## The Gateway: DFU Plebiscite 2020-21



#### **Presentation Overview**

- 1. Context
- 2. Consultation/Outreach
- 3. Feedback Heard to Date
- 4. Questions/Discussion

## Who is *The Gateway* and how did we get here?

- Founded in 1910, The Gateway publishes approximately 1,000 articles online and eight monthly print magazines during the Fall and Winter semesters (September to April).
- The Gateway covers stories and issues while providing an open forum for the exchange of ideas related to the student interest and campus experience at the University of Alberta. This means exploring events and issues mainstream media does not typically cover.
- We are a volunteer-driven community centric organization
- Last year, The Gateway unsuccessfully ran a plebiscite to increase our fee and provide an opt-out option.
- This year we are requiring to run a plebiscite in order to renew our dedicated funding unit.

#### Preamble

The Gateway, founded in 1910, is the student-run campus newspaper and the only student-run media organization at the University of Alberta. Publishing over 1000 articles each year, written by volunteers and staff from faculties across the U of A, The Gateway covers events on campus, U of A and Students' Union governance, the achievements of students and academics, SU elections, and gives students a platform to make their voices heard on important issues.

The Gateway is an award-winning student publication, recognized by the Canadian University Press and Alberta Magazine Publishers Association. The Gateway has also broken many stories that then become syndicated nationally by other news media outlets.

The Gateway is a not-for-profit, funded by a Dedicated Fee Unit (DFU) and advertising revenue. The DFU, paid by all undergraduate students except those at Augustana Campus, is \$3.54 per Fall/Winter semester and \$0.54 per Spring/Summer, increasing with inflation, and is renewed every five years by a plebiscite. The funding helps give students paid opportunities to work in journalism, empower non-paid volunteer contributors, and enable community projects and collaborations in the field of student journalism.

For more information, check out <u>www.votegateway.ca</u> or see the work The Gateway does at <u>www.thegatewayonline.ca</u>

#### Question

Do you support the continuation of The Gateway's 110 year legacy of student journalism on campus through a \$3.54 dedicated-funding unit to fund the operation of the University of Alberta's only student-run media organization?

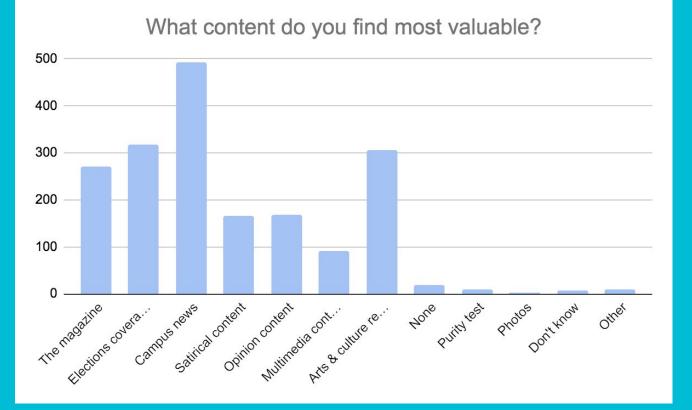
#### This is not last year's campaign

- Recommendations document from our DFU Team from last year
- Consultation
  - Two readership surveys
  - Fall and winter student outreach
  - Focus Groups
  - Meetings with Faculty Associations and Departmental Associations
  - Purpose Document Development



total respondents

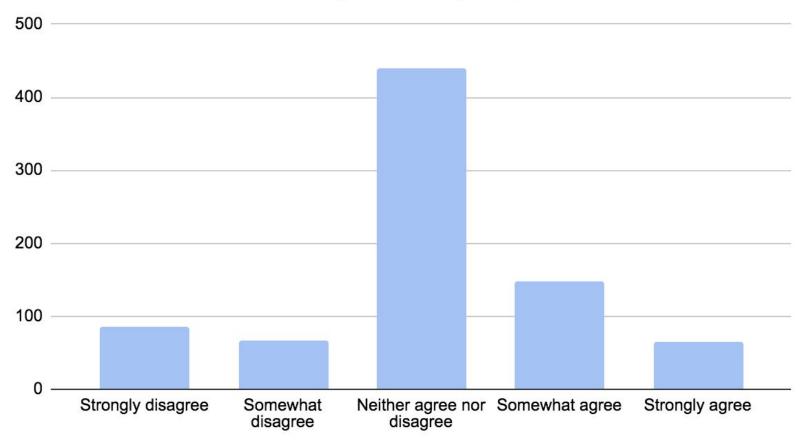
Average respondent was a woman of European origins in her second or third year of undergrad, studying sciences



