

THE GATEWAY

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JACKSON HINTON

MOM WOULD APPROVE Kid Koala twisted some knobs and shuffled some records, making music like a finger painting.

U of A re-evaluates admission policies

NATALIE CLIMENHAGA
Senior News Editor

The idea that more and more students could be applying to Canadian universities in the fall of their grade-twelve year is being viewed by some as premature and unnecessary. But according to Carole Byrne, University of Alberta Vice-Provost and Registrar, the use of early admissions is nothing new, as the University was one of the first schools in Canada to introduce the use of early conditional admission.

An *Edmonton Journal* editorial “Leave Gr 11 alone” published on 18 October highlighted the disadvantages of having universities use early admission programs, stating their use puts undue pressure on high-school students.

“There are practical advantages, letting students and families plan ahead. But there’s another concern—that of increased pressure on younger high-school students already facing a highly competitive postsecondary world,” the editorial wrote.

However, Byrne said the use of early admissions shouldn’t be something to be afraid of.

“Everybody has been talking about admitting in Grade 11,” Byrne said. “We’re looking to see if Grade 11 is a good predictor of Grade 12, but it’s not necessarily going to change the way we do admissions.”

Currently, only a small group of students are given early admission at

the U of A, those being full diploma IB students. For the remainder of students, final admission is given at the same time across the board: when high school transcripts become available.

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**CAROLE BYRNE,
U OF A VICE-PROVOST
AND REGISTRAR**

“We conditionally admit students starting in October, November and by December usually we have already admitted up to 1400 or 1500 of the 5000–7000 students who eventually come here,” Byrne explained, stating it’s very rare for the University to have to later revoke or reverse admission.

“Basically nothing is changing from that point of view, we do currently do early final admission for a small group of students [and] we may look at doing a little further.”

This year, the U of A started a task force on admissions, which Byrne explained will mainly focus on eliminating any unnecessary admission requirements or barriers high-school

student might face.

Regular admissions at the U of A are fairly late in the year compared to peer institutions, with the U of A having a regular application deadline of 1 May and a deadline of documents for 15 June. This means that while students may be being given conditional admission, they may not be enrolled at the U of A until August.

“For students who are in a more financially unstable state the late admission deadline is really challenging to plan for in terms of making sure your loans are in and placing them and that kind of thing,” Students’ Union Vice-President (Academic) Amanda Henry explained.

Henry also noted that for scholastically advantaged students—people in the top one or two per cent of their class—the U of A is really behind the curve on guaranteeing final acceptance, especially to highly competitive programs like engineering or some of the fine arts degrees, as the student will probably go to the institution that guaranteed them acceptance first.

“Say somebody with a 97 per cent average coming out of high school applies at the U of A, the U of T and McGill, whoever gets back to them first is going to be who gets that student if they are financially able to move around the country,” Henry said.

PLEASE SEE **ADMISSIONS** ♦ PAGE 4

Hopes still rising at Mount Royal College

CHLOÉ FEDIO
Managing Editor

Mount Royal College will soon make the conversion to a degree-granting institution, opening the door for the school to become Calgary’s second university, Alberta’s Minister of Advanced Education announced last week.

Dave Marshall, President of the college, said this process has been going on for over three years and that the province’s commitment is welcomed news.

“It’s actually a little strange that Calgary has grown the way it has and still has only one university,” Marshall said. The city of one million has five postsecondary institutions, mostly colleges. Edmonton, however, has three universities and a handful of colleges.

According to recent report compiled by SAIT, Mount Royal College, Alberta College of Art & Design, Bow Valley College and the University of Calgary, Edmonton has received the 11 473 more provincially funded college and university student spaces than the five Calgary institutions combined, who collectively turned away about 16 000 students for admission this fall. The report was based on 2004/05 figures.

It’s hoped that Mount Royal’s ability to grant degrees will raise the number of university spaces and help alleviate some of the strain on the city’s schools.

“We should be increasing access right across the province, not just in any particular city—but having said that, Mount Royal’s growth is pretty modest,” Marshall said, adding that the institution plans on growing by 2500 students over the next seven years.

“I think we’re doing our part, but I would certainly never begrudge what another institution in our province would achieve,” he added.

But Dave Taylor, Liberal critic for Advanced Education and MLA for Calgary-Currie, is concerned that giving colleges and technical institutes degree-granting status without going through the proper steps to ensure the degrees are recognized out-of-province produces “university grads on the cheap.”

“The government of Alberta has been quite eager to give [colleges] degree-granting status because a college can turn out a baccalaureate degree graduate cheaper than a university can, but cheap isn’t always good,” Taylor said.

PLEASE SEE **MRC** ♦ PAGE 2

U of A prof nominated for GG literary award

AMANDA ASH
Arts & Entertainment Editor

When it comes to the status of University departments, the English program isn’t always the most sought after vocation, but following being nominated for the Governor General’s Literary Award for her non-fiction work *The Half-Lives of Pat Lowther*, professor Christine Wiesenthal is turning heads in the literary direction.

On 16 October, Wiesenthal received a call from her publisher in Toronto, who told her that the book had been chosen as one of the five finalists in the non-fiction category. The nomination will earn her a quick \$1000, but from Wiesenthal’s perspective, just being on the list of finalists is a reward in itself.

“I was very excited,” Wiesenthal recalled. “It was really wonderful news, particularly because the book came out as a fairly small print. The soft cover is coming out now, but for that reason, it hasn’t had a huge amount of exposure, so for it to make it onto the shortlist is really

thrilling.”

Wiesenthal’s book is a biography based on the life of Pat Lowther, a poet from British Columbia who was murdered by her husband in 1975. Wiesenthal explains that, since she writes poetry herself, covering Lowther’s life in a way that allowed her to selectively shape and edit the truth, as well as rethink the whole genre of biography, was a challenge. But in the end, Wiesenthal’s happy it’s paying off.

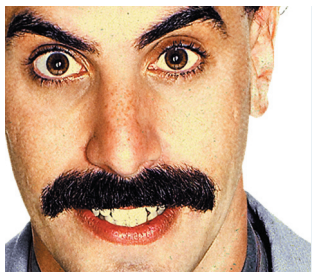
“It’s a validation of eight years of work, and a validation of a poet who’s been underappreciated in a number of respects,” Wiesenthal explained. “[Lowther] is a poet and a writer worth reading today. It’s great that [the book] has a spotlight on Canadian poetry, which is a subject that we don’t hear about all that often.”

And while Wiesenthal feels lucky to have had the chance to research and explore a subject like Pat Lowther, she’s also grateful to be added to the long line of U of A English professors who in the past have also been nominated.

PLEASE SEE **GG AWARD** ♦ PAGE 4

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Jagshemash!

Borat invites all western girllies for chitchat and sexytime. He also wants you to see his new movie-film.

A&E, PAGE 10



Bernard drops the ball

Laurence plans a very special Halloween party, but a certain anthropomorphic allergen ruins it all.

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