THE GATEWAY

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ALSO ON BOARD FOR THE BOG

Aside from the rent increase proposal, the Board of Govenors also decided on a number of other budget items

A complimentary smorgasbord of fruit and muffins awaited the Board of Governor members and dedicated public spectators able to drag themselves out of bed for the start of the 8am BoG meeting last Friday. Debate on the proposed rent increase took up a large portion of the four-hour public session; however, during that time copious cups of coffee were consumed and the following three proposals were also carried:

PARKING RATES

Campus commuters have more than rising gas prices and traffic jams to face if they plan to continue driving to the University of Alberta.

Historically, parking rate changes come into effect 1 September; however, a motion was passed to change the date to align with the beginning of their fiscal year.

Effective 1 April, 2007, all U of A monthly parking permit rates will increase by 3.6 per cent to match cost of living adjustments, with main campus facing an additional monthly parking permit rate increases of five per cent in 2007/08, followed by a five per cent and ten per cent increase over the next two years. The extra revenues will be put towards ongoing supplemental costs.

Prior to voting on the proposal,

University Vice-President (Facilities and Operations) Don Hickey gave a presentation on the North Campus supplemental, specifically how the increases support the University's travel demand management plan (TDM) The plan—pursued in collaboration with the City of Edmonton—was designed to increase public transit and reduce transport and environmental concerns.

The University owns a total of 8760 parking stalls in a variety of surface, parkade and underground facilities in Edmonton, and on the Augustana campus; 96 per cent of those stalls are found at the main campus.

Hickey noted that 80 per cent of vehicles coming to the University are single-occupant, with an average overall occupancy rate of only 1.2 people per vehicle. And according to the proposal, the discrepancy between the price of a monthly parking permit and a monthly bus pass isn't significant enough to promote public transit usage

MEAL PLANS

The Board of Governors voted in favour of an increase to the Lister Hall meal plan, which amped up the costs 5-6.65 per cent for the individual plans.

The change was prompted by an evaluation of the Lister meal program

carried out last January by the Canadian College and University Food Services Association. The CCUFSA found that, while the meal plans have remained approximately the same price for many years, food prices have risen substantially. This, according to the evaluation, made the meal plans less useful to students, and recommended an annual price increase of 8-9 per cent for three years to give students more flexibility in what they could purchase with the plan.

Phyllis Clark, University of Alberta Vice-President (Finance & Administration), explained that support for the plan was universal among the administration and, ultimately, those paying into the plan.

"[The proposal] is supported by the Students' Association in residence, because it really does make it better for them," Clark said.

Michael Janz, Lister Hall Student Association President, agreed, saying that the five per cent increase was to match against CPI, plus an extra bump to make it GST-compliant.

According to the new system, meal Plans A. B. C. and D will see an increase of five per cent, while the priciest program, Plan E, will see a bump of 6.65 per cent.

TUITION

Tuition was also on the menu for the BoG, as they approved a proposal to increase tuition by 3.3 per cent for the upcoming year, the maximum allowed under legislation that links tuition prices to Alberta's Consumer Price Index.

The increase, according to Carl Amrhein the University of Alberta Provost, is meant to keep up with the rising costs that the institution has to contend with.

"We asked for 3.3 per cent, and we recognize that all the operating costs are rising at a level equal or greater to CPI in Alberta," Amrhein said.

He further explained that, on top of the current costs, University Administration is looking to make improvements to the learning environment of the U of A, specifically targeting the current student-professor ratio.

Clark also said that the increased tuitions costs as a whole were linked to rising maintenance costs, a problem that grows as the U of A campus gets older.

"We've got a lot of critical building systems in an aging infrastructure that we need to maintain. It's not a great situation to be in," she said, adding that more support from the provincial government would be needed to keep tuition costs from rising.

-Complied by Natalie Climenhaga and Scott Lilwall

STREETERS

St Swithin's Church in Lincoln, England, recently decided to do away with hymns in favour of popular music, in what they're calling "the U2-charest."

What popular music do you think they should incorporate into their sermons, and why?

Karen Schaaf,

Nursing



Renee

The Titanic song, "My Heart Will Go On." Because it's so sad, and religion is all about being sad.

I would definitely incorporate '80s music, because it's awesome. "Spandau Ballet," because it's in a video game I like to play and I think we need more of this culturalcomputer stuff going on.



I think they should incorporate "It's Raining Men," because that would be hilarious to hear in a church

"Bringin' Sexy Back," because it's a damned good tune.

Brad Mvck

Engineering I

Matthew Coates









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