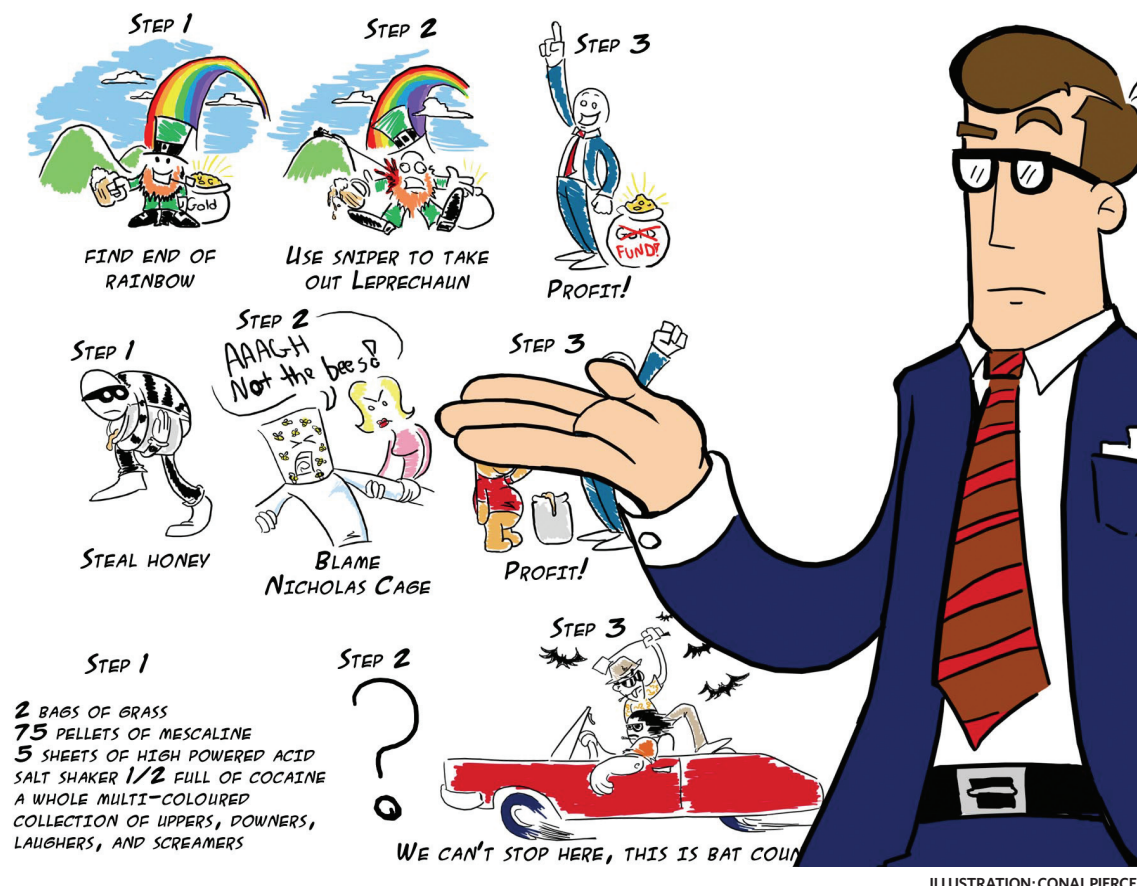


# THE GATEWAY

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## SU Access Fund no longer saving for a rainy day

### PLANS FOR INCREASING ACCESS FUND



SCOTT LILWALL  
Deputy News Editor

Students' Council voted last week in favour of a major change to a financial reserve in hope of easing the burden for students suffering economic hardship.

Omer Yusuf, Vice-President (Student Life), proposed a motion to eliminate the investment requirement from the Access Fund, which was set up in 1995 as a final resort for students who find themselves in dire financial trouble.

"This was something that the Access Fund Committee wasn't comfortable in deciding alone, because it is students' money, so it had to be agreed upon by Council," Yusuf said.

He explained that the money collected from the student fee was previously divided three ways. The majority of the fund was given to students who apply and show a drastic financial need. A small percentage is put aside to pay for the costs of administering the fund, while a final ten per cent was invested in an endowment fund. It's this ten per cent, which was placed in the endowment in the hope of making the fund self-sustaining in the future, that Council voted to redirect.

Yusuf noted that, while the fund

gave away nearly \$1 million to applicants every year, the demand has greatly outweighed the available funds since 2003/04. Every application therefore has their request prorated by a certain amount.

**"This was something that the Access Fund Committee wasn't comfortable in deciding alone, because it is students' money, so it had to be agreed upon by Council."**

OMER YUSUF,  
VICE-PRESIDENT (STUDENT LIFE)

"At the same time that we are not addressing the current need, we are taking funds for students in the future," Yusuf said. "So, there's this weird moral question, of is it okay to be doing this, not knowing for certain whether the endowment fund will be able to meet [future] student needs."

