

Fulcrum Publishing Society  
Board of Directors  
MINUTES

Sunday, May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
Zoom, 9:55 a.m. - 12:11p.m.  
Meeting #12 2020-2021 Publishing Year

**Present:** Kalki Nagaratnam, Benjamin King, Kate Murray, Brendan Keane, David Campion-Smith, Charley Dutil (ex-officio), Justin Turcotte (ex-officio), Ryan Pepper, Jelena Maric (ex-officio), Julia D'Silva

**Partially Present:** Christina Le

**Absent (with reason):**

**Absent (without reason):**

1. Opening of Meeting

B. King opened the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

B. King noted that the raise hand feature will be used once again for voting at today's meeting. K. Nagaratnam motioned to approve the agenda. K. Murray seconded the motion. The motion passed.

3. Kahoot Activity

C. Dutil led a mini Kahoot quiz based on articles from the past month.

4. Ombudsperson Report

H. Hubbard took this opportunity to reiterate some of the points from his report. He reported that there were very few complaints this semester - only two, and one was a continuation from the previous semester. H. Hubbard noted that this amount was less than last semester and stated that it's a bit alarming that the Fulcrum is only receiving such few complaints given the population of the students on campus.

H. Hubbard proceeded to revisit his recommendations from his fall 2020 Ombudsperson report.

**Remove the Influence**

H. Hubbard argued that the Ombudsperson should be granted access to all levels of the organization, as they don't have this authority right now. He added that the Ombudsperson should be given a non-renewable term of at least one year, and not exceeding two or three years. H. Hubbard said he is confident that the Fulcrum can establish a feedback friendly culture by taking these steps. He mentioned that the Board will need to look at the Fulcrum's Bylaws.

### **Redefine the Purpose**

H. Hubbard asserted that the Ombudsperson's purpose should extend beyond complaints and look at the feedback in general, which will allow the Fulcrum to adapt to the changing needs of our readers and audience.

### **Reorient the Responsibilities**

H. Hubbard maintained that the Ombudsperson should be tasked with the reception, acquisition, consolidation, categorization, storage, conversion, dissemination, and actioning of feedback within the Fulcrum, subject to specific criteria and principles set by the Board of Directors - such as anonymity and trustworthiness. He added that if the recommendations are to be successful and successfully implemented, the need for organization and structure will be much greater as the FPS becomes a learning organization that implements the feedback of its readership as frequently as possible.

### **Conclusion**

H. Hubbard said that he thinks the Ombudsperson position is dying out, and that it doesn't serve much of a purpose right now. With that said, he mentioned that he would like to be a part of the conversations on improving the Ombudsperson role.

#### **5. Approval of April Meeting Minutes**

K. Murray motioned to approve April's meeting minutes. K. Nagaratnam seconded the motion. The motion passed.

#### **6. Standing Actions List**

B. King reviewed the standing actions list and K. Murray and K. Nagaratnam made the necessary changes.

#### **7. Executive Director**

### **Finances**

J. Turcotte began his report by reviewing the Fulcrum's finances. Regarding the Fulcrum's bank accounts, he said that things are plenty fine. J. Turcotte proceeded to go over the numbers with the Board. He noted that the Fulcrum has earned around \$20,000 from its investments.

#### Overdue Accounts

J. Turcotte advised that the Fulcrum has two overdue accounts at the moment: one from the UOSU Peer Help Centre for \$339.00, for which he hasn't received a response from, and another from the UOSU levy for \$11,316.57, for which he expects the Fulcrum to receive sometime in June.

#### Levies

J. Turcotte informed the Board that the Fulcrum has received almost all of its levies for this year. He added that both student associations are using EFTs, which he said makes things easier.

### Canada Summer Jobs Funding

J. Turcotte announced that the Fulcrum has been approved for \$26,491.00 in Canada Summer Jobs Funding, which he explained is to be distributed among four editorial positions, one in the summer and three in the fall. He went on to say that the Fulcrum will receive the majority of this money at the end of our agreement, so likely sometime in February or March 2022. J. Turcotte added that he will provide the new Board with some options at the June Board meeting for making use of this additional funding.

### Credit Card

J. Turcotte indicated that Dorian's credit card is paid off in full and his credit card application has been processed. He noted that he'll be getting a cash back credit card instead of the Aeroplan points card that the Fulcrum has had previously.

### Chequing Account

J. Turcotte informed the Board that the Fulcrum is able to "upgrade" its TD chequing account to an unlimited plan with additional features for no additional cost. He clarified that he'll be making this change post-stay-at-home order with one of the Board's signing authorities.

## **Human Resources**

### Hiring

J. Turcotte stated that the hiring committee have hired the following editorial positions for 2021-22 publishing year:

- Social Media Manager;
- Managing Editor;
- Multimedia Director; and
- News Editor.

J. Turcotte said that Phase 2 of editorial hiring will begin in June and will make up most of the remaining positions. He added that Phase 3 will be the hiring for the staff writer positions.

### Onboarding

J. Turcotte reported that he's developed a new virtual onboarding process that makes use of SurveyMonkey and is an easy way for staff to provide documents and agreements while also getting introduced to key policies and given required documents.

### COVID-19

J. Turcotte advised that all staff continue to work from home, as per provincial requirements.

## **Operations**

### Mailbox

J. Turcotte informed the Board that he'll be purchasing a parcel box for the Fulcrum office that will allow the Fulcrum to receive both regular mail and parcels directly to the Fulcrum's offices, which will mean that he will no longer have to chase down mail between the uOttawa mailroom and the OUSU offices. He said that the only issue is that the purchase will be \$285 and the Fulcrum's budget line for repair and maintenance this year is only \$250, therefore he will need Board approval to proceed. J. Turcotte went on to say that there are two options: (1) exceed the budget line or (2) add funds to the budget line.

#### Fulcrum Office

J. Turcotte mentioned that there was a leak in the ceiling of the third floor that had been going on for some time. He said that the uOttawa facilities team identified it and have completed repairs. J. Turcotte went on to say that the Fulcrum received a bill from the uOttawa administration for about \$19,600 in maintenance costs dating back to 2017. He stated that he informed the staff member that this was a mistake, as the Fulcrum doesn't pay for maintenance related to the Fulcrum's building. J. Turcotte continued, saying that she would check and has not gotten back in touch with him, but he reassured the Board that he doesn't anticipate this being a problem.

#### Director Sweaters

J. Turcotte told the directors that there sweaters are all safe and sound at the Fulcrum office and once the COVID situation has stabilized, he will be in touch with us regarding coming to pick them up.

#### **Strategic Plan**

J. Turcotte reminded the Board that a big part of the new Executive Director role is leading the strategic plan implementation. He mentioned that he's set-up a progress map for the incoming Board to track key progress indicators. J. Turcotte proceeded to go over the document and the table, which is only accessible through Fulcrum emails. He noted that the most significant and short-term project is to work on the Fulcrum's website this summer.

