

What Now???

A Decision Making Booklet for Students by Susan Spellman Cann Counsellor

Thinking about your future after Bishop Mc Nally High School and taking steps towards it.

“What am I going to be doing after high school?”

This is the only question you need to ask yourself at this time. Don't put any more pressure on yourself than you need to.

- ✚ Take the time to think about your options
- ✚ Think about what you know about yourself
- ✚ What are your strengths/interests
- ✚ What are you passionate about?
- ✚ Ask others for advice
- ✚ Research different occupations... ultimately, the decision is yours but there is help available.

Research Alternatives.

Take interest inventories, personality tests, value profiles, skill assessments, etc.

The Career Centre is there to help you

Go on **Career Cruising** user name mcnally password careers

Begin the process:

Research all the alternatives you are considering.

- Some of these may require degrees at university

- Others may require a journeyman certificate, or any other level of post secondary courses

Each has its own value. **The most desirable route is up to you. Each is as important.** All levels of training and education are important because the dynamics of the workforce is changing. More people will be retiring from the work place in the next ten years than will be joining it so it is important in your decision making you look at job trends and which areas will see a growth in years to come.

Two trends to note are:

1. The availability of work in the trades, specifically construction
2. Healthcare; especially in connection with the aging population.

Resources:

Below you will find a list of different areas of resources to help you.

- Teachers
- Parents
- Guidance counselors
- University/College Calendars
- University/College representatives
- studentcounsellor.com
- Professionals in your chosen field
- Family and friends
- The Career Centre at Bishop Mc Nally

The Career Centre houses most Canadian University and College calendars.

These are updated annually. Past calendars are a useful resource for courses available. These may be borrowed. Most websites now have calendar information.

Post secondary institutions send representatives to inform students of their programs.

Please listen to announcements and check posters for times.

Expect visits this year from:

- University of Calgary
- Mount Royal College
- SAIT
- St. Mary's College
- University of Alberta
- University of Lethbridge and many more

University / College websites:

For the most updated information on Post Secondary Institutions please visit their websites and explore:

Alberta College of Art and Design

www.acad.ab.ca

Athabasca University

www.athabascau.ca

Bow Valley College

www.bowvalleycollege.ca

Devry Institute of Technology

www.devry.ca

Grant MacEwan College

www.macewan.ca/web/home/index.cfm

Lethbridge Community College

www.lethbridgecollege.ab.ca

Medicine Hat College

www.mhc.ab.ca

Mount Royal College

www.mtroyal.ab.ca

Olds College

www.oldscollege.ab.ca

Red Deer College

www.rdc.ab.ca

SAIT

www.sait.ab.ca

St. Mary's College

www.stmc.ab.ca

University of Alberta

www.ualberta.ca

University of Calgary

www.ucalgary.ca

University of Lethbridge

www.uleth.ca

Alberta also has two technical institutes that offer programs tailored to workplace requirements. Technical institutes offer certificate, diploma, applied degrees See the web site

www.advancededucation.gov.ab.ca/college/AppliedDegree

apprenticeship and continuing education programs.

NAIT www.nait.ca

SAIT www.sait.ab.ca/flash.htm

Please sign up for any information sessions in the Career Centre.

These representatives are an excellent resource. They have answers to your questions about any particular program at their school. They also have invaluable information on housing etc.

Some universities visit Calgary for an evening information session at a downtown hotel, or invite students to their location for a tour. These dates will also be posted on the Post Secondary bulletin board in Student Services.

Entrance Requirements

These vary greatly for each institution and program of study. The information can be found in the Calendar for the school or see the Career Centre for help in reading and understanding the different requirements.

You will need to know which program you wish to study as well as which school you want to go to.

Check it out

- Do not assume you do not have the marks to go to the program of your choice. Always find the correct information, do not rely on what others may have told you.

If you find something you want to pursue as a career then you will find a way of doing it. The Career Centre can help find similar courses, different alternatives, or other programs which may work just as well.

The general understanding is you require 5 subjects at a Grade 12 level at an average of 75 to be accepted at a university. Most faculties require a Pure Math 30. Colleges for a university transfer program require the same subjects but allow for a lower average %. U of C will accept Math 10 Applied for some faculties.

- St. Mary's entrance average is 65% .
- U of L is 65% as well.

This is not to say the quality of the education in these institutions is lower. Mount Royal College, for example, has a transfer program where all your courses count toward a full degree at a university. It is generally understood Mount Royal College will have degree granting status.

There are also Diploma programs at college which require less in the way of academics usually the minimum is English and Math at a 30 level. Some programs require only English, others a High School Diploma.

As you can see this is quite complicated and it is much better to check with the Career Centre or Counsellor rather than guess the requirements.

Have a BACK-UP PLAN..

This is especially important as, by the time you have found out if you have been accepted by your first choice it is too late to apply anywhere else. This allows YOU the opportunity to choose rather than have doors closed in front of you because the deadlines are passed!

