

Mixed reactions over proposed fee increase

by James Stevenson

A combination of Students' Union president Dave Tupper's new increase policy and a bold statement on increases by President Davenport has students outraged and demanding explanations.

On September 26, Students' Council adopted a new increase policy, one which will hopefully guide administrators in future tuition increases. Conceding that increases were inevitable, SU created this new policy on four main factors. Firstly, that operation funding be in accordance to student fee increases. Secondly, that student financing rise with student tuition fees. Third, that tuition be tied with inflation, and lastly, that employment oppor-

student leaders before agreeing to any tuition rise. On the question of Davenport creating a large tuition raise, Deisman said "Davenport does not have much control on increases."

On October 5, an article ran on the cover of *Folio*, the University of Alberta's faculty newspaper, which outlined a recent on-air forum on student tuition increases between Davenport, Tupper, and the Minister of Advanced Education, John Gogo.

The article mentioned that Tupper felt that tuition "should increase by reasonable increments," but failed to mention anything on the recommendations of the new increase policy.

Furthermore, the article quotes both Gogo and Davenport on agreeing that "tuition in Alberta be raised from its current level of about \$1100 to the national average which is \$1700" over the next three years.

Students on campus offered a range of reactions to this news.

"I wasn't aware of a tuition hike..."

tunities while attending and after graduation be considered in future fee increases.

"Ours is the second lowest tuition in the country," said Wade Deisman Students' Union V.P. external. While the SU agrees that certain fee increases are inevitable, Deisman said, of the projected 200 dollar per year increase, "there is no way the government will allow increases of that magnitude."

Deisman insisted that the government is obliged to follow a "students first" policy where they will consult

"This hurts me very badly," said Tina Monts, a first year business student "because I'm a first year student and I do have three more years to go."

"So basically, we are paying an extra two hundred dollars a year to come to a school where I can't even get into the classes I want and the ones I do get into are overcrowded and impersonal," said Gord Sawatzky, a third year sociology major.

One of the main aspects of student aggravation when questioned

on this increase, was the lack of communication that Davenport and Tupper have shown towards the students.

"I hadn't heard about it and now that I have I don't think much of it," said Oscar Strelleor, a fourth year science student. "I don't see how they can rationalize it, that's just too much money for most people."

"I wasn't aware of a tuition hike, and I certainly wasn't aware of how much it was going to be," stated third year arts student, Wendy

Moffitt, who seemed to be speaking for most of the students questioned.

While many students were upset at the thought of extra money being drained for the same crowded style of teaching, there were others who questioned our Students' Union.

"Tupper may be realistic, but that's not what we need," said Sean Hogan, a fourth year agriculture student. "We need a president who will stick up for the students' rights, and not simply stand by and watch."

Zoe McDougall, a first year science student, believed that a sharp increase in fees was inevitable, with the arrival of the new University president, Davenport. "I heard it through the news when the president changed, I expected he would raise it by thirty percent."

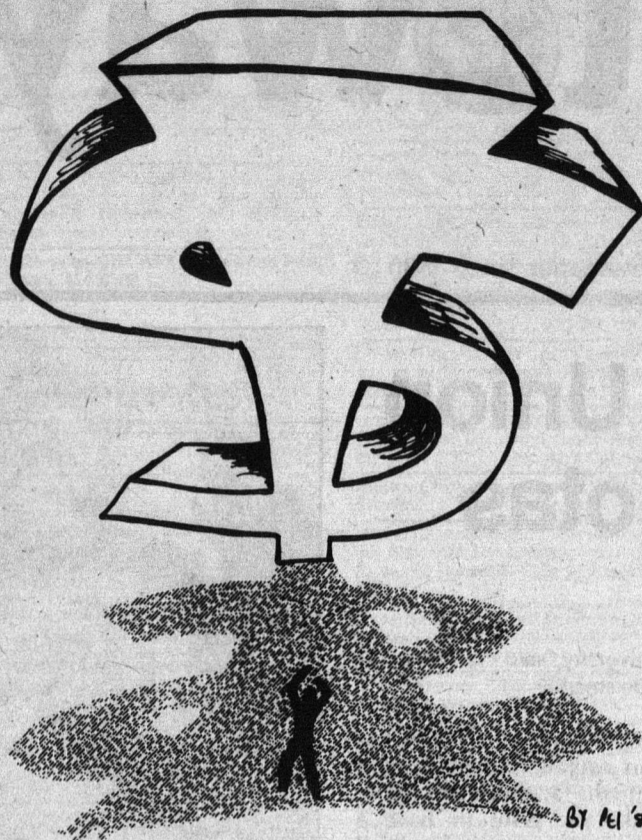
The sharp increase without promise of relief for the overcrowded campus seemed to provoke questions in many students. "I think it's unreasonable, especially since he (Davenport) hasn't justified the increases - like expansion of programs, clubs, and other student services," said Jason Furgala, a third

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year education student.

While student opinion was decidedly against enormous tuition hikes, most questioned the figures on current rates in the province. "It's not great," conceded second year electrical engineer, Daryl Park, "but I'm paying far more than \$1100 a year anyways."

Although many questions regarding tuition remain unanswered it is evident that there is a strong feeling among students that their student government has a mandate to keep tuition increases to a bare minimum and ensure that a university education can be attained by all, and not only the very wealthy.



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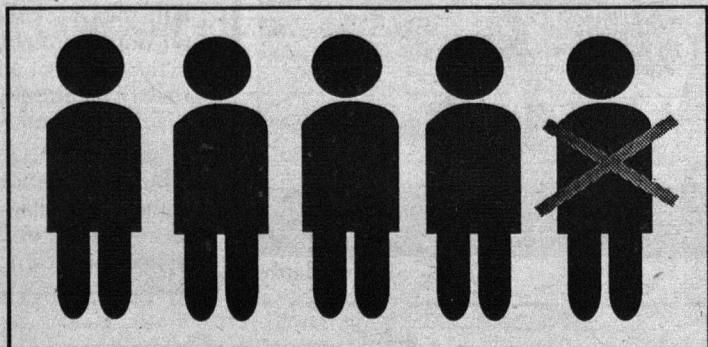
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