#### **Website Feedback**

J. Turcotte asked that if anyone has any feedback on the website, to please send it to him as soon as possible. He said that so far, he has successfully repaired the Fulcrum's social media widgets on the Fulcrum's website.

#### **Looking Ahead**

J. Turcotte concluded his report by going over some of the things of the radar for himself and the incoming Board, which included:

- Website redesign and general fixing
- Implementation of Ombudsperson recommendations
- Various marketing/outreach plans to be developed for the year ahead
- Allocate additional CSJ funding
- Create an advertising plan

- Etc.!

## 8. Editor-in-Chief

C. Dutil began his report by welcoming the new Board members!

### Staffing

C. Dutil stated that he, J. Turcotte, and D. Ghosn conducted a total of ten interviews in their first phase of hiring. He said that at the end of the hiring process, they ended up hiring four people:

1. Aly Murphy, who is the former Arts & Culture Editor for the 2020-21 publishing year, will serve as the Managing Editor this year;
2. Jelena Maric, who was a staff writer this past year is now the Fulcrum's Social Media Manager;
3. Zoe Mason, who was the Features Editor in 2019-20 will be one of the Fulcrum's News Editors this upcoming year; and
4. Hailey Otten will be the Fulcrum's first-ever Multimedia Director, and she is totally new to the Fulcrum!

### Content

C. Dutil explained that April was a turnaround month so the Fulcrum hasn't had a lot of content going out in the last couple of weeks, but he said that in the Fulcrum's first two weeks of publishing, he and Jelena have picked it back up with a couple of Live from the Archives, a Dear Di, and the Wire.

C. Dutil added that he and Jelena are now creating a playlist every week on the Fulcrum's Spotify account in an effort to promote it to students. He continued, saying that they have also started making TikTok, and right now they are making two a week, but he'd like to get to a point where they publish four or five a week. C. Dutil said that Jelena will be starting a new series this week where she'll be doing news recaps.

C. Dutil mentioned that when the rest of Ed Board starts in September, he and Jelena plan on giving them access to the Fulcrum's TikTok so that whoever has ideas can make drafts and he and Jelena can review them.

## 9. President

### COVID-19 Pandemic

K. Nagaratnam gave an update on the Fulcrum's guidelines regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. She said that the COVID-19 pandemic continues to demand that the Fulcrum operate in a physically distant manner. K. Nagaratnam stated that effective Thursday, April 8th, the government issued a province-wide Stay-at-Home order until May 20th, which has now been extended until June 2nd.

K. Nagaratnam said that the order, among other things, states that, "[e]veryone is to remain at home except for essential purposes, such as going to the grocery store or

pharmacy, accessing health care services (including getting vaccinated), for outdoor exercise, or for work that cannot be done remotely.” She went on to say that additional public health and workplace safety measures took effect on Saturday, April 17th.

K. Nagaratnam mentioned that some good news is that Ontario is continuing to expand eligibility for and access to COVID-19 vaccines through mass vaccination sites, hospital clinics, primary care settings, and pharmacies.

K. Nagaratnam asserted that at this time, all Fulcrum staff continue to be directed to work remotely, with visits to the office only permitted for essential reasons, at the discretion of the Executive Director.

### **Executive Committee**

K. Nagaratnam reported that the Executive Committee met this past week to finalize the agendas for today’s back-to-back Board meetings. She added that they also started planning for the Director Orientation and Training Session, which will be hosted by the current Executive Committee in early June.

### **Legal, Capital Assets, Marketing, Policy, and Inter-Board Health and Wellness Committees**

K. Nagaratnam indicated that these committees didn’t meet this month. She said there are no legal updates to provide, but that the Policy Committee is working on creating the updated versions of the Fulcrum’s Bylaws and Policy Manual with the amendments that were made this publishing year.

### **Finance Committee**

K. Nagaratnam informed the Board that the Fulcrum will receive the Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) Funding! She explained that this government program provides wage subsidies to employers to create quality summer work experiences for young people aged 15 to 30 years. K. Nagaratnam continued, saying that the Fulcrum will receive approximately \$26,000 to partially fund some of the Ed Board positions. She added that this was the Fulcrum’s first time applying.

### **Human Resources Committee**

#### Exit Interviews

K. Nagaratnam informed the Board that the HR Committee conducted exit interviews for the Editor-in-Chief and the General Manager at the end of April.

#### Editorial Hiring

K. Nagaratnam mentioned that C. Dutil has finished the first phase of hiring for the Managing Editor, Multimedia Director, and Social Media Manager positions. She noted that the new Board will ratify the candidates during this afternoon’s Board meeting. K. Nagaratnam added that the next phase is set to begin around June 1st.

### Contract Discussions

K. Nagaratnam explained that the HR Committee has been working with the Executive Director to standardize staff contracts and ensure they included all the usual contract sections. She said that in the past, the Fulcrum had noticeable differences between the Fulcrum business and editorial contracts.

### In-Camera Matters

K. Nagaratnam advised that the Board will move in-camera at the end of the meeting to discuss the HR Committee's proposal about paid leaves.

### **Board Matters**

K. Nagaratnam stated that there are currently two open seats on the 2020-21 Board:

- University Representative; and
- Community Representative.

She commented that there are three open seats on the 2021-22 Board, two of which she anticipates the Board will fill today:

- University Representative;
- Community Representative; and
- Student Representative.

### **Other Business**

#### Committee Chair and Officer Transition Reports

K. Nagaratnam reminded the Board that all committee chair and officer transition reports are to be submitted to her and Kate by May 31st.

#### Board Social

K. Nagaratnam said that the Executive Committee is planning to have one final Board social in the upcoming weeks, so stay tuned!

#### Calendar Items

K. Nagaratnam stated that the first meeting of the new Board is later this afternoon.

#### Thank Yous

K. Nagaratnam said a special thank you to the Board's outgoing directors:

- David Campion-Smith - Marketing Committee Chair (~2 years of service);
- Julia D'Silva - Policy Committee Chair (~1 year of service); and
- Ryan Pepper - Inter-Board Health and Wellness Committee Chair (~1 year of service).

She thanked all the directors and ex-officio members of the 2020-21 publishing year for their insights, contributions, and dedication to the Fulcrum this past year.

10. Social Media Manager

### **Facebook**

J. Maric reported that overall, there isn't a lot of things going on because there was a lull in publishing content. She noted that since she and C. Dutil have started posting again, and they've noticed the numbers going back up on the Fulcrum's Facebook account. J. Maric continued, saying that compared to this time last year, everything has gone down, although last year's analytics were for the entire month of May instead of half, which may have had an impact as well.