Applications

Know when you are going to apply to the school or schools of your choice.

Most schools have concrete deadlines for applications for specific areas of study.

You should be applying when the school begins to take applications NOT AT THE DEADLINES.

For example Mount Royal College has a first- come first- serve policy with applications being accepted on December 1 and their available spots being filled by mid-January.

For specific application times please see the website for the school you wish to attend or see a counsellor.

Generally speaking applications should be in to preferred schools by the end of **December**. In most cases you can apply on the Internet and some cases it is the preferred way.

All Ontario applications go through a centralized system with 1 application for all the universities.

ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES:

[Carleton University](#)

[Lakehead University](#)

[McMaster's University](#)

[Queen's University](#)

[Ryerson Polytechnical University](#)

[Sir Wilfrid Laurier University](#)
[University of Guelph](#)
[University of Ottawa](#)
[University of Toronto](#)
[University of Waterloo](#)
[University of Western Ontario](#)
[University of Windsor](#)
[York University](#)

QUEBEC UNIVERSITIES:

[Bishop's University](#)
[Concordia University](#)
[McGill University](#)
[University de Laval](#)
[University de Montreal](#)
[University de Quebec](#)
[University de Sherbrooke](#)

OTHER CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

BRITISH COLUMBIA:

[University of British Columbia](#)
[University of Northern British Columbia](#)
[University of Victoria](#)
[Simon Fraser University](#)

SASKATCHEWAN:

[University of Saskatchewan](#)

MANITOBA:

[University of Manitoba](#)

THE ATLANTIC PROVINCES

Acadia	<u>www.acadiau.ca/</u>
Cape Breton U.	<u>www.cbu.ca/</u>
Dalhousie	<u>www.dal.ca/</u>
Memorial	<u>www.mun.ca/</u>
Mount Allison	<u>www.mta.ca/</u>
Mt. St. Vincent	<u>www.msvu.ca/</u>
St. Francis Xavier	<u>www.stfx.ca/</u>

St. Mary's	www.smu.ca/
St. Thomas	www.stthomasu.ca/
U. of New Brunswick	www.unb.ca/
University of Kings College	www.ukings.ca/
U. Prince Edward Island	www.upei.ca/

US Universities and Colleges Info:

<http://www.usuniversities.com/>

[Peterson's Guide on U.S. Universities](#)

[The Princeton Review](#) - Talks about universities and colleges such as SAT and how to get there.

[Yahoo Colleges & University Home Pages](#) - Worldwide colleges and universities close to 12,000 college's

[Christian Colleges and Universities](#)

[U.S. News and World Report](#) - Compare up to four colleges and universities.

[SAT Test Information & Sign-up](#)

[Scholarship Search Engine](#)

The Career Centre also stocks paper applications for most of the preferred choices.

The application process differs greatly for universities in the US. Please see a career advisor for information regarding the relevant testing required (SAT'S ACT's etc)

Some universities will offer early admission if you meet all their academic requirements. This may be granted in February or March if you have done well on your 1st semester courses. This admission is granted on the understanding it can be cancelled if your 2nd semester marks pull your average down below the required %. The advantage to

early admission is you can often choose your 1st year courses in May or June and know you have the courses you require.

Transcripts

Official Alberta Education Transcripts

Official transcripts must be sent to the university or college you are applying to. They are not sent to your home.

Simply pick up a TRANSCRIPT REQUEST FORM from Student Services or on the internet (search 'Alberta Learning' and then on their site select "Transcript Request"). Fill out this form: send it to Alberta Learning in Edmonton and the Department of Education there will send your official marks to the universities or colleges you list on the form. There is a \$10 fee for each request.

Need a High School Transcript:

Follow the link:

<http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/learning/studentservices/transcripts/>

These marks can be requested by the university for the end of both semesters or only after the second, in June. If in doubt what is required it is advised you send one copy at both times.

It is recommended you send the request to Edmonton at the same time; you put in the applications to the schools of your choice.

Interim Transcripts prepared by Bishop Mc Nally High School

Some schools may require more than the Alberta Education transcripts mentioned above, since those records only include COMPLETED courses, they do not show IN-PROGRESS marks. So some schools will ask for INTERIM grades.

These can be obtained from our counselling office. Many times it is useful to send these midterm grades whether they have been specifically requested or not.

SCHOLARSHIPS

There are website links from the Career website which will connect you to many scholarships available.

Some of the most important sites include

1. www.studentcounsellor.com

- find a scholarship link, username AB403CHE password Calgary

2. www.alis.gov.ab.ca

3. www.canlearn.ca

4. www.myschool101.com

The Scholarship board is regularly updated with new information. Keep an eye on it for any scholarship relevant to you. There are many scholarships available but the academic portion of most is becoming high... over 90%... Look for smaller scholarships also, often they require less academics and more community involvement.

Before you begin to fill out scholarship applications, it is useful for you to take the time, to list, under three headings, your accomplishments to date. These headings would be:

ACADEMIC

COMMUNITY SERVICE
LEADERSHIP.

