

SU confronts bankruptcy

by Greg Harris

Major "accounting errors" have been discovered in the recently ratified Students' Union budget for 1982-83 that could mean receivership for the SU unless drastic cuts are made.

A \$300,000 oversight has boosted the summertime deficit to \$1.2 million, and university approval of the budget is in doubt.

SU President Robert Greenhill has called an emergency Students' Council meeting for Thursday night to hammer out budget cuts, that will ensure university approval.

CJSR Campus Radio and the SU Art Gallery appear to be the areas that will be hardest hit.

Under the current agreement, the university must approve SU budgets until 1985; at which time it is hoped the university-sponsored \$500,000 overdraft will be wiped off the ledger.

Greenhill says that the chances of the university

approving the budget as is, are "infinitesimal."

"We're not exactly sure what we can do... but it seems more than probable that if we submit the budget as is, it won't be accepted," Greenhill says.

The alternative, he says, is to let the university put the SU into receivership, and make the appropriate budget cuts itself, which would be a serious blow to Students' Union autonomy.

Neither Greenhill nor former v.p. finance and administration Elise Gaudet are sure what happened with the \$300,000; however, both cite a \$200,000 sum put away for transit passes that is unaccounted for.

The confusion should be cleared up by the end of May, says Greenhill, when the final auditors report is filed.

Both Greenhill and Gaudet point to the firing of Business Manager George Ivanisko as the probable time the mistake occurred.

"I'm not sure exactly who to blame for that," says

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the Gateway

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...it's because you don't know enough to know better.

Jay Wiseman

...according to Horsman...

Fees skyrocket

Allison Annesley

Students enrolled next year at an Alberta University will face a 20 per cent increase in tuition fees effective this September.

The Board Of Governors passed a 20 per cent tuition increase after adjusting the Finance Committee's 25 per cent recommendation to the formula announced the same morning in the Provincial legislature.

James Horsman, Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower, announced that tuition increases this year would be restricted to 20 per cent. All Alberta universities followed suit and raised tuition 20 per cent. Due to the 5 per cent decrease in the proposed tuition hike, the projected operating deficit for the U of A will rise to \$970,000.

SU President Robert Greenhill requested in the meeting that the Board levy a support grant in lieu of the 20 per cent increase. His grant proposal was rejected by the Board in favour of the tuition increase.

"We should make the point clear to the provincial government that their grants are not sufficient," Greenhill said after the meeting.

Former SU President Phil Soper was granted a request last year for a similar support grant, in lieu of the proposed tuition increase of 15 per cent at the time. The \$1.8 million deficit created by the freeze on tuition last year was taken from the \$3 million University Reserve Fund. Even vice president of University Finance, Lorne Leitch was surprised this year, when the deficit was absorbed by the university.

An unexpected rise in revenues which covered the \$1.8 million deficit was attributed to both a 6 per cent rise in student enrollment and the high interest returns received for some short term University investments.

Overall budgeted expenditures for 1982-83 were increased by 25 per cent,

and post-secondary funding was increased by 19 per cent. Funding to the U of A was only increased by 14.2 per cent.

"Students won their case last year, and there was not increase. This year students will have to pay," commented University President Myer Horowitz.

Board member and Education Chairman Steve Hunka, who has previously shown himself a strong opponent of tuition fee increases resigned himself to the inevitability of an increase and voted in favour of it.

"I now interpret this as social policy on the part of the government and I have no good answers," he said.

Not the least of the budget's critics was Greenhill, who said, "The Board of Governors has an obligation to provide better education but also has an obligation to provide a high quality accessible education. This budget does neither."

Board Student representative, Brian Bechtel, blamed the serious



condition of student finances on underfunding by the government, while reserving criticism for the University administration.

"If the university is guilty of

anything, it's their failure to pressure the government, but they cannot be accused of complicity. It's time for us (the SU) to recognize common grounds and unite with the administration," he said.

Questionable time for policy

by Wes Oginski

Federation of Alberta Students (FAS) President Don Millar denounced the manner in which the province announced its long term tuition policy last Friday.

"Any discussion of the announcement must go in the way of the timing," Millar told a press conference Monday.

"The announcement is over two months late according to the Minister's own schedule," he adds. The announcement instead came when most students are preparing for finals.

The tuition policy fixes students' fees at eight to 12 per cent of the post-

secondary institutions budget. At the same Board meeting, the University announced a 20 per cent tuition increase for next year.

"By passing the responsibility to Boards of Governors the minister can force them to bear the brunt of decisions regarding tuition fees while continuing his policy of consistently underfunding institutions in this province," Millar says of the policy.

"This underfunding will force Boards to impose ever increasing tuition fees each year. By stipulating that tuition fees must represent a fixed amount of the university budgets, the minister will further ensure continual increases while trying to avoid the blame."

"The minister has chosen to index fees and he has essentially ignored the thousands of students who are concerned with the future of post-secondary education system," he adds emphasizing that the minister received about 14,000 postcards from students demanding a tuition freeze. "We are demanding a meeting with the minister asking the withdrawal of the indexing policy."

The U of A Students' Union will examine the policy before deciding to take action.

"We'll be calling a press conference within two weeks," says Robert

Greenhill, SU president, "after we examine the report in detail."

Greenhill says the report is vague and leaves many unanswered questions. One of these questions surrounds the announced accessibility study.

"When you look at it (the study of patterns)," he says, "it looks like a study of tuition fees across the continent...not necessarily a study of accessibility."

Millar says the proposed accessibility study only pays "lip service" to the issue.

FAS has had a standing policy requesting a tuition freeze until a study into accessibility has been completed by an independent body. The University SU has a similar policy. Millar notes that a long term policy has been established before such a study has even begun.

Greenhill adds that the study is still questionable "especially since it is under the minister's department. It could be just a fudge factoring."

Millar also questioned the announcement to increase assistance to students. On Friday he said he contacted the Student Finance Board, but they were unaware of any changes forthcoming in student loan structure.

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