J. Maric proceeded to go over some of the top posts. She stated that overall, the Fulcrum's stories have been getting a good amount of reach, with the LFTA being the most reached and clicked on story this month. J. Maric went on to say that she noticed an afternoon timeblock between 2-5pm is when the Fulcrum's readers are the most active online. She added that it's been slow news-wise, which might explain the lower numbers as well.

J. Maric indicated that the Fulcrum's Facebook page came in fourth with total page likes and engagement compared to other student publications. She commented that she has increased the Fulcrum's Facebook page likes and ranking, from 3000 likes to 3,200 likes.

### **Twitter**

J. Maric informed the Board that overall, everything has gone down on the Fulcrum's Twitter account as well with Tweets, Tweet impressions, and mentions all down compared to this time last year. With that said, she observed that profile visits and followers are up from this time last year. J. Maric theorized that this all could be attributed to a lack of news stories.

### **Instagram**

J. Maric enthused that overall, the Fulcrum's Instagram account does well with high peaks on the days that the Fulcrum posts stories. She noted that compared to this time last month, the Fulcrum's Instagram account has more reach, impressions, and followers.

J. Maric explained that continuing to post at the times that most of the Fulcrum's followers are more active (in the afternoon) and stories with interesting headlines and content will ensure continued website traffic and visits. She added that these Instagram analytics will most likely increase as more news stories are posted. J. Maric reported that the Fulcrum's stories perform incredibly well, with most users going through the entire story and not exiting before it's over. She commented that continuing to use Instagram stories is a good idea.

### **TikTok**

J. Maric indicated that the Fulcrum's TikTok followers have grown since the Fulcrum began posting more content on its page.

### **Website**

J. Maric informed the Board that the Fulcrum's website visits and traffic are increasing compared to the past few weeks when the Fulcrum wasn't posting as much content. She said that as usual, the majority of the Fulcrum's traffic to the website is coming from organic



searches. J. Maric continued, saying that the bounce rate has increased since the last March report, and the number of users and pageviews has dropped, which, she explained can all be attributed to a lull in posting. J. Maric then briefly gave a breakdown of the top ten pages.

Regarding the Fulcrum's Facebook account, J. Turcotte commented that he really like how the Fulcrum can do the comparison with other student media. He wondered if it's possible to do the comparison with Twitter and Instagram against other student papers too. J. Maric said that she will look into it.

## 11. Board Survey Review

### Overview

B. King gave an overview of the Board Survey, noting that it was composed on SurveyMonkey and its purpose is to allow directors to reflect on the year and evaluate the performance of the Board. He explained that the results that were compiled will continue to enable the Board to operate in an effective and efficient way. B. King proceeded to briefly outline the categories of the questions, which included:

- Meetings and materials;
- Agenda;
- Meeting participation;
- The Chair and Robert's Rules; and
- Comments and Experiences

### Meetings and Materials

B. King informed the Board that the feedback from this section included:

- Materials (minutes, agenda, motions) were provided with enough time to prepare for meetings;
- Meetings were found to generally start on time → the 9:55am start time will continue; some meetings were found to run a bit long;
- A lot was accomplished at meetings; and
- Standing Actions List was well-received

### The Agenda

B. King provided the following feedback from the survey on the agenda:

- The agenda was found to be clear and realistic for the allotted time;
- The agenda and correspondence before meetings generally provided the Board with a clear picture of the goals for meetings
  - Is there a way the Board can improve this (links to reports or pertinent discussion points in emails)?;
- Agenda items were found to be appropriate;
- Presenters of agenda items provided clear background
  - Providing background at the start of new agenda items should continue to be something that the Board reinforces for the new Board.

## Meeting Participation

B. King went over some of the comments on meeting participation, which included:

- Meeting participation is something the Executive Committee wanted to work to encourage between last year and this year;
- Board training had a greater focus on reinforcing that meetings are a space to share thoughts and ideas;
- Generally, directors felt encouraged to share ideas and felt valued as a member of the Board; and
- Disagreements were handled openly, honestly, and directly

## The Chair and Robert's Rules

B. King reviewed the responses regarding this section, which included:

- The Chair was prepared for the meeting and kept discussions on track;
- Robert's Rules of Order were typically followed
  - Online meetings made Robert's Rule a bit more challenging for differentiating between raising new points and direct responses, but it generally went smoothly;

B. King mentioned that, as always, any feedback is appreciated and you can always reach out to him with questions, concerns, or comments.

## Comments and Feedback

B. King highlighted some of the specific comments and feedback from the survey:

- *"I love the addition of the Kahoot quizzes at the beginning of the meetings"*
- *"I think that starting the meetings at 9:55am instead of 10:00am as well as having the 5-minute recess in the middle of the meeting were both solid additions this year"*
- *"Could implement some of the ideas that (the Executive committee) discussed to spice up meetings such as having Board workshops"*
- *"Sometimes meetings did go a bit long."*
- *"I wonder if there might be a better way to handle some of the presentations of officer reports, especially since everyone receives them in advance. Even the president doesn't necessarily need to do the quick overview of all the committees if those chairs are going to present through the course of the meeting as well."*

## How can we improve the Board experience at the Fulcrum?

B. King stated that some of the suggestions for improvement of the Board experience at the Fulcrum included:

- *I loved that we had a Board social this year (and hopefully one more with the current Board). I know Ed Board has these sorts of events often, and I think it'd be great if we as a Board could have them for ourselves too!"*
- *"A better connection with the editorial board I think. Especially as members change and we get maybe less ed board experience"*

*represented on the board that understanding of how things actually work becomes even more important.”*

### **Conclusions and Outlook**

B. King concluded his report of the survey by stating that there were some good strides made in the last year to improve participation at meetings. He reported that meetings are typically efficient and materials provided to directors are clear and effective. B. King mentioned the suggestion that the Board explore alternatives to presenting officer reports and having more events coordinated throughout the year for the Board, similar to EdBoard, such as workshops, social events, etc.

#### **12. In-Camera: HR Committee Proposal**

K Nagaratnam motioned to go in-camera with J. Turcotte to discuss paid leaves and contracts. K. Murray seconded the motion. The motion passed and the meeting moved in-camera.

K. Nagaratnam motioned to approve the HR Committee’s proposal. B. Keane seconded the motion. The motion passed.

K. Nagaratnam motioned to stay in-camera. B. Keane seconded the motion. The motion failed and the meeting moved out of camera.

#### **13. Revisit Standing Actions List**

No additional changes were made to the standing actions list or the forward agenda.

#### **14. Other Business**

J. Turcotte noted that the budget line for repair and maintenance is \$250 and the cost for the mailbox is \$285. K. Nagaratnam said that she’s in favour of increasing the budget line so that the mailbox can be purchased (to \$300).

