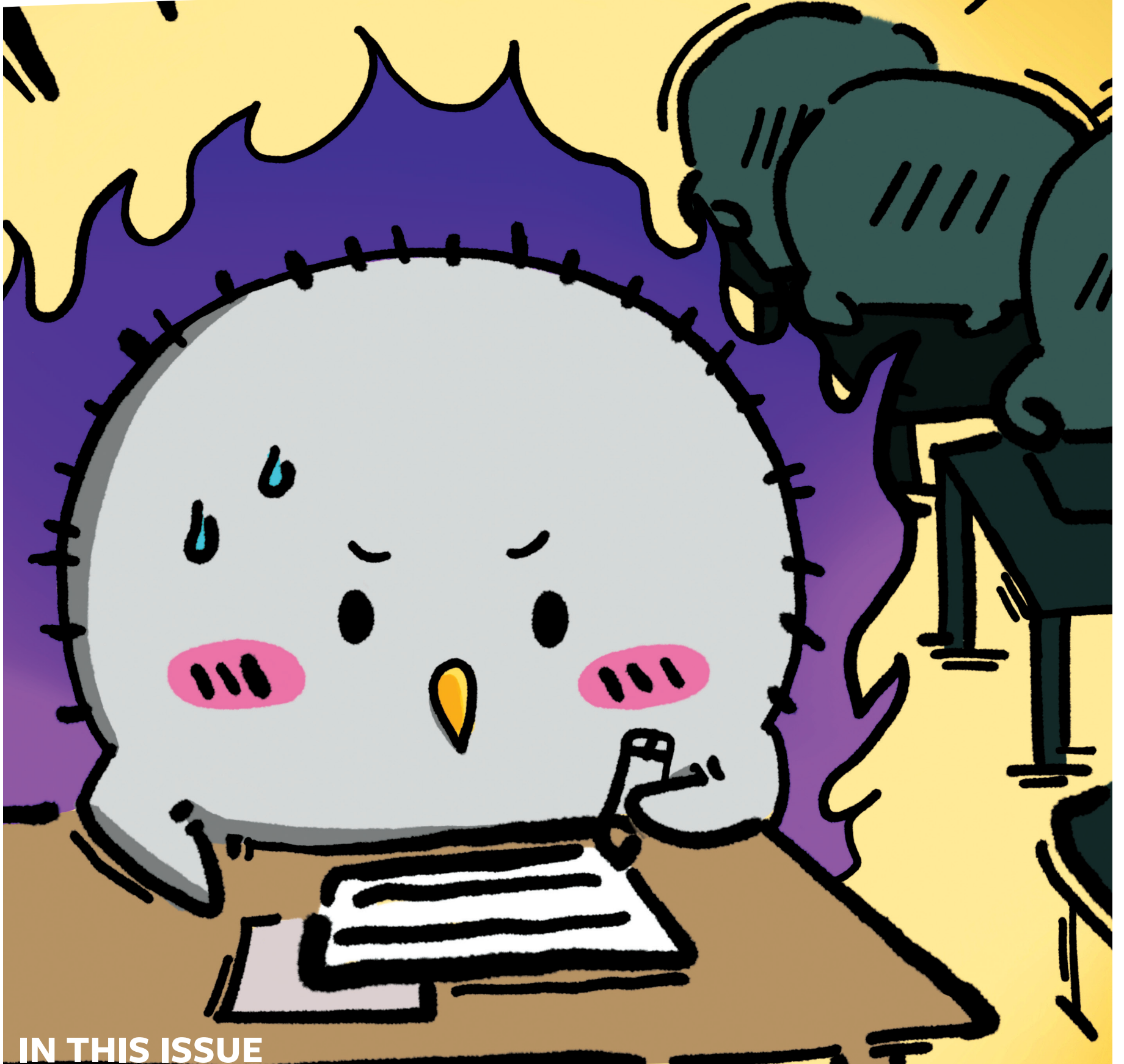


NAIT NUGGET

Wednesday, January 15, 2025
Volume 65, Issue 5

thenuggetonline.com
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Students to vote on keeping or ditching U-Pass starting Fall 2025

By Eugene Jacob

Students will head to the polls in February to vote on a new U-Pass contract, as the current contract is expiring in August 2025. Jenna Luczak, NAITSA's President, along with representatives from MacEwan, Norquest, Concordia and the University of Alberta, negotiated with the City of Edmonton over the summer to develop a new contract with students' best interests in mind. Now, because the U-Pass is a mandatory fee, students will have the final say in a referendum. The results of the vote will determine if NAIT continues to have access to the discounted group transit pass or not.

Luczak and others began negotiating in the summer of 2024. At first, the city wanted to increase the cost of the U-Pass by five dollars each year. "So, instead of paying the regular \$180 that we're paying now, they wanted to raise it to \$200 [by year four]," said Luczak. "We were able to negotiate them down to \$180 for the first year, \$182.50 for the second year and then \$185 for year three."

In past years, the U-Pass contract has been four years, but Luczak and the other schools wanted a shorter contract so that "we as students can monitor that the city is upholding their verbal promise to us," Luczak explained. "We know that there's issues with transit frequency, there's issues with security and safety. So we want to make sure that students aren't tied down for [a] longer period."

According to the Edmonton Police in May 2024, between 2022 and 2023, crime severity rates in LRT stations or transit centres have decreased by 11.3 per cent, but calls for service to these locations have increased by 18.8 per cent. Luczak also shared that during negotiations, the city did address changes being made to improve safety on transit. "There are a lot more cameras and a lot more security improvements being worked on in the background."

Students will vote in February during the NAITSA executive council election. To pass, two thirds of the students that vote must be in favour. According to Luczak, students have mixed feelings on the U-Pass. "Some people love it, and some people hate it and don't want to pay for it. But once we explain the



A student uses their NAIT OneCard to access transit via the U-Pass.

Photo by Skylar Boissonnault

concept of the universal transit pass is that everyone pays or no one pays, and if everyone pays, it subsidizes their peers, it makes it cheaper for those who actually need the transit, people are more likely to see the value in it."

