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WUSA proposes changes in governance following review

Major changes are expected to happen within WUSA's governing bodies after receiving advice from external consultants



ANDRES FUENTES

Nicola Rose
Managing Editor

The Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association (WUSA) has published a governance review in which consultants recommended that the Students' Council and the Board of Directors be merged into a single governing body that would act as both a representative to the student body and as a fiduciary to the nonprofit corporation that is WUSA. These recommendations have been accepted by the board and council, who are now working to outline the process for implementing the changes.

The new single-governing-body structure would constitute a significant change for WUSA, which currently operates under a bicameral model, where Students' Council serves as the representation for students and the Board of Directors is responsible for WUSA's corporate functions, though the two groups collaborate to direct the organization. WUSA's four executives — the president, vice-president operations and finance, vice-president student life and vice-president education — provide day-to-day leadership to the organization and oversee both its corporate and advocacy initiatives. The three student bodies work alongside a team of administrative staff.

Under the current structure, WUSA's

membership — undergraduate students at UW — selects the executives and the Students' Council in a general election in the winter term. The board is elected during the general meeting, an annual meeting open to the undergraduate student body, where students can provide direction and feedback to their representatives. Elected representatives serve from the beginning of the spring term to the end of the next winter term.

"Primarily, we are an advocacy organization. We exist to represent the interests of [undergraduate] students to decision-makers on campus, being university administrators, and to government officials in municipal, provincial and federal government. And then we provide campus life services in the form of our student-run services and our commercial operations in the SLC," said Benjamin Easton, the current WUSA president and former chair of the Board of Directors.

However, there are several challenges associated with the current model, some of which have become more pronounced over the past two years, as student engagement in campus life has been restricted by the pandemic.

One major issue WUSA faces is low voter turnout. From 2012 to 2017, the highest voter turnout was around 15 per cent, while the lowest was approximately 4.7 per cent. In the 2021 general election, turnout was only 5 per cent, meaning only 1,729 of 34,084 eligible voters participated in the election pro-

cess. Moreover, many candidates run unopposed, weakening their validity as elected representatives, and several council seats are usually left empty following the general election.

Easton acknowledged that with such low turnout, it can be difficult to evaluate whether executives and councillors truly represent what students want. "How am I legitimately the representative?" he asked. "On paper, I'm the singular representative of all undergraduate students but people could challenge that and say, 'Well, how does that make any sense? You ran unopposed. 900 people voted for you.'"

Engagement with WUSA is further diminished by facets of the current structure that inhibit accountability amongst elected leaders and confuse students who want to be involved with the governance process. For example, WUSA's current policy and procedure manuals are several-hundred pages long. "So you want to get involved in WUSA, okay, read 500 pages. Nobody does that, it's an unreasonable expectation," Easton said.

It is also often unclear who students should contact with issues. "It's almost a misuse of student effort, where people [elected representatives] want to guide the direction of the organization, but then they're finding themselves in positions where they can't really do that. And then that's sort of like obfuscates transparency and accountability of

our organization, where you have some any issue that you want to raise, but part of your effort is trying to find where in the organization you should bring your complaint to," Easton added.

Once issues are brought to WUSA, the delegation of power can be confusing. "In recent years, the person who has the power to make those decisions is getting a little confusing and muddled which makes it hard to hold people accountable," Simpson said.

In light of these issues, when the current executives assumed their roles in the spring of 2021, they employed the services of governance consultants to review the organization's structure and identify areas where changes would better serve the undergraduate population.

The consultants were selected based on their success at other institutions, including a similar governance review for Students Nova Scotia as well as their work with the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology.

The biggest recommendation from the consultants was that WUSA should combine the Students' Council and Board of Directors into a single governing body of 13 people — fewer than the current council, more than the current board. While the current council consists of more than 30 elected positions selected from each faculty, campus and college, under the new structure, there would be no designated spots for

students from any of these groups. Instead, the 13-member board would be elected from the entire student body at the winter general election. The board would then elect an executive team amongst themselves.

Easton said he believes this system would encourage more competitive elections. "I would suggest part of the reason that we don't have competitive elections is because we have too many seats," he said, noting that students would still have opportunities to be involved with WUSA in other ways.

Ultimately, both Easton and Simpson believe the proposed structure would enable WUSA to better serve students in several areas.

Simpson argued that the new structure would encourage accountability and efficiency. "In the current system, it's really difficult to hold people accountable to the decisions that they're making," she said. "That's the part I'm hoping gets clarified [in the new structure], so students know where to go and know who their advocates are."

Additionally, it can often take a long time for proposed initiatives to be enacted. Under the current structure, WUSA's advocacy abilities can sometimes be restricted because the different bodies are so separated. Currently, the board and council will often review suggestions separately, which can lead to duplicated efforts and slower uptakes, even when both bodies agree. Similarly, some responsibilities are duplicated between executives and administrative staff, which reduces the amount executives can accomplish during their term. Simpson believes that under the new structure, the 13 elected students would share corporate and advocacy responsibilities and work as one body advocating on behalf of all undergraduates.

