

# THE NEW STAR

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Photos were taken from Pinterest

Love is...



Vulnerability



Motivation is a key to success



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# Love is a placebo

Love is a placebo.  
 Don't understand you,  
 That not to get in a black hole  
 You should control  
 Your dreams and feelings?  
 Why waste yourself on something  
 hollow?  
 There is so much evil in the world!  
 And there is just one simple rule  
 That every dream always comes true.  
 Sometimes not as you expect,  
 But if you think for a moment:  
 "It is so nice and isn't bad..."  
 You are a slave of thought. The end.  
 Falling in love's like taking drugs,  
 Simple and straight,  
 like a piece of cake,  
 But to stop loving needs operations  
 That may not help you in fact.  
 Therefore, if you get butterflies  
 in the stomach or the heart,  
 Please think of it twice  
 Or disembowel yourself.

Любовь - плацебо.  
 Разве ты не понимаешь,  
 Что сам себя в пучину тьмы  
 Своими мыслями сгоняешь.  
 Тебе подвластны чувства и мечты.  
 Зачем их тратить на пустое?  
 Ведь в мире столько много зла!  
 Есть одно правило простое:  
 Мечта сбывается всегда.  
 Бывает, не совсем, как ожидаешь,  
 Но если ты подумаешь на миг:  
 "А что? Она ничё такая..."  
 Момент. Ты мыслей раб своих!  
 Влюбиться, как принять лекарство,  
 Легко и просто, пять минут,  
 А разлюбить - тут операции...  
 И то не факт, что помогут.  
 Поэтому коль в животе иль в  
 сердце,  
 Почувствуешь ты бабочек полет,  
 Прошу тебя, подумай дважды  
 Или вспори себе живот.

Gloria Goil,  
 TCMA-120

## Fairytale Winter in Kyrgyzstan

Kyrgyzstan is a combination of harmony and purity of nature. (Mountaintops in the skies of a thousand mountains, lakes, and raging rivers) The Republic of Kyrgyzstan in Soviet times was one of the tourist centers where people from all over the USSR went on vacation. Even those who could hardly find the country on the map have heard about the Tien Shan and Issyk-Kul. For its picturesque landscapes, Kyrgyzstan is compared to Switzerland. During the Soviet era, the Republic of Kyrgyzstan was a popular tourist destination for visitors from across the USSR. Everyone got used to the fact that Kyrgyzstan is a paradise for tourists in summer: if you want, you can lazily laze on the beach; if you wish, you can selflessly conquer the mountain peaks. What can we do there in winter? Actually, there is plenty to do in winter: mountain hiking, skiing, snowboarding, and even bathing in geothermal springs when the weather is warm.

There is a lot to do in winter, for example, you can go skiing at Karakol Ski Resort, hang out with a true eagle hunter, explore incredible Kyrgyz landscapes covered in snow, stay in a yurt, venture into Jyrgalan wild backcountry, soak in a hot spring, watch a Kok Boru match and many more activities. I want to explain some of them that will turn your life into a fairytale:  
 Ski vacation. With the onset of the ski season, 17 ski resorts open across the country every year. Each base has trails for skiers or snowboarders, as well as for dummies. There are comfortable cable cars that would bring you to the top of the mountain; it is worth mentioning that the living conditions and food service are pretty good too. By the way, according to Forbes magazine, the Karakol Ski Resort has become one of the best resort areas in the CIS countries. The ski season runs from November to April. In addition, you can enjoy geothermal springs, salt caves, and other pleasures of the sanatorium. I used to come to the resorts to improve their health. Now beach parties with a lot of alcohol and heavy food are in trend.

Fortunately, Kyrgyzstan did manage to preserve the legacy of the Soviet health resorts, whose competitive advantage was natural resources. In addition to various salt caves and pools with unique healing mineral water, you can also receive qualified medical care.

Helicopter ride or heli-skiing. This is a new kind of extreme recreation. Instead of the usual cable car, a helicopter will take you to the desired peak.  
 Mountaineering. Thanks to Mother Nature, the location of the mountain systems is so successful that there are many options for climbing various peaks.  
 A huge number of foreigners enjoy the fairytale winter of Kyrgyzstan. I interviewed some of the students who are studying in Kyrgyzstan and have fun doing different activities during their winter break. Atiqurahman Saleem, one of the Afghan Master students, mentioned, "My winter break has been adventurous with all the entertainment and enjoyment I do with my friends or alone. When I am with my friends, we get used to going for a walk outside, singing, dancing, and playing games like snowball targeting. One of my great experiences in winter was when I went with my friends to Karakol. Besides all the fun activities mentioned above, we went skiing, which was super exciting. When I am alone, I have a lot of other entertaining activities like jogging, singing, watching comedy movies, and making snowmen."  
 To sum up, you can have an incredible winter in Kyrgyzstan by doing all these great activities. Winter is a wonderful season to explore Kyrgyzstan and relax your soul by having a nice To-Do list for your winter.