K. Nagaratnam motioned to adjourn the meeting at 12:11pm. All voted in favour and the motion passed.

### **Appendices**

#### **THE FULCRUM PUBLISHING SOCIETY**

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May 16, 2021

Kalki Nagaratnam  
President  
The Fulcrum Publishing Society  
07-85 University Private,  
Ottawa, ON, K1N 6N5

Dear Kalki Nagaratnam,

Your requested report regarding complaints received during the Winter 2021 Semester is attached herein.

You will find that the report focusses on the substance of complaints received during the Winter 2021 Semester and uses these as examples for the importance of the Fall 2020 Ombudsperson's Report's Recommendations—and ultimately, their implementation.

I look forward to your reply and am happy to assist you in the work that you do at the Fulcrum Publishing Society.

Sincerely,

Harley K. Hubbard  
Ombudsperson



**REMOVING THE INFLUENCE, REDEFINING THE PURPOSE,  
AND REORIENTING THE RESPONSIBILITIES**

Prepared for  
The Fulcrum Publishing Society,  
Their Board of Directors, and  
Students of the University of Ottawa

Prepared by  
Harley K. Hubbard  
Ombudsperson  
The Fulcrum Publishing Society

May 16, 2021  
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## INTRODUCTION & SUMMARY OF COMPLAINTS

With “37,449” (University of Ottawa [uOttawa], 2021) undergraduate students at the University of Ottawa, the number of complaints that The Fulcrum Publishing Society (FPS) is receiving is alarmingly low. Only two complaints were submitted to the Ombudsperson for the Winter 2021 Semester; this is less than 1% of the University of Ottawa’s student community, highlighting the importance of recommendations from the Fall 2020 Ombudsperson’s report.

Apropos the two complaints received, in each instance the Ombudsperson’s role was unclear to the complainants. They believed that the Ombudsperson had the authority to oversee their complaint, and even though the Ombudsperson should have this authority, the Bylaws do not provide for the type of independence that is required for the disposition thereof. At present, the Ombudsperson does not have the authority to solicit information from The Fulcrum’s employees, nor can the Ombudsperson initiate preliminary investigations to determine the frivolousness of complaints as is required by Section 10.02

of General Bylaw Number 2 (The Fulcrum Publishing Society [FPS], 2020a, p. 21).

Furthermore, the Ombudsperson does not receive information regarding particular complaints in a timely manner; all complaints are received on a semesterly basis. Therefore, more needs to be done to define the Ombudsperson's role at FPS as discussed in the Fall 2020 Ombudsperson Report, and this role ought to be properly communicated to University of Ottawa students.

To illustrate this need, one complainant is cited who feared to pursue their complaint with FPS's Board of Directors, because they believed that board members would not review their complaint in an impartial manner. This prompted them to consider raising their complaint to an alternate authority—the University of Ottawa Students' Union or the University of Ottawa itself. Arguably, for reasons provided in the Fall 2020 Report, it would be in their best interests to do

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so. Furthermore, the absence of an Independent Ombudsperson could lead to ethical or legal concerns in the future (Dallas, 1997, p. 134) as complainants have few at FPS to voice their concerns to, nor do they have an adequate dispute resolution mechanism which protects their interests.

Admittedly, in the majority of cases complaints received should be overseen by the immediate supervisor in instances of internal conflict; furthermore, editorial complaints mostly should be addressed by the Editor-in-Chief; however, there is always a potential for conflicts of interest. In those instances, there are very few alternatives for complainants as

provided for in Sections 4, 5, 6, and 7 of FPS's Policy Manual (FPS, 2020b, pp. 21 – 26). Therefore, with very little to report from the two complaints received—one being a *continuation* of a complaint from the Fall 2020 Semester—the findings of the Ombudsperson's Fall 2020 report will be revisited here, perhaps striking a dialogue for future action to benefit FPS and University of Ottawa Students.

## **FALL 2020 OMBUDSPERSON REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **REVISITED Removing The Influence**

When deciding the frivolousness of complaints, the Ombudsperson is not authorized to compel information from FPS employees. Furthermore, the Ombudsperson is reliant on others within the organization for the information he or she receives and cannot source information independently. Therefore, to ensure the independence of the role, the Ombudsperson ought to be authorized access to all employees at all levels of the organization when conducting preliminary investigations of complaints and when analyzing feedback more generally. The authority of the

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role implies a high degree of trustworthiness, and candidates targeted for the role should be selected as such.

Furthermore, the Ombudsperson has a limited ability to implement his or her authority due to normative influences held over the position. The Ombudsperson should be given a non renewable term of office not less than one year and not exceeding three years, and this should be included within Section 10 of General Bylaw Number 2 within the



description of the Ombudsperson's roles and responsibilities. By doing so, FPS has removed a significant normative influence held over the Ombudsperson, reducing the likelihood that the Ombudsperson would change his or her opinion to satisfy members of the board—thereby compromising his or her impartiality.

### **Redefining the Purpose**

At present the Ombudsperson's purpose is to "...investigate membership complaints against the editorial content of the Fulcrum." (FPS, 2020a, p. 21) They are also granted the authority to convene the Investigations Committee when they find that the complaints received are not frivolous (FPS, 2020a, p. 21).

However, the Ombudsperson's purpose should extend beyond complaints to include feedback in general, because this would allow for the establishment of a "feedback-friendly culture" (Baker, 2013, pp. 260 – 266). As discussed in the Fall 2020 Ombudsperson Report, the establishment of an Independent Ombudsperson is sufficient to establishing such a culture—and to seizing the various strategic benefits which result therefrom, because an Independent Ombudsperson establishes a "learning continuum ... trust and psychological safety ... and authentic dialogue ..." (Baker, 2013, pp. 262)

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If, rather than merely investigating editorial *complaints*, the Ombudsperson's purpose is to oversee all forms of feedback within the organization, FPS would seize the value of feedback and become a learning organization which implements feedback received from the University of Ottawa student community in its operations. The Ombudsperson's purpose, therefore, would be to oversee all forms of feedback within the organization and to analyze

this feedback when making policy and strategic recommendations to FPS's Board of Directors.

### **Reorienting the Responsibilities**

The Ombudsperson should be tasked with the reception, acquisition, consolidation, categorization, storage, conversion, dissemination, and actioning of feedback within the organization subject to specific criteria and principles set by the Board of Directors—such as anonymity, and trustworthiness. That is, the responsibilities should be carried out in accordance with the interests of University of Ottawa students. Additionally, the anonymity of employees and sources of information must be maintained.

As mentioned in the Fall 2020 Ombudsperson Report, a significant issue with complaints received is the fact that data are unstructured and disorganized. Mainly, complaints are received via email in the form of screen shots. Although this is adequate for relatively small amounts of complaints, if the recommendations are successful and successfully implemented—the need for organization and structure will be much greater as FPS becomes a learning organization that implements the feedback of its readership as frequently as possible.

