

# THE GATEWAY

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PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: LAUREN STIEGLITZ

EXTRA! EXTRA! Free daily newspapers are scattering across Edmonton. Full story page three.

## SU councillors debate contentious budget cuts

SCOTT LILWALL  
Deputy News Editor

Three budget recommendations made to Students' Council on Tuesday evening were shot down by councillors. The result, which might lead to raised student fees next year, have some questioning the process that went into forming the plan.

"My main frustration with the budget principles is that there was very little in terms of a consultation process," said Omer Yusuf, Vice-President (Student Life) said. "There was very little in the way of analyzing what the financial situation of the Students' Union is. What are the services of business or entertainment units the SU offers, and how are they being utilized?"

The principles, put together by the SU's Budget and Finance Committee (BFC), were designed to address the organization's financial hardships. Two of the plan's three main recommendations—repealing councillor remuneration and reversing the SU's ban on selling tobacco products, both of which could increase SU revenues by around \$30 000 each—revived discussion on some of last year's most hotly debated topics. A third suggestion, to eliminate funding to the Environmental Coordination of Students (ECOS) program, also drew fierce debate from opposing sides. If eliminated, the move could save the SU approximately \$35 000 annually.

According to Theresa Chapman, chair of the BFC, the recommendations were made in hopes of avoiding a student fee increase for next year.

"They were definitely the main changes," she said. "Most of the committee felt it was their responsibility to recommend things be cut, and not [suggest] a fee increase."

**"My main frustration with the budget principles is that there was very little in terms of a consultation process."**

OMER YUSUF,  
SU VP (STUDENT LIFE)

Chapman said that eliminating pay for councillors was the obvious starting point when it came to deciding what to cut.

"We felt that if we were going to be raising fees, the most politically correct thing to do would be to not be paying ourselves. We felt that we shouldn't be paid for a volunteer position," she said.

But, Law Councillor Jonathan Tieman argued paying councillors for their time keeps talented representatives from moving on to other jobs.

PLEASE SEE BUDGET • PAGE 4  
ALSO READ FREHNER ON PAGE 9

## Students tackle housing crisis

Affordable Housing Task Force looks to provincial government to help solve Alberta's shortage of affordable student residences

LIZ DURDEN  
News Staff

With the current housing shortage across the province, and campus vacancy rates projected at less than one per cent for next year, Students' Union Vice-President (External) Dave Cournoyer took the opportunity to present recommendations to the provincial government's Affordable Housing Task Force on 21 February.

**"It's almost impossible [to find housing]. I pay \$1200 for a double."**

SHYAM RAM,  
U OF A EDUCATION STUDENT

The SU suggested that the Government of Alberta create more student housing, eliminate municipal property tax on residences and provide funding so that the University can deal with deferred maintenance issues. Cournoyer believes that these suggestions would reduce the overall strain on the housing market, since U of A students comprise approximately 3.5 per cent of the greater Edmonton area's population.

"[The government] could alleviate pressures

on the general market by creating more student housing and investing in student housing," Cournoyer said. "Right now, in the University area, there is almost no vacancy, and the vacancies that do exist are generally high rent and out of the reach for most students."

Third-year education student Jane Hawes found it difficult to find housing when she moved to Edmonton from Saskatoon in the fall. She's currently living at the Campus Saint-Jean residences.

"It took a while—I came really, really early because I was told that the situation was going to be difficult, so I came in June or even before that to get housing for the fall. I actually had to rent a place from July on in order to [live in Edmonton over the summer]," Hawes said, adding that she pays around \$600 a month for a single room.

Fifth-year student Shyam Ram, studying both physical education and education, echoed Hawes' statement about the difficulties in finding housing.

"It's almost impossible [to find housing]. I pay \$1200 for a double," Ram stated.

According to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Edmonton vacancy rates fell to 1.2 per cent in 2006. As stated by the SU submission, in the fall semester over 3800 undergraduate students—primarily from other parts of Alberta—came to the City and required housing.

PLEASE SEE HOUSING • PAGE 4

### Inside

News	1-7
Opinion	9-13
Features	14-15/25
A&E	16-20
Sports	21-23
Le Miroir	26
Comics	27
Classifieds	28



### Left to the imagination

The resurgence of burlesque in Canada hopes to put the "tease" back in striptease—and empower women.

FEATURE, PAGE 14-15



### Extra! Election Special!

After the ballots are counted and the tears are shed, check SUB, CAB, ETL or Tory for our election results edition.

ON CAMPUS FRIDAY, 9 MARCH