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THE BATTALION

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Students question proposed use fee increase



Jay Robbins, THE BATTALION

President Bowen addresses the open forum on Wednesday afternoon where students, faculty and administrators discussed proposed fee increases.

Approximately 175 students, administrators, faculty and staff attended an open forum to discuss the proposed increase of the general use fee.

By Wes Swift
THE BATTALION

The proposal to increase the general use fee came under intense criticism Wednesday during a public hearing in the MSC. Dr. J. Malon Southerland, vice president for student affairs, mediated the open forum to discuss the proposal, which would raise the general use fee from \$12 to \$26

per semester credit. The \$15.4 million in revenue generated by the increase will be used to fund a 3-percent staff and faculty salary raise, \$1 million increase to financial aid and will erase a \$6.8 million budget deficit created by the Texas Legislature's decrease in budget appropriations for the University. An estimated 175 students, administrators, faculty and staff packed the conference room and questioned many aspects of the proposal, from motivations to consequences. Toby Boenig, A&M student body president, said that although there may be a need for an increase, the \$14 dollar raise was too much, too fast. He explained that students are being asked to pull more than their weight. "We do understand that we have to take

some of this burden," Boenig said. "But the burden should not be as great as it is. It should not be as focused on one party as it is right now. We feel that the burden should be spread out over several different areas." Many students spoke about the effects the fees would have and offered recommendations to improve the proposal. Tracy Wittington, an A&M senior and single mother, said with the additional \$210 per semester that she will have to pay, she could buy 928 diapers and 119 gallons of milk. "I understand they're going to have to increase these fees sometime," Wittington said. "But it's such a large increase all at one time, and that is what hurts."

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University task force awaits results of telecommunications regulation bill

A&M's electronic information task force will publish its findings on Internet regulation in August.

By Scott McMahan
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M's electronic information task force is watching the U.S. Congress closely for the results of the telecommunications bill that would regulate the Internet.

The task force was appointed in Fall 1994 to cover Internet issues including free speech, harassment, obscenity, liability and enforcement.

A report on the group's findings will be published in August, addressing the use of the Internet at A&M.

John Dinkle, associate provost for A&M's computing services and task force member, said sections of the report will be affected by what Congress decides.

Dinkle said he does not know who should be accountable for Internet transmission.

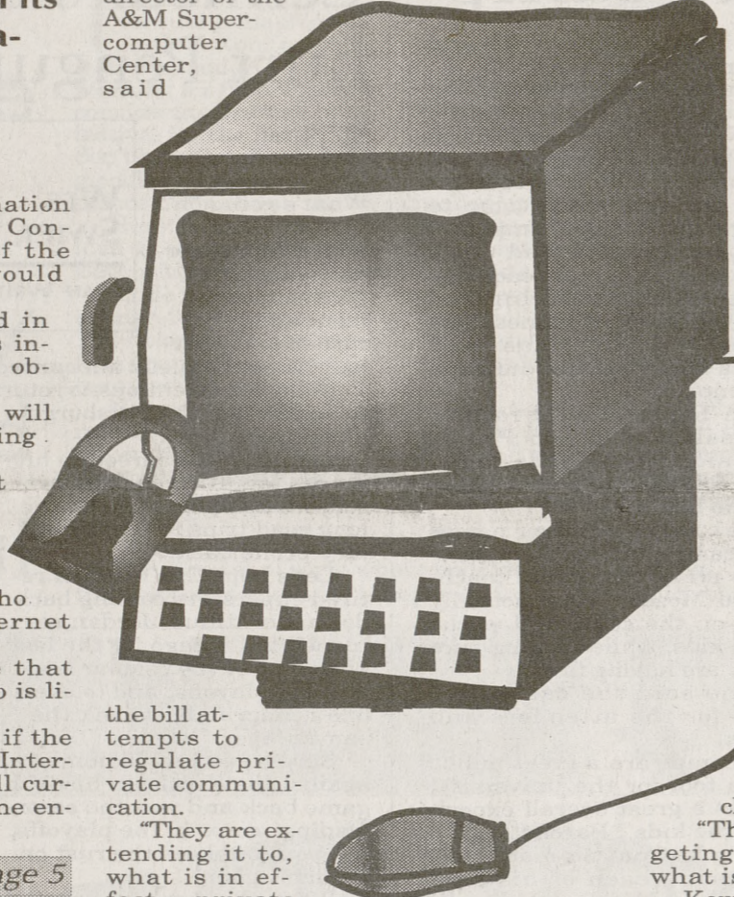
"If a person posts a message that someone deems inappropriate, who is liable?" he said.

