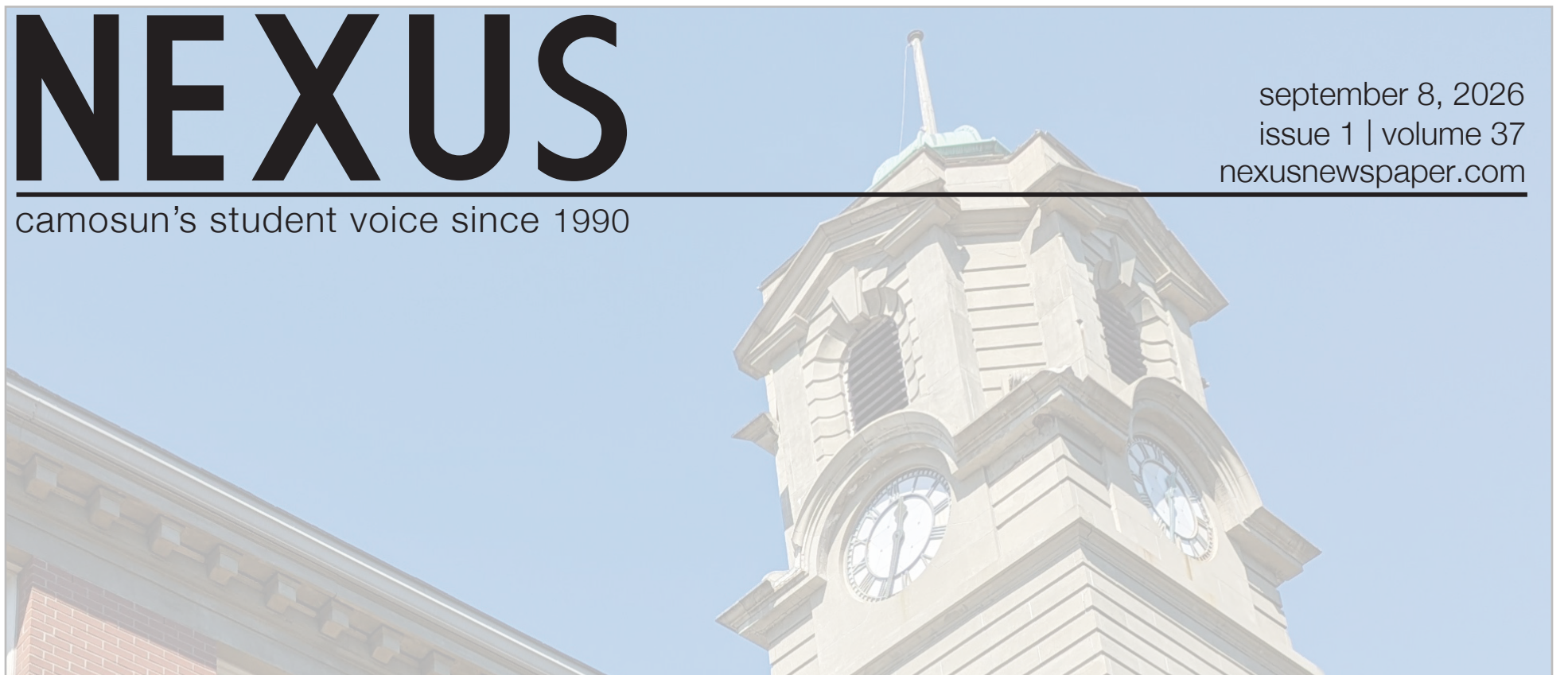




10 THINGS CAMOSUN NEEDS TO CHANGE



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OVERHEARD AT NEXUS: "When I first met you you were talking about how drinking too much coffee is like a bad acid trip."

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editor’s letter
Falling out of summer

Well, we once again find ourselves back in classes. I’ve been back and forth about whether or not I just wanted to get on with it and fall back into my comfortable—if somewhat hectic—routine; or perhaps I wanted to live in an endless lackadaisical summer bliss. The trouble with me is that I rarely enjoy something until someone is trying to take it away from me, and so it is with summer. Now that the last halcyon rays of that golden summer sun are fading in the western sky, I feel like I could get down to brass tacks with some real summer livin’.

This time of year always makes me feel a bit nostalgic, a bit maudlin, and this year is proving to be no exception. This could be a number of things: it could be that perfect light that only seems to reflect off ocean waves in the late summer; it could be the smell of barbecues wafting from the cottage next door; it could be a trauma response to the utter panic I would feel at the prospect of being sentenced back to the prison of elementary school for yet another year, that monument to mediocrity and conformity that plagued my childhood, and likely yours as well.

The schoolyard: the main contributing factor leading me to struggle so much with identifying “back to school!” propaganda as a harmless, innocuous thing. It feels more like the death knell summoning me to the gallows pole (or some imagery that is equally horrifying and not the least hyperbolic).

I’m still trying to undo that sinking feeling in the pit of my stomach that rears its head every time a course outline mentions group projects, which is the exact same feeling that would cause my mind to stutter to a halt when we were told we would be chosen for teams (inevitably by someone far more popular than I).

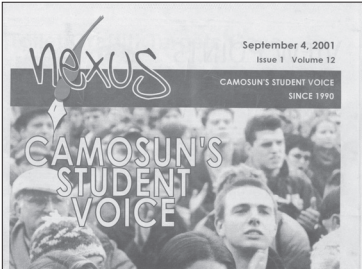
I would like to propose that moving forward, we no longer torture children with these tyrannical cruelties. I have reached my big age, and never once been forcibly made to play dodgeball or floor hockey, or have my worth assigned to me by someone named Timmy.

We can go even go one step further in our newfound mission of not creating additional barriers to a pleasant educational experience by doing away with group work and team sports unless someone is of the particular masochistic bent where they actually enjoy such horrible peculiarities and seek it out of their own volition. Just keep those weirdos away from me, and everything will work out nicely.

All this to say that, my damaged psyche aside, it does feel pretty good to be back.

Nik Ovstaas, student editor
nik@nexusnewspaper.com

flashback
25 Years Ago in *Nexus*



GREG PRATT
MANAGING EDITOR

Corporate collusion: Concerned about corporate influence on campus? I mean, you probably should be, and you wouldn’t be alone in that: back in our September 4, 2001 issue, we covered how students were upset about corporate donor plaques popping up around campus. “I think it is pretty disgusting,” said Camosun College Student Society director Kristen Reiber, “especially when you are going to take a class on social change in the CIBC Bank Room or the Royal Bank Room.” Reiber went on to say the CCSS was going to lobby the government to place an emphasis on public post-secondary as being just that, “and looking out

for the interest of the public at large and not Coca Cola.”

Credit concerns: Students also had opinions in this issue about the government implementing credit checks on people applying for student loans. Credit checks for student loans had been banned previously in an effort to ensure equal access to education, but the Liberal government brought them back. But good news to angry students of a quarter-century back: the credit checks—which were for first-time applicants 22 years of age or older—were waived in August 2024.

College cutlines: We talked in this issue, as we tend to do, about the importance of writing for *Nexus*. New to Camosun? This is the place to have your voice heard, and to bring your concerns to the public, and to Camosun brass. “*Nexus* is the student voice on campus and when you speak through its pages, people listen,” wrote Barbara Risto, who was *Nexus*’ managing editor at the time. All these years later, the sentiment holds true.