Whatever a student may feel about the U-Pass, Luczak encouraged students to vote. "We understand that money is very precious these days and it's very hard to justify a \$180 cost that you may not use, but it does subsidize your peers ... but just stick to what you know, stick to what you value."

naitsa **NAIT NUGGET**

Informing and entertaining the NAIT community since 1964.

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The terminator of jobs: AI, robots and jobs of the future

Editorial by Sukhamjit

Playing tag with my insecurities, I stumbled across the section labeled upcoming. Being intrigued, I walked closer and tripped over an automatic vacuum cleaner and fell face first. I was falling down a technology hole, like Alice in Wonderland. I've never seen that movie, but my editors told me it was a relatable analogy. As I fell, I imagined AI at its full potential—robotics and employees of iron. I saw a sea of ideal workers who don't take lunch breaks or sick days.

Since then, I have had a funny feeling in my stomach.

When combined with robotics, AI can, and likely will, become a terminator. Not of lives, but of jobs.

I think the coming age of AI is quite apparent, especially since the introduction of ChatGPT somewhere in the pandemic chaos. AI has been flooding the market left, right and center. No supply chain problems here.

And it's moving fast. Disturbingly fast. Many fear robots will rule the world, which is a fear I'm not sure I share. Robots don't have emotions of superiority or inferiority, so why would they ever try to take over? My fears are less specific to fairy tales. It's not robots taking over that we have to fear, but the tangible economic impact AI will have.

There's a lot of uncertainty about the future of labour markets after AI's wrath takes its toll. The signs have already begun reflecting the inevitable; jobs are already reducing. The World Economic Forum's 2023 Future of Jobs report projected that in the next five years, 2% of jobs will be lost to automation. That's 14 million jobs. With numbers like that, I wouldn't be surprised if in 2026 a self-service checkout at a grocery store eats a cashier right in front of me.

The decision-makers are dodging AI questions, trusting the process of big tech while a lot of us sit in denial that we are replaceable, fueled by our own ignorance. In April 2024, I did a research report on an AI-related topic. I joked that comedians were safe from AI, but it feels like Google's Gemini heard my joke through the microphone of my iPhone and said, "challenge accepted." A 2024 study done by the University of South Carolina showed that "AI-generated jokes tickle funny bones more than those created by people," so it seems not even comedians are safe from automation.

I have often heard that the blue-collar sector is relatively safe, but I think Robo-forklift is not a far stretch from Robo-taxi. In any case, does the world have enough blue dye to paint the art, business, data and math rejects—those beyond the trades—such as myself?

Maybe I am too paranoid; I shouldn't spend so much time dwelling on possibilities so early. But the market is changing rapidly, almost like an overactive imagination. Instead of getting stuck in paranoia I want to assume a disruption is coming and promote debate and discussion about how AI can be accommodated so the shift is less of a collision of eras.

Unfortunately, policymakers are not having this debate nearly as much as they should, and it seems like they only care about AI when it affects elections. Poll watchers are predicting, as precise a hypothesis as an astrologer, that the 50th President of the US will be a man made of iron. Does that get their attention?