These are the 3 important prerequisites of almost all scholarships.

Academic accomplishments include... honours, awards, % received over your high school career. Report cards and teachers' letters can attest to this level of constant academics.

Community Service accomplishments include any church work, volunteer service anytime over the past 6 years. Do you canvass for the Juvenile Diabetes society? Do you help fill food boxes at the Mustard Seed Ministry? Did you go on a church mission?

Leadership is seen mainly in school council but could also be local politics, supervising a babysitting group at church. Any activity where you have taken the initiative to start a project or supervise a continuing one.

Take time also to practice writing a report on why you should be granted a scholarship. It's not as easy as it sounds to tell of all your own accomplishments while still sounding modest!!!

Many scholarships also request a reference letter or letter of recommendation from an academic referee. If this letter is to present insight into your academic performance or leadership abilities it should be written by the principal. You should provide enough time for him to write this letter and give a list of activities, clubs, volunteer work and accomplishments to help.

Some of you may qualify for the Rutherford Scholarship. These funds are from the Alberta Heritage Fund. The current maximum scholarship is \$2500. It is based on a formula which grants \$400 for Grade 10 results, \$800 for Grade 11 results and \$1300 for Grade 12 results. APPLICATION FORMS ARE AVAILABLE DURING THE SECOND SEMESTER IN STUDENT SERVICES. This scholarship is paid out purely on marks and you are not competing with anyone other than yourself....so make sure you put in an application if you have close to an 80 % in any of Grades 10 11 or 12. You will hear in August what monies you have qualified for and will receive a cheque for that amount in the November of the first year of your post secondary education.

There are also scholarships for Apprenticeships and for students from the RAP program who are continuing at College with their vocational training.

UPCOMING SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINES

Scholarships are open to students across Canada who:

- are in their final year at high school.
- have demonstrated outstanding community leadership.

- possess the academic skills to successfully enter and complete college or university.

For further information, please visit the Counselling Department or access the district website

www.cssd.ab.ca

and search under *students...* then *scholarships*.

DEADLINE: For the Alexander Rutherford Scholarships

MAY 1st

<p>Alexander Rutherford Scholarship</p>	<p>\$400 gr. 10 \$800 gr. 11 \$1,300 gr. 12</p>	<p>80% combined average in 5 subjects including:</p> <p>a) English 10 or 13;</p> <p>b) Two of Social Studies 10, Math 10A or P, Science 10, a second language 10;</p> <p>c) Any other subjects at the 1000 level including the above. Two half courses may be combined.</p> <p>http://www.alis.gov.ab.ca</p>
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AWARDS INFORMATION

Deadline

May 31

Form of Assistance

Students Finance Board

Description:

The Federal and Provincial governments both provide student loan plans. The Student Finance Board administers both Province of Alberta and Canada Student Loans. Both loans are applied for on one application form. It is recommended that students apply before May 31st to receive money by September 1st. Application forms may be obtained from Student Services in April or from Students' Finance Board, Rm 401, 855 - 8 Ave. SW, Calgary AB T2P 3P1. Phone: 297-6344.

<http://www.alis.gov.ab.ca/learning/FinancialAssistance>

Deadline: July 31
Assoc. of Municipal Districts & Counties)

AAMD & C Scholarship Program (Alberta

Description:

Student must be resident of a municipality which is a member in good standing of the AAMD&C, be registered to commence their first year of studies at a recognized Alberta post-secondary institution, and be pursuing a course of studies which is of relevance to local government and/or rural communities. Applications must include letter, transcripts, brief resume, and written confirmation of residency. Send to AAMD&C, 4504 - 101 St. Edmonton, Alberta T6E 5G9

Unknown Alberta Opportunities Bursary Provides non-repayable assistance of \$500-\$3000. Post-secondary students with a minimum of \$4000 of student loans qualify. Priority is given to those with the highest need.

<http://www.alis.gov.ab.ca/learning/FinancialAssistance>

Deadline: Unknown Student Business Loans

Description:

Up to \$3000 interest free loan for students wanting to start a summer business. Must submit a concise business plan, funding is on a first-come first-served basis. Loan is interest free until October 1 following the summer of the loan.

Deadline: Ongoing

Anytime Bank of Montreal "Brain Money" Student Line of Credit

Description: Full or part-time student entering any year of post-secondary education. Borrow up to a maximum of \$6500/year for four years. Pay monthly interest on the amount you use. Please note that these loans do not qualify for the Alberta Opportunities Bursary assistance.

Deadline: Ongoing Millennium Scholarship Foundation Bursary Program \$1000 to \$4000

Description: Only students who apply to the Students Finance Board for assistance qualify for this Bursary. Awarded to post-secondary students who demonstrate merit and have the greatest financial need. Application included on Student Loan application.

<http://www.millenniumscholarships.ca/en/main.html>

Deadline: Ongoing

KidSport Society Registration Fees, equipment etc.