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open space
Camosun tuition-drop deadline exclusionary

MEL OZARD
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

In 2022, Camosun reaffirmed academia’s commitment to exclusionism by moving the 100-percent-tuition-refund course-drop deadline backwards three weeks. Historically, the deadline was after classes began so students could, without financial penalty, drop a course after attending a few lectures. But the requirement to lock in course enrolment (and tuition) before classes start is problematic.

Because of this timeline, students are unable to see a current course syllabus, assess teaching styles, meet their peers, or verify the course workload before committing hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars. Students no longer get to determine—in person and for themselves—if a class is a good fit without losing at least a percentage of their tuition and student fees.

The college emphasizes the importance of course selection to ensure students stay on their program track and to show that students have choices in their education. Camosun has a wide breadth of courses, but it’s intentionally missing the point: students consider much more than timetables and requirements when selecting courses. Workload, group work, and the cost of assigned readings are just some examples that are important to students. These variables (and their consequences) are often amplified for students new to the country, those with neurodivergences or disabilities, or those with other responsibilities.

As both a life-long student and a previous post-secondary administrator, I see the pros and cons of this policy from both the institution and student perspectives. The fact that this policy has remained in place for four years tells me that it’s likely here to stay. So, what can be done to address the burden it places on students?

Instructors could prepare their course outlines as soon as teaching assignments are finalized. Links to outlines should be placed in MyCamosun’s registration course catalogue. Course syllabi need to be available before the tuition-drop deadline to ensure students know

Something on your mind? If you’re a Camosun student, get in touch with us with your *Open Space* idea! Email editor@nexusnewspaper.com. Include your student number. Thanks!

what to expect if they take the course that term, with that instructor. Currently, students can only use an incomplete syllabi archive for this purpose. Personally, I’ve found more information helpful to my course selections on ratemyprofessors than in the college’s syllabus archive.

Students who meet predetermined criteria (for example, being registered at the Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL) or new international students) should be allowed to appeal for a full refund within the first two weeks of classes. Should a marginalized student be forced to stay in a learning environment where they feel unsafe? If a student with disabilities did everything to ensure their success only to find it won’t work after all, should they be penalized financially? Exceptions must be allowed for.

Students should be told—loudly, clearly, and frequently—that they can reach out to professors about courses they are interested in. Academic advisers know about policy and program requirements, but most are not experts on the nuanced needs of individual marginalized students. CAL advisers can put supports in place, but they are not always available as needed. Most instructors are very open to discussing their upcoming classes with prospective students, and students can make their own assumptions if professors aren’t receptive when asked.

These suggestions make more work for professors and administrators, but addressing student needs and injustices within policy is part of the job. This policy furthers systemic marginalization—tell Camosun’s Board of Governors or Education Council how you feel.

Increased class enrolments, successful course completion rates, and the sustainability of the college’s finances through increased tuition income are all factors to be considered when developing college policy. Another important, and often under-considered, factor is accessibility.

This policy continues to perpetuate academic elitism through exclusion.

letters
Lamenting loss of Lansdowne trees

I was shocked to see eight trees cut down along the walkway beside the parking lot in front of the Lansdowne student housing project lot.

The information provided on one of the websites for this project states that the project will result in a net gain of trees on the site. This could be interpreted as one more tree than the present number will be planted on the new site. But were these eight trees on the proposed site? Will these trees be replaced with trees of the same age and species? These are only two of the variables used to calculate a tree’s ability to remove CO2 from the atmosphere.

Also, the use of the word “sustainable” is included in the website’s information. Is cutting down trees part of sustainability? These trees supplied not only oxygen, but also shade (cooling of the environment), and habitats for birds, insects, and other plants at their bases. In my opinion, these eight trees appeared (and their stumps appear) to be healthy. They were part of the ecosystem.

So, it seems that student housing will be contributing to an increasingly unliveable environment for all living things. The college is a place of learning; it is a place to learn how to live with the environment. As Sam Roberts said, we are doing it to ourselves.

JERRY-LEE CERNY
CAMOSUN COLLEGE STUDENT

post-secondary

Camosun College Faculty Association calls for increased post-secondary funding in Budget 2027



Camosun College Faculty Association members with president Lynelle Yutani (front).

PHOTO PROVIDED

JASMINE WAGSTAFF
STAFF WRITER

As British Columbia’s post-secondary institutions face growing financial pressures, the Camosun College Faculty Association (CCFA) is calling on the provincial government to increase stable public funding for colleges and universities through Budget 2027.

The CCFA has submitted its recommendations to the Select Standing Committee on Finance, arguing that post-secondary institutions need reliable government funding rather than increasing dependence on tuition, international enrolment, and other sources of revenue. The association also called for greater support for community-based education, arts and humanities, and a move toward debt-free post-secondary education.

“We actually make the Select Committee on Finance submissions every year,” says CCFA president Lynelle Yutani, “and what we try to do is balance what’s good for internally, like the CCFA, against what is, in general, we believe, good for post-secondary education and, I would say, by extension, the

province, or for all the people of BC. So our recommendations this year focused on the funding insecurity that was revealed by the changes to federal immigration policy and all of the subsequent things that happened with the international student tuition, let’s call it tap, being turned off. So that really, I think, revealed a critical structural problem in BC in that post-secondary education hasn’t been funded like it’s being treated as a public good, or something that we believe is good for the economic prosperity of the province.”

The submission comes as institutions across BC continue to deal with financial difficulties. A June report from BC Policy Solutions found that 19 of the province’s 25 public post-secondary institutions are projected to operate at a loss over the next three years, with an estimated combined annual shortfall of \$300 million. The report also found that more than 180 programs have been cut or suspended since 2024, while more than 1,300 faculty and staff have been laid off.

Camosun announced in March that it would need to reduce its

2026-27 budget by between \$7.2 million and \$9 million. (Camosun College declined to be interviewed for this story.)

“One of the biggest barriers to future prosperity for the average, let’s call, young adult is the cost of education, and with that, the loans that most students take out in order to be able to complete their program, also eat, also pay their rent, you know, tuition notwithstanding,” says Yutani. “So things like increasing the tuition cap or increasing the amount of money that students are allowed to borrow in order to get their education doesn’t really result in a long-term benefit economically.”

The CCFA’s recommendations argue that funding decisions should account for the broader role colleges play in their communities, rather than focusing primarily on immediate labour-market demands. The association says community-rooted programs including arts, humanities, social sciences, and Indigenous studies require dedicated support because their value cannot always be measured through short-term workforce outcomes.

“There is growing concern that subjects that aren’t considered direct payoffs in the employment pipeline are being reduced. For example, arts, humanities, social sciences, and a lot of community-rooted education. And because organizations, not just Camosun, but all across BC, are being asked to trim all the fat they can, those are the programs that are hit the hardest.”

LYNELLE YUTANI
CAMOSUN COLLEGE FACULTY ASSOCIATION

“There is growing concern that subjects that aren’t considered direct payoffs in the employment pipeline are being reduced,” says Yutani. “For example, arts, humanities, social sciences, and a lot of community-rooted education. And because organizations, not just Camosun, but all across BC, are being asked to trim all the fat they can, those are the programs that are hit the hardest. They’re hit earliest, and I think they have the most net detriment for students. And I feel like every single student, when they approach their own personal education and educational journey, should have enough opportunity to discover that thing that they have that level of passion about. But if we’re having to judiciously use our funding in order to deliver on workforce predictions, I worry that that opportunity is going to be limited in a very unfortunate way.”