PLEASE SEE ACCESS FUND ♦ PAGE 4

## Professor pens his way to prestigious literary prize

AMANDA ASH  
Arts & Entertainment Editor

Judging by the giant poster of Rudy Wiebe displayed at the Bookstore, the University of Alberta graduate and professor emeritus has become a literary icon that many are looking up to—literally.

The renowned author already has numerous short stories, essays and awards under his belt, including a Governor General's Award in 1973 for his historical fiction *The Temptations of Big Bear*. On 16 January, Wiebe added yet another achievement to his already overflowing nominations list: his book, *Of This Earth: A Mennonite Boyhood in the Boreal Forest*, was one of three works shortlisted for the Charles Taylor Prize, an award that commemorates the life of the late Charles Taylor and recognizes excellence in non-fiction writing, granting \$25 000 to the winner.

Wiebe knew Taylor before he died, as both were members of the Writers' Union. To be shortlisted for a prize established in Taylor's name was an honour for the jovial

Wiebe, and to be chosen out of 98 submissions simply reinforced the fact that he can "still write at [his] age."

"[The Charles Taylor Prize judges] emphasize the prose and the stylistic elegance of non-fiction, not just the content of it," Wiebe says. "This I like very much, because over the years, I've had a lot of feedback like, 'He doesn't know how to write English,' especially with regards to my first couple of books. People thought my style was too heavy or whatever. So to get nominated for an award for stylistic elegance is particularly nice."

*Of This Earth* documents the first twelve years of Wiebe's life. According to Wiebe, the book was a silly, simple idea that challenged his memories of being born and raised on a northern Saskatchewan homestead farm; and, although many of his close friends thought it to be an impossible task for an aged man like himself, Wiebe was determined to write about his early life.

PLEASE SEE WIEBE ♦ PAGE 3

## Terrorism lacks universal definition

Former UN employee Hamid Abdeljaber was on campus for I-Week explaining the challenge of reaching a global consensus about terrorism

CHLOÉ FEDIO  
Managing Editor

A buzzword for the 21st century, "terrorism" has been splashed across headlines and echoed over newscasts, playing a prominent role in today's public consciousness, but what does the term define? Hamid Abdeljaber, who spent 25 years working for the United Nations, was at the University of Alberta Monday evening to discuss the challenge of getting the international community to agree on what a word with over 100 different suggested definitions actually means.

"There is no group in the world that calls themselves terrorists. They've been called terrorists, but they don't call themselves that," said Abdeljaber, former Chief of Middle East Radio Unit for the UN's Department of Public Information.

For over ten years, the UN has been drafting and redrafting definitions of the word, but the meaning of terrorism remains hotly contested, as states continue to argue how to distinguish national liberation movements from terrorist activities, or whether to create a distinction between state-sponsored

terrorism and individual acts.

"We have to be fair when we talk about who is a terrorist and who is a freedom fighter. There are people who are oppressed and fighting for their lives," Abdeljaber said.

**"There is no group in the world that calls themselves terrorists. They've been called terrorists, but they don't call themselves that."**

HAMID ABDELJABER,  
FORMER UN EMPLOYEE

He explained that the UN's challenge was finding a definition wide enough to create common ground for all the different points of view; and while defining terrorism will help combat it, ultimately the world has to address its root causes, such as exclusion, discrimination, racism and above all poverty.

"With extreme poverty, people have no hope, and they might resort

to unethical means to express this despair," Abdeljaber said. "Poverty is truly the mother of all ills, and the world should address this scourge as soon as possible."

"If we address these issues, then we are drying the environment which produces this kind of frustration and hopelessness," he added.

But while the UN is undertaking a noble feat by trying to coordinate a definition that will be accepted by the 192 members that make up the organization, Enneke Lorberg is unconvinced that the method is effective.

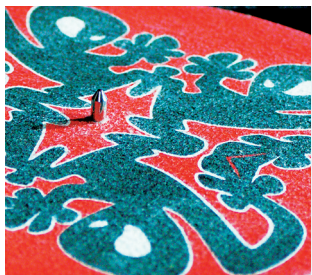
"There is no hope in hell that we'll get that a clear definition of terrorism," Lorberg said, adding that the use of the word is problematic. "Terrorism has led to paranoia ... the paranoia is very destructive."

Lorberg, a historian who studied in the Netherlands, later coming to the U of A and writing a thesis on protest movements, was a vocal audience member who was concerned that actually defining terrorism would lump protest and liberation movements under the banner of terrorism.

PLEASE SEE TERRORISM ♦ PAGE 3  
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## The life of the party

DJing isn't as easy as it looks. A&E editor Amanda Ash took some lessons so she could throw the next big bash.

FEATURE, PAGES 12-13



## Golden Bear BFF

Bears basketball will say goodbye to close friends Scott Gordon and Tyson Jones on Saturday night in the Gym.

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