Description: KidSport assists economically disadvantaged Alberta kids to overcome barriers which prevent them from participating in sports. For more information and a community contact call 1-

POST SECONDARY INFORMATION...

Certificate, diploma, degree . . . what's the difference?

Certificate, diploma, applied degree some people think they are the same thing however, there are some important differences in the way these words are used in Alberta's post-secondary education system.

Alberta Journeyman Certificate (Apprenticeship) programs

- are available in **50** designated trades in Alberta.
- involve registered apprentices completing a specified number of on-the-job training hours, periods of formal instruction at one of Alberta's training institutions and an examination.
- enable certified journeymen and completing apprentices who successfully write an **Interprovincial Standards (Red Seal) Program examination**, to work in other Canadian provinces where the designation is recognized.

Alberta Occupational Certificate (Training) programs

- are available in **5** designated occupations in Alberta.
- involve registered trainees completing a specified number of on-the-job training hours, and if required by the specific occupation, formal instruction at one of Alberta's training institutions.

Certificate programs

- prepare students for entry into specific occupations.
- involve **one year or less of full-time**, hands-on study at a college or technical institute.
- require completion of some high school studies (often specified grade levels and subjects) for admission.

Exceptions: Certificate programs are also offered by universities. These university-level programs may require high school graduation, some post-secondary education, or mature student status for admission.

Diploma programs

- prepare students for employment in a particular field or group of occupations.
- involve two years of full-time, applied study at a college or technical institute.
- require high school graduation (often with specified grades and subjects) for admission.

Exceptions:

- Colleges also offer diploma programs in general studies or liberal arts.
- University-level diploma programs involve one year of study beyond a bachelor degree, and may be applicable to related master degree programs.
- Alberta College of Art and Design's diploma programs in the visual and applied arts require four years of study.

Applied Degree programs

- provide enhanced career preparation that applies to a broader range of career and employment opportunities beyond entry-level in an industry.
- are offered by some public colleges and technical institutes.
- **are four-year programs** (usually a two-year diploma plus two additional years) consisting of six semesters (about three years) of academic studies and at least two semesters (about one year) of paid, related, supervised work experience in industry.

- have admission requirements that may be similar to those of diploma programs. In addition, completion of a related diploma program may be a prerequisite for admission to an applied degree program.

Bachelor Degree programs

- are offered by universities and private institutions authorized to offer accredited degree programs.
- involve the equivalent of three or four years of full-time study. The length of program varies by discipline and by institution.
- generally have entrance requirements that include a minimum average in specified Grade 12 subjects, including English 30. Admission to faculties with enrolment limits may require marks higher than the specified minimum average.

Exceptions:

Athabasca University has an open admissions policy for students 18 years of age and older.

Alberta College of Art and Design offers a Bachelor of Fine Arts and a Bachelor of Design degree program.

Masters Degree programs

- involve a minimum of two years of full-time university study beyond the bachelors degree level. There are time limits for completing degree requirements.
- require a completed bachelor degree for admission. Applicants who have a three-year undergraduate (bachelor) degree are generally required to complete an additional qualifying year.
- may require completion of a thesis or a course-based (non-thesis) program.

Doctoral Degree programs

- require two or three years of full-time university study and research beyond the master's degree level. There are time limits for completing degree requirements.
- involve planning and carrying out high quality research leading to advanced knowledge in the student's major field of study.
- include the preparation and defence of a dissertation on an approved topic.

Choosing a Post-Secondary Program

When similar education/training programs are offered by different institutions, how do you know which program(s) would be best for you?

The following tips can help you make sure that

- the certificate, diploma or degree you earn will be one employers respect, and
- the post-secondary institution you choose to attend will provide the type of learning environment in which you learn best.

The most important thing you need to know is **why** you want to take an education or training program. If you know where you want the training to take you, it is much easier to decide which program will get you there.

For help deciding what you want, check out the "Career Planning" articles at www.alis.gov.ab.ca/tips/archive.asp articles in the Tip of the Week archive.

Make sure you are aware of all the education and training programs that might fill your needs, and if there are less formal methods of acquiring the knowledge and skills you need (e.g. on-the-job training, distance education courses).

For help identifying education and training alternatives, see EDINFO at www.alis.gov.ab.ca/edinfo/ and the "Many Training Paths Develop Skills and Knowledge" article www.alis.gov.ab.ca/tips/archive.asp?EK=126 article in the Tip of the Week archive on the Internet, or refer to the publication, It's About Time...to choose a post-secondary program, published by Alberta Human Resources and Employment. Telephone the Alberta Career Information Hotline at 1-800-661-3753 or in Edmonton at 422-4266 for information as well.

When you've identified one or more programs that could get you started in the direction you want to go, you'll probably have a number of questions.

