

# Students skeptical of Academic Plan's success

Implementation of proposed initiatives unlikely without significant funding increase: Henry

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"I realize to a certain extent you can't get into the nitty gritty details in a ten-page document that's supposed to set the next four years of academic evolution at this institution, but at the same time, as a student I don't really see how this is going to directly affect me," Kirkham said.

Vice-President (Research) Dr Gary Kachanoski assured the creation of specific benchmarks and measurements to gauge the success of initiatives aimed at improving the quality of learning on campus would be forthcoming "over the next two or three months."

"You have to understand that this talks about academic priorities. It doesn't speak about the implementation plan [or] the budget plan, and it's because there is a University Business Plan," Kachanoski said.

But according to Henry, the ambiguity of the Academic Plan makes it hard to praise.

"As wonderful as this ideally is, I'm not certain that it's going to be operationalized," Henry said, pointing to the idea to hire 500 new tenure track professors—an initiative that Amrhein stressed is pending increased provincial funding.

"If we had all the money in the world this plan would be great," Henry said. "Everybody wants to be great at everything they do. The reason we're not already great at everything we do is money."

But Kachanoski stressed that

while the University will be lobbying the new forthcoming provincial government for a significant funding increase, the U of A already has ample resources that can be used towards initiatives inspired by the new Academic Plan.

"This is not driven by the need for outside resources or money. We have significant internal resources that are moving forward to the deans," he said.

Kachanoski was confident the approval of the Academic Plan would facilitate the creation of future progressive University projects.

"I think this is a good day for the University," Kachanoski said. "We now have a broad consultation document from 'the bottom up' that clearly meets—and I guess reflects—the [U of A President's] Dare to Discover vision and one that will guide how we're going to spend resources."

For the time being though, Henry was unable to share this optimism.

"This is a beautiful fluffy inspiring picture of people standing on the tops of mountains with U of A flags kind of document, but if you can't chart whether or not we're actually successful at this how are you going to know what we're doing well or not," Henry questioned.

The Administration has assured yearly updates will take place to course the progress of the implementation of the Academic Plan's goals; however, the SU has yet to hear how they will be carried out or what they will entail.



KRYSTINA SULATYCKI

**LOOKING FOR A REMEDY** Tonight, escape from the cold inside Remedy Café where discussion on HIV-AIDS will brew.

## NEWS BRIEF

Written by Catherine Scott

### CAMPUS GROUP COMMEMORATES AIDS AWARENESS WEEK

Condoms are generally seen as an annoyance during sex, but during AIDS Awareness Week (27 November-1 December), the Students' International Health Association (SIHA) has local projects aimed at breaking down the stigma attached to condoms.

SIHA will have a booth set up in SUB this week, advertising the condom art pin project. One of the project's artistic ideas consists of attaching a pin to the transparent side of a condom package so that it faces the body, then decorating the front side with a design.

The project also allows students to

customize their own condom art pins. Samantha Stasiuk, co-chair of SIHA, hopes that this project will highlight the fact that HIV-AIDS is a problem everyone should be concerned about.

"As HIV educators, we're always trying to come up with new and different ways to catch people's attention and let them know that [HIV] is still a prevalent problem," Stasiuk said.

She explained that the goal of these pins isn't only to encourage students to talk openly and honestly about safe sex, but to realize that it's not just a global concern.

"In Canada, one person is infected every two hours ... people from 15-24 years of age right now are really being infected. Specifically in Edmonton ... there's a huge outbreak of syphilis, and rates of gonorrhoea and chlamydia are

going up," Stasiuk noted.

But the most important thing, Stasiuk stressed, is people must realize the practice of protected sex is necessary for reducing the rate that AIDS is transmitted.

"Even though there are medications, it's really important to note that there's no cure, so prevention is the best means of stopping it," Stasiuk concluded.

On 30 November, an event is also being held at Remedy Café, where a gathering of people will come to share ideas and listen to music and speakers focused on breaking the silence and prejudice against HIV. Admission is free.

For general information, or if you want to volunteer with a local or international branch of SIHA, visit [www.siha.ca](http://www.siha.ca).

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Applications must be received in 2-900 SUB by Tuesday, January 23/2007 at 5 PM

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