The funding debate is taking place alongside the province’s review of the post-secondary sector; post-secondary advocacy groups are concerned about what changes the results of the review, which are expected soon, may suggest (a Freedom of Information request by *Nexus* to see the review was denied).

Another recent examination of the sector, The BC Policy Solutions report, argues that the current crisis is the result of long-term underfunding and an increasing reliance on international student tuition to fill gaps in institutional budgets. It recommends restoring government funding to at least 75

percent of institutional operating costs and maintaining the existing two percent cap on domestic tuition increases.

The CCFA’s Budget 2027 submission similarly argues for a stronger public funding model. It also calls for replacing provincial student loans with needs-based grants and creating dedicated funding for arts, humanities, social sciences, Indigenous studies, and community-rooted education.

“[One of the recommendations asks for] support to post-secondary institutions to meet local and regional workforce development priorities,” says Yutani. “And the reason that I would say that one is because local would include your rural and remote communities, and their needs are very different from urban communities. And I think that when we say workforce development, I would want that to be approached more broadly in terms of not using the labour market predictions. I think we need to stop relying on labour market predictions because they are notoriously inaccurate. They’re always behind. And I think when you have an educated community, whether it’s urban or rural, the people of that community, they know what they want to do. They know what they need in order to be successful. And so creating learning organizations that are well-funded, allowing people in those communities to achieve their goals without the government trying to predict what those should be.”

NEWS BRIEFS

Camosun dining goes cashless

As of Monday, August 24, Camosun College dining services no longer accept cash. Credit and debit will be the only methods of payment available for students.

Camosun students showcase technology capstone projects

Camosun College students showcased their final projects

at the Technology Capstone Showcase on Friday, August 14. Students from Mechanical Engineering Technology, Interactive Media Developer (IMD), and Information and Computer Systems (ICS) programs demonstrated projects developed for industry, education, and community applications. The capstones included a renewable energy system, carbon-dioxide-to-chalk converter, environmental monitoring buoy, automated manufacturing equipment,

software applications, games, and augmented reality experiences. Mechanical Engineering projects were presented at the Interurban campus, while IMD and ICS students showcased their work at the Lansdowne campus.

Greater Victoria Hiring and Education Expo returns

The Greater Victoria Hiring and Education Expo will return on Thursday, September 10 at

G.R. Pearkes Recreation Centre. The free event will run from 11 am to 3 pm and connect people with employers, post-secondary institutions, and training providers. Representatives from Camosun College, Royal Roads University, Sprott Shaw Community College, and the University of Victoria Division of Continuing Studies will be available to discuss programs, admissions, and career-focused training. The event is intended for people seeking employment,

considering a career change, or exploring further education.

Chargers to host volleyball championships

The Camosun Chargers will host the PACWEST volleyball championships next year. The games will be held on February 26 and 27, 2027.

–JASMINE WAGSTAFF,
STAFF WRITER AND GREG
PRATT, MANAGING EDITOR

politics

Camosun alum Rishi Sharma announces candidacy for Saanich mayor

“We implemented the first free textbooks online initiative; I really championed that.”

RISHI SHARMA
CAMOSUN COLLEGE ALUMNUS

AMELIA WILDE
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Camosun College alumnus Rishi Sharma has announced that he will be running in the District of Saanich fall election as a mayoral candidate. As a father of three, Sharma—who graduated from Camosun’s Major Appliance and Vending Machine Repair Technician program in 1998—says he has a strong desire to keep Saanich safe, affordable, and healthy for all residents.

As a previous chief of staff for the minister of post-secondary education, Rishi, a life-long Saanich resident, championed the first free online textbooks initiative. During his time in office, Sharma and his team were worried about the increasing financial pressure that was being put on post-secondary students, so they elected to turn their attention toward textbooks. This eventually culminated in a free online textbook database that’s currently accessible for all students.

“I remember hearing about struggles years ago when I was the chief of staff,” says Rishi. “Then we implemented the first free textbooks online initiative; I really championed that.”

He says that it was relatively cheap on the government’s end to get the database up and running.

“It wasn’t that expensive on the government’s part,” he says. “It was pretty cheap.”

Rishi’s background in academia also comes from personal experience as a former trades student at Camosun and a recent graduate from a master’s program at Royal Roads. His master’s thesis encroaches into his political background, as it’s about having uncomfortable conversations in leadership roles. Rishi says that his master’s research has influenced a remarkable amount of his campaign.

“Every single day since I’ve written it, I’ve used the tools on how to have uncomfortable conversations,” he says. “The tools that I’ve used—no bias, understanding that I may think differently but everyone is allowed to have their time to speak, everyone’s opinion should be valid, and listening—was huge.”

Rishi says that by using these tools and actively listening to his community, he has become more flexible with updating his policies throughout the campaign, saying that his work is a constant revision.

“I have all my policies, and I have what I’d like to do, but I’ve already made six or seven amendments on my website to different areas because I’m out door-knocking now,” he says.

As an example of this, Rishi recently made a change on his climate protection and environmental resiliency policies.

“I just posted a new policy on environmental protection and climate resiliency because I went through the parks, because I spoke to environmental leaders, I did more research,” he says.

Rishi feels strongly about bringing Indigenous leadership into the conversation of environmental protections.

“It’s actually quite important to me,” he says. “It’s something I think is very important in getting representation and knowledge from all our various communities, nations and individuals.”

An endorsement from Save Our Saanich (SOS) Neighbourhoods Society as their mayoral candidate has drawn attention to Sharma’s campaign. SOS is a local advocacy group aimed at enhancing and protecting “Saanich’s treasured environments, agricultural lands, and welcoming, human-scaled neighbourhoods for generations to come,” according to its website. Since their political values aligned well and he admired their previous work ethic, Rishi was open to discussing an endorsement and working alongside their team.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Camosun alumnus Rishi Sharma is running for mayor of Saanich this October.

“I was so impressed with their ability to get out to folks, to have these open conversations, and to do that all in five weeks,” says Rishi. “They came to me and we had a conversation on what our priorities are, and our priorities were kind of in sync from what I ran last time.”

Rishi says that working on a team has also been quite valuable to his campaign, as they’ve been able to share workload and capacity.

“I’ve ran independently, which was okay, but I’ve also worked on teams in politics, and being on a

team at this point is something I really needed to do and really wanted to do,” says Rishi. “They have their priorities like responsible spending, protecting greenspace, smart development, transparent decision-making, and efficient roads—and that’s all the priorities that I hold as well.”

The general municipal voting day for Saanich will be held on Saturday, October 17. Eligible voters will be able to elect one mayor and eight councillors. Find more info at saanich.ca.

campus

Three tips for new Camosun College students



FILE PHOTO

The Young Building at Camosun College's Lansdowne campus.

MATIAS LI
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

So, you decided to attend post-secondary. Here’s how it will look: one week you’re coasting along, scrolling through seals dancing to Eminem during lectures, all the while crushing weekly quizzes and getting 95 percents. The very next week you’re pulling brutal

week-long study sessions where your responsibilities, hobbies, and life outside your multi-page essay on Lithuanian fork design becomes a hazy, irrelevant memory. And how does it all end? With a meagre C—because the fourth sentence in the second paragraph didn’t follow the exact formatting an English

major cobbled together 15 years ago after downing one too many energy drinks.

Welcome to Camosun College.