- ✓ What are the entrance requirements?
- ✓ Is it a "quota program" with limited enrolment? If so, **what sort of marks do I need for admission?**
- ✓ How long does it take to complete the program?
- ✓ When does the program start? In September, or are there other possible entry dates?
- ✓ Is there an application deadline? If so, when?
- ✓ Does the program include a work experience component? If so, is it volunteer work or are students paid for their work?
- ✓ What percentage of graduates have found related employment after graduation?

✓ How much do tuition, books and supplies typically cost?

The most reliable source of information about a particular program is the institution that offers the program. You can contact post-secondary institutions directly and request print materials, or **check out their websites.**

Information about public post-secondary institutions in Alberta, including contact information, is posted in the "Learning" section at <http://www.alis.gov.ab.ca/learning/> of the ALIS website.

If you don't have easy access to the Internet or you would like to browse through print information from a variety of institutions, visit a career counselling office or public library in your area. Labour Market Information Centres, which have copies of post-secondary institution calendars, are located at the nearest **career centre** throughout the province.

*LABOUR MARKET
INFORMATION CENTRE
DOWNTOWN LOCATION*

5th Floor, Century Park Place
855 - 8 Avenue SW
Calgary AB T2P 3P1

To be connected toll-free from anywhere in Alberta, dial 3 10-0000, then dial (403) and the phone number you wish to reach.

Phone: (403) 297-6344

Hours: Mon., Wed., Fri.
8:15 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Tues., Thurs.
8:15 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

For [student funding](#) assistance
telephone 1-800-222-6485

Services Provided:

▶ [Alberta Works](#)

▶ [Employment and Training Services](#)

[Career & Employment Programs and Services](#)

▶ [Student Funding](#)

▶ This centre has multimedia career development resources in the following areas:

- career planning
- occupations
- labour market trends
- associations
- educations
- apprenticeship
- job search
- interviewing skills
- cover letters
- resume writing
- entrepreneurship
- work search
- wage information
- etc.

▶ Additional services include:

- internet (career planning and job search)
- photocopying
- faxing

After you've used print and/or Internet resources to gather basic information about your program options, talk to people connected with each program:

- program graduates,
- representatives of related professional associations or licensing bodies,
- employers likely to hire program graduates, and/or,
- program instructors.

Finding and contacting these people may take some determined networking, but it's well worth the effort. For example, if employers tell you that they prefer to hire graduates of a different program, that's definitely something you want to know before you enroll!

Your choice of institution may be influenced by any or all of the following considerations:

- location (how close is the institution to your home?),
- size (would you prefer the learning environment at a smaller or larger institution?),
- type of institution (public or private, affiliations, etc.),
- the institution's academic reputation in your subject field,
- costs (tuition, books, accommodation, etc.),
- social and athletic programs, and/or
- student services and facilities (counselling services, student housing, etc.)

Most post-secondary institutions have "open houses" or "information sessions" in the spring. It's a great opportunity to look around the campus, experience the learning environment, ask about program content, and find out what student life is like.

College, technical institute, university - what's the difference?

Wondering how a private college differs from a university, or how a public college differs from a technical institute? To help sort out the differences, here's an overview of the post-secondary education system in

Alberta.

Public Colleges

- ❖ Alberta has 15 publicly-funded, board-governed colleges. They may offer academic upgrading, job readiness, continuing education, apprenticeship and one-year certificate programs as well as two-year diploma and university transfer programs. Some also offer applied degree programs.

Exception: The Alberta College of Art and Design offers four-year diplomas, a Bachelor of Fine Arts program and a Bachelor of Design program.

- ❖ Public colleges tend to have smaller classes than universities and offer students a close-knit learning environment.

Colleges that offer university transfer programs give students the option of beginning university studies at an institution that may be closer to their homes.

Technical Institutes

- Technical Institutes offer one-year certificate, two-year diploma, applied degree, apprenticeship and continuing education programs.
- Technical institutes respond to labour market needs and offer programs tailored to workplace requirements.

Universities

- Alberta has **three campus-based universities** and one distance-learning university.
- Universities offer a wide range of degree programs through various departments and faculties.
 - Note:* Other post-secondary institutions also offer degree programs.
 - The technical institutes offer applied degree programs.
 - The private colleges with degree granting status offer degree programs.
 - Some public colleges provide applied degree programs.
 - Ten non-resident institutions have approval to offer degree programs in Alberta.
- The number of students attending universities in Alberta range from 5,000 to over 30,000.

Private Colleges with Degree Granting Status

- Alberta has seven private colleges that grant bachelor's degrees approved by the Private Colleges Accreditation Board. For a list of the accredited degree programs, visit www.pcab.gov.ab.ca

Private Colleges and Institutions

- Alberta has numerous private colleges. Some are affiliated with post-secondary institutions in Alberta, colleges in the United States, Canadian or American Bible College/Theological schools or associations. These private colleges offer post-secondary programs in areas of study such as divinity, Native studies.
- There are also 139 private institutions in Alberta offering vocational programs licensed under the Private Vocational Schools Act. A listing of institutions including the programs they offer is available at a [career centre](#) near you.
- Licensed programs offered by private institutions respond to current labour market demand. These programs prepare students for employment in a wide variety of occupations.
- Program-specific job placement data are available at the institution that offers the program and from the Private Institutions Branch of Alberta Learning.

