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Hike may increase graduate dropouts

By Tacie Holyoak
STAFF WRITER

The results of a graduate student survey distributed early this month are in, just in time to be presented to the Arizona Board of Regents at today's tuition hearing.

The numbers show that 11 percent of 500 students surveyed are considering dropping out if tuition is raised — 5 percent temporarily and 6 percent permanently. Forty percent

said they will drop the number of semester units they take.

Based on the survey results, 550 — to 600 of UA's 8,000 graduate students

could permanently drop out, said Pete Morris, president of the Graduate and Professional Student Council.

"That's a hell of a lot of money for the university to lose," Morris said at Tuesday's GPSC meeting.

When so many students drop out, he added, the university loses money that could be set aside for need-based financial aid.

A GPSC proposal released Tuesday asked the administration for \$700,000 to cover the costs of need-based aid, an amount Morris believes will completely protect those who

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OPTICAL SCIENCES



DEREKH FROUDE/Arizona Daily Wildcat
John Greivenkamp, optical sciences professor and the faculty consultant for the new optical sciences building, looks over the scale model for the building yesterday afternoon. The opening of the new addition to the building has been moved back until at least November.

Budget slows Meinel addition

Bids for optical sciences building exceed \$17M budget

By Bob Purvis
STAFF WRITER

When UA officials lifted their shovels to break ground on a multimillion-dollar expansion to an optics research facility in September, they said it would solidify Tucson as "Optics Valley."

However, what was supposed to be a full-fledged construction site in the nexus of Optics Valley remains the small dirt patch construction workers dug six months ago.

Construction plans for the Meinel optical sciences addition, located at North Cherry Avenue and East University Boulevard, recently came to a halt when contractors' initial bids eclipsed the \$17.2 million budget set for the project.

The budget setbacks will push the expansion's projected

opening from August to November at the soonest, said May Carr, project manager for the optical sciences addition.

"Initial bids are higher than we are budgeted," said Melissa Dryden, public information coordinator for facilities design and construction. "We are re-examining to make cuts where we can without changing the design."

Members of the department of optical sciences say Meinel is crunched for space. The 47,000 square-foot addition

would nearly double the size of the building.

"We are really in need of space and the new facilities, so we are definitely disappointed it's been pushed back," said John Greivenkamp, an optical sciences professor and the user representative to the architectural team.

Dryden said that facilities design and construction has put forth a "big effort" to tight-

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Students hang up phone, sign on to IM



RANDY METCALF/Arizona Daily Wildcat

Undecided freshman Dylan Anderson-Berens talks on AOL Instant Messenger in his La Paz dorm room Tuesday.

By Tessa Hill
STAFF WRITER

Every morning, Crystal Alkais begins her day not by eating breakfast, showering and brushing her teeth, but by signing on to her America Online Instant Messenger account.

Alkais, a pre-business freshman, said she uses AIM daily to talk to her family in Phoenix and friends who live down the hall.

The use of instant messaging through AOL and other providers like Yahoo and Microsoft Network has become increasingly popular as an inexpensive and often free way for college students to exchange

instant text messages with friends and family, whether nearby or across the country.

Alkais, a Coronado Hall resident, said the chime of an incoming IM is a very familiar sound in her residence hall.

"Almost everyone I know uses it," she said.

"It's a lot easier than calling people, especially when they are out-of-state," Alkais said and added that she often uses AIM to see what her friends are up to throughout the day.

"I sign on in the morning and usually don't sign off until I'm going to bed," she said.

With more than 180 million

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Student body president threatened

By Devin Simmons
STAFF WRITER

A former SafeRide employee threatened Student Body President Doug Hartz in his office Friday, UAPD reports stated.

Ronnie Gammage, an undeclared sophomore, was fired from SafeRide on Feb. 20. Hartz said that he had nothing to do with the termination and had no idea why Gammage was let go. But he was told by SafeRide officials that when Gammage was fired, he became angry and made a scene,

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