Whether you’re coming back to class because your gap year devolved into a hazy bender of YouTube character analyses, pizza nights, and long-winded internal debates; you’re a recent graduate coming for a post-grad certificate to land that job that has endless requirements; you’re someone who realized after two years that their major sucks; or you’re even a bored retiree coming to take jazz to wow your golf pals, I, Matias Li, have three universal tips that I hope can help you overgrown teenag... err, students, whoever you may be.

Tip one: never underestimate a course. Post-secondary is not purely a test of how good or talented you are on a subject; courses test you on your professional procedure and your persistence as much as your talent. This advice applies even if a course is taken as an elective or you did well in that subject in high school. No matter the course, you always should make sure you have a

partial grasp of the lecture’s content within 48 hours. Write your own notes while rereading slides, listen to recordings at the gym; whatever study methods are up your alley, make sure to have a 30 percent understanding of the lecture content within two days. Even if you feel like all you’ve absorbed are garbled fragments of an alien language, the logical structures will be recorded by your brain, making future study sessions far more effective.

Tip two: professional study help is around the corner, figuratively and literally. Camosun offers myriad free study services for students, including the Writing Centre, Math Help Centre, Ask a Librarian, and Learning Skills Services. These centres hook you up with professionals and they help you go through complex content judgement free (they already deal with dozens of us brain-melted students every day). Furthermore, if you can’t attend in-person sessions, you can book online help sessions. Just send them the material you are struggling with, and your deep-fried brain will thank you as you blow through that one

gnarly trigonometry problem or essay paragraph that stitched your butt to a half-broken chair for five hours.

Tip three: Register for the plans and discounts that the Camosun College Student Society (CCSS) offers to students. The CCSS not only gets you discounts across Greater Victoria, from Rexall to Chicken Hub, but they also offer deals that cut the costs of many health and wellness services by more than half. The CCSS not only lets you to buy two chicken hub special burgers instead of one, but they also help ease your financial worries, allowing you to be all burgered-up and ready to crush that Lithuanian fork essay.

The Camosun experience isn’t about becoming modern Confucius; it’s about time management, persistence, and knowing when to call for help before your fingers fuse with your pen. You will miss deadlines, misread assignment guidelines, and question your life choices at 4 am every now and then. But you’ve got this. Now go get on your weekly quiz’s slides, and kick some academic ass.

clubs

New Camosun club aims to get students involved in blood donation

JASMINE WAGSTAFF
STAFF WRITER

A new student club at Camosun College is hoping to encourage students to donate blood while educating the campus community about the importance of blood donation.

Lifeline: A Blood Donation Club was founded by second-year Nursing student Isla Betteridge, who says the idea came to her after learning her own blood type during an anatomy and physiology lab. She says the experience made her realize how accessible blood donation could be for students and inspired her to create a club focused on advocacy and education.

“Well, as a student nurse, I learned about my own blood type in a blood lab, strangely enough, during my anatomy and physiology class that we have to take in the Nursing program,” says Betteridge. “And I thought it was really interesting just to know my blood type and learn a little bit about, you know, iron levels and stuff like that.”

Betteridge donated blood for the first time that same day after realizing she was eligible. She says the experience was easy and enjoyable, and it encouraged her to find a way to get other students involved.

“As soon as that lab was done, I just booked an appointment at the blood donation clinic and donated blood,” she says. “And it was fun. It was easy. Everybody there was super nice, and I made a lot of connections with staff.”

“What we plan to do throughout the year is not only just encourage students to donate blood and host blood drives where people go to Canadian Blood Services, but we also want to do some education.”

ISLA BETTERIDGE
LIFELINE: A BLOOD DONATION CLUB

The club focuses on advocacy and education, with plans to organize blood drives, educational booths, and outreach events. Betteridge also hopes members can visit local high schools to teach students about blood donation.

“This just doesn’t necessarily mean it’s only for students that plan to donate blood, but it is more of an advocacy program,” she says. “And so what we plan to do throughout the year is not only just encourage students to donate blood and host blood drives where people go to Canadian Blood Services, but we also want to do some education.”

Although Betteridge is a Nursing student, she wants the club to include students from across Camosun.

“And the goal is not to just have nursing students,” she says. “I’d also love to have some of, you know, the Business students, or even

members of the trades community.”

The club will be based primarily at the Interurban campus, with potential outreach at Lansdowne. Members are expected to meet once or twice a month and plan initiatives for the year.

“We would essentially just, in our first couple of meetings, plan out some of the initiatives we want to do throughout the year, what seems feasible for everybody,” says Betteridge. “And then it’s a good opportunity because we’ll be partnering with Canadian Blood Services, and they’ll be able to give us volunteer hours.”

Other activities the group is considering include group blood donations and potentially bringing a mobile blood-donation clinic to campus. Betteridge says the club can also provide useful workplace experience for students.

“It’s a great opportunity for

lifeline

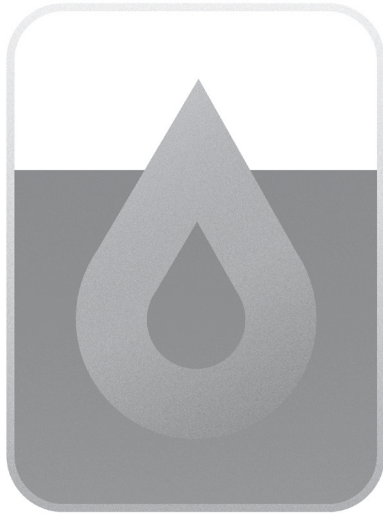


IMAGE PROVIDED

Lifeline: A Blood Donation Club is a new student club at Camosun College.

students and staff to join because, one, you get volunteer hours, two, if you’re looking to go into any kind of healthcare position, it looks great on a resume,” she says.

Students interested in joining can email lifeline@camosunstudent.org; leadership positions include treasurer and outreach officer, or students can join as general mem-

bers. Ultimately, Betteridge hopes the club will encourage students to learn more about blood donation and its impact on the community.

“I hope that anybody that takes an interest in this does it not only for themselves,” she says, “but with the knowledge that they not only potentially, but most likely, will save a life.”

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Langford learners! You can now find copies of *Nexus* at the John Horgan campus!



10 things Camosun Co

Story by Ashley Hay

File

I'm officially counting down my final days here at Camosun. Once this semester is through, I'll be at a different school in a different city, living what I assume will be more or less the same life, but one that, for all intents and purposes, will be different too.

While I'm excited to start this next chapter of my life, I can't help but feel a little nostalgic for the place where my post-secondary career began. Here at Camosun, I've gained knowledge and experience and formed friendships that'll last a lifetime. I can also confidently say I became prepared for whatever academic challenges lie ahead of me. And yet, as I reflect on my time here, I can't help but dwell on the handful of areas where I feel Camosun falls short. I couldn't find a suggestion box (although, admittedly, I wasn't looking very hard) but I figured what better way to say farewell before I pack up my bags than with a loud-mouthed parting gift?

10. Campus life

When it comes to campus life, Camosun is in a pretty tough spot; most of us here have jobs, families, or any number of commitments that must fit alongside our studies. We're a pretty hard-working bunch; unfortunately, that also means that socializing with our classmates doesn't often take top priority (or even second, for that matter).

Still, I think it's important to remember that not everyone operates that way. Many students arrive here fresh out of high school and focus all of their attention on post-secondary education. So, shouldn't we prioritize some kind of campus life for them, if not for all of us?

Camosun has every opportunity to host events and activities that cultivate community, be it live productions, game nights, friendly competitions, or recreational sports. However, by failing to create these opportunities for connection, Camosun ultimately fails its students too.

