

## Bill needs more consultation time—Orr

Heated debate preceded the bill's passing; however, in the end, a majority of councillors voted to move forward with the development of an opt-out system

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Others in the SU don't necessarily agree with this sentiment. As Vice-President (Operations & Finance) Eamonn Gamble explained, there will be ample time for consultation on the matter in the future.

"I do believe that consultation, especially with something that's probably going to be controversial, is a good thing," Gamble stated. "That being said, what Council debated last Tuesday was a principle. That's what first readings of these bylaw changes are; they're read as principles to see if Council in general agrees with the idea. The rest of the main concerns from these DFUs were implementation concerns, which can be dealt with later."

However, a more serious concern from APIRG revolves around the very operation of their organization.

As Orr explained, because APIRG is a not-for-profit society, it must abide by the rules of the Alberta Societies Act. One of the stipulations of the act is that they must maintain an active membership list. Due to freedom of information issues, the SU has never released this list to APIRG. To circumvent this, the organization has instead kept a list of individuals who have opted out, and students who come in and aren't on this list are considered members. If the opt-out is centralized, there are fears that neither an opted-in or opted-out list will ever reach APIRG, taking away its ability to register as a society.

Still, Gamble affirmed that this shouldn't be a problem with a



MIKE OTTO

**THE DFU DILEMMA** Eamonn Gamble discusses the SU's position on Bill 6.

centralized system.

"I think this is very easily remedied in that we just give them the list after people have opted out," he explained. "We'll keep the opportunity to opt out confined to a short period of time."

But Orr feels that more discussion of the bill and a well-thought out plan is necessary for Bill 6 to be of benefit to students and DFUs alike.

"I don't think that Council was ill-intentioned in this, and in no way would APIRG want to be portrayed as not wanting an opt-out to be accessible or trying to hide over in the corner someplace and just collect the money and not be accountable," Orr stated. "The spirit of the motion isn't necessarily where it's

going to go, ultimately."

Failure to amend the wording of Bill 6 means that Class-C DFUs would also be affected, allowing students in the School of Business and Faculty of Engineering to use the centralized system to opt out of their specific Faculty Membership Fees. As of press time, neither the Business Students' Association or the Engineering Students' Society could be reached for comment.

Following its initial passing, Bill 6 moved on to the Bylaw Committee, where it will be assigned a draftsman. A second reading will take place at a Students' Council meeting in January.

## Students with disabilities receive new info on PSE

NATALIE CLIMENHAGA  
Senior News Editor

When Stephanie Carvalho finished high school, she had little idea of how not to let her visual impairment hold her back from pursuing further education.

She explained that at the time, she took it upon herself to learn more about the technology and mobility options that would allow her to succeed as a postsecondary student.

"My school counsellor didn't know anything," said Carvalho, who is now in her third year of sociology and women's studies. "I had to take a year off because if I came here, it would have been a huge shock to my system."

However, with the recent creation of the *Transition Planning Guide*, the Government of Alberta wants to ensure that high-school students with disabilities don't have as many unanswered questions as Carvalho faced.

The three-part comprehensive guide, put together by the Ministry of Education, provides students and parents with information ranging from funding logistics to success stories designed to motivate students with disabilities.

Jean Jackson, alternate format delivery manager at the U of A Specialized Support and Disability Services (SSDS), explained that while the guide is intended for current high-school students, it may help prospective U of A students be better prepared for their transition.

"Hopefully [...] they won't be having

to take a year off to find out, 'How do I do this; what do I do; who do I talk to; what about funding,' and all these kinds of things. Hopefully that will cut down on that lag time," she said.

Jackson explained that the guide will likely be most valuable to students living in remote areas of the province.

"I think this will be really useful out of the city area. Stephanie is local, and she got no information—so you can imagine what it's like if we get out into northern Alberta or in the extreme south of Alberta," she said, adding that the U of A also produces guides for students who have been admitted to the institution.

However, Jackson doesn't suspect this will produce a drastic increase in the number of U of A applicants with disabilities, which she said has been steadily climbing since she first came to campus in 1999.

"I think [the transition guide is] going to catch those people who were maybe slipping through the cracks before. People who just figured, 'I can't do it,'" she said, adding that, generally, students with visual impairments or mobility issues may not feel unsuited for postsecondary life.

"The student who is blind doesn't necessarily feel that they can't come; they just know that they can't see everything, but they're doing okay in school," she said. "Students with learning disabilities may have got the impression that they can't do it, and so this is really good information for them."

# character

is higher than

# intellect...

a great soul

will be strong

# to live,

as well

# as think.



## SU AWARDS

Each year, the Students' Union recognizes students who have made contributions to the campus and/or community. If you have helped better your campus or community you could be eligible for up to \$1500 from an SU award.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR AN APPLICATION, VISIT [WWW.SU.UALBERTA.CA/AWARDS](http://WWW.SU.UALBERTA.CA/AWARDS). APPLICATIONS ARE ALSO AVAILABLE AT ALL INFOLINK DESKS, FACULTY OFFICES, INTERNATIONAL HOUSE, AND 2-900 SUB. APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED IN 2-900 SUB BY MONDAY, FEBRUARY 4TH 2008 AT 5PM.

For further information contact 492-4241 or [ea@su.ualberta.ca](mailto:ea@su.ualberta.ca)



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