Frogh Marz Shekan  
 JMC-120



Photo was taken from Auca website

## What are the Outcomes of the survey devoted to the AUCA Kitchenette foods and services?

University is considered to be a second home not only for students but also for the faculty and staff as they spend more than three hours a day on campus. Besides being a place for work and study, the university also serves as an inevitable socializing platform. Regardless of what students, faculty, and staff do, they are part of daily activities and events; they use the available facilities like Kitchenettes. Hence, it is particularly important to know how they rate their experience and what they like or dislike about the AUCA Kitchenette.

To further understand the thoughts of the AUCA community, purposive sampling and snowball sampling have been done in collecting responses from 17 respondents that included 2 staff members, 2 faculty members, 4 local students, 5 Afghan students, and 4 Tajik students. There were two questions in the questionnaire:

1. How do you consider the Kitchenette services?

2. What kind of changes would you like to see?

The respondents shared their answers in written form.

The findings reveal that 95% of the respondents are quite happy with the behavior of staff working in the kitchenette and are grateful for their wonderful work.

'I express my warm appreciation for the friendly atmosphere that they created for students to have an exchange of thoughts during the meals,' wrote one of the respondents. In addition, some respondents preferred to have their breakfast on campus and liked the breakfast menu for several reasons: 'I love food on campus... I always eat my breakfast there because I get healthy foods like eggs, fruit, and kasha. My favorite desserts are cheese, pancakes, and fruit pies with tea,' mentioned one of the respondents.

Nevertheless, 5% of the respondents seemed to have low satisfaction with the way the staff treated them. Some respondents shared their concerns and dissatisfaction with what they got for lunch. 'We need less oily white rice, less fried, and more boiled dishes, more vegetables and fruit, more soups, and a more diverse diet considering the diversity of dishes in the campus,' mentioned several respondents.



Additionally, most of the respondents did not like the increase in food prices inside the campus. 'I understand that not all AUCA students can afford to eat in the food court of AUCA as the prices are high. That is why most of the time I carry a lunchbox from home,' wrote one of them.

'Moreover, food is not always fresh,' pointed out some respondents.

'The food is not fresh, and sometimes leftovers of a day or two are sold to students,' added another student.

Finally, almost all the respondents requested the administration office for further improvements and consideration of the following suggestions:

1. The food price must be reconsidered.
2. There must be assured food standards, and its quality must be checked.
3. The menu should include more healthy food, such as soup, salad, and boiled meat.
4. New Afghani dishes must be added to the menu.
5. Food prices and menus must be available online in English.
6. Food calories must be displayed using emoji to show the healthiness or unhealthiness of food.
7. Voting polls should be created so that students could be able to vote and share their preferences.

In conclusion, the majority of the respondents enjoy and prefer to get their food on campus probably because they have neither desire, time, nor resources to cook by themselves. However, the respondents expect and appreciate their suggestions to be heard and implemented to a possible extent. Lastly, the author expresses her gratitude to the AUCA community for the general setup and services of the Kitchenette staff and thanks the respondents for sharing their time, experiences, and comments.



## Life hacks to Remember during the Forthcoming Semester

For each student, a new semester has its importance. For some, this semester is the last and most significant in all four years of study; for others, this semester may have their most cherished dreams come true. Some students will have important projects that will play a key role in their future careers. However, regardless of individual plans and goals, this semester is another chance to restart and prove to yourself that all victories are possible despite any challenges. Before taking the first, confident step into the second semester, here are some great tips from the Student Senate chair, Deniz Nazarova:

### 1. Use add/drop week

Add/drop week is a great opportunity to find out what fits you and your schedule. Attend classes, read syllabuses, communicate with professors, and please do not hesitate to drop classes if you feel you are not interested in them. It is what add/drop week is for!

### 2. Visit your advisor

You never know how your life turns out after the break. Maybe you got offered an internship, and now you have a time conflict with one of your classes. Or perhaps you are just not happy with your schedule anymore. Before dropping any of your courses, discuss with your advisor whether it is a good idea so you can prevent any future issues with graduating on time.

### 3. Take some time to think about your plans for this semester

Do you want to apply for an exchange program? Raise your GPA? Or maybe you merely need to restore after quite a stressful event? There is no correct answer, be in contact with yourself and try to explore what you need most. And don't forget that you are never alone: visit your peer advisor, counseling services, or spend time with your friends!

### 4. Find a hobby

Remember that your life is not limited to your classes and basic needs. Explore AUCA clubs, go for sports, or meet new people. It is always a good idea to have an activity to sublimate into when you are stressed with studies.