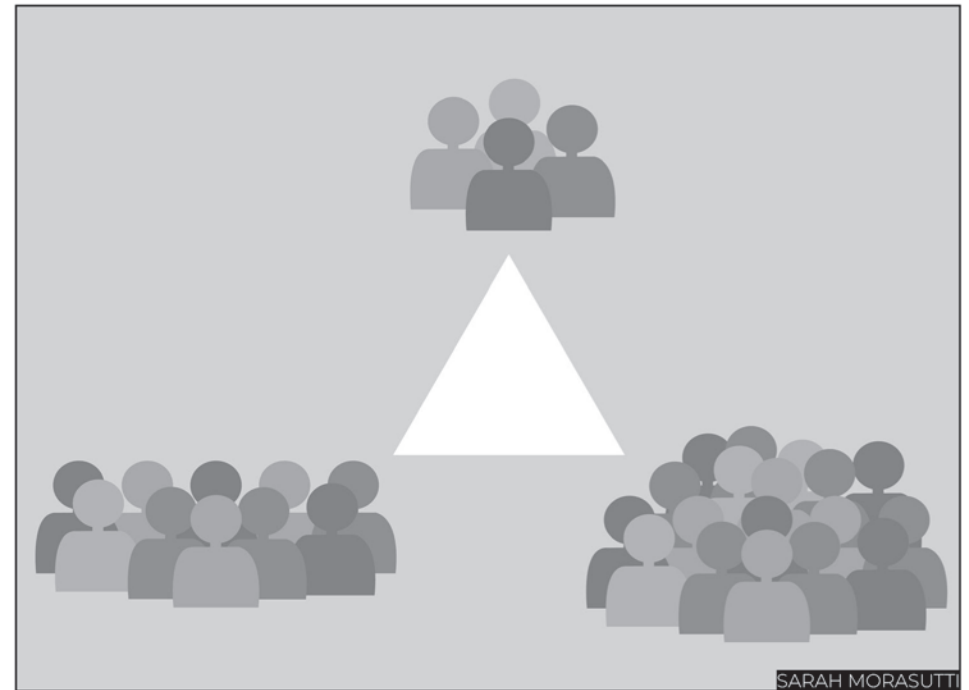
However, just as there are potential benefits associated with governance changes, there are also potential concerns. In a governance update published on the WUSA website, Easton wrote that "any move to a new model will include a period of transition where unforeseen problems will need to be solved." He asserted that "it's unreasonable to expect immediate perfection, especially in an organization as large as ours."

When asked about what issues he expected might arise, he mentioned that the administrative staff, who typically retain their positions for longer periods than elected officials, will have to adapt to a new system. "It's hard because you can't know the particularities of the issues that will arise until you're there. We have to make a decision based on the best available information we have," he said.

Still, he believes the change is necessary. "[We understand] that the status quo is not a sustainable solution for the long term of our organization, and change will have to happen at some point," he said. "I'm optimistic about our ability to deal with it now, especially coming out of the pandemic with the return to campus. I think now is a good time to do it."

Simpson added that the governance consultants would support the organization through the changes, which alleviates many concerns she would otherwise have had about such significant reforms. "[Because] we have the consultants who will be helping our staff, train our volunteers, train the people who will be making our policies and procedures, I have a lot of confidence that our regular scheduled programming will go off without a hitch," she said.

She doubts the changes will affect any services or supports accessed by the general student body. "Really, [students are]



SARAH MORASUTTI

just going to see fewer people on their ballot. They're going to see fewer elections throughout the year, which actually will deal with a lot of election fatigue."

Since both the board and the council have accepted the consultants' final report, the two groups are in the process of deciding how to move the recommendations forward. The proposed changes to WUSA's structure will require significant updates to the organization's policies and bylaws. To accommodate for the necessary changes, the 2022 general election, which is typically held in January, will be delayed.

Easton outlined how student input will be considered during this process. "Any chang-

es will have to be approved by a majority vote of the council, two-thirds of the board, and then ratified at a general meeting of the membership," he said.

He emphasized the importance of remaining transparent and keeping students informed. "We've shared [the review] with the [faculty] societies as well through the committee of presidents. We're using our existing governing channels to communicate the changes, again, understanding, you know, it's a pandemic, we have a lot of members, there are limits to communication," he said, adding "I've offered to make myself available for students that have questions and asked for feedback."

Waterloo Region prepares for Omnicron COVID-19 variant

Rebecca Butler
News Editor

On Nov. 26, the World Health Organization (WHO) announced the discovery of a new COVID-19 variant known as Omicron. The variant originated in South Africa and quickly spread to several European and Asian countries.

On the same day that the WHO classified the new variant, the Canadian government made the decision to close its borders to South Africa. Unfortunately, it was already too late to prevent the spread as two cases of the variant were detected in Ottawa on Sunday morning.

An update released by the WHO on Nov. 28 stated that it is currently unknown whether Omicron is more transmissible or more lethal than previous variants. Due to the large number of mutations in Omicron's spike protein, it appears that those who have had

COVID-19 before are more likely to be re-infected with Omicron compared to previous variants. Studies are also underway to determine the potential impact Omicron may have on existing vaccines.

As many Ontario universities expand their in-person offerings for the winter 2022 semester, it is unknown what impact the new variant might have for students.

Prior to the discovery of Omicron, Carleton University announced that many of their planned in-person classes for winter 2022 would be switching to online. In light of the new variant, some UW students have begun to worry that the University of Waterloo might make a similar decision.

"It's going to be very disappointing if everything ends up online again," said Matthew Lam, a third-year computer science student. "I signed a lease for the winter term under the impression that things would be in-person. If it's all online, that will have

been a huge waste of money."

