

# THE GATEWAY

volume XCVIII summer issue 5 • the official student newspaper at the university of alberta • www.thegatewayonline.ca • thursday, 26 july, 2007



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: KIM SMITH

**CLEAN POWER GLOWS BRIGHT WHITE** Energy-saving compact fluorescent bulbs will only be a small part of the environmentally friendly development planned for the area south of 71st avenue.

## Green light for green South Campus development

With concerns over pollution, the University has made plans for future expansion to have as little environmental impact as possible

KIM SMITH  
News Staff

With the expansion of the LRT along 114 St, the University of Alberta has proposed a plan to develop South Campus as sustainably as possible in hopes of lessening its environmental impact and boosting the University's reputation.

According to University Vice President (Facilities and Operations) Don Hickey, the U of A now has the opportunity to start fresh with South Campus and address environmental stability of the site.

"Now you have a green field in the middle of an urban environment: how do we best develop it, taking into account all kinds of sustainabil-

ity practices?" Hickey questioned. "How do you lessen the footprint on the environment when you're building?"

Instead of addressing only the energy efficiency of buildings as done elsewhere at the University, the development planned for South Campus will go beyond its design and layout by being more accommodating to walkers and bikers, as well as by incorporating the U-pass.

According to Hickey, the U of A hopes to reveal by this fall its proposed sustainability policy for campus, which he said will act as a scorecard around what decisions will be made.

"In the past, decisions were strictly made on a life-cycle basis, so quite often it would be on a financial basis,"

he explained. "I think when you add these other principles in place, the scorecard is going to be much different. Technical will be one, financial will be one, but then we'll also have sustainability issues. It'll be a much more complicated decision-making [process]."

There have been indications, especially out of the US, that students are beginning to choose their universities based not only on the quality of the institution, but also on what they're doing in terms of environmentally friendly development, Hickey stated.

According to Michael Rawson Clark, director of the Campus Sustainability Coalition, due to climate change and other environmental factors, students

are starting to understand the importance of green initiatives.

"You don't have to be an environmentalist anymore to care about these things," Clark said. "It's [as much] the right to have clean air [and] clean water as basic human rights. If you're fighting for sustainability, you're a human rights advocate as much as you're anything else."

Clark also noted that other North American universities such as Harvard and UBC have already implemented extensive sustainable development programs, and that the U of A needs to follow suit in order to remain competitive.

"The top schools in the country take sustainability very seriously, so if the U of A doesn't do it, I don't think it

would ever be able to achieve its goal of being one of the top 20 universities in the world," Clark said.

Students' Union President Michael Janz said that building more efficient and sustainable buildings is financially a good plan. The money that the campus won't be spending on paying heating bills and other buildings costs can go towards the operating budget—which is where our tuition increases typically go towards, he explained.

"I would much rather see the University spend the money on becoming more efficient and spending that money on professors [instead of] spending that money on expensive heating bills," Janz stated.

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## Health benefits of meditation questioned

EDMON ROTEA  
News Staff

While many people try to meditate their way to better health, evidence for the therapeutic value of meditation may be lacking, according to a new report by the University of Alberta and the Capital Health Evidence-based Practice Centre (EPC).

The study, titled *Meditation Practices for Health: State of Research* and led by research project managers Maria Ospina and Kenneth Bond, analyzed 813 English-language studies that dealt with the effects of meditation on health problems. The research, which was under contract to the

US Department of Health and Human Services, sought to evaluate the current state of research in meditation on a variety of health conditions.

"This was a more ambitious project," Ospina said. "We wanted to include all meditation practices that have been researched in the scientific literature and have different conditions and populations, so the criteria were broader—that made it more challenging to complete."

She also explained that previous studies often placed emphasis on the effects of meditation on a specific medical condition.

The report found that among the 813 English-language studies evalu-

ated, most concerned three health conditions: high blood pressure, heart disease, and substance abuse.

Bond explained that other conditions had been studied in the reports analyzed mental health problems such as anxiety disorders, depression, and insomnia, as well as other medical ailments such as fibromyalgia and diabetes.

"What's interesting is that researchers in meditation might be tuned to what is important from a public health-care perspective. Hypertension and cardiovascular disorders are conditions where the burden of those diseases is high, along with mental disorders and substance abuse," Ospina said.

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## Program bluffs with binary

RYAN HEISE  
Deputy News Editor

Poker's rise in popularity over the last few years has created a new breed of hold 'em players. But a new challenger from the University of Alberta doesn't wear dark sunglasses or peer into your eyes with a stoic stare as it sits across from you, waiting to pick out that one tell—a flinch or a furrow of your brow—to take all your worldly possessions.

This player is more methodical; constantly watching your play closer than any human ever could in heads-up play.

Its name is Polaris, and it's a poker-

playing computer system developed by a group of University of Alberta researchers in the Computer Science department.

Computer Science professor Michael Bowling, who recently took over the team working on Polaris, explained how it differs from other programs designed to play games.

"If you look at chess, computer programs can beat pretty much anyone out there. Poker is interesting because this just isn't true," Bowling said. "Poker doesn't have complete information in the sense that there is obviously some things you are missing—the cards the other person has."

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## Always pick the big kids...

Eight teams descended on Edmonton for the FIFA U-20 World Cup and some Gateway photogs took in the action.

PHOTO FEATURE, PAGE 6-7



## ...or the monsters

The thrash-metal band known for throwing bodily fluids on audiences opens up—and really, really listens.

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