### **CONCLUSION**

The Fall 2020 Ombudsperson Report highlighted some significant areas for consideration, and it highlighted an implementation plan. With this most recent round of

complaints received, it is apparent that there is a need to act and to adapt, because even those who do complain are afraid of partiality throughout the complaints process. The Ombudsperson receives very few complaints within a semester, and this is not due to a lack of objects of complaint. Therefore, in order to establish a “feedback-friendly culture” (Baker, 2013, pp. 260 – 266) a dialogue must be initiated between FPS’s Board of Directors, the Ombudsperson, and relevant stakeholders throughout the complaints process.

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#### REFERENCES

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631 King Edward Avenue  
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# Fulcrum Publishing Society – Board of Directors

## Executive Director's Report

Sunday, May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Justin Turcotte

### 1. Finances

#### Snapshot of Accounts

The below financial information is accurate as of 3:00 pm on Tuesday, May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

	<b>April 2021</b>	<b>May 2021</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$560,981.39</b>	<b>\$558,189.18</b>	<b>\$2,792.21</b>
<b>Chequing (TD)</b>	\$400,414.55	\$398,754.27	<b>\$1,660.28</b>
<b>Investments (RBC)</b>	\$100,566.84	\$99,434.91	<b>\$1,131.93</b>
<b>Canada Business Loan (COVID-19)</b>	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$0

#### Overdue Accounts

The following accounts are overdue:

1. UOSU Peer Help Centre: \$339.00
  - No response
2. UOSU Levy: \$11,316.57
  - Expect to receive sometime in June

#### Levies

We have received almost all of our levies for this year. Both student associations are using EFTs, which makes things easier.

#### Canada Summer Jobs Funding

The Fulcrum has been approved for \$26,491.00 in Canada Summer Jobs Funding to be distributed among four editorial positions, one in the summer and three in the fall. We will receive the majority of this money at the end of our agreement, so February or March 2022.

I will provide the new Board some options at the June Board meeting for making use of this additional funding.

#### Credit Card

Dorian's credit card is paid off in full and my credit card application has been processed. I will be getting a cash back credit card, instead of the Aeroplan points card we have had previously.

#### Chequing Account

We are able to "upgrade" our TD chequing account to an unlimited plan with additional features for no additional cost. I will be making this change post-stay-at-home order with one of the signing authorities.

### **2. Human Resources**

#### Hiring

We have hired the following editorial positions for the 2021/22 publishing year:

1. Social Media Manager
2. Managing Editor
3. Multimedia Director
4. News Editor

Phase 2 of editorial hiring will begin in June and will make up most of the remaining positions. Phase 3 will be the hiring for the staff writer positions.

#### Onboarding

I have developed a new virtual onboarding process that makes use of SurveyMonkey and is an easy way for staff to provide documents and agreements while also getting introduced to key policies and given required documents.

#### COVID-19

All staff continue to work from home, as per provincial requirements.

### **3. Operations**

#### Mailbox

I will be purchasing a parcel box for the Fulcrum office that will allow us to receive both regular mail and parcels directly to our offices, no longer needing us to chase down mail

between the uOttawa mailroom and the UOSU offices. The only issue is that the purchase will be \$285 and our budget line for repair and maintenance this year is only \$250, thus, I will need Board approval to proceed.

Options:

1. Exceed budget line
2. Add funds to budget line

### Fulcrum Office

Speaking of the office, there was a leak in the ceiling of the third floor that had been going on for some time. The uOttawa facilities team identified it and have completed repairs.

Likewise, we received a bill from the uOttawa administration for about \$19,600 in maintenance costs dating back to 2017. I informed the staff member that this was a mistake, as we do not pay for maintenance related to our building. She told me she would check and has not gotten back in touch. I do not anticipate this will be a problem.

### Director Sweaters

Your sweaters are all safe and sound at the Fulcrum office and once the COVID situation has stabilized I will be in touch with you regarding coming to pick them up.

## **4. Strategic Plan**

As you all likely know, a big part of the new ED role is leading the strategic plan implementation. I have set-up a progress map for the incoming Board to track key progress indicators.

<https://sites.google.com/thefulcrum.ca/thefulcrumstrategicplan/home> (only accessible through Fulcrum emails)

The most significant and short-term project is to work on the website this summer.

## **5. Website Feedback**

If anyone has any feedback on the website, please send it to me as soon as possible! So far, I have successfully repaired our social media widgets on the site.

## **6. Looking Ahead**

This will be a busy summer, some things on the radar for myself and the incoming Board:

- Website redesign and general fixing
- Implementation of Ombudsperson recommendations
- Various marketing/outreach plans to be developed for the year ahead
- Allocate additional CSJ funding
- Create an advertising plan
- Etc.!

## **Board of Directors Report May 2021**

Welcome to all the new board members!

Hope you'll enjoy your role at the Fulcrum as much as I enjoy mine!

### **Staffing**

Justin, Dorian and I conducted a total of ten interviews in our first phase of hiring. At the end of the hiring process we ended up hiring four people.

- Aly Murphy, formerly the arts editor for the 2020-21 publishing year will serve as managing editor this year.
- Jelena Maric, who was a staff writer this year is now our social media manager.
- Zoe Mason, who was the features editor in 2019-20 will be one of our news editors for this upcoming year.
- Hailey Otten, will be the Fulcrum's first ever multimedia director, she is totally new to the Fulcrum!

### **Content**

We haven't had a lot of content going out in the last couple of weeks but in our first two weeks of publishing me and Jelena have pick it back up with a couple of Live from the Archives, a Dear Di and the Wire.

We also are now creating a playlist every week on our spotify in an effort to promote it to students.

We have also started making TikTok, right now we are making two a week but I'd like to eventually get to a point where we publish four or five a week.

When the rest of edboard starts in September we plan to give them access to our TikTok so whoever has ideas can make drafts and Jelena and I can review them.

631 King Edward Avenue  
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## Fulcrum Publishing Society – Board of Directors

### **President's Report**

Sunday, May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021

*Zoom*

Meeting #12 of 2020/21 Publishing Year



Kalki Nagaratnam

### **1. COVID-19 Pandemic**

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to demand that we operate in a physically distant manner.



Effective Thursday, April 8th, the government issued a province-wide Stay-at-Home order until May 20th. This is now extended until June 2nd.

*“Everyone is to remain at home except for essential purposes, such as going to the grocery store or pharmacy, accessing health care services (including getting vaccinated), for outdoor exercise, or for work that cannot be done remotely.”*

Additional public health and workplace safety measures took effect Saturday, April 17th.

Some good news, Ontario is continuing to expand eligibility and access to COVID-19 vaccines through mass vaccinations sites, hospital clinics, primary care settings and pharmacies.

**At this time, all Fulcrum staff continue to be directed to work remotely, with visits to the office only permitted for essential reasons, at the discretion of the Executive Director.**

The Fulcrum’s [COVID-19 safety plan can be viewed here](#).