The university did not respond to a request for comment in time for publication. However, they have previously stated that in-person classes and course activities will move online only if required for public health reasons. It remains to be seen how Ontario Public Health will react to the variant, but Ontario health minister Christine Elliott said she believes the province has good measures set up to deal with Omicron.

"Ontario has the infrastructure in place to manage outbreaks," Elliott said. "Ontario is prepared and ready to respond to the new variant."

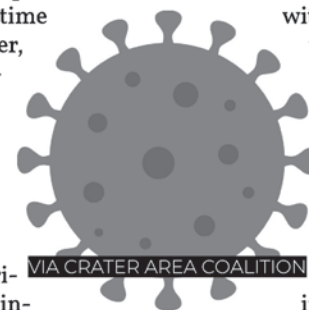
Region of Waterloo officials responded to concerns about Omicron and COVID-19 during their weekly briefing on Nov. 26. Kar-

en Redman, chair of the Region of Waterloo, stated that the region has been in contact with the premier's office to address the threat of the new variant.

"I'm encouraged to see that the provincial and federal government are looking at addressing this issue together," Redman said. "Given this is a pretty predictable outcome, it's the way viruses work, I'm heartened to see they're continuing to be vigilant."

Dr. Hsiu-Li Wang, medical officer of health for the Waterloo region, stated that one of the best ways to tackle Omicron is to continue with current public health restrictions.

"We know that public health measures and vaccinations have been effective against all of the variants of COVID-19 to date," Wang said. "At a local level, we need to continue to increase our community immunity and practice public health measures."



sports & health



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Want to go to UW games for *Imprint*?
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UW panel discusses harassment of minorities within gaming circles

Eduardo Matsumiya
Head Copy Editor

The University of Waterloo's Games Institute and Women's Centre joined together for a panel discussion on Nov. 10 to highlight issues of harassment experienced by women and minorities within gaming circles, as well as a lack of diversity in video games.

The four-person panel was one of several events put on by the Women's Centre as part of Love Your Body Week — a week-long awareness campaign that aims to promote self-love and a positive body image, with special emphasis on the impact social media and other digital spaces have on body image.

Panel members included Emma Vossen, a PhD graduate from UW who currently works both with the Game's Institute and as an instructor for game design and development at Wilfrid Laurier University. Vossen opened the discussion with a presentation on the historical context for misogyny in gaming — from the discrimination faced by female creators of Dungeons and Dragons in the 80s to the massive marketing push of video games towards male consumers throughout the 90s, and finally the merging of alt-right circles with the Gamergate movement in the 2010s.

Vossen highlighted an article she published in early 2020 titled "There and Back Again: Tolkien, Gamers, and the Remediation of Exclusion through Fantasy Media," which discusses the evolution of fantasy literature

into fantasy tabletop games, and eventually into fantasy video games. The article examines how harmful tropes within the genre are passed down and have persisted for decades.

"Essentially, a lot of things that are being made today are not any more progressive than fantasy works that were being put out 100 years ago, because if you try to make something more progressive, there's this backlash that it's not historically accurate, or it's not really fantasy," Vossen said. "But people only use the concept of historical accuracy to uphold white supremacy, to uphold sexism, to uphold homophobia. They never use it to uphold anything else, so it's really just an excuse."

Several panelists highlighted a significant disconnect between the modern realities of the video game market as opposed to how it has been advertised historically.

"The idea that sex sells is still such a thing. I scroll past ads for games that feature these incredibly buxom sexualized women, and then you see a shot of gameplay and it's a top-down tower defense with no recognizable human characters whatsoever," said Lindsay Meaning, a PhD candidate for the English department at UW, whose research has focused on representations of settler colonialism, imperialism and the sex industry in video games. "I find a lot of women consumers who are turned off by that sort of thing, so it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy," she continued.

Brianna Wiens, a lecturer in communication arts at UW and co-organizer of the

collaborative, an intersectional feminist research lab at UW, brought up a recent in-class example she used to highlight the shifting nature of gendered advertising today — an Amazon commercial starring Michael B. Jordan that aired during this year's Super Bowl. "Look how quickly this shifted from being 'Alexa, a disembodied female voice' to 'Ooh, let's bring sexy Michael B. Jordan into this,' and I just wonder how long it'll take for this to show up in games as well," Wiens said.

The topic of forced diversity and its perceived negative connotation within gaming circles sparked a lot of discussion amongst the panelists. Wiens took issue with the term "forced diversity" itself and the implications it has. "We have to consider what's meant by 'forced diversity,' because it implies that there is some sort of 'good diversity' that isn't what we currently have, that we couldn't possibly reach, even if that's not the intention," she said.

Vossen expressed frustration with people's insistence that games are an apolitical zone, despite the fact that the term 'forced diversity' is often used as a dog whistle. "It's just like...Black women do exist, so you're insisting that the existence of a Black woman is political, but the existence of a white man is not. But the existence of a white man in a game is political, it's just that the politics are white supremacy, and people don't want to acknowledge the existence of white supremacy, because white supremacy is what's normal in our society."

She used *Overwatch* as an example of a game where 'forced diversity' is a valid crit-

icism, highlighting how despite the game boasting an incredibly diverse cast of characters, this diversity really only exists within the narrative and has zero effect on gameplay, meaning it is easy for people to ignore if they so choose.

"One of the barriers we need to move past is a lot of times in games this content is selective, like you have to go seeking it out," she explained. "Until that content is mandatory, people are going to see anything else as forced diversity, because they've been allowed to opt-out of playing the female Shepard in *Mass Effect*, they've been able to opt-out of the Queer storyline in *Life Is Strange*, they've been able to opt-out of interacting with people of color characters in a fantasy setting."