It has not yet been determined if the University will be liable for what Internet users publish, he said. The bill currently being debated does not define enforcement procedures.

See related EDITORIAL, Page 5

Dinkle said the Internet and telephone communication cannot be compared to one another, because someone can post a message on an Internet bulletin board that anyone who has access

to the Internet can receive. Dave Safford, director of the A&M Super-computer Center, said



"The problem with the obscenity issue is that the Supreme Court has applied it with local standards," he said. "The Internet is global, it is not a U.S. thing. How can the U.S. regulate it?"

Safford said there are other regulatory options that the Senate did not explore, such as rating Internet content similar to movie ratings.

"I think this bill has good intentions, but it's flawed in its implementation," Safford said.

The U.S. Senate already has passed the Exon/Gorton Decency Act which criminalizes forms of expression on the Internet that are indecent and obscene.

The telecommunications bill will make it a criminal offense to communicate "any comment, request, suggestion, proposal, image or other communication which is obscene, lewd, filthy or indecent, with intent to annoy, abuse, threaten or harass another person."

Butch Kemper, project director for A&M's computing and information services, said he expects the new bill will be challenged in the Supreme Court.

"The stuff that the Exon Bill is targeting is just a very small portion of what is out there."

Kemper added that there is less personal interaction for Internet users and more of a sense of anonymity than telephone conversations.

"People are less inhibited when they are on the Internet," he said.

the bill attempts to regulate private communication.

"They are extending it to, what is in effect, private conversation," Safford said.

Obscenity is not clearly defined in the law and may even be more difficult to define on the Internet, he said.

Decrease in applications, funding cause graduate enrollment rates to drop

The number of applications A&M received this year decreased 11 percent and acceptance decreased 5 percent.

By Javier Hinojosa
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M graduate student enrollment dropped 7.1 percent from 1994 to 1995 because of decreases in funding for graduate researchers and fewer applicants.

Dr. Dan H. Robertson, director of the A&M office of graduate studies, said that although the latest reports show nationwide graduate enrollment has increased 1 percent, it is not unusual for institutions to be leveling off at the graduate level or seeing slight declines.

"Not all institutions carry the same disciplines, so it is not correct to assume that enrollment was up in every institution," Robertson said. Universities can be more selective

in choosing applicants if more applications are received, he said.

"In the business of graduate studies, one of the things you do is keep in touch with what is happening with graduate applications," he said. "They are a good lead in forecasting enrollment."

The ratio between applications and admitted students varies among the different colleges, he said. Overall, the number of applications A&M received decreased 11 percent this year, and acceptance decreased 5 percent.

"Cases where the percent change in acceptance is higher than that of applications say two things," Robertson said. "Either there are better quality applicants in here than there were previously, or the college has been more liberal in admissions."

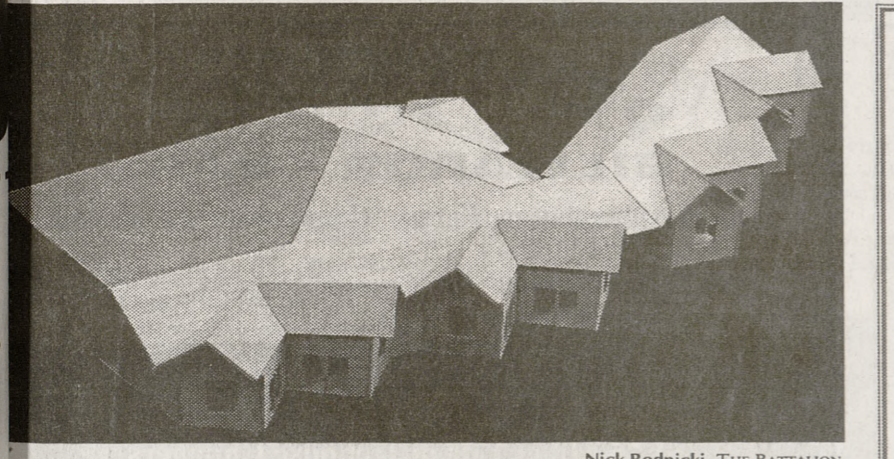
Robertson said graduate enrollments may be decreasing because colleges are being more selective and that there may be less-qualified students.

