

What's another ten per cent increase among friends?

DESPITE A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF RED TAPE surrounding the annual tuition hike, the University's Board of Governors has persevered and found a way to squeeze more money out of its cash-strapped students. Since the province's new affordability standards prevented the University from raising tuition by more than 3.3 per cent, they cleverly made up the difference by increasing rent in residences by 10 per cent—and with the added bonus of only having to hear 4400 students complain about it instead of the entire campus.

In the fall of 2006, the University of Alberta fell victim to the Affordability Crusade when the Alberta Government limited tuition increases to the Consumer Price Index, strangling the BoG's ability to fund this growing institution. The U of A was on a comfortable spending path, funded by tuition increases that have seen students pay \$2258.40 more in fees since 1994/95.

But while increases over the years were attributed to the need to keep this institution afloat in an age of growing maintenance and operating costs, the University didn't get around to funding residence facilities. Data presented to the BoG on 26 January estimated that deferred maintenance in the residences comes at \$49 million, while the abatement of asbestos will come in at no less than \$120 million. Surely if students expect livable housing they won't mind stretching their wallets a little more—especially since tuition is hovering at the bargain rate of \$4687 next year, not including the mandatory student fees. But \$250 per term is mere pocket change for those of us with part-time jobs.

In the past year, Edmonton's housing market has seen a huge spike, so why should students be getting a deal? It's simply not realistic to expect the University to subsidize students living in residence—even though they're charging market rates for broom closets. Between 1994–2006, residence rates increased by a 34 per cent, but buildings are getting older, so it only makes sense that students should be paying more. And to be fair, though the bulk of students will be paying an extra 10 per cent in rent, the BoG has given students living in East Campus Village houses a break with a mere 7.12 per cent increase, while students at Augustana will be practically stealing their Camrose quarters for just 3.6 per cent more.

Alberta is a wealthy province, so it follows that all of its residents are as well. And even though there are new barriers to limit tuition increases, this doesn't mean that more funding can't come from students themselves. Sure, with over 30 000 students on this campus, increasing tuition would be a simpler way to get the funding; an extra \$5 each would result in an added \$150 000 for the coffers, probably helping the U of A forge ahead with its daring vision of being among the top 20 universities in the world by 2020. Instead, the BoG has approved a scheme that will see students in residence footing the extra bill on their own. With wily administrators working at this fair institution, we're sure to go down in history as one of the best.

CHLOÉ FEDIO
Managing Editor

But ... but ... popozao ...

APPARENTLY ALL THE MEN IN BRITNEY SPEARS' life can't help but make a fool of themselves during the Super Bowl. First it was ex-boyfriend Justin Timberlake and Janet Jackson's notorious "wardrobe malfunction," and now her estranged husband K-Fed has angered the fast food industry with a 30-second ad slated to run during the third quarter of the NFL season's pinnacle event.

Federline said he never meant for the commercial—in which he assumes the role of a fry cook dreaming of the big time—to offend America's minimum-wage workers. The commercial begins with the once-upon-a-time backup dancer decked out in all his bling and rapping the song "Rolling VIP," only for it to turn out as a burger-flipper's daydream. Here's to hoping it's a sign he's finally realized he can't make it as a rapper.

NATALIE CLIMENHAGA
Senior News Editor

Dude, Telus is letting us download adult content on our phones now!

Pfft, my little brother's been doing that on his Wii for months ...



MIKE KENDRICK

LETTERS

Wedding's off between Canada and Pakistan

"Engagement" is a vague word, loaded with potential consequences that those such as Mr Lettner have clearly not grappled with (re: "Canada needs its own plan of attack," 25 January). In Canada's efforts in Afghanistan, Mr Lettner's piece identifies "engaging" Pakistan as a key component of Afghanistan's reconstruction.

Unfortunately, this ever-expanding strain of thought is based on the false assumption that (a) Pakistan's government has the control of its largely autonomous Inter-Services Intelligence sympathetic to the Taliban, and (b) that there is a political will of the government to crack down on a movement widely supported by the Sunni Pakistanis and their populous of Pashtun refugees.