Near the end of the panel, an audience question brought up the topic of pipeline approaches to increasing diversity within STEM circles — that is, minimizing retention issues experienced by minorities in the field — and whether these could also be a viable strategy for gaming circles. A couple of the panelists took issue with this approach.

"Before we think about plugging the holes in a pipeline, we have to think about what kind of culture we are creating that's going to actually support and encourage women, racialized people, Queer people, anyone who's been marginalized," Wiens said. "I think that's something that is currently lacking in a lot of spaces. There's a lot of talk about 'how do we get more people here?' and not a lot of talk of 'how do we support them when they are here to be able to thrive?'"

imprint
THIS WEEK IN ATHLETICS
WATERLOO WARRIORS
GO GOLD GO BLACK GO GOLD GO BLACK

M HOCKEY
DECEMBER 4 | CIF ARENA
4:00 PM
VS WINDSOR

ALUMNI
'WE ARE ONE' GAME

UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO
EMPLOYEE DAY

WARRIORS
CAMPS AND MINOR LEAGUE DAY

WARRIOR BRAIN BREAKS
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ATHLETES OF THE WEEK
WATERLOO WARRIORS

HANNAH BLAIR
TRACK & FIELD
KINESIOLOGY

BRYAN YANG
SWIMMING
CHEMISTRY

Warriors women's hockey team off to a flying start

Andres Fuentes
Publisher

The Waterloo Warriors women's hockey team has started the season on the front foot. Including pre-season games, they are 11-0-1 heading into the winter break. The only blemish on their record, an overtime loss, came on Nov. 27 in the second game of a home-and-home with Western University.

Playing at Western in London, Ont., the Warriors were down by two goals midway through the second period. Two goals by Carley Olivier at 12:46 and 17:59 of the second period evened the score for the Warriors before being defeated by a goal from Mustangs' Hannah Irwin during overtime. A day earlier, the Warriors had taken the first game of the home-and-home 3-0 with goals from Keiara Raitt, Megan Fergusson and Leah Herrfort. Mikayla Schnarr faced 20 shots to record the shutout.

The expectations for the team at the start of the season are always high. "We're always trying to win a championship. Our expectations are definitely to win a championship here so that's the way our group thinks and that's the way our staff feels. So that's that's our goal," said Shaun Reagan, head coach of the women's hockey team.

With the lost season and varying restrictions due to the pandemic, sports teams have been facing a lot of unknowns heading into their new seasons. According to Reagan, the

players had been working on the ice in small groups and in the gym over the summer based on restrictions, but it's been hard for them to replicate good gameplay. The team scheduled six exhibition games, more than usual, to help them get up to speed and have a strong start.

Another impact of the cancellation of last year's season is that there are two rookie classes this year. The team has seven players that would have been rookies last year, but are now making their debuts with the team along with three new rookies that joined this year. In addition to those rookies, the team also got a couple of transfers from the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). The team is carrying a bigger roster than normal — along with a double class of rookies, senior players also had a year of eligibility carried over from 2020-2021, with the team only losing two senior players.

"We have probably over half of our roster right now that is in their first year in the league. So that's why we're really excited too because we've got a great base of players here not only for this season but the future seasons as well," said Reagan.

The team now has a break until Jan. 15 and while their 11-game winning streak is broken, Reagan has a positive outlook.

"We were 11 in a row undefeated and you know, maybe a little humble pie before the break here for us. So, we come into the second half, that much more motivated to get back rolling again. The loss was tough on Saturday, but I think long-term we'll look back and go maybe it was a good thing."



CHRISTIAN BENDER

Recipe: Vegan banana anything muffins

By Ingrid Au

No, I refuse to believe that any banana-related baked goods are merely a fad during quarantine — we can still enjoy them! With exams approaching, eating healthy is the last thing on students' minds. So, I have curated a little healthy snack for study breaks or a quick breakfast-to-go. With this recipe, there are absolutely no excuses for students not to take care of their health!

Tools:

- A mixing bowl
- Muffin tin (if not accessible, refer to alternatives below)
- muffin/cupcake baking cups

Ingredients:

(yield amount varies depending on baking cup size)

- 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of oat flour or flour of your choice
- *for oat flour, blend oats until powder form
- $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{3}$ cup of honey or brown sugar (sweetness varies depending on the ripeness of bananas, start with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup, taste and add as you go)
- 2-3 bananas (depending on the size of bananas, you want about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ - 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups of mashed bananas)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of melted coconut oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp of baking soda
- 2 tsp of baking powder
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp of salt
- 1 tsp of vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{2}$ - 1 tsp of cinnamon

Alternatives:

- Muffin tin: if you do not have a muffin tin, use a regular sheet pan and triple-layer the baking cups and place them sparsely on the sheet pan
- Recommendations to pair with bananas:
- Grated carrots (about 1 cup for the measurements above)
- Berries ie; blueberries, strawberries, gooseberries (about $\frac{3}{4}$ cup)
- Lemon zest and poppy seeds (about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup)
- Chocolate chips (about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup)
- Orange zest (about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup)
- Chopped nuts (about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup)

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 350F.
2. Mash your bananas and incorporate them with the wet ingredients: honey or brown sugar, coconut oil, and vanilla extract.
3. Combine with the dry ingredients: flour, baking soda and powder, salt and cinnamon.
4. Fold in the extras of your choice, and add a spoonful of batter into the baking cups.
5. Bake the muffins for 20 to 25 minutes. You will know when the muffins are done when you stick a toothpick into a muffin and it comes out clean.