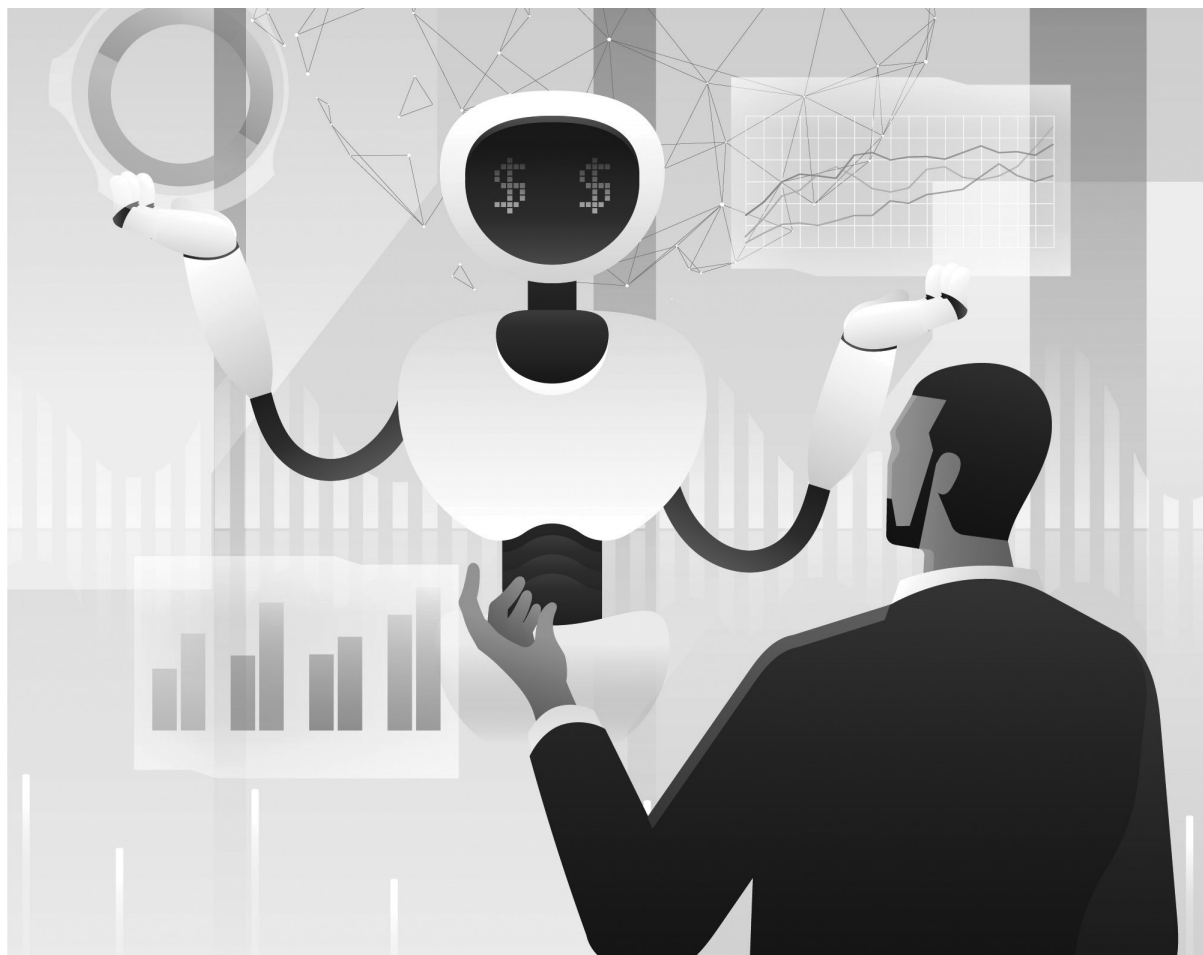


Photo via Freepik

Discussions on how to combat AI replacing the human workforce are not completely unheard of, though. Universal Basic Income is something that personally intrigues me as a solution to unemployment, but it comes with a whole set of new problems, like the loss of meaningful employment and the subsequent loss of identity some experts warn of. Sure, you could argue that employment is not identity nor meaningful—I have heard "work for passion, not for money" so much that it stinks of cliché.

But passion requires opportunity and appreciation. When AI sucks up opportunities and the world loses appreciation, passion can sell so cheap that it ceases to exist in the first place.

Despite my fears, automation is not completely uncalled for. In business, efficiency is always welcomed. Besides, the world can use a hand with toxic and hazardous jobs and I wouldn't mind less wait time for healthcare.

But I think many people, including myself, fail to comprehend the complete gravity of AI. Well, what are we to comprehend, a technology running wild? Neverending additions to an already content-rich genre of movies? Yes, self-service checkouts save time and the queue is shorter and moves faster, but when robots are picking up your groceries, will this saved time still be important?

There's no doubt that the coming age of automation will be efficient, but who says efficiency has to be human? With robots acting as humans and humans acting as robots to keep their jobs and feed their families, maybe automation is the humane solution.

My job has never been to scare you. As much as I enjoy freaking others out with impending technological doom, I wasn't hired for that. Besides, this ghost of the future scares me more. I merely want you to brace for impact and get out of denial, so we can talk more about this inevitable change.

So, tag, you're it.



NAITSA EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ELECTION 2025/2026

NOMINATIONS OPEN JANUARY 2 - JANUARY 27, 2025

The NAITSA Executive Council is comprised of 4 student representatives at NAIT:

- The President
- Vice President Academic
- Vice President External
- Vice President Internal

Interested in becoming a candidate?
Nominations close January 27 at 4pm.
Email Leeanne Mills at leeanne@nait.ca

VOTING OPEN FEBRUARY 7 - 13, 2025

Information booths open
Wednesday, February 12, 2025
4:00pm - 7:00pm

South Lobby, HP Centre, CAT 1st floor

Information booths open
Thursday, February 13, 2025
10:00am - 2:00pm

South Lobby Kiosk, Fresh Express, X-Wing,
HP Centre, CAT 1st floor, CAT 2nd floor,
Patricia Campus, South Campus



Voting closes
February 13 at 4pm.

Vote using your NAIT
student portal or at
naitsa.simplyvoting.com

NAITSA unveils new mural in student study space

By Amy St. Amand

Students looking for a relaxing but aesthetic study space can head to T109 to see NAITSA's newest mural. The former classroom was converted to a student study space last January. While students have been using the space, NAITSA President Jenna Luczak noticed the usage rate died off after 4 p.m. "We did see that there were a lot of students who used the space, but after 4, after actual school time, it wasn't really used," she explained.

Luczak believes that the décor of the room contributed to the lack of usership outside of school hours. "It was very cold, it just felt unloved," she said. "It's a beautiful mural to really attract students to the space and also make the space feel a bit less classroom-y."

Painted by Tyler Hochhalter, a Calgary-based artist, the mural features leaves and flowers painted in shades of green—a colour specifically designed to promote relaxation and productivity. "It is green, so it's not very distracting, it's very natural, it's calming. Those were the kind of vibes that we wanted." This was not Hochhalter's first mural at NAIT; he's previously painted the mural by the washrooms in the Nest and the Oaks Life Wings mural in CAT.

Luczak hopes having a more welcoming space encourages students to stay in the room longer and study harder. "It's a personal bias, but having spaces



Photo supplied

that are beautiful can make people more productive," she said. "Something that is visually enticing ... it can stimulate you to be in that space for longer and to study a bit harder. Because if you're in an uninviting space, then you're not going to want to be there, and then you might just pack up, go home and not study."

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Adults, not animals: Student behaviour needs to improve

By Sanjiyven Alfred Joseph

Money, power and respect. These aren't just words most rappers discuss in their songs. They apply to numerous incidents I've witnessed in NAIT classrooms. This explanation might sound harsh, but as a NAIT student, I find myself compelled to write about the behaviour of these "exemplary" achievers. And if you're missing the context clues, that was sarcasm.

Money is (somewhat) the motivation

I am certainly not a trust fund baby, nor do I have a secret inheritance waiting for me somewhere. As an international student, paying more than two thousand dollars a subject is a massive financial burden. That is why attending and focusing in classes is important to me. Yes, there are times when my thoughts drift, but these thoughts are rarely translated into words that I loudly utter in classrooms. Paying money is already tough, but paying attention seems to be tougher when people choose to blabber noisily in classrooms. Even worse, the warnings issued by the instructors seem to act as remote controls that raise the volumes of these oblivious students.

Talk is cheap, but classes are expensive. If you can't control the urge to spill the tea, leave the classroom and spill it somewhere else. Don't create a mess for the rest of us who want to achieve grades that are good enough to justify the exorbitant fees that we pay.

More power to you

Students have many types of power, including the way they complain about their instruction. They can write social media posts, post a review on the website Rate my Professors or complain to an official entity so an instructor will face consequences.

Instructors, however, don't have that same kind of power. If the tables were turned, and they were allowed to let loose, I guarantee students would witness the many forms of the Hulk in the classroom, online and wherever else the instructor chose to vent. Use your power for good, okay? Think about others before you decide to tell your seatmate all about your weekend at the same volume as your alarm clock.