### 5. Prioritize health

Be healthy both physically and mentally. Teach yourself sleep hygiene and do not make a habit of depriving yourself of sleep or food because you have not finished your assignments. Create a meal plan to eat regularly and schedule a rest time daily. These tips might sound obvious but believe me, by the time finals start, your body and mind will thank you ;)

After a long and much-needed break, it's hard to find concentration and adapt to an excessive workload again. However, you can slowly flow into your study rhythm and start to build your plans and goals. Always remember that it is only you who decide what the following semester will be for you. But there is one thing I want you to do: make sure to be proud of yourself and your hard work at the end of the semester.

Salima Almazbekova  
JMC-121



## A Meaningful Experience

On the 4th of December 2021, I had an opportunity to attend an online discussion between the AUCA and AUN (American University of Nigeria) students. Beforehand students of our group looked through the topics to decide which one to choose to get ready. The students voted for "Traditional Practices That Should Be Abolished".

I prepared one topic for the general meeting and another for our Video Project about Education in break-out room discussion. At the appointed time, I joined the zoom meeting. There were a lot of Nigerian students, many friends from AUCA, and instructors from both universities, Ms. Emilienne Akpan (AUN) and Ekaterina Galimova (AUCA).

At the beginning of the discussion, the hosts - 2 students of both universities - gave us a little information about their universities. The video about Nigerian University impressed me. The AUN campus, library, and study rooms are comfortable. I liked AUN student engagement in community service who enjoy doing it. The hosts from AUN and AUCA informed us about the goal of the meeting, general rules and regulations. Then the general discussion started.

At first, I was very nervous and kept silent, then while more people were joining, I pulled myself together, took a deep breath, and raised my hand to express my own opinion on the topic. Everyone was trying to contribute to the discussion. It was fun to listen to people from various cultural backgrounds. Despite our living far from each other in different countries and on different continents, we still have a lot in common. For instance, every country has traditions that we think should not continue to be followed. In Nigeria, it is child labor, and in Kyrgyzstan, it is bride kidnapping.

When the general discussion ended, we were subdivided into break-out rooms. There were rooms with identified topics and nameless ones. It is worth mentioning that we could jump from one break-out room to another and that was great as it gave us a sense of freedom. We could enter the room, give it a name and start our own discussion. So, I entered the room "Equality for all is a utopian idea." There were four of us. I was the only one who was for the possibility of a utopian society in some periods of time; however, everyone else was against it. There were moments when I was listening to my group mates enjoying our conversation. We gave each other a lot of meaningful information. For instance, Nigerian students claimed that there would always be the richer and poorer, and it is almost impossible to reach equality everywhere. At some point in our discussion, I found myself thinking that they were right, and it is impossible to provide equality for all as we are all different. In other words, I eventually changed my opinion on this topic. Having finished our discussion on equality, my AUCA group mates Daria Baidakova, TCMA-120, Adeim Chynybaeva, LAS-MS-120, and I began to interview the participants about their educational system, its disadvantages, and what an ideal school should look like. We included a small part of the survey in our Video project too.

At the end of the break-out room discussions, we returned to the main session; we talked about our feelings concerning the meeting; students gave their opinions of how it went. Everyone was nice to each other. The atmosphere was friendly and comfortable. It was a great experience as I had a chance to improve my speaking skills, practised my interview and research skills, and I would love to repeat this kind of discussion!

After the meeting, I participated in the questionnaire about it launched by our professor. With the help of my answers, I was able to express my opinion concerning the benefits and improvements of future online discussions.

Asylzat Akjoltoeva  
BA-120



When the small amount of red light  
 Is still in the sky,  
 When the day ends,  
 When I cannot keep  
 The blaze of my heart under control,  
 It is the time when there is a sparkle of sadness in my brown eyes,  
 The time I forget the broad days,  
 The sunlight hours end,  
 And the waking hours seem to be shortened,  
 When the nocturnal hallucinations start,  
 I become blinded  
 By the harsh glare of my heart,  
 The umbra of my heavy thoughts starts to bring the witching hours  
 closer,  
 The dullness of days,  
 Remind me of the gathering darkness,  
 The shades of evening bring me  
 The glimmer of loneliness,  
 I am with the prisoner inside me  
 Whom I share the low light of my heart,  
 I paint the inkless image and the sloppiest lines in my head,  
 And we together draw the emptiest sketches.  
 We meet during the lowliest time,  
 And there,  
 My inner voice says, "See the Vulnerable Side of You."

Nahida Yari  
 ECO-120

*Don't trust anyone but yourself!*

Life becomes complex when you rely on the words of others and their promises. There is enough power in yourself that you do not need to find in others. You are the main character of your story, not them. To the majority, believing, respecting, mercifulness, loyalty, kindness, and being good to others mostly sounds like poverty; moreover, they will perceive you as a child who constantly needs the mother's presence. So, accept the stiffness of this world and merely count on yourself. Breaking promises and believing them will hurt the most, stealing all of your happiness and returning you to a dark hole where you will be unable to stand and leap. Everything depends on what the purposes are to be ascertained in this life and following them.