We often forget that our physical health correlates with our mental health, so make sure you take care of yourself by eating healthy and treating yourself from time to time. This recipe is quick, convenient and easy, and I hope it can become something you look forward to every day. Take care!

Have a favourite recipe you want to share? We'd love to try making it!
Email it to sports@uwimprint.ca.

INGRID AU



Things to do this December



Erin Froud
Assistant Arts and Life Editor

If you celebrate the holidays, you probably aren't lacking activities to do. Between final exams, decorating, shopping, visiting your relatives and finding the time for all your favorite movies and traditions, it can be difficult to find time to breathe in December. But, if you are looking for something to do for a few hours to relax, or even just want to do your Christmas shopping somewhere that isn't a mall or online, this list might be of some assistance.

Wonders of Winter

Nov. 27, 2021 to Jan. 1, 2022
5 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.
Waterloo Park
50 Young St. W., Waterloo, Ont. N2L 2Z4

Located just across campus, enjoying the lights in Waterloo Park, Wonders of Winter is, by now, a staple of the University of Waterloo Christmas experience. This brief walk around the park features lighting displays from groups and organizations — including students — from all around Waterloo. Due to the pandemic, the opening and closing night ceremonies, as well as trolley rides, photos with Santa and beverage sales, have been cancelled. Regardless, with a hot beverage and some friends, this free event is a lovely way to spend an hour or so this December.



Christkindl Market Outdoor Festival

Dec. 2, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Dec. 3, 12 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Dec. 4, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Dec. 5, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Gaukel St., Kitchener, Ont.

Centred on Gaukel St. in Kitchener, Christkindl Market is home to an outdoor village of 22 huts hosting various shops and artisans. During the day, visitors can enjoy music from concerts, bands and choirs. In the evenings, the Market features a video wall, that plays various musical highlights from the Market's history.

If you want to combine your Christmas shopping with a walk through downtown Kitchener while listening to some holiday tunes, this event is for you. Even if you can't attend in-person, Christkindl Market has an online advent calendar with a new video and concert every day from Dec. 1 through Dec. 25. Both in-person and online events are free.

Country Christmas

Dec. 5, 12, 19
12 p.m. to 4 p.m.
Ken Seiling Waterloo Region Museum
10 Huron Rd, Kitchener, Ont. N2P 2R7

Offering warm apple cider, treats and outdoor demonstrations, this event at Doon Heritage Village — a 60 acre living history village that replicates life in Waterloo in 1914 — is the perfect opportunity to take a nice walk, enjoy something sweet and learn some history.

The museum is also currently hosting an interactive exhibit, Amazing Pollinators, that allows patrons to engage with the world of bees, bats, and butterflies.

Student tickets are available on EventBrite for \$10.74. The museum recommends that patrons reserve their place in advance, as the event is selling out quickly.

Winter Artisan Market

Dec. 11, 2021, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Kitchener Market
300 King St. E.
Kitchener, Ont. N2G 2L3

If you can't make it to Christkindl Market, or you really want to buy local gifts while sipping hot beverages, the Winter Artisan Market has plenty to offer. In addition to a free-to-use ice rink, the market features "a curated selection of the best artisan vendors in the region, along with delicious food and drink favourites from the local vendors and restaurants that you love" — including mulled wine and seasonal craft beer. Like many of the other events on this list, the market is free to attend. Registration is available but not necessary.

Drunken Cinema: Die Hard

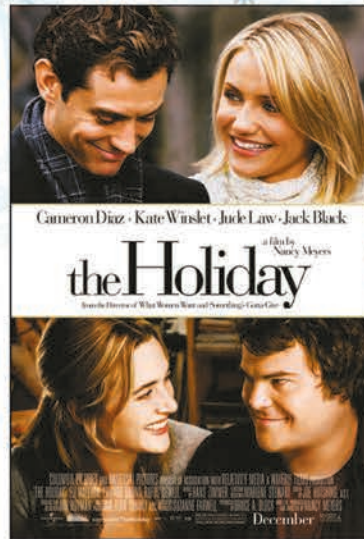
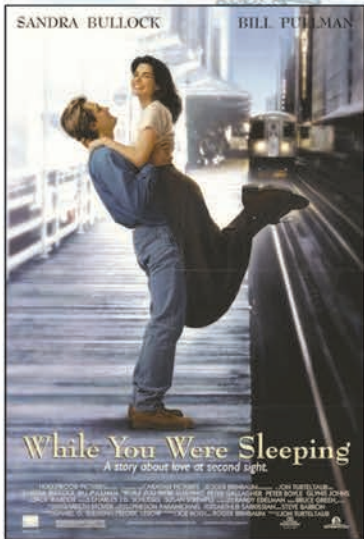
Dec. 17, 2021 at 9:30 p.m.
Apollo Cinema

Finally, if you are sick of Christmas shopping, bundling up, drinking warm beverages or hearing Christmas music, you can always go to the Apollo Cinema to enjoy the ultimate on-Christmas Christmas movie: Die Hard. As the event page describes: "40 Stories. 12 Terrorists. 1 Cop. Many Drunken Cinema attendees. The odds are against John McClane... That's just the way he likes it."