## **2. Executive Committee**

We met this past week to finalize the agendas for today’s back-to-back Board meetings. We also started planning for the Director Orientation and Training Session. The current Executive Committee will host this session in early June (date TBD).

## **3. Legal Committee**

No updates to provide.

## **4. Capital Assets Committee**

This committee did not meet this month.

## **5. Finance Committee**

We will receive the Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) Funding! This government program provides wage subsidies to employers to create quality summer work experiences for young people aged 15 to 30 years. We will receive approximately \$26 000 to partially fund some of the EdBoard positions. This was our first time applying.

## **6. Marketing Committee**

This committee did not meet this month.

## **7. Inter-Board Health and Wellness Committee**

This committee did not meet this month.

## **8. Policy Committee**

This committee did not meet this month, but is working on creating the updated versions of our Bylaws and Policy Manual with the amendments made this publishing year.

## **9. Human Resources Committee**

### Exit Interviews

We conducted exit interviews for the EIC and GM at the end of April.

### Editorial Hiring

Charley has finished the first phase of hiring for the Managing Editor, Multimedia Director and Social Media Manager. We will ratify the candidates during this afternoon's Board meeting. The next phase is set to begin around June 1st.

### Contract Discussions

The HR Committee has been working with the Executive Director to standardize staff contracts and ensure they included all the usual contract sections. In the past, we had noticeable differences between our business contract and editorial contracts.

### In-Camera Matters

We will move in camera at the end of the meeting to discuss the HR Committee's proposal about paid leaves.

## **10. Board Matters**

There are currently two open seats on the 2020-2021 Board:

- University Rep
- Community Rep

There are currently three open seats on the 2021-2022 Board:

- University Rep
- Community Rep
- Student Rep

## **11. Other Business**

### Committee Chair and Officer Transition Reports

All committee chairs and officers are asked to submit their transition reports to myself and Kate by May 31st.

### Board Social

We are planning to have one last Board social in the upcoming weeks, stay tuned!

### Calendar Items

Next Board meeting TBD later today.

### Thank Yous

A special thank you to our outgoing directors:

David Campion-Smith - Marketing Committee Chair (~2 years of service)

Julia D'Silva - Policy Committee Chair (~1 year of service)

Ryan Pepper - Inter-Board Health and Wellness Committee Chair (~1 year of service)

Lastly, thank you to all our directors and ex-officio members of the 2020-2021 publishing year for your insights, contributions and dedication to the Fulcrum this past year!

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Fulcrum Publishing Society – Board of Directors

### **Analytics Report**

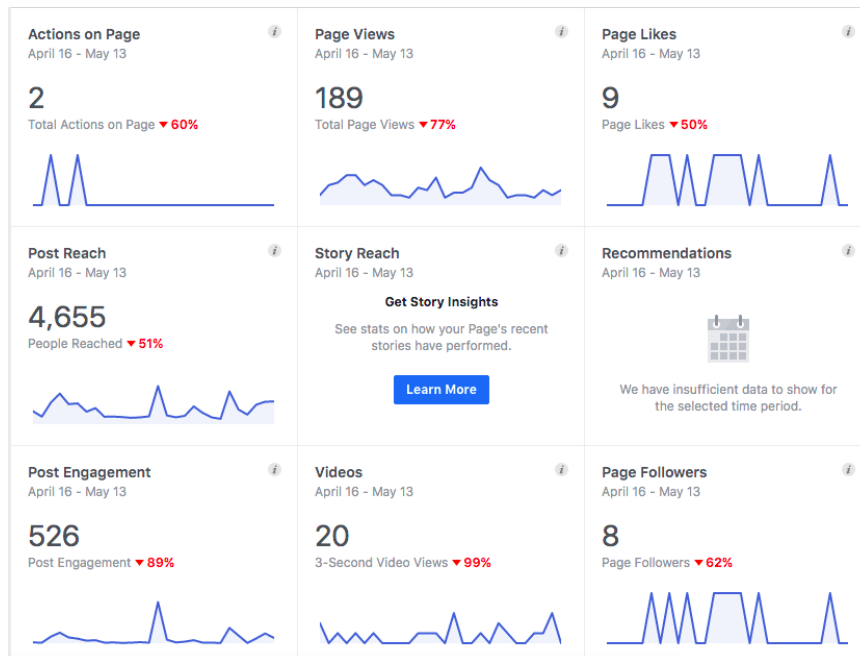
Date: May 14, 2020

Name: Jelena Maric

## Overview































1. Facebook
2. Twitter
3. Instagram
4. Tik Tok
5. Website

## Facebook (Via Facebook Insights)











### Overview:

- We can see that overall, everything has been going down as a result of less posting and content
- However, it is starting to rise again since we have started to post several times a week again
- Compared to this time last year, everything has gone down - but last year's analytics were for all of May and not just half, so this may have an impact as well.

Your 5 Most Recent Posts							Create Post
<span>Reach: Organic / Paid</span> <span>Post Clicks</span> <span>Reactions, Comments &amp; Shares</span>							
Published	Post	Type	Targeting	Reach	Engagement	Promote	
05/13/2021 2:41 PM	 In July of 2011, students wishing to access the Student Federation of			412 	15 3 		
05/12/2021 2:33 PM	 What makes it even worse is that his favourite porn star looks nothing			500 	35 0 		
05/11/2021 4:04 PM	 "As I wrap up my undergraduate program at a large Canadian			537 	18 3 		
05/08/2021 2:32 PM	 The Fulcrum, which was supposed to move temporarily to 631 King			1.2K 	80 14 		
05/04/2021 5:04 PM	 "As others are discovering indie music, I'm discovering PG-13			714 	7 6 		
See All Posts							

### Overview:

- Overall, our stories have been getting a good amount of reach, with the LFTA being the most reached and clicked story this month
- All posts were posted in the afternoon between 2 and 5 pm.
- Slow news wise, which might explain the lower numbers as well.