The Banff Centre

- The Banff Centre is a publicly-funded institution which provides advanced continuing education opportunities in fine arts, management studies, language training and environmental training for people who already have academic credentials and/or professional experience in their discipline.

How to Study Effectively

Studying effectively takes determination, effort, organization and practice. If your study skills are rusty (or never were very good), the best time to improve them is **before** you go back to school. You'll be busy enough when school starts!

Fact: To succeed in their studies, most students in post-secondary programs must devote about two hours of study time for every hour of class time. That often

adds up to over 40 hours a week of class and study time.

Set up a study schedule.

Your schedule should be flexible, but it should be written down. A schedule helps you get organized and make decisions about how much time to spend on what (so you don't spend too much time on relatively unimportant assignments). Start by writing down exam and assignment due dates and work back from there. You may find that you can't afford to take a full two days off every weekend, but do schedule some time for recreation.

Study every day, during your best hours.

Shorter, more frequent, study times are more effective than longer study periods once or twice a week. If you must study for longer than two hours at a stretch, give yourself a short break and switch to a different subject. Whenever possible, choose the time of day when you are most alert. Forcing yourself to study when you are exhausted or distracted makes it much harder.

Keep your schedule flexible and as creative as possible.

Review your schedule regularly - unexpected events and assignments that take longer than expected will require you to make adjustments. You can borrow or trade, but never steal study time! If you need to "make" more study time, try using bits of free time between classes or using time that might otherwise be spent waiting - for a doctor's appointment or on the bus, for example.

Set short-term goals.

If graduation seems a long way off, try setting more immediate short-term goals. Interim goals such as reading two chapters by the weekend, doing well on an assignment, or passing an exam are much more meaningful on a day-to-day basis. Reward yourself when you achieve an important goal - give yourself a couple of guilt-free hours at your favourite pastime, for example.

Make sure your goals are realistic.

Don't take all of the most difficult courses in your first term "to get them over with." Adjusting to the program takes a little time so try to balance your workload in each term. If you can, make your first term your easiest.

Compete with yourself .

See if you can increase the length of time you can concentrate, improve your mark on the next exam, or accomplish more in a set amount of time.

Think and say positive things about studying.

If you have a negative attitude ("I can't do it," "it's too hard," "it's boring"), you are making the job harder and more unpleasant than it has to be. Approach studying in the same way you would approach any other type of work - take a positive attitude and tackle it head on.

Fight off the urge to procrastinate.

Sometimes breaking large tasks (like assignments) into smaller, more manageable tasks makes them seem less daunting. When a task can be completed in a fairly short time, you are less likely to waste time getting started. Refuse to listen to the excuses you give yourself for putting things off.

Make it easy to start studying.

You need a quiet place you can use all the time - one with a desk or table, a comfortable chair, and good lighting and ventilation. Have everything you need organized and handy. If you can't keep your mind on your studies for very long, start with short but more frequent study sessions.

With practice, you **can** improve your ability to concentrate.

For more suggestions and specific recommendations about how to take notes, for example, ask a librarian for suitable self-help materials or ask about study skills seminars at the school you plan to attend.

More to Education than Studying

When you start a post-secondary education program, you enter a **community** filled with exciting possibilities for learning, career building, and having fun. If all you do is attend classes and study, you miss opportunities to

- make new friends and develop a support network of people who can help you do well in your studies, find related work after you graduate, etc.,
- expand and develop your recreational interests and skills (e.g. rock climbing, singing in a choir, playing Bridge), and
- develop transferable and personal management skills that are not taught in the classroom, but are essential for building and maintaining a well-balanced lifestyle and successful career.

Most colleges, technical institutes and universities offer programs and services to help students get the most out of their education, and apply what they learn in the labour market. Post-secondary institutions may offer all or some of the following types of programs and services.

Orientation sessions designed to help new students make the transition to student life.

- Orientation sessions provide a great opportunity to meet other students, become familiar with the campus, and gather information about other helpful programs and services (e.g. study skills help sessions, effective writing courses, library tours).

Programs and activities designed to introduce students to people who work in program and related fields and/or give students program-related work experience.

- Many post-secondary programs include work experience components that give students opportunities to meet people and apply their knowledge in a real work environment. Programs that do not include a formal work experience

component may provide opportunities to help students connect with the work world. For example, student associations may facilitate job-shadowing programs by matching interested students and volunteers from the work world. Professional and trade associations may offer special rates for student memberships and encourage students to attend association functions.

Social relationships established while you are a student can extend well beyond graduation and may lead, directly or indirectly, to future work opportunities.

Recreation, sport, cultural, religious, health programs and services designed to help students develop and maintain healthy, balanced lifestyles.