Popcorn and a themed cocktail will be available; a customized game card and a glowstick are also included in the price of admission, which is \$13.27 for non-members and available on the Apollo Cinema website.



Movies to watch this winter



Erin Froud & Abhiraj Lamba
Asst. Arts & Life Editor, Arts & Life Editor

With the holidays right around the corner, it's time to start preparing your winter watch-list. There are so many amazing movies set around Christmas, choosing which ones to watch is never easy. The holidays have different meanings for different people, but whatever they mean to you, there's a movie for you to watch!

While You Were Sleeping (dir. Jon Turteltaub, 1995)

This film is perfect for those who want a cute movie to watch with loved ones that has Christmas spirit without hitting you over the head with Christmas cheer. In the grand tradition of classic Christmas films *Die Hard* and *Home Alone*, this charming romantic comedy takes place at Christmastime, but isn't really about Christmas.

Lucy Moderatz, played by an adorable Sandra Bullock in one of her first roles, is a fare token collector for Chicago Transit Authority (Chicago's version of the subway) with no family and a massive crush on a commuter. Her watching him from afar ends, however, on Christmas Day, when he is mugged and pushed onto the train tracks. Though she saves him, the commuter — Peter — is in a coma and, due to a misunderstanding at the hospital, his worried family believes Lucy is his fiancée. As Lucy gets to know and falls in love with Peter's family, it becomes more and more difficult to reveal the truth — and things only become more complicated when she meets Peter's brother Jack, played to down-to-earth perfection by Bill Pullman, and the two begin to fall in love.

Despite the slightly problematic premise (though fairly tame as far as 90s rom-coms go), this film is funny and sweet with a great soundtrack. It makes for a thoroughly enjoyable winter evening.

The Muppets Christmas Carol (dir. Brian Henson, 1992)

Any version of A Christmas Carol is an excellent option for the holidays, but if you have children to entertain or just want a funnier version of the classic tale, *The Muppets Christmas Carol* is a delight.

Featuring two-time Oscar winner Michael Caine playing Ebenezer Scrooge as if his co-stars aren't Muppets, the traditional tale unfolds with Kermit the Frog as Bob Cratchit; Miss Piggy as his wife; Fozzie Bear as "Mr. Fozzi-wig"; Gonzo the Great as the film's narrator, Charles Dickens; and Rizzo the Rat as himself. Despite the silliness of the Muppets, the story is told with remarkable accuracy and features many excellent, and sometimes strangely moving, songs. If you love the Muppets or just want something lighthearted and silly to watch, this film is for you.

Little Women (dir. Greta Gerwig, 2019)

Though this film can, and should, be enjoyed year-round, some of its central action occurs at Christmas, and it serves as an excellent "Christmas-lite" option if you want something that features Christmas but isn't necessarily a "Christmas movie."

Based on the classic 1868 novel by Louisa May Alcott, *Little Women* follows the lives of the March sisters — young, artistic Amy (Florence Pugh); beautiful Meg (Emma Watson); kind, shy Beth (Eliza Scanlon); and tomboyish writer Jo (Saoirse Ronan). Throughout the film, the sisters navigate the absence of their father, who is a chaplain in the Union Army, their relationship with their neighbor Laurie (Timothée Chalamet), their relationships with each other, and the complexities of growing up.

Though some viewers struggle with the non-linear structure writer and director Greta Gerwig uses — and the 1994 version with Winona Ryder is better if you want a warm and fuzzy tone — *Little Women* (2019) perfectly encapsulates the struggle of balancing personal relationships with pro-

fessional growth, while also containing all the funny and moving moments that made the original novel so popular. Even if this film doesn't make it onto your roster of holiday films, it should absolutely be on your "To-Watch" list, thanks to its talented, stunning cast and moving story.

The Holiday (dir. Nancy Meyers, 2006)

While you can enjoy a Nancy Meyers rom-com anytime during the year, *The Holiday*, in particular, remains a Christmas must-watch.

Iris Simpkins (Kate Winslet) from London and Amanda Woods (Cameron Diaz) from LA decide to exchange houses for the Christmas break, after each facing heartbreak at home. Trying to get away from their daily lives, they find love across the pond.

An iconic inspirational moment in this film is when Eli Wallach's Arthur Abbott reminds Iris that she is the leading lady of her life, proving that Meyers came up with "main character energy" long before anyone else.

As we move closer to the holidays, there is no better movie to watch if you're looking for that happy, cozy feeling this winter.

Love Actually (dir. Richard Curtis, 2006)

Love Actually is a Christmas rom-com that revo-

lutionised the genre and is a staple of the holiday season. It follows the lives of about 20 characters across 10 interwoven stories, exploring the different facets and complexities of love.

Every story and every major character is so well fleshed out that, in just over two hours, the audience is able to feel for them all. The only exception is the storyline that culminates in the iconic cards on the doorstep scene, which, frankly, is a little uncomfortable, but the rest of the movie more than makes up for it. Most storylines are fairly predictable but in a way that reminds you of the comfort of familiarity.

Christmas would be incomplete without this movie. If you haven't seen it, you should definitely check it out and if you have, watch it again!





UW engineering professor wins Steacie fellowship

Alfred Yu won the Steacie fellowship to research ultrasound technology



VIA UW

Mahek Kaur
Reporter

Last month, University of Waterloo engineering professor Alfred Yu won the Steacie fellowship to research ultrasound technology.

