Cadets ready to 'kick butt' 

By Alexandria Blute 

I n the cold morning air, a group of 15 elite ROTC cadets trudged sleepily up the steps of the UA’s South Hall. It was 5:30 a.m. The students, clad in lightweight uniforms, wasted no time for their team captain to lead stretches as they prepared to take the Army physical fitness test. The cadets worked in virtual silence, broken only by the captain’s occasional command to switch stretches.

The group then sprinted to the UA Mall where they completed two minutes of sit-ups and push-ups that must be executed in perfect form. If they needed a rest, there was an Army-approved position in which they could rest until the time was up. But these cadets rarely paused to reposition themselves on the cold, damp Mall grass, nor did they stop to walk during the timed two-mile sprint.

These cadets are the best of the best, the elite, and they have been waking up before dawn every weekday for two months to prepare for the Army ROTC Ranger Challenge. The group’s hard work, dedication and endurance will be put to the test this weekend as the team travels to Fort Benning, Georgia for the annual competition this weekend, 10 days after their Ranger Challenge.

The Ranger Challenge, which includes six different competitions, that will assess each cadet’s individual physical and mental strength as well as the cadre’s ability to work as a team. The group will compete against hundreds of other cadets in events such as M-16 marksmanship, land navigation, a one-ropes bridge and an obstacle course, said Trees, a science education junior. The cadets will also take an Army mental fitness test.

The final event is one that many of the cadets say is grueling: a 10k rucksack foot march during which competitors run nearly six and a half miles laden with gear and a pack that can weigh nearly 40 pounds. But being pushed to their physical and mental limits is nothing new to the cadets, as they have been waking up before dawn every weekday for two months to prepare for the Army ROTC Ranger Challenge.

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Tuition may go up $500

By Andrea Kelly

Students could face a $500 tuition increase this year if regents and the three university presidents decide to reach their goal of getting university tuition to rank at the top of the bottom one-third of other senior universities. According to data compiled by the Arizona Board of Regents, the UA is exactly $497 away from the top of the bottom one-third, or the 34th spot on the tuition roster.

This increase would come on the heels of last year’s record setting $1,000 tuition increase for resident undergraduates. The Arizona Board of Regents will decide in March whether reaching the top of the bottom one-third among nation-wide tuition rates is something that should be accomplished this year or if the increase should be dispersed over time.

Karen Bender, a pre-med freshman, said spreading the tuition increase over time would be better. “I think it would be hard for people who plan ahead for college,” Bender said. “An unexpected increase would be hard.” President Peter Livak would not say if he would ask for a $500 tuition increase this year, but he said when it comes time to issue a proposal, he will ask for what he thinks is best for the university. Ultimately though, the regents may decide in March whether reaching the top of the bottom one-third among nation-wide tuition rates is something that should be accomplished this year or if the increase should be dispersed over time.