- Most campuses have recreational facilities that provide students with opportunities to swim, skate, lift weights, run or play team sports. Exercise can relieve stress and give you the lift you need to keep plugging away at your studies.
- Choirs, drama clubs and cultural groups give students the opportunity to participate in or attend a wide variety of cultural activities.
- Chaplain services, representing various religious denominations, deal with the spiritual and religious aspects of student life on campus. These services may include counselling, support groups and clubs as well as worship services.
- Campus health centres often have extended hours to meet students' needs for medical care.

Career planning and placement services designed to help students find suitable part-time, summer or full-time work.

- Through individual or group sessions, career counsellors help students write résumés, prepare for job interviews and develop other work search skills. They may also provide labour market information and other career guidance services.
- Employers often begin recruiting on campus in October, so it's important to

visit the student employment and career services office early in the academic year.

Services and programs for special student populations.

- Special student services provide support and counselling for Aboriginal, disabled, foreign and other student populations.

Check your institution's calendar or website to learn more about student services. Remember, only part of your learning will take place in the classroom – the rest is up to you. **Make the most of it!**

Need a High School Diploma?

Didn't finish school, but need qualifications equivalent to a high school diploma? If you are over 18, you may or may not have to go back to school to get the credentials you need. Your options depend on why you need a high school diploma or equivalent.

- ❖ If you want to take a post-secondary or training program, you may not need a high school diploma for admission. If you are at least 18 years of age and have certain specified high school courses, you may be eligible for admission to the program you want to attend. To find out, check out the **mature student admission** policy and program admission requirements in the institution's calendar or on its website.

Caution Not all post-secondary institutions exempt mature students from fulfilling all of the standard admission requirements.

Minimum age and other requirements specified in mature student admission policies vary from one institution to another. For example, some institutions require applicants to pass a writing competency exam.

- ❖ If you are not sure your academic skills are good enough for you to

successfully complete the post-secondary or training program of your choice, it may be a good idea to take one or more upgrading courses even if you are already eligible for admission to the post-secondary program.

- ❖ If you need academic upgrading, several institutions may offer suitable programs at locations near your home.

Many public and private school boards offer part-time continuing education courses for adults. For information, call your local school board(s) or visit **school board web sites** at www.asba.ab.ca/people/

Many public and private colleges and technical institutes offer part-time and full-time programs designed to help students upgrade their academic skills. These programs may be called college preparation programs, bridging programs, pre-technology programs, pre-careers programs or transitions programs. For information, contact the publicly-funded institutions, private vocational schools or the community consortium office near you or visit their web sites. Contact information is available through the Alberta Career Information Hotline, 1-800-661-3753, or (780) 422-4266 in Edmonton, or check **EDINFO**, the database of post-secondary programs in Alberta at www.alis.gov.ab.ca/edinfo

Caution Upgrading programs may be designed specifically for students who wish to qualify for other programs offered at the same institution. If you plan to attend a different institution after you graduate from an upgrading program, make sure the credentials

you earn will be accepted at the institution you plan to attend later.

If you want to demonstrate to yourself and others (for example, employers) that you have the knowledge acquired through daily living that is equivalent to the knowledge of a high school graduate, you can write a series of five GED (General Education Diploma) exams to earn a High School Equivalency Diploma.

Caution Before you invest time and energy preparing for GED exams, talk to several employers who have the types of jobs for which you would like to qualify. Find out if a High School Equivalency Diploma will get

you where you want to go.

To find out about the GED, preparation courses and exam sites, check out the following websites:

National Adult Literacy Database (Canadian) at
www.nald.ca/gedblue/alberta.htm,

GEDonline at www.gedonline.org, or

GED Testing Service at www.acenet.edu/calec/ged/

If you cannot attend classes, you may be able to take distance education courses to complete high school diploma requirements. The Alberta Distance Learning Centre (ADLC) offers K to 12 courses, and provides free placement testing to determine where you should start. For more information, visit the **ADLC web site** at www.adlc.ab.ca or phone (780) 674-5333 in Barrhead. To call toll-free from anywhere in Alberta, dial 310-0000 first and then the phone number.

Which Post-secondary Institution(s) Should I Attend?

If only one school offers the program you want, your choice of which institution to attend is obvious. Or is it? Maybe not,

- if there are post-secondary institutions closer to home that offer appropriate transfer programs, or
- if an educational consortium offers the program or transferable courses at a location near you.

Transfer programs

You may be able to take up to two years of post-secondary education at a closer school (the "sending" institution), and get credit for those studies from the school that offers the program you want to complete (the "receiving" institution). However, there are two important things you need to know before you enrol in a transfer program.

Admission to the receiving institution program is competitive, and the number of students who can be admitted may be limited. Therefore, admission is not automatic after completion of a transfer program.

You are responsible for the planning and consultation required to make sure that you will receive credit for all of the courses you take at the sending institution.