Since 1965, the E.W.R. Steacie Memorial Fellowships have been awarded annually to up to six natural science and engineering researchers in Canada to help them further their research efforts and become leaders in their field. The fellowships are awarded by the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC).

Recipients receive a total of \$250,000

over the course of two years, typically paid in two annual instalments of \$125,000.

In 2021, along with Alfred Yu, Steacie fellowships were also awarded to professors from five other universities including the University of Victoria, University of British Columbia, Western University, the University of Toronto and York University.

Currently, Yu's research is focused on two areas of ultrasound technology, one of which is related to diagnosis and the other of which is related to therapy. Yu told the University of Waterloo that he believes that it is possible to connect these two areas of medicine into a single tool that is able to provide both guidance and treatment at the same time.

One aspect of Yu's research is geared towards developing new techniques for ultrasounds that allow medical professionals to acquire useful quantitative information about the stiffening of arteries as people age. This data can be used for different medical purposes such as preventing strokes.

Yu is also researching the interaction between human cells and ultrasound waves. Currently, scientists and practitioners have only a basic understanding of how ultrasounds are able to stimulate cells in order to regenerate damaged tissue. Yu seeks to learn more about how and why this process works, which would help with the development of more effective treatments.

Yu has been interested in ultrasound im-

aging and therapeutics research since he started his academic career at the University of Hong Kong in 2007.

He relocated his research group to the University of Waterloo in 2015, now based in the electrical and computer engineering department along with substantial involvement with the applied mathematics department. He is also a research scientist at the Schlegel-UW Research Institute for Aging and an Associate Director of the Center of Bioengineering and Biotechnology.

During the course of the two-year fellowship, Yu will be relieved from his teaching duties to focus on research. He has expressed his desire to bring the most updated knowledge in ultrasonics back to his students.

How three women in science closed the gap between arts and science

Sarah Hammond
Reporter

The fields of art and science have often been in opposition to each other; however, three authors have managed to connect them by writing scientific fiction. Madhur Anand, Margaret Nowaczyk, and Krista Foss use their appreciation and devotion to science to elevate their works of art.

Science has fueled these women's creative works in many ways. "I use it to illuminate, I use it to evoke wonder, I use it for metaphor, I use it to enrich everyone's lives who participates in the book, including my characters, but I don't use it to explain things," Anand said.

Anand is a professor of ecology at the University of Guelph and the director of Guelph's centre for environmental research. She is also a poet and the author of the award-winning memoir, *This Red Line Goes Straight to Your Heart: A Memoir in Halves*. The memoir is about the beginnings of an unlikely family and their journey to Canada. It is told through the lenses of biology, physics, history and poetry.

Nowaczyk is a clinical geneticist at McMaster's Children's Hospital and has authored 120 peer-reviewed papers in genetic journals. She also writes short stories and essays. Her memoir *Chasing Zebras* was released on Nov. 23rd. It chronicles her journey to become a geneticist and details how writing improved her abilities as a geneticist and physician. She uses science in unexpected ways to enhance her story.

"I used the idea of turbulent flow from fluid dynamics because, originally the book came out of my desire to write about my parents after my mother had a heart attack so I played a lot with the idea of lines and flows and hearts and turbulence," Nowaczyk said.

Foss is an author, essayist and award-winning short story writer with a curiosity for the sciences. She was a journalist at a national newspaper, where she interviewed many scientists about their work, kindling her love for science and prompting her to find a way to merge her two passions.



SARAH MORASSUTTI

Foss' newest book *Half Life* was released in March of this year — a novel about a science teacher who finds comfort in confiding to a dead physicist.

Although Anand, Nowaczyk and

Foss have connected their passions in arts and science, there is still a chasm between the two fields, to the disadvantage of many. The line drawn between the two disciplines has been difficult for many to rec-

oncile — students choosing university programs, adults choosing their careers and even people exploring their hobbies.

Nowaczyk is passionate about bridging the gap between arts and

science. A large part of her memoir is about how the separation of arts and sciences has affected her and how much repairing this gap can help others.

"I am involved in the field called narrative medicine where medical students and physicians are taught and encouraged to read literary works to foster empathy," Nowaczyk said. "In the olden days, people were supposed to have been trained in humanities as well as the sciences before they applied into medicine — it was just as important to have a good grasp of ancient history and the classics. That has gotten lost in the technologization of medicine. Narrative medicine strives to make people more sensitive and more empathetic by reading literary fiction."

Anand also feels the pull between the two seemingly different directions.

"I am a practicing scientist and a practicing artist, and I have to fight with that within my own personhood and identity," she said. "We have these silos in society and in institutions that are broad and sweeping. This is a problem because we do have a lack of understanding of what scientists do and currently we have a crisis in believing in scientists, the politicizing of science and so on, and it can be really problematic."

These women show that though science and art seem to be completely different, it is when they are both used in tandem that a truly amazing product can be achieved. They have proven that it is possible to follow their passions in multiple disciplines and pave the way for others to do the same.

"Science doesn't just belong to scientists, it belongs to all of us," Foss said.

The University of Waterloo recognizes the importance of a well-rounded student who is versed in arts and science. One of the ways they attempt to bridge the gap between disciplines is through the Knowledge Integration program which allows students to explore interests on both sides of the divide. The school also encourages students to customize their learning with minors and specializations available for many degrees.