The Camosun College Student Society (CCSS) does its part in putting on events; it's up to the students to come support them to ensure they keep happening.

9: Clubs

Going beyond campus social events, I'd also like to talk about Camosun's wildly underwhelming club scene. If you look at the CCSS club directory, you might find that a great deal of the clubs are practically dormant. Well, okay, "dormant" might be a little bit dramatic, but my point still stands. In fact, I've had several friends try to join these campus groups just to be stood up.

Now, admittedly, this is less of a Camosun issue and more of a student-engagement issue. You see, the clubs here are primarily student-led, with some oversight and support from the CCSS.

My suggestion? Get a third party involved. Faculty members, industry professionals, you name it. Granted, more casual groups like the Nintendo club probably don't need any more oversight than they already have; something tells me they're not exactly hurting for members. But more academic groups, like the psychology club, would likely benefit immensely from having someone with higher education or real-world experience involved.

And let's talk about a different issue I've noticed with Camosun's clubs: marketing.

Poor marketing does absolutely nothing to increase student engagement. I mean, how many people at Camosun don't even realize we have clubs, let alone interesting ones like knitting, martial arts, *Dungeons & Dragons*... the list goes on.

If you ask me, Camosun is in desperate need of a functional network where students can connect over shared interests and hobbies. So, hey, if you're looking for something to get involved in this semester, you might consider joining a club—or, alternatively, create your own. All you need are five students and a half-decent idea.

8. Lansdowne dining options

I think we can all agree that the dining options at Lansdowne are downright abysmal. In fact, let's list them off: there's Campus Caf in the Fisher Building, the coffee shop in Wilna Thomas, and that's it. Unless, of course, you include Dunlop House, although I've never met anyone who's actually been there, much less in between classes.

This sparse reality is utterly ridiculous. I mean, sure, you can get a pack of instant ramen from the bookstore or a bag of chips from a vending machine (assuming you find one that actually works), but are those really our only alternatives?

Comparatively, Interurban campus has five distinct dining spots—six if you include their pizza vending machine, and seven if you include the Classroom Restaurant. Talk about a Lansdowner.

Now, it's important to note that the Hillside Shopping Centre is only a 10-minute walk away from campus, featuring a bountiful food court that students can explore (well, depending on your definition of "bountiful"). But, in any case, I would argue that trekking off-campus is only a viable option if you have an extended break between classes, and that's just not a luxury that a lot of students have.

So why not revamp the empty cafe space beside the library? Or bring some of the Culinary students to Lansdowne? It's my hope that after my departure these questions may be answered.

7. Transportation

I'm sure most of us are familiar with the illustrious UVic bus exchange. As the second-largest transit destination in Greater Victoria, it accommodates roughly 25 percent of all local transit trips, with at least 14 bus routes passing through each day. Now, to put that number into perspective, Interurban and Lansdowne each get around half a dozen bus routes servicing them.

Of course, Camosun is smaller than UVic, so a direct comparison may be a little unfair, but it does highlight a clear issue with the infrastructure in and around Camosun that needs to be addressed.

Interurban is widely considered to be a commuter school and therefore must have a little more to offer in terms of parking, whereas Lansdowne just lost an entire lot to make room for the new student housing project. Now, ultimately, I think having affordable student housing is a net-positive for both the school and the community. However, I also think that if Camosun is actively reducing parking spaces for students, they should also be responsible for advocating for better public transit to pick up the slack. Of course, the college isn't entirely at fault for this (municipal transit gaps do seem a little bit out of their jurisdiction), but they have a duty—or should have, at least—to advocate for their students.

6. Academic Advising

Alright, here's where my critique gets personal. I started my journey as a University Transfer student about a year ago, knowing good and well that I'd eventually land myself someplace else. And as I've lived in Victoria my whole life, I've always known that UVic was the last place I wanted to continue my studies. I wanted to do my own thing; broaden my horizons. So, after careful consideration, I finally found a school that seemed like the perfect fit for me and promptly booked a meeting with an academic advisor to ensure that my course plan was on the right track.

It didn't take long for them to inform me that they mostly dealt with UVic transfers and had very little knowledge of the institution that I had planned to attend. So, we sat in their office staring at the BC Transfer Guide for about 30 minutes before they finally concluded that I was on the right track — no advising needed. And while I did feel a little reassured by that, I also felt dumbfounded. Like, why did I even bother booking this appointment?

College needs to change

gel, features writer

photo

I look back on that meeting now as nothing more than a laughable waste of time, especially considering it took weeks just to get the appointment (the process as gruelling as it is inefficient). So, I'd like to offer something of a proposal for the Academic Advising department: the online booking system used to set up appointments should require students to provide their major and school(s) of choice, rather than just their faculty. Specificity helps everyone, and giving advisors access to this information ahead of time would allow them to prepare more effectively for their meetings with students. Everybody wins.

5. Counselling services

From my very first day at Camosun, I found it strange that there was no online booking option for student counselling services. If you need support, your only options are to phone the office or to show up in person. There's no two ways about it. (Or, there's only two ways about it.)

But there's one small issue: as I mentioned earlier, a pretty good portion of Camosun's student body works while attending classes, so many people don't have the flexibility to schedule an appointment during office hours.

Beyond scheduling conflicts, many students who need access to professional counselling might not be comfortable walking into a physical building or speaking with a stranger over the phone. While those things may not seem intimidating to everyone, they are petrifying for others.

The point that I'm trying to make here is that if our massage-therapy clinic can implement an online booking system, then surely our mental-health services can do the same.

There was a time in my life when I would have greatly benefited from counselling, but if the only way to initiate that process was by walking into a building or making a phone call, I wouldn't have done it; I would have been completely paralyzed. And that's why I believe it's crucial for an educational institution to accommodate vulnerable students and make them feel safe, especially when they reach out for help.

4. Library hours

Over the past year, I've spent countless nights reading, writing, and studying at the McPherson Library at UVic, and it's not because I enjoy the aesthetic of their book-cases. Rather, it's open significantly later than Camosun's libraries: 11 pm most nights during the fall and winter semesters, and midnight during exam season. During the summer, it closes at 9 pm from Monday to Thursday and 6 pm on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays.

Working late is when I really thrive. There's something so motivating about being surrounded by students who are equally focused on what they're doing. It holds me accountable; it makes me feel like I'm right where I'm supposed to be.

Unfortunately, Camosun's libraries close at 8 pm (6 pm on Fridays; 5 pm on Saturdays and Sundays at Lansdowne, while the Interurban library is closed on the weekends). During the summer semester, weekends are closed entirely at both campuses and the libraries close at 4 pm on weekdays.

I'm sure this schedule seems fine on paper, but in reality, it fails to account for students who juggle heavy course loads or have to work late shifts. I mean, I can think of several instances when studying on campus wasn't an option for me, so off to UVic I went. An inconvenient and unnecessary journey just to get some work done.

3. Early registration

I don't know about you guys, but I've just about had it with the early-registration privileges that are granted to certain cohorts here at Camosun. I mean, seriously, I'm not convinced that anyone has experienced true, unbridled rage until they've tried to register for a class, only to be told that Criminal Justice students get priority for the next three weeks. Especially when, at the end of that timeframe, only a handful of them actually registered anyway.

Additionally, student-athletes are able to curate their schedules ahead of everybody else. Now, logistically, I understand why this is necessary, and it's by no means something exclusive to Camosun. But with recent budget cuts whittling our course sections down to the barest of minimums, seats are diminishing faster than ever. And as a result, tensions are starting to rise.