To decide which courses to take at the sending institution,

- ❖ check the transfer program advice in the sending institution's calendar,
- ❖ check the receiving institution's calendar to get the most current program advice, and then refer to the Alberta Transfer Guide to be sure the courses you select will transfer. The Guide is online at www.acat.gov.ab.ca or available free of charge at post-secondary institutions or from Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfers. Phone (780) 422-9021 or 310-0000 (toll free). To use the Guide or the Internet site effectively, you need to know

the program title and the codes and numbers (e.g. ART 131, BIOL 107) of

the courses you want to take at the sending institution (to find out which receiving institutions will grant credit for them), and/or the codes and numbers of first and second year courses at the receiving institution (to find out which courses at sending institutions are considered equivalent).

Studying in your community

If you live outside of major towns and cities in Alberta, you may have the option of taking post-secondary programs in your community through collaborative organizations and Educational Consortia. All programs meet the same standards and have the same entrance requirements as those offered on the main campuses of the institutions that deliver the programs. Check with:

Alberta-North at www.abnorth.ab.ca is a partnership of six post-secondary institutions to provide quality educational opportunities to adult learners in northern Alberta.

First Nations Adult and Higher Education Consortium at www.fnahec.org whose purpose is to provide quality adult and higher education by and for people of the First Nations.

Educational Consortia, associations of post-secondary institutions providing a range of programs and courses in communities not served directly by a single institution. There are four consortia in Alberta:

Big Country Educational Consortium serves the Drumheller, Stettler, Three Hills, Hanna, Oyen, Youngstown and Cereal areas

Chinook Educational Consortium serves the Blairmore, Pincher Creek and Claresholm areas

Pembina Educational Consortium at www.pec.ab.ca serves the Drayton Valley, Rocky Mountain House, Whitecourt, Fox Creek and Westlock areas.

Yellowhead Region Educational Consortium at www.yrec.ab.ca serves the Hinton, Edson, Grande Cache and Jasper areas.

Academic Upgrading, Power Engineering, Early Childhood Development, Business Administration, Engineering Technology and University Transfer are among the many programs available at educational consortia locations. The programs offered can change from year to year depending on the needs of local students.

If more than one school offers the type of program you want... you're in the happy position of being able to choose the one(s) you want to attend. To learn more about post-secondary schools in Alberta, visit their websites. You can find links to post-secondary institutions on EDINFO on the Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) website at www.alis.gov.ab.ca/edinfo.

Visit the schools yourself and talk to people who have attended them. Most post-secondary institutions have "open houses" or "information sessions" in the spring. It's a great chance to look around, experience the learning environment, ask about program content and find out what student life is like.

5 Tips For Surviving Correspondence Courses

"Live, learn and prosper!" This is not the Vulcan greeting but it could well be the instruction that leads to success for any enterprising individual.

Learning takes place in many different environments, but it is a struggle in a changing world to find the time or the place to do it.

Many workers or those changing careers find it difficult, expensive or inconvenient to attend classroom learning. Also, many employers are giving employees manuals or self-directed courses to complete on the job. Here are five tips for managing learning from manuals or modules.

Be organized

Because your learning is not structured like in a classroom, it is easy to procrastinate. Learning on your own requires discipline. Look through your materials

and find ways to break the learning into small, defined pieces. Then set deadlines for yourself and schedule in the learning as a regular commitment. Use a calendar or organizer to plan specific learning times and activities.

Find a learning space

You might be able to learn at work or home if you can manage your interruptions and distractions. Let everyone know when you are learning. You may have to close a door, turn off the stereo and television or not answer the phone. You may find that going to a library is necessary. Once you have a good learning space, have all your learning materials together and organized. If your learning needs to be portable, put all your materials and supplies into a case or bag. It is easy to waste lots of time looking for things. (This is especially true if you have kids. In our house things like erasers, pencils, paper and pens are constantly disappearing. We have had to declare our office supplies as off limits.)

Read to learn

To make the best use of your materials, look them over before you start reading. Find ways to help you organize and summarize the information. Keep yourself focused when reading by looking for main ideas and taking notes. Stop reading often and ask yourself, "What did I just read? What was the main idea?" This self-testing will help you avoid the daydreaming and lack of focus that can come with reading.

Find support for learning

If someone is aware of your learning goals and commitments they can help you succeed. If you are taking a formal course, you may have tutoring support available through the phone or the Internet. Some learners find it helpful to link up with another person who is taking the same course. They can then study together or support each other.

Support can take many forms including explaining subject material, encouraging,

gently reminding you to get at it or helping with other roles such as covering workload, watching kids, making dinner or other acts that provide you with time and space for learning.

Follow through

If you find that your learning time is getting bumped from your schedule, consider other ways to manage your time and roles. You may have to negotiate with your employer, family or friend to help you make time for learning. Keep in mind your initial motivation, remind yourself why you are taking the course and how it will help you to succeed.

Keep these tips in mind to ace your next correspondence course.

*C:\Documents and ann.CSSDADMIN\My Documents\Grade 12 Info.
Career Planning\What Now.doc*