

THE GATEWAY

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KRYSTINA SULATYCKI

PIPE BOMB He might have had high hookah hopes, but Cunningham's plans for a series of tubes in the 'Plant dissipated.

Hookah plan goes up in smoke

NATALIE CLIMENHAGA
Senior News Editor

Hookah, shisha, nargeela, argeela, okka, kalyan, ghalyan or hubbly bubbly—there are about as many names for water pipes as there have been Students' Union schemes to turn the Powerplant into a profitable business. However, no one expected that the image of students sitting in the notoriously low-profit bar smoking from a long hose would almost become a reality.

Vice-President (Operations and Finance) Chris Cunningham surprised the SU Executive at their 26 February meeting when he announced he had spent \$400 on three small hookahs

and accessories.

"Everything was good to go and then I came back to Exec and said, 'Okay, I'm going to institute this tomorrow,' and they shut me down," Cunningham explained.

Hookahs are large water-pipe devices that use water-filtration and indirect heat to smoke a variety of substances, such as herbal fruits and tobacco. They originated in India but spread in use throughout the Middle East and more recently have become increasingly popular in Europe and parts of Asia.

According to SU President Sam Power, while the Executive Committee had previously encouraged Cunningham to research the idea of hookahs, they had never given it a green light.

"[Cunningham] came to me and said that he had bought the hookahs and so I said, 'Well I don't think that Exec approved the purchase of hookahs—we approved exploring the idea of hookahs,'" Power said, adding that herself and the other Execs didn't feel hookahs fit in with the vision of what they want for the Powerplant.

"It's really more the mandate of what we're doing with the space," Power said. "Ultimately, because we had ... decided we'd be going a different route with the Powerplant, and sort of looking at creating more of a student space, we felt that maybe hookahs didn't really fit in the same vision of the 'Plant.'"

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ALSO READ GAUMONT ON PAGE 9

SU may raise fees to combat deficit

SCOTT LILWALL
Deputy News Editor

Undergraduates might be paying more for Students' Union services next year after Students' Council gave the go-ahead to raise student fees in the hopes of combating a projected deficit for the 2007/08 fiscal year.

"We refused to cut Councillor remuneration and the Environmental Coordination Office of Students (ECOS), and shot down the possibility of running a small deficit, so this is an unfortunate last resort, but a necessary," Councillor Stephen Dollansky said. "It's just unfortunate that it came to a fee increase and not one of the other options."

The proposed student fee increase was added on as an amendment to the SU's budget principles during an emergency Council meeting on Tuesday night. The proposal would allow the Budget and Finance Committee (BFC) to raise student fees

to make up for increased expenses in the next year. The vote came down to a 13–8 decision to approve the amendment.

Councillor Jonathan Tieman, who voted for the increase, said that it was necessary for the SU to make up lost funds.

"It's just unfortunate that it came to a fee increase and not one of the other options."

STEPHEN DOLLANSKY,
SU COUNCILLOR

"Like most in Council, it was a reluctant [yes] vote," Tieman said. "We don't want to have to raise fees, but obviously when we're looking at the situation ... it was the only reasonable [choice]."

PLEASE SEE BUDGET • PAGE 5

Enrolment bust warning

Report says student demographic will soon decline

RAMIN OSTAD
News Staff

A report released by the Canadian Millennium Scholarship Foundation cautions that the country could see a population bust by 2020, and says that universities need to increase postsecondary participation in students from lower-income groups.

In the February edition of their flagship publication, entitled, *The Price of Knowledge, 2006/07: Why Access Matters*, the foundation determined that the postsecondary-aged population will decrease in size by approximately 300 000 students by 2026. As the "echo boom" generation—the children of the baby boomers—begins to enter universities and colleges, the report states, there'll be a slight increase in postsecondary enrolment at Canadian institutions, followed by a sharp decline after the year 2013.

"Right now, what we're going through in this country is a demographic boom," Joseph Berger, one of the report's authors said. "Every year for the next three or four years there are going to be more and more 18–24-year-olds. What will happen in the next 15 years is there will be a decline in the population. There will be fewer people trying to fill up the increasingly larger spaces of university campuses."

One of the main concerns presented

in the report is that the impending decrease in the number of highly educated individuals will result in shortages of skilled workers in a currently booming economy. This will result in fewer and fewer people of working-age supporting a larger non-working age group.

"The way we see it is that [this is] in addition to the fact that we're currently not graduating enough young people to meet the needs of our current labour market," Berger explained. "That situation is going to get more and more dire, especially when the population ages and we have a larger share of the population in retirement, drawing on the social safety net. We need to be a more productive society to meet their demands, and the way to do that is to enroll and graduate more and more students."

The foundation states that, in order to maintain the number of postsecondary graduates despite a decrease in actual population size, there must be significant efforts made to provide education access to under-represented youths—specifically those from low-income families, those from families with no history of postsecondary education and aboriginal youth. However, the report adds that it isn't the sole responsibility of the universities to provide this access, but that governments also have a large role to play.

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Dive into Madness

The NCAA Tournament begins today, and we've got everything you need to pick a winner. (Hint: It'll be UNC.)

SPORTS, PAGE 13



More flowery words

Our Literary Contest has arrived to up the intelligence quotient of our pages; after we eliminated the nonsense.

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