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Graduate students want aid

By Tacie Holyoak
STAFF WRITER

Between 500 and 700 graduate students are considering dropping out if financial aid is eliminated under Focused Excellence, according to preliminary results of a survey still underway in the graduate college.

Financial woes increase as proposals add additional fees of \$1,250 to \$1,500 per year to tuition, as well as newly proposed program fees. In addition to worries that low remission will not help their pocket books, students also have concerns about the proposal's failure to include need-based financial aid for graduate students.

The Arizona Board of Regents is considering a resolution to give 14 percent of all tuition to financial aid, as opposed to the 8 percent now in effect. This proposal goes to vote in March.

Although graduate financial aid is not currently included in Focused Excellence, graduate students will still be required to give the 14 percent to undergraduates.

This is a big concern for the Graduate and Professional Student Council, according to its members.

"Use graduate tuition for graduate students," said Pete Morris, GPSC president, at the last GPSC meeting.

He added that the money should be given to the students who are "telling us they're going to drop out."

Although the proposal does not include plans for financial aid, Morris, after meeting with President Pete Likins on Friday, said he is "positive about the prospects of need-based aid" although a "concrete commitment" has not yet been made.

Graduate students are also concerned with the amount of tuition remission or reimbursement graduate assistants will receive if Likins and Provost George Davis' Focused Excellence becomes a reality.

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STUDENT UNION MEMORIAL CENTER Union celebrations begin

By Bob Purvis
STAFF WRITER

One of the biggest parties UA has ever seen begins today.

And it's all in honor of a building. Administrators will officially dedicate the largest student union in the nation without a hotel — the new Student Union Memorial Center.

At 405,000 square feet and nearly 9.3 acres, it is double the size of the original student union.

It's not just a union, it's a small city, said Dan Adams, director of UA student unions.

"The word I hear constantly is, 'Wow. Wow it's big. Wow it's beautiful.' This is what I like to call the 'Wow' building," Adams said.

Although it's taken three years, 12 million pounds of steel, and over \$60 million to construct the union, it's still not finished.

As students celebrate and check out the new union, construction workers scurry to put the finishing touches on the building.

Construction won't be completely finished for another month, Adams said.

"We still have meeting rooms to get open. We still have few retail operations to get open but for the most part we're there," he said.

Many of the building's meeting rooms will remain closed through the 24th and some retail spaces still remain empty.

"There is still a lot of stuff that isn't open," said Keith Whitten, creative writing sophomore.

Two of those spaces will soon be filled, however, with a CD store and the new Kaplan testing center.

In addition, Chick-Fil-A is also still under construction with a projected opening date of late March.

"It's a real challenge to get all the operations up and running," Adams

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CHRIS CODUTO/Arizona Daily Wildcat
Computer science sophomore Andy Schmidt and architecture freshman Hilary Post relax outside the new Student Union Memorial Center Sunday afternoon. The union's grand opening is this week.



DAVID HARDEN/Arizona Daily Wildcat
Cherice Clark, a biology freshman, fills up her car yesterday near campus. Gas prices have risen 40 cents in the past year.

Community protests 'blood for oil'

Students, Tucsonans link war on Iraq with gasoline

By Cara O'Connor
STAFF WRITER

The possibility of a war with Iraq looms over America, and the Tucson Peace Action Coalition thinks that the U.S.' motivation for the war is simple — gas.

On Saturday, about 100 protesters stood in front of gas stations across Tucson holding signs that said: "No Blood for Oil."

"I think that it's obvious this war is about oil," said Luis Herrera, a 19-year-old Pima student. "The United States has not put a bunch of troops next to North Korea but they're doing it in Iraq."

The rally began at 11 a.m. when protesters met at Himmel Park, 1000 N. Tucson Blvd, and signed up in groups to drive to more than 30 gas stations from Oro Valley to the intersection of North Craycroft Road and East 22nd Street.

"We are not against people driving cars," said TPAC member Adam Aguilar, 21, "but we want to let people know that the main reason the government wants to go to war in Iraq is to get control of their oil."

In response to growing conflicts between Iraq and the U.S., gas prices have risen dramatically over the past year.

According to AAA Arizona, gas prices are about 40 cents more than last year.

As of Feb. 12, a gallon of unleaded self-serve gas in Arizona cost \$1.53.

"Our goal is to get people to understand the connection between war and oil," said TPAC organizer Kwabena

Stephan X.

"War is a business," he said, adding that weapons and drugs are top commodities in today's economy.

An Arizonans United for Peace flyer that was circulated among protesters on Saturday stated: "The U.S. has a history of waging war and supporting the overthrow of governments in countries where private ownership of natural resources has been threatened."

"I'd like to see true peace, true freedom, true equality and true democracy," Stephan said.

The anti-war movement has recently become more prevalent in Arizona, especially in the past month.

On Jan. 18 more than 2,000 people marched down East Speedway Boulevard from the UA campus to DeAnza Park at

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