Students also have the power to determine their conduct and approach to academic integrity. Sure, there are consequences for cheating or plagiarizing, but at the end of the day, each student makes the decision on if they want to follow the rules. I am astounded by the "magic" powers that some of these students suddenly have during exams. You will witness professionals in made-up sign language and photography, all in the name of cheating. I have seen students use hand gestures and tap rhythmically on tables to ask for answers. Some even take pictures of the question papers before the exams begin and presumably forward it to their friends. Just like us, instructors only have a pair of eyeballs each, and it is not easy monitoring 60 plus students, especially when some of them only show up during exams.

I know I can't control if you cheat. If you want to get grades you didn't earn, that's on you. You have to live with the risk of getting expelled or getting caught. Please, just do it in a way that's less distracting to the rest of us. And if



Photo via Canva

you do continue to cheat, consider this Malay proverb: "Sepandai-pandai tupai melompat, akhirnya jatuh ke tanah juga," which translates to: "As intelligently as a squirrel jumps, it will eventually fall to the ground."

Give respect, get respect

If all of that is not bad enough, imagine answering phone calls in classrooms, while the instructor is teaching. Imagine continuing the phone conversation while the instructor is staring at you in disbelief and telling you to put the phone down. And finally, imagine answering the phone, shushing the teacher with your finger and proceeding to talk, while nonchalantly leaving the class.

I wish I was imagining, because all these situations actually happened in classes I've taken. Ironically, one of the above incidents happened in my communications class. Seems like they still need to learn some communication skills. I feel so silly having to say this because we're adults. We should know this. But leave the classroom if you must answer a call, and when you return, come back in with some respect and common sense.

Sometimes I feel like those monkey emoji with their hands over their ears, eyes and mouth. I try to remind myself that it is not my circus, not my monkeys, but it is difficult to do so when these students are literally sitting next to me. Moving forward, can we all try to be more civilized and respect our peers and teachers? The door is always open for you to leave, but some of us do not have that luxury.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Inform your peers and earn money!

NAITSA is looking for students to work at the upcoming U-Pass referendum and Executive Council election information booths.

- ✓ Part-time, hourly employment
- ✓ Varied shift times between Feb. 10-13
- ✓ \$18 / hour pay

If interested, contact Leeanne Mills, NAITSA Administration Director, at leeannem@nait.ca, or visit the NAITSA office (O108) and speak to Leeanne in person.

Be a hero and slay your assignments with S.M.A.R.T. goals

By Sunny Lee

As a student, sometimes it feels like we're battling a Hydra—complete one assignment and two more appear. Like the protagonists of such mythological tales, we've secretly had a powerful weapon this whole time, which appears just in time to help us slay the almighty beast. You may have already heard of S.M.A.R.T. goals: a systematic method for breaking down fearsome assignments into smaller, more innocent creatures.

Keeping this mythological analogy going, it helps turn the cryptic and vague prophecies from the Oracle into clear and step-by-step objectives that will lead us to our destination. Prepare to learn this ancient skill as I train you to be S.M.A.R.T. and outline how I used this method to finish this very article.

Although it's not going to do the work for you or make you instantly productive, using this method will help break down intimidating projects into manageable chunks. It will require a bit of time before starting your assignments, but the more you do it, the easier and quicker it will become. Eventually, you can do it in your head in minutes. Let's descend into the depths of this acronym so you can defeat those beastly assignments.

Specific

Make your goals specific; the more specific, the better. Consider how vague our default goal setting tends to be: "I'll finish it by next week" or "I'm going to read the whole chapter by Tuesday." How you can make your goals more specific depends on the assignment you're working on, but also on your own personal style. Here's what I wrote for this article:

Write 800 words about S.M.A.R.T. goals. Start off with a catchy hook that is relatable to students, describe what it is and how to formulate goals with this method. For each acronym, explain how I planned for my article. Finally, write a closing statement reviewing what we learned.

Measurable

You need to be able to measure the progress or success of your goals. For example, since I broke down my article into specific goals, it lets me visually see my progress. Breaking it into chunks and knowing I want it to be 800 words, it can be measured as such:

- *Catchy hook – first section (~100 words)*
- *What is it and how does it work – second section (~100 words)*
- *List each acronym and give examples – third section (~500 words)*
- *Conclusion – final section (~100 words)*

Achievable

Consider if your goals are realistically achievable. Based on knowledge of yourself or your group members, can it be accomplished? I know very little about civil engineering, so for an assignment on this topic, I would need to set an extra goal to gather the necessary resources to familiarize myself with engineering principles instead of diving straight into the assignment. Perhaps an academic journal I want to use for research won't be available for two weeks, but my assignment is due next week, meaning my goals require re-adjusting.

Based on feedback from editors on my previous article, I can finish this one before the given deadline using what I already know about S.M.A.R.T. goals.



Photo via Freepik

Relevant

This part can be explored in many ways. Is this goal relevant to completing the task? For example, waiting for a library laptop loan to complete your work isn't relevant to finishing the assignment. If working at home is not possible, stay and use the school computers. Is this goal relevant to my skills? If one of my goals is to develop a graphic design for my website, I could hire someone else instead of trying to do it myself and wasting time. Is this relevant to my future? For personal projects, consider if the goal is necessary for your ambitions. If you want to become a programmer, setting goals on how to weave baskets may not be relevant to that path.

The Nugget's audience is primarily students, so I should also brainstorm relatable themes or metaphors (like Greek mythology) to connect them with my topic.

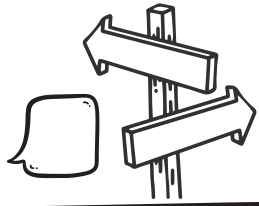
Time-bound

Make your goals time-sensitive. You could have the best S.M.A.R. goals, but it won't be effective if they're not finished on time (also, now the acronym looks silly).

I will allocate the same time for my subsections since they are 100 words each. Realistically, I can finish two sections per day in the morning when I'm at school early, which means my rough draft is done on day four, and the fifth day is for editing.