Page	Total Page Likes	From Last Week	Posts This Week	Engagement This Week
1  The Ubyyssey	14K 	▲ 100%	12	3.5K 
2  The Varsity	9.2K 	▲ 100%	6	969 
3  The Eyeopener	4K 	▲ 100%	3	544 
YOU 4  The Fulcrum	3.2K 	▲ 100%	4	173 
Keep up with the Pages you watch. 				
5  The Charlatan	3K 	▲ 100%	0	0 
6  La Rotonde	2.9K 	▲ 100%	2	130 

### Overview:

- Coming in fourth with total pages likes and engagement compared to other student publications.
- Have increased our page likes and ranking, from 3K likes to 3.2K

### Twitter (Via Twitter Analytics)

**28 day summary** with change over previous period



#### Overview:

- Overall, everything has gone down with Twitter
  - Tweets, Tweet impressions, mentions are down from this time last year
  - Profile visits and followers are up from this time last year
    - Profile visits last year: 681
- This all could be attributed to lack of news stories

#### APR 2021 SUMMARY



#### Overview:

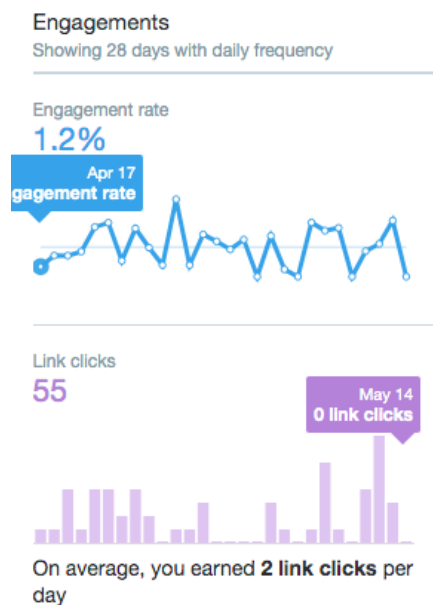
- Compared to April, we are also down in all categories
- Once again, most likely due to a lack of news content and less publishing common during summer months

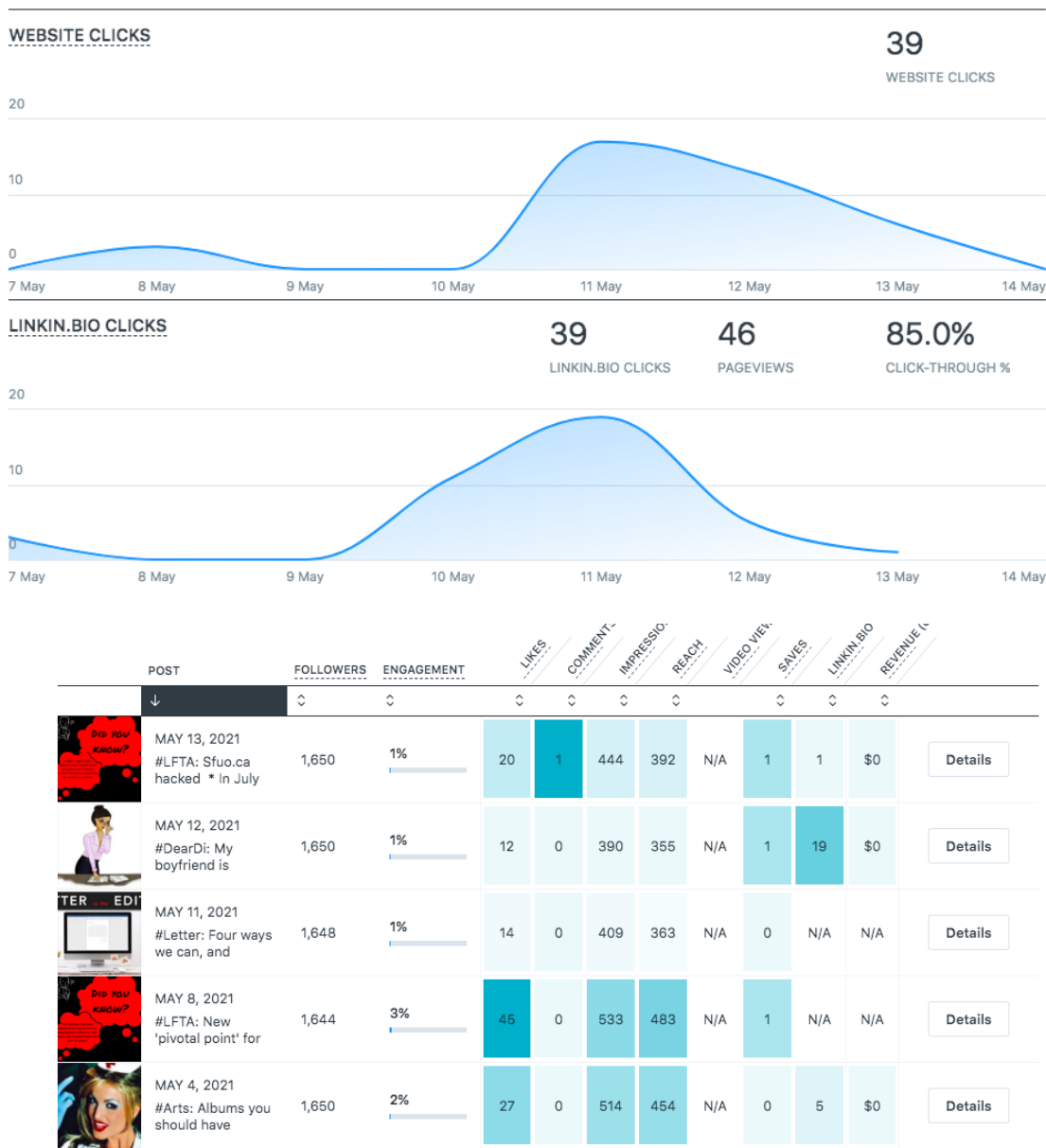
## Instagram (Via Later.com Analytics)



### Overview:

- Overall, our Instagram account does well with high peaks on the days we post stories
- Compared to this time last month, we have more reach, impressions and followers





### Overview:

- Continuing to post at the times most of our followers are more active (afternoon) and continuing to post stories with interesting headlines and content will ensure continued website traffic and visits








- Will also most likely increase as more news stories are posted

	MAY 8, 2021 2:43 PM	214	213	0	25	143	13	94%	1	<a href="#">Details</a>
	MAY 8, 2021 2:43 PM	236	232	0	3	154	25	89%	1	<a href="#">Details</a>
	MAY 5, 2021 5:29 PM	355	343	2	20	243	61	83%	1	<a href="#">Details</a>
	MAY 5, 2021 5:29 PM	357	347	0	30	227	10	97%	1	<a href="#">Details</a>
	MAY 5, 2021 5:29 PM	374	361	0	50	195	21	94%	1	<a href="#">Details</a>
	MAY 5, 2021 5:29 PM	431	414	1	15	213	42	90%	1	<a href="#">Details</a>

## Overview:

- Our stories do incredibly well, with most users going through the entire story and not exiting before it is over

