



POLICY 7.03

COUNCIL GOVERNANCE

The Voice Magazine

POLICY INTENT

To provide a structure by which to govern the existence and delivery of an AUSU student publication, currently known as *The Voice Magazine* or *The Voice*.

POLICY RESPONSIBILITY

Executive

DEFINITIONS

Editorial staff will consist of the executive director as the editor-in-chief, and the managing editor of *The Voice Magazine* who are responsible for the professional safe-keeping and administration of *The Voice*.

POLICY

Mandate

The Voice Magazine is an online publication by the Athabasca University Students' Union (AUSU). *The Voice* will endeavor to provide current, factual, pertinent information and entertainment in a clear and understandable format, and to provide a forum where students may gain experience by having their writing published. *The Voice* will maintain an open submissions policy and actively encourage student participation.

Mission

- a) *The Voice* will focus on issues and topics of importance or interest to Athabasca University (AU) students.
- b) *The Voice* will represent the students' point of view.

Editorial

3.01.01 *The Voice's* editorial policy is one of fair and equitable coverage. In keeping with standard journalistic ethics, *The Voice* does not support or endorse any individual politician or

political party or any individual faculty or department within Athabasca University, except for its editorial pages, which may contain personal opinions of the authors.

- 3.01.02 In designing and creating *The Voice*, the editorial staff will strive for a professional presentation that is visually appealing, easy to navigate, and readily accessible.
- 3.01.03 Editorial staff and writers will work in keeping with Canadian Press Journalistic Style.
- 3.01.04 The editorial staff will determine a process for soliciting, receiving, and selecting articles for publication in *The Voice* that is open, transparent, and fair.
- 3.01.05 The editorial staff will make the final determination of suitability of the articles for *The Voice* and may refuse to publish articles deemed to be in poor taste.
- 3.01.06 The editorial staff will set aside space in *The Voice* for AUSU news or commentary by an executive member or councillor designated by the executive to act on behalf of AUSU. This does not prejudice the editor-in-chief's ability to publish any other comments or articles on AUSU activities.
- 3.01.07 Letters to the editor are encouraged and published at the discretion of the editor-in-chief. The editor-in-chief reserves the right to edit for length and suitability to *The Voice* format. If edited, the editor-in-chief shall ensure that the spirit of the content remains unaltered.
- 3.01.08 A masthead will be present, identifying legal publishing rights, disclaimers, the address of *The Voice* and the editor-in-chief, and *The Voice* website and email addresses. It will feature a disclaimer indicating that not all views presented are those of the students' union.
- 3.01.09 The editorial staff will conduct regular reader surveys to determine what AU students want out of *The Voice*. The survey should be advertised and easy to locate and may offer prizes as an incentive. All efforts should be made to obtain as much student input as possible. Subsequent content should strive to provide students with the kind of articles they wish to read, as determined by the survey results.

Funding

- 3.01.10 Funding for *The Voice* is provided by AUSU according to the AUSU bylaws, where the council-approved budget allocation is designated to *The Voice* within the AUSU operating budget and is subject to AUSU financial management policies.
- 3.01.11 The net dollar value of the budget allocation to *The Voice* shall not fluctuate by more than fifteen percent (15%) from year to year unless by special resolution.
- 3.01.12 *The Voice* expenditures will be audited on an annual basis as a part of the AUSU audit to ensure it is always operating in the best interest of the membership.
- 3.01.13 *The Voice* internally restricted reserve funds shall only be used for the administration and production of *The Voice Magazine*.

Advertising

- 3.01.14 The editor-in-chief will determine advertising prices for *The Voice* that they determine will best benefit *The Voice*.
- 3.01.15 *The Voice* reserves the right to deny any advertising at the discretion of the editor-in-chief.
- 3.01.16 *The Voice* editor-in-chief may recruit sales representatives to solicit advertising for *The Voice*.
- 3.01.17 Public service announcements may be accepted at the discretion of the editor-in-chief of *The Voice*.

Classified

- 3.01.18 *The Voice* offers classified advertising to students for free, specifications to be determined by the editor-in-chief.
- 3.01.19 The rate for classified ads for outside entities will be set by the editor-in-chief of *The Voice*.
- 3.01.20 The editor-in-chief reserves the right to refuse any classified advertising without explanation.

Management

- 3.01.21 The editor-in-chief:
- a) is responsible for maintaining ethical standards and integrity in *The Voice* as detailed in the ethical standards section below;
 - b) oversees all staff working directly for *The Voice*;
 - c) will arrange for editorial copy, assign stories, and edit finished works;
 - d) may contract with external services such as cartoonists, press, content providers (artwork, web art), mailing house, or merchandisers;
 - e) will write for *The Voice* as needed to provide a quality publication;
 - f) will be responsible for editing and layout;
 - g) will maintain *The Voice* website and email subscription lists, and arrange for upgrades or repairs to the site as needed;
 - h) is responsible for supplying, preparing, and presenting graphical content for *The Voice* articles;
 - i) will determine rates of pay for writers within the constraints of *The Voice* budget,
 - j) will promote or obtain promotions for *The Voice*;
 - k) is responsible to develop an annual budget for *The Voice*, to be incorporated into the AUSU council-approved budget each year.
 - l) is responsible for monthly financial reporting for *The Voice*, to be incorporated into the monthly and annual AUSU financial statements presented to AUSU Council.
 - m) will make *The Voice* available in formats that are easily accessible for AUSU members; and
 - n) will maintain or arrange for the maintenance of *The Voice* records. Records will include the following writer information: contact details, starting date with *The Voice*, contracts with *The Voice*, and payment details. Records will also include

details about professional contacts, outside services used by *The Voice*, and all other financial and administrative records.

- 3.01.22 The editor-in-chief may delegate any duty or authority in this policy to any member of the editorial staff or to an editorial committee.

Ethical Standards

- 3.01.23 All employees, staff writers, and volunteers of *The Voice* will strive to present themselves in a professional manner.
- 3.01.24 *The Voice* employees, staff writers, and volunteers will be expected to be courteous and compassionate.
- 3.01.25 *The Voice* employees, staff writers, and volunteers shall not use or attempt to use their position to gain personal benefit from gifts, gratuities, or hospitality of any kind.
- 3.01.26 *The Voice* employees, staff writers, and volunteers shall be bound by AUSU's policy 2.13: Code of Ethics, and 2.12: Harassment and Discrimination Policy, and any violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.
- 3.01.27 *The Voice* staff writers shall respect sources and their right to confidentiality, where appropriate and within the guidelines of Canadian law.
- 3.01.28 *The Voice* staff writers must verify the accuracy of all they report.
- 3.01.29 *The Voice* staff writers must ensure that subjects are aware of their intentions and their affiliation with *The Voice* and obtain the names and consent of individuals photographed or interviewed. Names will be published when applicable and reasonable. This will include when staff writers seek information through social media that are intended to inform or contribute to an article prepared for *The Voice*.
- 3.01.30 *The Voice* staff writers shall comply with all applicable copyrights legislation and obtain permission to use any material they publish in *The Voice*.
- 3.01.31 *The Voice* shall ensure all freelance writers abide by these ethical standards.

RELATED REFERENCES, POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND FORMS

This Policy References:

AUSU Bylaws
AUSU Policy 2.12 Council Governance: Harassment and Discrimination Policy
AUSU Policy 2.13: Code of Ethics

This Policy is Referenced by:

None

Forms:

None

POLICY HISTORY

Original Approval Date: October 23, 1999

Last Review Date: October 21, 2020

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