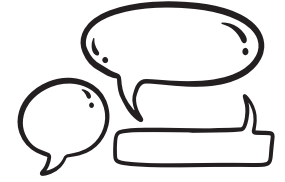
There we go! I used all the letters in formulating my plan of action. They don't have to be in order, and in fact, you should be considering them simultaneously.

Now, dear hero, armed with S.M.A.R.T, you look fitting of a protagonist told in legends. Go forth and slay your academic beasts; bathe in the glory of triumph. When faced with yet another foe, remember this in your time of need: be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound. Keep this knowledge polished and conquer all that stands in your way from here to the summit of Mount Olympus.



CLUBS CORNER

Why clubs are worth your time



By Sunny Lee

Feeling like something's missing from your college experience? You're probably checking off all the academic boxes, but there's that nagging feeling you could be getting more out of your time at NAIT. I sat down with Gaylen Sturko, President of the DMIT and eSports clubs, to find out why clubs might be the key to filling that gap. Whether you're looking to have fun, get hands-on experience, or build lasting relationships, clubs offer something for everyone.

Sometimes there's free stuff

Who doesn't love free stuff? Imagine attending an event and getting a free lunch, free entry to activities or even free swag. Sturko urges students to take advantage of this whenever they can: "Join the club, come to our events, get stuff paid for. If you're an Executive, you can have some decision power and hold events, and then not have to pay for them."

Clubs get grant money from NAITSA specifically to host events, so make the most out of that expensive tuition, and maybe that student debt won't feel quite as heavy.

The Learning lab

Sure, NAIT offers you the knowledge, but clubs can offer you the practice. In a club like the DMIT club, you'll get hands-on experience applying what you're learning in the classroom. Sturko believes that campus clubs can be "used in various ways to support people's learning."

"Every day we go to class and we learn about all these skills, but we never really get a great chance to practice them, practically ... it's my belief that campus clubs instead can be used in various ways to support people's learning while also giving a different outlet for recreation and relationship building," Sturko explained.

"All these skills that I use in campus clubs, I use them every day in my personal life."

Whether you're organizing an event or managing a project, clubs also give you the space to try, fail and learn without the weight of your GPA on the line. When you mess up (and you will), it's a chance to reflect and grow—something you don't often get to do in traditional coursework.

Build unique relationships

The relationships you build in clubs can be very different to the ones you make in class. Instead of bonding over a tricky assignment, club executives might be working towards a common goal like hosting a career fair or conference. And Sturko assures students it's easier than they think. "There's already an ice breaker, it's super easy to start the relationship because you both have a shared interest and a thing to talk about regularly." It's the perfect way to meet people without that initial fumble to find common ground.

Develop your leadership skills

If you're looking to do more than just be an executive, Sturko believes a president's role isn't about giving orders—it's about building a team that works together and being a facilitator. Creating a culture of respect and trust lets everyone take ownership of their roles, and when members are empowered, they grow through collaboration. "Everything we do here is in service of learning and self-improvement," said Sturko. "Particularly, being an executive in a club gives you a chance to develop very strong relations with the other people that are executives in your club ... it's not something that I've found to be the same as in class."

Whether you're just looking to have fun or you want to gain real-world experience that can set you apart in the job market, joining (or even starting) a club is one of the best decisions you can make. You'll meet incredible people, learn valuable skills, and who knows? Maybe you'll even leave a legacy behind. So, what are you waiting for? Go find your club, or start your very own. The real question is: what *won't* you get out of it?



A DMIT student works in a classroom.

Photo by Leigh Kovesy via NAIT Content Collective

My advice for first semester students

Editorial by Oluwatumise Ajayi

Back in my home country Nigeria, there's a term we label "JJC." It means "Journey Just Come." For a better understanding, it's more like a newbie or novice. That was how I felt the first time I stepped into NAIT. As an international student coming to study in a different country, I felt different emotions: excitement, nervousness, curiosity and so much more. I was so eager to explore, try new things and meet with people from diverse backgrounds.

The first set of people I encountered at NAIT was the IICC (International and Intercultural Community Centre). I got an email to receive a welcome package and that was how I found out about them. It was a great first-time experience with the people on campus. I also got to meet with someone from my home country which made me feel more relaxed. I got to know about the IICC's mentorship program for new students, which I participated in.

I encourage every new student to be a part of it if they can. You get to learn from other students, and gradually build a community. Attending your general and program orientation is another way to get to know more about NAIT, your program, get familiar with the campus and make friends.

Where to start

As a new student, enrolling in your courses can be challenging, especially when trying to figure out what courses to do first, or if you prefer in-person or online classes. After enrolling, familiarizing yourself with course materials like the syllabus and the academic calendar helps you understand the breakdown of your courses and due dates of each assignment or presentation. I would highly encourage you to get yourself familiar with your NAIT portal. There are many

resources available like learning services, study rooms and career advising.

These can help you with having a smooth academic progression here at NAIT. One of the challenges I faced, and am still working on, is managing my work-life and academic balance. You think you are good at managing your time until it's time for you to put in the work. One way I'm learning to manage that is to prioritize my academics, set achievable goals and everything else comes next.

Social and extracurricular activities

You've probably heard the saying "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." Well, it's true. It is also important to cultivate and build a good social life. Don't just go through the school, let it go through you. Come out of your shell, make new friends, join a club or two and attend social and networking events on campus. NAITSA hosts lots of events you can find on Looks Life.

Volunteering is another way to get involved on campus. For instance, if you are an international student, chances are you get homesick occasionally. There are lots of events designed to meet new people. The IICC hosts board game nights, NAITSA Campus Clubs holds events to showcase the clubs they offer, and so much more. Outside of campus, don't forget to explore the city because there is so much to do in Edmonton.

While the first semester is just the beginning, it sets the foundation for an exciting journey ahead. These experiences have shown me that every hurdle is an opportunity to grow, cherish every memory and embrace what the future has in store.

Does teamwork really make the dream work?

Editorial by Celestia Nlemvo

People often use the quote, "teamwork makes the dream work" to explain that working together can result in better outcomes than working alone. Who knew that words so encouraging could be so misleading?

If you've taken a business class at NAIT, you've probably had to do a group project. I'm sure other programs have them too, but every business student groans when they see group projects on the syllabus. In my experience, group projects are distracting and lead to unnecessary drama among group members.