Now, unlike some of my other grievances, I don't actually have a clear (or unclear) solution to offer here. The fact of the matter is early registration is both a privilege for some and a hindrance for others. Student-athletes must balance their coursework with training and games, and Criminal Justice students—like other students—must meet their program requirements to graduate, even if it puts everyone else at a distinct disadvantage.

2. Timetable

As we know, course sections have been dropping like flies, and as a result, the remaining classes have been compressed into identical time slots on the exact same days. This nonsensical setup has made planning a stable semester nearly impossible. I, for example, had to cycle through 10 course options just to fill the 12:30 pm opening I had on Mondays and Wednesdays (believe me, I really wish I was exaggerating).

Instead of creating some semblance of balance, it seems like every course is now being offered either at the crack of dawn or in the middle of the night. If you ask me, this chaotic layout defies all logic. And it might be funny, too, if it weren't so frustrating. I mean, how are students supposed to meet their program requirements when so many classes are scheduled concurrently at 8:30 am on Tuesdays and Thursdays?

The current academic calendar almost feels like it's setting students up to fail, which is an incredibly disheartening sentiment to harbour toward an educational institution. And just to drive my point home a little bit further: I'm an English major who cannot take a single English class this semester. I mean, come on.

1. Course catalogue

It's a radical concept, but I'm of the opinion that if a course is no longer being offered by the college, it should be removed from the catalogue altogether. This simple change would have saved me a world of hurt when I was mapping out my final semester.

It is incredibly discouraging to build your plan around courses that are "typically offered fall only," just to find that they've been quietly abandoned. So, how do we rectify this? Well, instead of cluttering the course catalogue with inactive sections, Camosun could simply move them to the syllabus archive. This way, students can still view them without mistakenly relying on them to fulfill their program requirements.

Many of the courses that are no longer active were nullified due to low enrolment, but I don't think that assessment is entirely fair. These numbers don't reflect a lack of student interest, but rather an impossible decision that needed to be made. In recent history, students have been forced to prioritize overlapping classes and rely on online options to maintain balance. In fact, one online section of ENGL 151 has a staggering waitlist of over 40 students. And out of all the university-level course sections offered online, nearly 55 percent have waitlists as of the time of writing this, while the less desirable in-person sections sit half empty. This is not sustainable.

It's important to note that beyond who is to blame, there are viable solutions. In fact, it's less about what started the problem and more about what resolves it. And if all we do is sit idly by while our surroundings fall apart in front of us, we forfeit the right to be shocked when faced with justified criticism.

There's no denying that I've gained invaluable knowledge and community here at Camosun, but the gaps remain, and there's still so much that needs to be rectified—it's important to acknowledge both truths at once.

stage

Couples Clownselling uses comedy as light-hearted therapy



COUPLES CLOWNSELLING/MITCHELL JOHNSON/THIS THING ON?

Vancouver comedians Aaron Campbell and Cass Furman get the audience involved at *Couples Clownselling*.

LANE CHEVRIER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Have you ever considered couples counselling, but are super turned off by how serious and humourless it can be? Wouldn't you rather get half-drunk off red wine and laugh at other couples as they laugh at themselves? Well then, Vancouver comedians Aaron Campbell and Cass Furman have just the event for you, with their travelling comedy show, *Couples Clownselling*.

"I feel like a lot of stand-up comedians, or comedians in general, have a lot of material about their relationships," says Furman. "We just had this idea of doing couples. We wanted to see what it would be

like to bring on stand-up comedians and their partners, most of whom are not comedians, onto the show, and see what happens."

The format of the show is simple. Campbell and Furman are a scrappy couple who find other scrappy couples and improvise answers to audience questions about their relationships.

"The audience gets to ask anonymous questions at the start of the show and put them in a bucket," says Campbell. "We quickly sort them and try to match them to people we think would answer them funnily. The questions range [from] anything from relationship advice to what people are going through."

Part of the dynamic tension of

the format is that often one member of each guest couple is not accustomed to performing on stage, which increases relatability with the audience, and accordingly, the humour. Furman and Campbell are skilled at doing the heavy lifting in moments where anxiety or awkwardness cause guests to stumble, and they often use their own relationship as a scapegoat for laughs by pretending to argue with each other.

"I tell all the couples is that if they can't answer a question or they're struggling to answer a question or come up with an answer, Aaron and I will answer it," says Furman. "And we'll usually—more often than not—fight or bicker on

"People are very curious about what it means to fall in love and stay in love, and when that looks authentic and when it doesn't."

CASS FURMAN
COUPLES CLOWNSELLING

stage to take the heat off of the other couple."

The off-the-cuff honesty behind the show's format allows for the audience to ask anything they can think of, and, usually, the performers are game.

"We do give the couples a chance to give us the no-go zone, and we always respect that," says Campbell. "We give them the out, but for the most part they are pretty down with anything, and what's cool is that they don't have to be funny answers, because honesty is sometimes the funny thing."

As social creatures, part of what makes humour funny is the mutual release of tension or discomfort. As the show progresses, the guests become more familiar with being in the spotlight, and the audience becomes more familiar with the guests as people.

"The audience can feel the tension, and the tension also helps create comedy, right?" says Furman. "When the person does say something funny, or does ease into the role of, you know, being on stage, people get really excited about that."

The real curiosity of the format

is the demystification of relationships as a social experiment. The audience may be comprised of people who have had their own experience with the highs and lows of long-term relationships and are curious what it's like for others, or they might be people who are unfamiliar with love and what it means to be in love... for better or for worse.

"People are very curious about what it means to fall in love and stay in love, and when that looks authentic and when it doesn't," says Furman. "I think people are just very curious to see those relationships in front of them, because no matter if the couple is the funniest couple on the show, or whether they're nervous, or whatever's happening, you get a glimpse into their relationship, and I think people just like to voyeur that dynamic."

Couples Clownselling
7 pm Saturday, September 19
\$30, The Mint
linktr.ee/couplesclownselling

review

Small exhibits filling big role at Royal BC Museum

NIK OVSTAAS
STUDENT EDITOR

The Royal BC Museum has been slowly but surely repatriating artifacts and belongings to the Indigenous peoples that are their rightful owners. This endeavour, a worthwhile step in the name of truth and reconciliation, has the side effect of causing rolling closures in various departments of the museum's permanent collection. This has created the unique opportunity to host smaller exhibits in the common areas of the third floor's Indigenous Belongings Gallery (formerly Ethnology). These exhibits focus on Indigenous peoples of our local lands and the environments that they have been stewarding for millennia.

GO FISH is an immersive video project by Scott Smith and Nettie Wild that focuses on the annual herring spawning season that transforms the coastal waters of the K'ómoks First Nation, providing livelihood for locals throughout the generations. The film is presented on three screens playing tandem footage, reminiscent of looking out the front windows of a fishing trawler.

GO FISH strives to illustrate all the dramatic scenery of the life cycle on full display while simultaneously allowing for the poetry in motion of the natural world to be fully brought



PHOTO PROVIDED

GO FISH is at the Royal BC Museum until January of next year, along with photo exhibit *The Island in the Middle of Everywhere*.

to life through kaleidoscopic camera artistry by cinematographer Smith and a sweeping musical score by Owen Belton. Sound designer/editor Michael Brockington rounds out the audio with the sounds of the west coast: crashing waves and the strident chorus of seagulls haggling for fish.