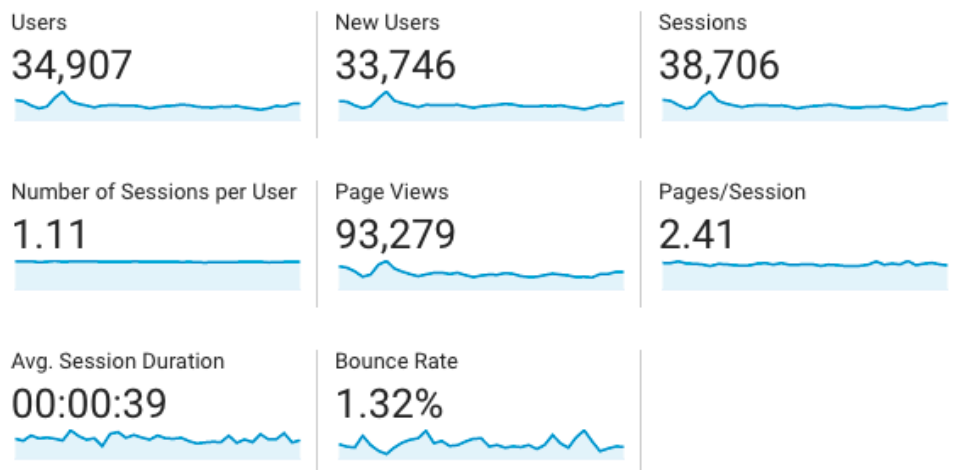
TIME POSTED		IMPRESSIONS	REACH	REPLIES	BACK	FORWARD	EXITED	COMPLETION RATE	AVERAGE VIEWS / USER	
↓		↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	
	MAY 13, 2021 3:53 PM	476	469	3	69	276	157	67%	1	<a href="#">Details</a>
	MAY 11, 2021 11:51 AM	413	412	0	73	360	46	89%	1	<a href="#">Details</a>
	MAY 11, 2021 11:50 AM	430	431	0	71	421	35	92%	1	<a href="#">Details</a>
	MAY 11, 2021 11:50 AM	450	450	0	8	407	60	87%	1	<a href="#">Details</a>
	MAY 8, 2021 2:47 PM	203	200	0	9	142	29	86%	1	<a href="#">Details</a>

- Continuing to utilize Instagram stories is a good idea

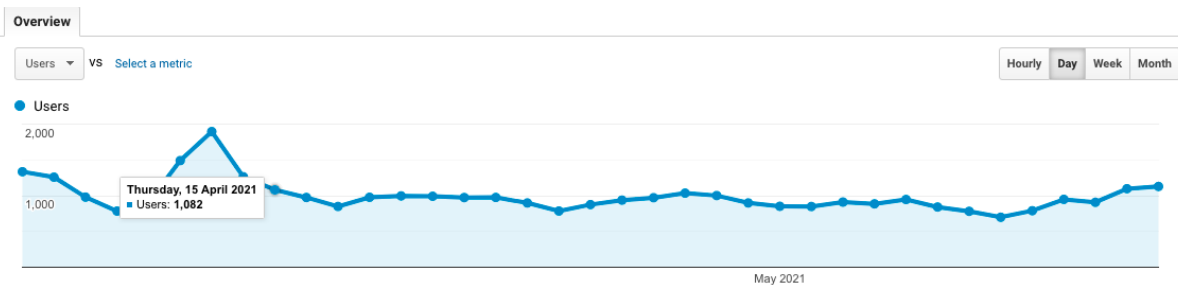
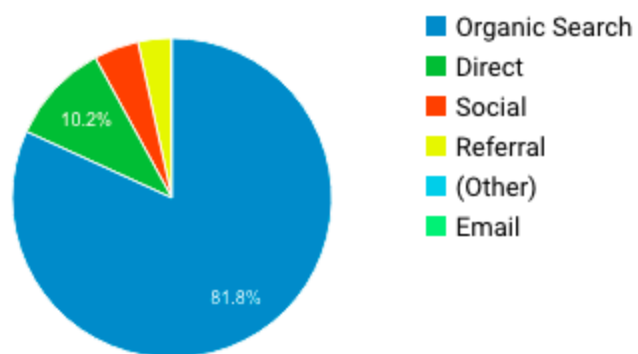
## TikTok:

- Followers have grown since we began posting more content to our Tik Tok page

### Website (Via Google Analytics):



### Top Channels



## Overview:

- Our website visits and traffic are increasing compared to the last few weeks where we were not posting as much content.
- As usual, most of our traffic is coming from organic search
- Bounce rate has increased since the last March report, and the number of users and pageviews has dropped.
- This can all be attributed to a lull in posting.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Page Title ?	Page Views ? ↓	Unique Page Views ?	Avg. Time on Page ?	Entrances ?	Bounce Rate ?	% Exit ?	Page Value ?
		93,279 % of Total: 100.00% (93,279)	43,141 % of Total: 100.00% (43,141)	00:00:28 Avg for View: 00:00:28 (0.00%)	38,690 % of Total: 100.00% (38,690)	1.32% Avg for View: 1.32% (0.00%)	41.48% Avg for View: 41.48% (0.00%)	US\$0.00 % of Total: 0.00% (US\$0.00)
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. The benefits and drawbacks of masturbation during COVID-19 - The Fulcrum	11,743 (12.59%)	5,552 (12.87%)	00:00:15	5,496 (14.21%)	0.44%	46.90%	US\$0.00 (0.00%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. A brief history of pornography until 1910 - The Fulcrum	9,055 (9.71%)	4,247 (9.84%)	00:00:16	4,208 (10.88%)	0.64%	46.15%	US\$0.00 (0.00%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Students with poor Internet left behind in online learning atmosphere - The Fulcrum	4,803 (5.15%)	2,034 (4.71%)	00:01:04	2,013 (5.20%)	1.04%	41.91%	US\$0.00 (0.00%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. The Fulcrum	4,548 (4.88%)	1,931 (4.48%)	00:00:37	1,653 (4.27%)	4.72%	27.07%	US\$0.00 (0.00%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Opinion: the cancellation of Kim's Convenience is a huge loss for Canadian and Asian representation in media - The Fulcrum	4,272 (4.58%)	2,060 (4.78%)	00:00:16	2,046 (5.29%)	0.10%	47.66%	US\$0.00 (0.00%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Five foods to avoid during exams - The Fulcrum	2,321 (2.49%)	1,098 (2.55%)	00:00:17	1,095 (2.83%)	0.55%	46.92%	US\$0.00 (0.00%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	7. (not set)	1,774 (1.90%)	869 (2.01%)	00:00:17	853 (2.20%)	4.10%	48.08%	US\$0.00 (0.00%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	8. How online courses are affecting students with disabilities - The Fulcrum	1,484 (1.59%)	619 (1.43%)	00:01:02	613 (1.58%)	0.16%	41.24%	US\$0.00 (0.00%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	9. Orgy etiquette - The Fulcrum	1,364 (1.46%)	645 (1.50%)	00:00:21	640 (1.65%)	0.78%	46.26%	US\$0.00 (0.00%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	10. Criminal records for plagiarism might be a good thing - The Fulcrum	1,293 (1.39%)	515 (1.19%)	00:01:21	512 (1.32%)	0.19%	39.13%	US\$0.00 (0.00%)