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Next scheduled post-mortem meeting:
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Imprint acknowledges that the University of Waterloo is situated on the traditional territories of the Attawandaron (Neutral), Anishnaabeg, and Haudenosaunee Peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, land promised to Six Nations, which includes six miles on each side of the Grand River. Therefore, Imprint recognizes and respects this land that it is situated upon.

UW INDIGENOUS STUDENT ASSOCIATION



opinion



HAVE YOUR SAY

Submit your letter to the editor or your community editorial to opinion@uwimprint.ca. Find more opinions at uwimprint.ca.

The influence of pop culture on language

'Good soup' is just the latest phrase to become part of my vocabulary

Until a few months ago, if someone had said "Good soup" to me without any context, I would have stared at them in confusion and disbelief.

"What soup? Where is this soup? Why is it good?" were all questions running through my mind when I first encountered this phrase on my social media pages.

Now, if I find something to be pleasurable or up to par, instead of saying it's a good or great thing, I simply exclaim, "Good soup" — and depending on who I'm around, I'll get a few head nods in agreement from those who also believe that whatever I'm describing is satisfactory.

The phrase "Good soup" became a popular sound on TikTok in late-August 2021. It is originally from a 2017 episode of HBO's *Girls*, a TV show written by and starring Lena Dunham as one of four young women living in New York, looking to see what the city has in store for them. In the episode, Adam Driver slurps a big spoonful during an intense, emotional conversation with Dunham's character, following up with the simple line, "Good soup," and a sharp OK hand symbol.

According to Know Your Meme, users began posting lip dubs this past summer when referring to ramen, their tears or other non-soup objects as "Good soup."

But "Good soup" is just one example of a meme — an idea, behaviour, style or usage that spreads from one person to another in a culture — going beyond the screen and pop culture entering our vocabulary.

Popular culture is generally recognized as "the vernacular or people's culture that predominates in a society at a point in time," and it is determined by much more than just one single form of artistic expression. It involves media, sports, celebrities, brands and fads of all sorts.

In an article for Unbabel, Raquel Magalhães details the influence of pop culture on our language and vocabulary. Since we are constantly exposed to content, be it in-person or online, elements of popular culture are integrated into almost every aspect of our lives.

This isn't a new concept — even before TikTok, people often incorporated popular phrases into their everyday conversations, such as the infamous "How you doin'?"



Emotional scene from HBO's *Girls* where Adam Driver delivers his iconic line.

from *Friends* and "No, I am your father," from *Star Wars*.

Part of the reason why these phrases became integrated into our lives is the sense of belonging to a community.

In "Pop Culture: An Overview," Tim Delaney notes the inclusionary role pop culture plays in society.

"Along with forging a sense of identity which binds individuals to the greater society, consuming pop culture items often enhances an individual's prestige in their peer group," Delaney writes. "Further, popular culture, unlike folk or high culture, provides individuals with a chance to change the prevailing sentiments and norms of behaviour, as we shall see. So popular culture appeals to people because it provides opportunities for both individual happiness and communal bonding."

British sociolinguist Peter Trudgill states that no matter how much media we consume, the content doesn't become a part of our vocabulary until we start using it in our everyday lives.

"The electronic media are not very instrumental in the diffusion of linguistic innovations, in spite of widespread popular notions to the contrary. The point about

the TV set is that people, however much they watch and listen to it, do not talk to it... Face-to-face interaction is necessary before diffusion takes place, precisely because it is only during face-to-face interaction that accommodation occurs," he writes.

Magalhães also writes that it is the exchange of expressions derived from the media between people, and not necessarily their exposure to them, that influences language.

According to a 2018 article by Joe Veix titled, "Working Towards a Complete Theory of Meme Relativity," the average lifespan of a meme is approximately four months. Since "Good soup" first became popular in August, it appears as though its popularity is coming to an end (it peaked in early- to mid-September, when "Good soup" was its best). Though I plan to keep it in my vocabulary for at least a little while longer, I'm sure more pop culture terms will transition from my TikTok For You Page to my everyday interactions soon.

Alexandra Holyk
 Executive Editor



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LAYOUT/WEB

GRAPHICS

distractions



Q: WHAT'S AN EXAM'S GO-TO PICKUP LINE?

A: "HEY BABY, NICE CURVE!"

Imprint crosswords | Sudoku

	2			4			5	6
	9		5	7			2	
		1		6	3			
						8		
	8				2	6	3	9
	3		9				4	
2					7			
7			4	5				
			3				8	

JOHAN ALANT

LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS

2	5	8	6	7	3	1	4	9
7	4	3	2	1	9	5	8	6
1	9	6	8	4	5	3	2	7
3	2	4	7	6	1	9	5	8
8	6	9	5	3	4	2	7	1
5	1	7	9	8	2	6	3	4
9	8	5	4	2	6	7	1	3
4	3	2	1	9	7	8	6	5
6	7	1	3	5	8	4	9	2

Exam season  is finally here

ANNIE ZHANG

Time...  for some...

REAL SPEED!!

2x 

Good luck Warriors!

This Week's Weather Report

Wed 12/01	A few flurries	2	1
Thu 12/02	Light rain	5	-1
Fri 12/03	A mix of sun & clouds	-1	-5
Sat 12/04	A few flurries	0	-5
Sun 12/05	Light snow	1	-2
Mon 12/06	Mainly cloudy	0	-5
Tue 12/07	Light snow	0	-2
Wed 12/08	Light snow	1	-2

VIA THE WEATHER NETWORK