All the team members are connected to these waters in some way, and the film feels like a love

letter to the fishing practice that has supported the inhabitants here—human and otherwise—since time immemorial.

The Island in the Middle of Everywhere is a photographic offering documenting the members of the Xwe'tay/Lasqueti Archeological Project in their mission to illuminate the vast archeological record and pronounced historical significance that Xwe'tay/Lasqueti Island has

held for the Coast Salish peoples throughout the last 12 millennia or thereabouts. The island was perfectly situated in the central coastal waters of the Salish Sea to function as a central hub of trade for the Coast Salish nations, with canoes being the primary mode of travel through the archipelagic waters.

The island itself was also a fertile agricultural ground, as evidenced by artifacts and features dating back

roughly 3,500 years. There were also methods used to increase the fishing and foraging used in the intertidal zone, such as terraced rock walls to boost clam production and specialized fish traps and weirs for capturing salmon and herring.

While neither of these exhibits achieves the grandiosity or archaeological intrigue that is expected from Royal BC Museum these days with massive exhibits like the current Egyptian artifacts on loan from Denmark, endeavours like these ones are important for our local culture. Gaining a better understanding of our neighbours in these unceded lands, as well as an appreciation of what these islands have contributed throughout the ages to our way of life, is always worthwhile, and while the museum strives to not perpetuate the mistakes of the past by going over its collection of Indigenous belongings, we might as well bring our attention closer to home.

Oh, and both these exhibits—running until January 10, 2027—are included in the price of a regular admission to the museum, so you can still go and play in the pirate ship, gawk at the mammoth, and, my personal favourite, pretend you're the Beastmaster in the Natural History Gallery. And you'll still feel like a smart college student when you head home.

review

Alisha’s Light incredible coming-out story

I found myself wondering on the drive home how she could possibly keep all that in her head, before deciding that the only answer was that it was because it had never really left.

NIK OVSTAAS
STUDENT EDITOR

The long-running Victoria Fringe Festival is in its 40th incarnation, once again brought to our fair city by Intrepid Theatre to showcase outsider performance art. Fringe fests have long been the domain of the freaks and geeks, and a safe harbour for anyone not quite fitting into the mould of what you could call the “societally sanctioned,” and this year’s roster is no exception. In the true spirit of art and the world of theatre, there’s been no kowtowing to puritanical prescriptions, and *Alisha’s Light* is at the vanguard of it all.

For those unfamiliar with what a Fringe Festival is, a quick explanation: Fringe fests feature a roster of performances that are not selected by a panel of judges, and are not censored, meaning that the shows are chosen by either first-come-first-served registration or a random lottery system. All the box-office revenue is given to the performer, and the venues are often untraditional spaces and smaller

theatres off the beaten path. The tradition of Fringe festivals began in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1947, when eight uninvited theatre troupes showed up unannounced to the Edinburgh International Festival, and performed their artistry on the sidelines (or fringe) of the official festival, giving rise to the title.

Alisha’s Light is the autobiographical spoken-word poetry of one Alisha Richard detailing her coming-out story and the events that rose and fell alongside. What, for anyone, is a time of great upheaval and reckoning—and can come with devastating loss and triumphant gain—is something that, for many of us, happens in our teens and 20s. The timing can be the trick, because although we’re often still living under the roofs and auspices of parental figures, we’re also at a stage of life where we’re tentatively forging paths and putting down roots. Not so for Richard, who came out as a transgender woman at the age of 57, with a full-on wife, traditional job replete with a large cadre of co-workers, and two grown sons.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Alisha’s Light - Forever 57 was performed in Victoria as part of the Victoria Fringe Festival.

These high stakes, as I learned through poems and re-enacted conversations, did not dissuade Alisha. They did not convince her to just wait for another lifetime, as they may have some of us. Instead, they seemingly galvanised her, spurring her onwards, making her determined that the aforementioned light she had discovered inside her when trying on her wife’s brightly coloured dresses one day deserved to be allowed to shine and be shared with the people she cared about most.

The poetry, while having clear delineations as it moves from topic to topic—often highlighted by lighting changes and stage movement—flows incredibly smoothly. As Richard moves through subjects—some lighthearted and funny, others decidedly darker and more upsetting—her cadence altering to reflect emotional intonation, she never misses a step. I found myself wondering on the drive home how she could possibly keep all that in her head, before deciding that the only answer was that it was because

it had never really left. It’s obvious throughout the performance, especially in its darker moments, that this is a woman baring her heart and soul to a room full of strangers, and trusting that her reserves of inner strength—and her stores of inner light—will be strong and bright enough to shore up any damage taken.

This show should be required viewing for anyone interested in making political proclamations about the rights of transgender women.

review

Spider-Man: Brand New Day great movie 25 percent of the time



A bunch of ninjas show up for three minutes and never again. The Punisher is there for literally no reason. MJ and Ned make an appearance, but they are clueless and useless. This is an MCU action seizure.

LANE CHEVRIER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

In 2021, current Spidey actor Tom Holland said, “If I’m playing Spider-Man after I’m 30, I’ve done something wrong.” So, when it was announced he was in talks to star in *Spider-Man: Brand New Day*, he indicated that if he were to don the mask again, the story would have to be something special.

Then came the trailer. Peter Parker is lonely, worn-down, depressed. He doggedly throws himself into the role of Spider-Man solely to distract himself from the fact that his soulmate and best friend forgot he ever existed. He finds himself losing time, waking up in strange places, and realizing that his spider genes are taking over.

For Spider-Man nerds, this is reminiscent of the “Man-Spider” story arc from the comics and the 1994 cartoon, but, more importantly, it hearkens to the original Brand New Day storyline from the comics, where Parker dealt with

loneliness, existential darkness, and mental-health crises. This kind of raw, character-driven storytelling hasn’t been seen since Iron Man or Logan. Modern MCU has become topical, tepid, and flashy. Can Marvel Studios allow themselves to take the risk of focusing on a dark, serious, slow burn of a storyline?

No. No, they can’t.

I watched in horror as the teaser trailer was revealed to be a flimsy red herring. Let’s talk about the real story of MCU’s *Brand New Day*. It starts out strong. Peter is battling his own demons, the curse of selflessness and obligation, the curse of a hero. He begins to lose himself.

Suddenly, a spooky villain comes out of left field and starts possessing people’s minds, causing them to do horrible things, and intentionally kills several people in cold blood. Spidey soon discovers that this is... *Jean Grey? From the X-Men?! What’s going on?*

Oh. Jean is to be featured as a

major protagonist in the upcoming *Secret Wars*. She hijacked an entire Spider-Man film just to set up her role in the next Avengers instalment. Well, that’s cheap. Furthermore, she’s portrayed as a pure, innocent victim of an evil corporation. When I think about innocent victims, I don’t think of people who mind control an old man to step in front of a speeding bus, then chuck innocent civilians from skyscrapers.

This is what is known as egregious mischaracterization, reframing a narrative to fit a contrived story. It assumes the audience are idiots, and disrespects those who were hoping for a rich, intellectual character story.

Instead, what we got was a series of irrelevant, unrelated combat encounters. A bunch of ninjas show up for three minutes and never again. The Punisher is there for literally no reason. MJ and Ned make an appearance, but they are clueless and useless. This is an MCU action seizure.

There was a great story in the making here, and I wish I could see the early drafts of this script. I get the feeling that somebody wanted to do something really special, but corporate Marvel Studios didn’t trust their audience to have the intelligence and attention span greater than drooling, brain-dead toddlers.