Growing up, I even disliked hearing the word teamwork, as I knew it meant relying on others just to get the task done. My dislike for group work grew even stronger as instructors assigned groups in the class. Not only does everyone want to just be partnered with their friends, but when that doesn't happen, I find classmates shut down and put their needs before the group.

It doesn't help that if I had to describe myself in one word, it would be outspoken. I am not afraid to voice my opinions and make my presence known. That can be intimidating to people who don't know me that well, and as a result, it has contributed to years' worth of bad luck. I would always find myself being partnered with people who didn't like me and were looking for any excuse to make me look bad.

I believe that collaboration is a big part of teamwork. Everybody should be able to share their thoughts and ideas with the group without feeling left out. But it often seems like there is always one individual whose ego interferes with the success of the group. They insist on having things their way, and honestly, I can't stand it. All egos aside, teamwork is important, and I understand why we're forced to do so many group projects. Every human being is blessed with their own set of skills and strengths, and when the team works as a collective,



Photo via Freepik; edits made by Nugget staff

everyone has an opportunity to learn from each other.

At the end of the day, you may not be fond of your team members, but one thing all group members share is needing to complete the task at hand. Set clear expectations with your partners, try to match everyone's skills and responsibilities and do your best to listen actively to any concerns raised.

Group work can be challenging, so it's important to start projects in a positive, organized manner. Even if you dread group projects, there's no better feeling than successfully working as a team so everything all works out in the end. And who knows—you might even create some new bonds and make some new friends out of it.

HOT TAKES

2 NAIT students. 2 opinions. 1 relevant issue.

Welcome to HOT TAKES, a series where we get two NAIT students with different opinions to write about the same topic. This month, we're focusing on those goals we set as the clock strikes midnight and we move into a new year. That's right, we're talking **New Year's resolutions**.

More than a January fling: How to keep resolutions long-term

By Sunny Lee

Ah January, the month of the New Year, a time of celebratory toasts, fireworks, frosty windows and... disappointment? It's impressive how within a year, we always forget how poorly our last year's resolution went. Yet again, we step into the new year bright-eyed and optimistic that all our wishes will come true—only to stumble by the second week and spend the rest of January with a guilty conscience. Fret not, for this year you will have read this article and leveled up in wisdom. Let me help you succeed in achieving your goals because this year, we're going to do it differently.

Start now, start later, but don't start on Jan. 1

Who says resolutions must start on the first day of January? They don't become magically easier or more meaningful on this arbitrary date. If anything, it's potentially setting yourself up for failure. There's too much pressure and your mind has learned that there weren't any real repercussions from failing previous resolutions.

If you're reading this in the middle of January, great! Start now. If it's already February, take this time to get back into a rhythm after the holidays, and start in March. Yes, I'm asking you to delay your resolution on purpose. Distance yourself from this "New Year's resolution" and turn it into a "12-month resolution." This mindset change may help you approach resolutions beyond 2025, setting a foundation for years to come.

New year, new strategy

New year, new me? People don't change drastically in a year. You're the same old you, which means that same old strategy probably isn't going to work. After all, insanity is repeating the same mistakes and expecting different results. Which apparently Einstein never said...

Still, whoever said it is just as wise and has a point. So this year, try working on

that goal differently, in whatever way possible.

No more zero days

Rushing ourselves by piling all our efforts into the first few months leads to quicker burnout. If you aim for the stars, you're going to be lost in space, and if you aim for the sky, that's a tall height to fall from. Why not aim lower? In fact, I want you to do the bare minimum. If you want to read more this year, start with one page a day. Sounds a lot more achievable than your goal to read 30 pages everyday last year, doesn't it? Getting started is usually the most difficult part, so by lowering that barrier, we're more likely to follow through on our daily habits.

Keep your goals to yourself

These days, people tend to (over)share everything—from the most mundane to the most bizarrely unnecessary. But can we really blame them? In the age of digital media, oversharing is just a few keystrokes away. Come January, it's unsurprising to see people flood social media with their "New" New Year's resolutions.

This year, I urge you not to share your goals. Not even a whisper or an Instagram story to your close friends. Research has shown that telling others about our goals can hinder our progress. This is because when we tell people, our mind is tricked into feeling a premature sense of accomplishment, chipping away motivation to try.

So class, what have we learned about sticking to our New Year's resolutions? You should procrastinate, do the bare minimum, try a completely untested strategy and keep to yourself. Alright, it looks crazy written down like that, but you get the idea. Throw out the concept of rushed New Year's resolutions and redirect yourself towards slow-and-steady progress. True lasting changes are the ones that sneak up, tap you on the shoulder and make you reflect on how far you've come.

The utter ridiculousness of New Year's resolutions

By Rafael Luis Flores

I am a mature student. Growing up in the '80s, I remember a time when New Year's resolutions were much more serious. In fact, as a kid, my folks even ordered me to write my resolutions in an essay format. They would then refer to this document whenever it became apparent that I was not keeping those same promises I was forced to make. Ridiculous.

Fast forward to the 2020s, I feel like there's an unspoken acknowledgement that the practice is no longer meant to be taken that seriously, though it could just be my upbringing. Even for those who still do make them, many resolutions appear to be more of an aspiration than an oath that one binds oneself to.

Why don't they work?

While starting the year with resolutions seems organized and would make sense for a business or an organization, human beings are wired differently.

All resolutions have the goal of self-improvement, and a person has to desire self-improvement for it to have any chance of working. People are more likely to take accountability for their decisions if they are based on what they truly want, and not what others want for them.

Unfortunately, even if someone makes a resolution based on their own desires, one year is quite a long time to stick to a specific way of doing things. Unless there is a major force to change, there will always be many opportunities to break a resolution. This results in the ridiculous practice of making the same resolutions every year.

What works then?

When it comes to resolutions that last, a combination of necessity and will power is what works best in my experience.

Years ago, I was a smoker. I loved smoking. Sometimes in my dreams, I still smoke. Of course, I was aware of the health risks. I knew in principle that I should quit. But back then, I was younger and did not feel any of the negative effects...yet. So, barely a week after "quitting," I found myself restarting again. The resolution to change never stuck.