**Top 3:** Campus news Student elections coverage Arts & Culture reviews

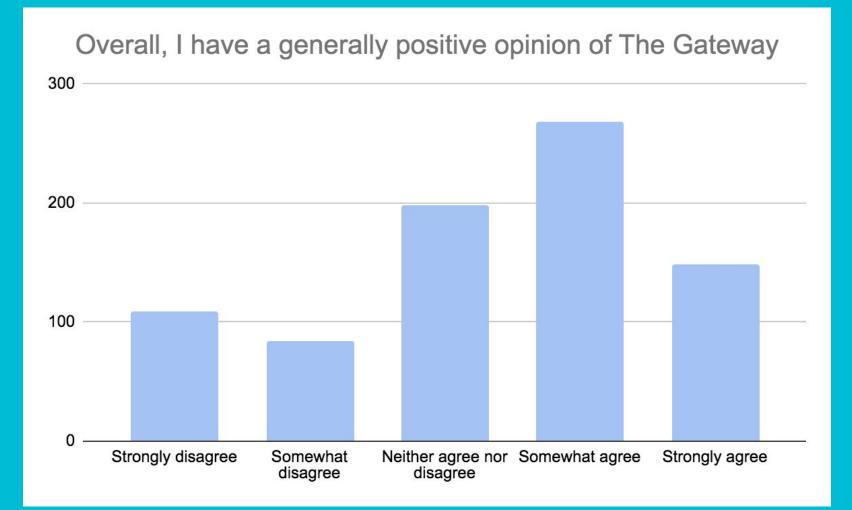
### The Gateway collects a \$3.54 fee from every undergraduate student each semester 400 300 200 100 n Not at all aware Slightly aware Somewhat aware Moderately aware Extremely aware

#### The Gateway is fiscally responsible



Sexist Entertaining Nice Annoying Inconsistent Relatable Unbiased School Disconnected 1 Edmonton Comprehensive Campus Inspiring Entertainment ionated Newsletter Reading Student voices Dumb Graphics Student-centred Print Undergrad Crosswords Stupid Stories Reporting Staple Unique Furries Total Costly Stupic Stories Reporting Staple Unique Furries Total Costly Staple Stories Reporting Staple Unique Furries Total Costly Staple Stories Reporting Staple Unique Furries Total Costly Staple Stories Reporting Staple Stap Student publication Reporting Staple Unique Furries Boring Helpful Buzzfeedy Horoscope Underrated Questionable Welcoming Edgy Welcoming Edgy Money Relevant Trash Fresh Liberal Important Money Relevant Online Trash Money Relevant Trash Varied Volunteer Useless Random Educational Left-wing Getaway Biased Friendly Current Engaging Roast Old Useful Informational Skulk Resource Exclusive Memes Cool I don't know Necessary Free Student journalism Leftist Young Innovative Controversial Interesting some of the time Irrelevant Awesome Informed Clique Student life Awareness Arts Uninteresting Poor quality Creative **T** Fluffy INCWS Opportunity Has potential Magazine Involvement Aesthetic Article Information Critical Overfunded Journal Investigative Word It SU Amateur

Top 5: Informative, news, opinionated, students, interesting



# Broad Takeaways

- Students generally recognize the value of having a campus news source, but they don't always find that The Gateway lives up to the standard that they expect
- The Gateway needs to put effort into raising awareness and gaining the trust of students this year

# What are we doing differently

- New purpose document to be released in the next month to students
- Better outreach and marketing
- Staff training and professional development throughout the year
- New content test that every article must go through prior to publication
- Fact-checking policy for all sections
- Code of conduct specifically for election coverage for both volunteers and staff
- Development of in-depth elections coverage training for Opinion and News Section volunteers

#### Value we offer to students

- An average of 1,000 articles per academic year
- Coverage of stories that often are left behind by mainstream media
- Writing and journalistic skills for any U of A student that they can build
  - From art & design, editing, multimedia, photography, videography, to writing and everything in between
  - Directly transferable skills to both the Canadian media landscape and the magazine publishing industry in Canada
  - Chances to meet and interact with professional journalists to further learn and grow
- Social opportunities
  - A chance to meet and work with diverse volunteers and staff from different faculties and interest backgrounds

## **Questions/Discussion**