FOR MORE DETAILS ON THESE EVENTS AND TO STAY UP TO
DATE WITH EVERYTHING THE CCSS IS DOING,
FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM: @CAMOSUNSTUDENTS
AND CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE: WWW.CAMOSUNSTUDENT.ORG

SEPTEMBER

September 8 & 9 - CAMFEST!

Interurban & Lansdowne Campuses

September 10 & 11 - CCSS Clubs Days

Interurban & Lansdowne Campuses

September 15, 16 & 17 - Consent Awareness Week

Interurban & Lansdowne Campuses

September 23 - Latin Festival

Lansdowne Campus

September 23 - 30 - Nominations open for CCSS Fall Elections!

All Campuses

September 19 & 26 - Women's Self Defense Classes

Interurban & Lansdowne Campuses

OCTOBER

October 3 & 10 - Women's Self Defense Classes

Interurban & Lansdowne Campuses

October 5 - 9 - Breast Cancer Awareness Week

Interurban & Lansdowne Campuses

October 20 - 22 - CCSS Elections Voting Period

All Campuses

Late October - Halloweiner Hot Dog Days

Interurban & Lansdowne Campuses

Late October - Dia De Los Muertos Club Night

Location TBD

October 30 - Rocky Horror Picture Show!

Lansdowne Campus

NOVEMBER

Early November - Diwali Club Night

Location TBD

November 16-20 - Transgender Awareness Week

Interurban & Lansdowne Campuses

November 24 - CCSS Christmas Market!

Lansdowne Campus

Weekly Free Bread & Produce Days

Brought to you by the CCSS Student Food Bank

Lansdowne Campus: Sept.10, Sept.24, Oct.8, Oct.22, Nov.5, Nov.19, Dec.3, Dec.17

Interurban Campus: Sept.17, Oct.1, Oct.15, Oct.29, Nov.12, Nov.26, Dec.10

Blackberry curd tarts

- Tart shell ingredients:
- 1/3 cup butter softened
 - 2 tbs sugar
 - 1 egg yolk
 - 1 tsp vanilla extract
 - 1 cup flour
- Blackberry curd ingredients:
- 2 1/4 cups fresh blackberries
 - 3/4 cup blackberry puree
 - 1/2 cup sugar
 - 2 eggs
 - 1 egg white
 - Pinch of salt
 - 4 tbs cold butter
 - 1 tsp lemon juice
 - 1 tsp vanilla extract

One of my favourite late-summer activities is picking blackberries. I highly recommend foraging for your own blackberries because it's almost \$6 a pint for them at the grocery store. Always be careful when foraging: double-check that the plant you are harvesting from is correct and thoroughly wash everything before eating. This is a fun recipe to do with friends after all the hard work of blackberry picking.

For the tart shell, measure out 1/3 cup of softened butter into a bowl, then add 2 tbs of sugar. Mix with a spatula until completely combined. Then add in the egg yolk and 1 tsp of vanilla extract; mix as thoroughly as possible. Pour in 1 cup of flour into the mixture and

This is a fun recipe to do with friends after all the hard work of blackberry picking.

mix with the spatula. Then, use your hands to knead the dough until it resembles a smooth ball. Flatten your dough into a flat disk in some plastic wrap, and let the dough rest in the fridge for 30 minutes.

When the tart dough has rested, take about 2 tbs of it and form it to your tart molds or a muffin tin. Cut off any excess from the top edge of the mold you are using. Using a fork, poke holes on the bottom and sides of your tarts, then place them in the freezer for 10 minutes. Pre-heat your oven to 350 F and put your tarts on the second-to-bottom rack; bake them for 20 minutes. Let your tart shells cool completely before filling.

For the blackberry curd, start by mashing or blending your berries to a smooth consistency. Then pour the mash into a sieve above a bowl to remove the seeds and excess pulp. Use a spatula to move around the mash to help the liquid pass through the sieve. The blackberry liquid in the bowl should be around

3/4 cup. Scramble your 2 eggs and 1 egg white in a separate bowl. Pour your blackberry liquid into a pot with 1/2 cup sugar, scrambled eggs, 1 tsp lemon juice, pinch of salt, and 1 tsp vanilla extract. Stir constantly on medium-low heat until the blackberry curd is thick and bubbling.

When your blackberry curd is done cooking, take it off the heat and pour it into a bowl. Stir in butter 1 tbs at a time until all 4 tbs of butter are fully incorporated. Let the blackberry curd cool for five minutes then put plastic wrap on the surface of the curd. Place the curd in the fridge to cool completely. Give the curd a mix before putting it into the shells.

When the tart shells and blackberry curd are fully cooled, assemble them together by filling the shells with as much blackberry curd as you can fit. Have them set in the fridge for about 10 minutes; then, they are ready to enjoy.



TRILLIUM MCNABB/NEXUS

Blackberry curd tarts are a great way to use picked blackberries.

What even is a municipality?

Politics—you're probably already familiar with the term, or you at least hold a notion of what the concept means. A simple way to think about politics is to think of them as the complicated web of relationships that humans hold between each other and their environment(s).

To best introduce municipalities, it's first crucial to understand what politics are and how they affect you and those around you.

For example, imagine you're pitching a promotion to a new boss. You're confident that you have all the necessary skills and qualifications needed to take on a new role, but your current boss has no previous history with your performance. Through reputable references and a carefully crafted narrative, you must construct a professional and approachable persona that persuades your boss that you're the most qualified applicant for the position. To reach this goal, you're being asked to leverage evidence and lobby your issue with a person of authority.

Even a scenario as common as this counts as political discourse—or, in short form, politics. The next jump in understanding comes with recognizing the role of different levels of government—more specifically, where their responsibilities lie.

Say you're walking down the street in Saanich, and you stop to drop a food wrapper in a nearby

The main purpose of this column is to give you as a reader the tools you need to better understand how politics are affecting you and perhaps give insight into places where your voice can be heard.

garbage can. Have you ever thought about how the garbage is collected? How about when you're biking through downtown Victoria, and you stop at a traffic light designed specifically for bicycles? Have you ever considered the people who implement these tiny details into our lives? The answer is the same for both—the overarching decision-makers behind these social amenities are municipalities.

Municipalities—short for “municipal corporations”—are the established governing bodies that deal with the physical and social infrastructure people encounter on a daily basis. This covers issues as small as sidewalks and parking spots, and as wide as approving major construction projects, protecting and maintaining parks, and ensuring communities have access to adequate emergency services.

The number of projects a municipality oversees often depends on the size of a population and capacity of the wider community. Take, for example, the City of Toronto versus the District of Sooke. With

an additional population of a few million, the City of Toronto is forced to act on broader societal issues, including international relations, provincial safety concerns, and even upholding the imagined “image” of Canada. With the District of Sooke, 15,000 people would never put this same pressure on the town council, but that also translates to their economic resources being slimmer. Thus, we are introduced to the municipalities' general role in governance.

The main purpose of this column is to give you as a reader the tools you need to better understand how politics are affecting you and perhaps give insight into places where your voice can be heard. Whether this means better understanding the role of public-service workers or simply an understanding of what in the world “zoning” means, I hope this column can help unravel the complicated network of local politics and how they affect you.

Welcome to the wonderful world of municipal politics.

eyed on campus



GREG PRATT/NEXUS

Camosun recently turned into Blackwell Academy as crews were on site filming.

Evie the Alien - Jazmyn Hodges



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