Eventually, I began to suffer ailments caused by smoking, and this took so long to recover from. The persistent feeling of being generally unhealthy also began to affect me psychologically.

That was when I decided to quit—because I felt that I had to. All those graphic warnings on cigarette packs no longer seemed far-fetched for me. Truly, there is no better way to build up one's will power than the desire to avoid suffering and death.

Resolution vs. proposal

If you're about to write an essay with your 2025 resolutions, or you've already written them down somewhere, try and make them realistic and based on compelling life conditions, because writing New Year's resolutions without resolve makes them nothing more than simply behaviour propositions.

The vanishing third place: Can we ever go back to the mall?



St. Albert Centre

Photo by Skylar Boissonnault

By Sunny Lee

Do you remember when “let’s go to the mall” was code for “let’s hang out?” The mall was where you could wander aimlessly with friends, maybe buy a questionable T-shirt you’d never wear and spend hours doing...well, nothing. Sadly, they’re no longer the epicentre of social life—heck, sometimes we avoid them altogether. Instead of window shopping, we scroll through Amazon. Instead of catching a flick at the local cinema, we binge-watch Netflix in our pajamas. Our favourite public spaces are quietly disappearing, and with them, the joy of spontaneous socializing.

Over the last decade, the go-to place for young people to hang out has shifted dramatically away from malls. According to sociologist Ray Oldenburg, the mall was the perfect “third place.” These are the spaces outside of the home (first) and work or school (second), where people gather without any specific agenda, just to exist and maybe interact with others beyond their usual bubble. Third places are free, open spaces where you can bump into acquaintances, people-watch and spend hours doing everything and nothing at all.

Sadly, as cities expand and real estate prices soar, that kind of space has become a luxury. Malls are getting replaced by high-rise condos, office towers and overpriced retail spaces. The third places like malls are being squeezed by the pressures of capitalism—you can’t even sit in peace in public without someone trying to sell you something, or worse, getting kicked out for loitering, as if just sitting there is a crime now.

As much as we try to stay connected online, social media often falls short.

Sure, we can post memes, comment on each other’s lives and like every other photo—but where’s the magic of running into someone random at the mall and striking up an impromptu conversation? Those spontaneous, face-to-face interactions are harder to come by, especially since we’re all too busy scrolling through our phones to notice the person standing next to us.

So, how do we bring back the third place? Maybe it’s as simple as putting down our phones. I’ve been testing this out, and surprisingly, it’s led to more random conversations than I expected. Whether in a coffee shop or on a park bench, being present and less absorbed in a screen invites others to connect with us. Maybe third places have evolved into smaller pockets, like the local bookstore, farmers’ markets or even the bus stop.

The space doesn’t have to be huge like a mall, it just needs to be there.

The need for third places is undeniable for our social lives. We crave spaces where we can hang out, meet new people and connect without a price tag or a schedule to follow. The magic of these spaces, though harder to find, still exist. It’s up to us to reclaim them. So, next time you’re about to mindlessly scroll, look up. Third places may be vanishing, but if you’re present, another one can pop up where you least expect it.

The Nugget switches to fake news

By Sanjiyven Alfred Joseph

The Nugget is overhauling its entire publication and will no longer be publishing real news, real stories and compelling writings. Beset Spinastorie, Editor-in-Chief of the Nugget, explained that fake news is “the way forward.”

“If you can fake it, we will break the news for you.”

Making the change “wasn’t a challenge,” as Spinastorie wants to focus on the current needs of students and the micro-community at NAIT. “Students don’t want to know what’s actually happening in dull, old newspapers. They look at headlines and if it’s controversial, they share or talk about it.”

The Nugget used to focus on something they called the ‘Nangle,’ meaning stories and news that have a NAIT angle. Moving forward, Spinastorie is abolishing that “ridiculous” term and replacing it with the “Spingle,” a term she came up with that bears suspicious resemblance to her own name.

“Spin the story in every angle possible, because that is real journalism,” she explained.

Drawing inspiration from established publications like YEGWAVE, Spinastorie wants to make the Nugget a publication that is the “cornerstone of fake news, rumours, lies and propaganda.”

“We aim to shatter the current pillars of journalism because who cares anyway?”

Her second major change was to fire the News Editor, who she said was “truthful, objective and only stuck to the facts.”

“Being factual is a thing of the past and so is our News Editor... dinosaurs don’t belong in this office, especially a Factasaurus” she added. The fate of the other Editors remain uncertain, as Spinastorie promised to keep close tabs on them, especially those who have strong intentions of remaining accurate, fair and hardworking. The Entertainment Editor’s job, however, is safe, as entertainment “isn’t news anyway.”

Spinastorie intends to focus on student contributors who submit articles that are “heavily plagiarized” and “written fully by ChatGPT.” She assured that they will be paid large sums of money. “We understand that students are already proficient in using ChatGPT for assignments, so why not utilize their talents here too?”

She is reluctant to recruit students who use legitimate sources and references. “We want more sauce, not sources. And if we can waste money printing newspapers, we can definitely spend money paying these exemplary students.”

Also, Spinastorie affirmed that the usage of phrases like “no shit Sherlock” and “it is clearly stated in the email” have been banned in the Nugget office with immediate effect. Sympathizing with students, Spinastorie believes that there is no such thing as a stupid question, especially if “the answer is too obvious for you.”

“Students have a hard time reading simple instructions, so we will gradually remove all of them. After all, we are a publication for the students and by the students,” she said.

Spinastorie’s ultimate goal for the Nugget is to get rid of the print issue altogether. “In the future, we might literally shout out something scandalous and ask students to verbally spread fake news, because they spread it faster.”

One thing remains the same, and that is the Nugget’s pledge to be welcoming to all students, irrespective of who they are and what their abilities, or lack of it are. “The world is flat, and we don’t care where you are on the sphere,” said Spinastorie. “Let’s embrace rumourtism together and mold the best batch of student writers yet.”

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HARD

THE ANSWERS YOU NEED ON THE NUGGET ONLINE.