Speaking to the first point, about two weeks ago a captured Taliban militant admitted that the Taliban's leader Mullah Omar was in fact being harboured in the Pakistani border town of Quetta, under the protection of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence.

On top of this support, the central government in Islamabad runs the risk of losing the popular support of its Sunni majority for taking too aggressive a stance against the Taliban, also a Sunni movement. Despite the occasional ceremonial strike on Taliban madrassahs in the border region designed to please NATO members, anything more aggressive would lead to widespread protest, and perhaps the

Taliban turning the knife on their main benefactor in Islamabad.

Considering all these domestic political realities in Pakistan, it is unreasonable to expect any fundamental change in their policy toward the Taliban through diplomacy. In a situation such as this, where the dramatic change called for (by those like Mr Lettner and Jack Layton) through "engagement" could jeopardize the very existence of the current Pakistani Administration, the options as thin as they are dire.

In order to secure the desired change in Pakistani policy, our only option of "engagement" would be taking a page out of the American post-9/11 approach to courting Pakistan by threatening to bomb their country "back to the stone age." Surely this isn't the "engagement" Mr Lettner and Mr Layton are advocating?

LLOYD SUCHET
Arts III

Letters to the editor should be dropped off at room 3-04 of the Students' Union Building or e-mailed to letters@gateway.ualberta.ca.

The Gateway reserves the right to edit letters for length and clarity, and to refuse publication of any letter it deems racist, sexist, libellous or otherwise hateful in nature. The Gateway also reserves the right to publish letters online.

Letters to the editor should be no longer than 350 words, and should include the author's name, program, year of study and student ID number to be considered for publication.

Furthermore, e-mails featuring excessive amounts of exclamation marks, all-caps, large font sizes, and emoticons, are liable to be ridiculed mercilessly by the editorial staff.

LETTERS FROM THE ARCHIVES

More school spirit stat!

A University is supposed to be an institution, and this one is no exception. Maybe I'm one of those people who thinks everyone is crazy but themselves, but I'll ask you to bide with me a while.

Perhaps I'm a little off the old rocker, but a few people have agreed with me in the thought that [the] U of A is just a little bit dead. We come here for an education, but it takes a lot of things to make a civilized individual out of the raw material that enters the portals of learning each fall, and not the least of these is a social life which teaches one to get along with his fellow men and to be able to meet a person and leave a good impression. Embodied in this are certain social graces, such as seeing the other fellow's point of view and being at home in the many situations in which one might be called upon to exercise his powers of being agreeable.

Varsity affairs leave much to be desired in this way. A lack of cooperation on both sides is evident. We have a fine band in town now, which can play to please everyone, and a floor that is the best around. The Wauneita was held at the Barn—why shouldn't the others? It's a great place—but, someone will say, it is available only on Monday or Tuesday. Well, we can dance as well on Tuesday as on Saturday, and if what comes after spoils the next day for learning, why not leave your crock and so on

for Saturday night? The Wauneita is an experiment. Will it work? I hope the professors will note the various "morning after" reactions and comment on them so we can see where we stand.

I said above that we can dance as well on Tuesday as on Saturday, but that doesn't seem to be very well. This is a poor place to find good dancers, but I had a far-fetched scheme in mind for a Saturday afternoon music session—a time for beginners to loosen up and learn, and those that are really good to show the others how and have a good time all around. With something of this sort we could develop some of the musical talent that is lying around dormant, and put out an orchestra we could well be proud of. Come on, dust off the place and pull the cobwebs down.

A horrible anomaly of this place is that it is a university but it has no college spirit. Anyone who heard the first half of the game last Saturday would certainly notice a lack of enthusiasm. We went because it was the thing to do, and besides it was nice out. What a hell of a way to go to college! And how many took the trouble to look up the Saskatchewan yell to offer them a part of what they deserve?

House dances speak for themselves. If you have no date, no social aspirations and no dough, you go to a house dance. Something has to happen, but I wonder what.

I suppose everyone thinks I'm like that all the time. No, I'm not a natural pessimist, but I think the U of A social life and college spirit could use a real shot in the arm.

Aw, what's the use!

"A SOPHOMORE"
24 October 1941