When you trust yourself, you will become non-stoppable, and no one can deceive you. It is a weakness of character that sometimes makes someone think that there is a need in someone else's existence for you to move on. However, what is essential is your resistance and prioritizing your self-esteem more than anyone's words. The more you resist, the more you can run and defeat your rivals.



The day you surround yourself with other people's help and believe them, your misery will start, and it will hurt you the most when they do not keep up their words. Blindly trusting would lead to a dark side and a feeling of dependency on others. Until you do not recognize yourself, and if you think of yourself as a weak person who needs someone to accompany you, you will be tricked over and over again. Never live in Disney World since it is fatal. When you open your eyes, it would be painful and disappointing. Trust in a way is to believe and respect the person's intentions toward you, and when you do so, they think of your poverty and dependency. Never allow them to overuse and eventually break you up. Always think logically and be decisive about what you promise to yourself. This world is too mean to be merciful to you, too dark if you do not rely on your own power, and too cruel to make you cherish it easily. It is your life, your world, and this is your time to shine brightly and fulfill your destiny. It is entirely up to you whether your life will be paradise or hell. Do not let the devil use it and make your life a flame.

Mahdia Yari,  
 ICP-121

## Motivation is a key to success!

Academic excellence is one of the major aims of AUCA students, and one of them is exchange programs. Going to a new country and studying in a different learning environment is a unique experience for students during their academic life. Student exchange programs are worth more than we know about at the time. These programs build a great academic career for the future of students. Having an exchange semester offers students beneficial advantages: it increases potential job opportunities, it helps students expand their network and have experience in a diverse university with students from all over the world, and finally, it aids students to discover a new culture and find a way to conform to the new environment. This year, Bard College in New York provides an extraordinary opportunity for AUCA students to explore this prestigious higher education institution. I am an AUCA student who found the chance to go to this university as a transfer student. Attending in-person classes at Bard with exceptional background professionals is a privilege. Apart from gleaning academic experience, there are some challenges to overcome. Moving to and establishing one in a new country is a challenging task in and of itself.



Through this experience, I have learned to be self-reliant because those who always support me are far away. I deal with everything by myself. Also, this experience allows me to meet honorable people like Jonathan Becker (AUCA president), Jack Markell, and White House coordinator for Operation Allies and the governor of New York Kathy Hochul. By using this opportunity, I expand my network with most respectful people with whom I have the wish to make a conversation. Finally, I want to remind all of my AUCA fellows that motivation is all you need to succeed. Most of the students believe that they are not capable of studying abroad. It is not the thing; everyone has their talent and skills. The only important thing is to have long-term and graceful goals. Every student should set an academic objective and should concentrate on it. Have your motivation, and do not be scared of anything. Nothing will be achieved without the willingness to make a sacrifice of today's joy and comfort.

Heram Zahra Amiri  
ECO-121

## Alienation in K-POP: Difficulties of Being an Idol

At least once in your life, you must have heard of such names as PSY, BTS, or BLACKPINK. All of them are related to K-pop, the musical genre that rapidly gained worldwide popularity. However, such popularity has its price – alienation. The concept of alienation was developed by Karl Marx. Its main idea is that the product of one's labor does not belong to its creator. Although one puts a part of one's soul into the object, its future does not lie in the hands of those who create it. Both product and producer are subject to estrangement from each other. Such a phenomenon is considered to be an essential feature of capitalism. The same pattern is applied to a great number of fields in social life, such as music production. For instance, idols – K-pop singers – are bound by contract and obliged to perform the responsibilities, which put their lives at risk. During their performances, singers can faint, get fractures, and be exposed to other life-threatening risks. Such hard work does not coincide with their wages. Idols take an active part in creating the product (music, video, etc.), the fate of which depends on their companies. Therefore, there is a constant process of alienation between the workers and their product of labor.

Furthermore, fans play an important role in supporting the entire industry, so fan service is well developed. Idols are supposed to behave in accordance with the expectations of their admirers. Therefore, they sell not only their music but also their lifestyle. Before the debut, they are compelled to pass through the hard training in dancing, singing, and acting. A lot of professional instructors are involved in the process. Hence, Korean singers are to be considered "estranged" or "alienated" both in terms of being the creators of the product and being someone's product of labor.

To sum up, the Korean entertainment industry is a great example of a capitalist society with an inherent phenomenon of alienation. Such characteristics as hierarchy, life threats, and low wages describe the industry well. A great number of people are involved in K-pop production, which leads to a vicious circle of estrangement. Therefore, behind the rapid growth and external attraction of Korean music, there is inequality and loss of oneself as a result of alienation.

Aleksey Pak  
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