(if what you need is answers to sudooku)



4 mocktails for Dry January

Photos and recipes by Skylar Boissonault

Have you heard of 'Dry January'? It's essentially a month of no drinking. All my friends that have tried get bored, crack and next thing I know they're out drinking. They were probably missing delicious alternatives! I have curated some amazing mocktails for you to try when those cravings start to hit to keep you on track. You can also whip these up if you don't drink, if you're driving or if you just want a different option on your night out.

Sunset Mojito

This virgin spiced peach mango mojito will have you wanting another one. Peach mojitos are one of my favourite cocktails, so I had to see if I could make a mocktail version of it.



Ingredients

- 8-10 mint leaves
- 0.5 oz brown sugar cinnamon syrup
- 0.5 oz lime juice
- 1 oz peach mango juice
- 2 oz water
- top with water

Instructions

Muddle the mint and syrup in your shaker or mason jar. Add everything but the soda, add ice and give a good shake. Dump your shaker into your glass and top with soda. I like to rim my glass with a spiced sugar by mixing equal parts brown sugar and white sugar and a sprinkle of cinnamon. Garnish with a lime and mint and you'll feel like you're relaxing on the beach in no time.

Butterfly Magic

I always like to have something simple, and this is it. There's only two ingredients, and while you might not have this tea in hand, it's sold at most grocery stores. Any butterfly pea flower tea will work—loose leaf, tea bags or even a blend. Steep according to the instructions and make sure to let it cool completely.



I like to make this the night before and keep it in the fridge so it's ready to use when I need it.

Ingredients

- 4 oz lemonade
- 4 oz butterfly pea flower tea

Instructions

In a glass, add your ice and lemonade. To get that beautiful split colour, use the back of a spoon and slowly pour your tea down it.

Make sure you are right above the surface when doing this, otherwise the layers will blend. And the most magical part: when you stir, it will turn from blue to this beautiful magenta!

Brown sugar cinnamon syrup

Add to a pot 1 cup water, 1 cup brown sugar and 2-4 cinnamon sticks. Bring to a boil and simmer for 2-3 minutes. Allow to fully cool and store in an airtight container. This should easily last a month.

Orchard Mule



Calling all my Moscow Mule lovers! This one's for you. You get sweetness from the apple, a nice spice from the ginger beer and the cinnamon brings it all together at the end.

Ingredients

- 0.5 oz lime juice
- 0.5 oz brown sugar cinnamon syrup
- 1 oz apple juice
- 2 oz water
- top with ginger beer

Instructions

Add the first four ingredients into your shaker with ice and shake. If you own the traditional copper

cup, fill it with ice. If you don't, fill a normal cup with ice. Dump your drink into your chosen vessel, then top with ginger beer. Garnish with a lime wheel and mint sprig.

Java Jive



Start the night (or morning, I don't judge) off right with this non-alcoholic espresso martini-style drink. I use a homemade cold brew, but feel free to buy premade. You can also use regular brewed and cooled coffee, but cold brew is a bit sweeter.

Ingredients

- 0.5 oz brown sugar cinnamon syrup
- 3 oz cold brew

Instructions

Add all ingredients to the shaker with ice. Give this one a good shake. Strain into your glass and garnish with three coffee beans, or sprinkle some cinnamon on top.

Women's hockey team on track for record-breaking season



Kelly Stanford, pictured above, is on track to tie the record for most points scored in a season.

Photo via NAIT Oaks

By Geono Aloisio

After winning their first championship in nine years last season, the women's hockey team is on pace for another record-breaking season. NAIT has tallied a league-leading 186 points, 67 goals—19 on the powerplay—and 119 assists.

Multiplying their average statistics for the season by their remaining games, the Oaks are projected to finish with 310 points, 111 goals and 198 assists.

These numbers would top the current record of 259 points, 107 goals and 152 assists in a season held by the Mount Royal Cougars.

The Oaks have had a standout start to their season; they've won 12 of their 15 games, outscoring their opponents by two or more goals in all but three games. But the team needs to focus on a few things to keep up with the pace and break the records.

The first is continuing to capitalize on the powerplay. 19 goals on the powerplay through 15 games puts them at an average of 1.27 powerplay goals a game, but that average will need to increase if they want to surpass 32. NAIT plays Red Deer—the top penalty kill team—three times in the final 10 games. The Oaks also play the worst penalty kill team, Medicine Hat, three times. If Red Deer's penalty kill units can contain the Oaks, those three games against Medicine Hat could decide whether the Oaks break the record for powerplay goals.

The Oaks also need to continue to prioritize scoring. Through 15 games, they averaged 4.47 goals, and in only five games have the Oaks scored less than four goals. If they're going to surpass the target of 107, they do have some wiggle

room with their current projection of 111. But, the Oaks must stay aggressive and aim for at least four goals a game to maintain their pace.

The records haven't changed in almost 20 years, so if the Oaks can pull it off, it means that NAIT will likely be in the Alberta Colleges Athletic Conference (ACAC) history book for a very long time. And if that happens, one rookie Ook may make some history of her own.

Kelly Stanford could become the first player to record 40 points in a season since 2004/05 when NAIT's Miranda Miller scored 40 points in 19 games.

Stanford is currently second in points, with 21 through 15 games. Seeing an Ook in the top five for points isn't new. NAIT has had three or more players in the top five for scoring in five of the past six seasons, but only two of them have been rookies. Livia Lucová finished fifth in 2019/20 with 18 points in 23 games, and Darby Robertson finished fourth in the shortened 2021/22 season with 13 points in 14 games.

Lots will need to go right for Stanford to become the first player to crack 40 points in a year—the team continuing to score over four goals a game, scoring on the powerplay and having her be involved in creating those goals.

But, if the Oaks break all four records, Stanford has a good shot of hitting those projections and furthering a record breaking season for the Oaks.

With a lot on the line in the season's final weeks before the playoffs, the 10 remaining games will be an exciting journey as the women's hockey team could potentially write a new chapter in the ACAC history books.

THE NUGGET'S MAP OF NAIT

featuring the places you know, the ones you don't and those that you probably should have figured out by now