Acceptance to the graduate

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GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENT ENROLLMENT CHANGES			
SPRING '94 vs. SPRING '95			
COLLEGE:	'94 Enrollment	'95 Enrollment	Percent Change
Business Admin.	550	490	↓10.91%
Education	993	952	↓4.13%
Engineering	1914	1652	↓13.69%
Liberal Arts	773	727	↓5.95%

Source: Office of Graduate Studies



Nick Rodnicki, THE BATTALION

This model for a proposed AIDS hospice was designed by senior environmental design student Steve Shores.

Architecture students design AIDS hospice

The designs reflect the needs of patients in their final stages of AIDS.

By Katherine Arnold
THE BATTALION

Making patients in their final stages of AIDS as comfortable as possible was the goal of Texas A&M architecture students during their class projects to design an AIDS hospice.

Dr. Mardelle Shepley, assistant professor of architecture, led 17 students in the Architecture 306, Architectural Design III class project.

"We had a client in Austin that wanted to build a hospice," Shepley said. "Each student did their own design for the project."

The client, Project Transitions, was a non-profit organization who provides medical care for AIDS patients. The organization was interested in building a hospice for eight people in the final stages of AIDS.

The facility would be adjacent to a long-term care facility which would treat HIV-positive people who do not require constant care.

The students' designs were compiled and presented to the organization for consideration.

There are several factors to consider when constructing a

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Career Center increases accessibility, services

Students can now access the center's information from campus computer labs and their personal computers.

By Eleanor Colvin
THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M Career Center has expanded its services in an effort to simplify the job search for students and to reach a broader base of employers.

Dr. Leigh Turner, director of the Career Center, said students can access job listings and interview information from campus computer labs and personal computers, instead of having to come to the center.

Turner said she hopes to make information available to more students and employers through the use of computers and streamline all aspects of the job search.

Turner said the center began networking with a few labs on campus two years ago. Now it is connected with all the major computer labs and with some departmental labs, such as the College of Engineering.

"Searching for a job takes time and is not an easy process," Turner said. "We started networking with the College of Business because the students felt Blocker was a long way from the Career Center, and we wanted to do everything possible to make things easier. We especially need that service now that there are colleges on West Campus."

Turner said the Career Center is developing its home page on the Internet for students to access interview schedules and job information.

"We are working on using the Internet because we definitely need to be in the forefront in terms of technology," she said. "I'd like for students to have the option of placing resumes on the Internet."

Tami Bennett, Class of 1994, said she has



CAMPUS PROGRAMS

benefited from the new computer services now that she is no longer on campus.

"The computer system is good for contacts, and you can use it during the summer and holidays," Bennett said. "I've had lots of interviews through the Career Center that I may not have been able to find out about on my own."

Turner said students who begin working with the center before their last years in school will benefit the most from the new computer networks and other services.

She recommends that students register with the center at least one year before they graduate, in order to make themselves more marketable and find careers they would like to target.

Turner said she encourages students to find internships, cooperative work experiences and summer jobs that will furnish them with professional skills.

"Any work experience is better than none," she said. "Students need to think broadly about the experience that various jobs provide. Professional experience is imperative for students to find jobs in such a competitive market."

ters in the nation. During the 1994-95 school year there was a 14-percent increase in the number of companies recruiting and a 22-percent increase in the number of interviews scheduled.

"I don't think anyone nationwide is doing as much for their students as us," Turner said. "My counterparts at a meeting with other Big 12 schools were surprised that we scheduled more than 21,000 interviews for the 5,200 students registered [with the Career Center] last year, not including the summer."

Don Birkelbach, of Dow Chemical in Freeport and a member of the Career Center's advisory committee, said he is pleased with the Career Center's efforts. He said Dow has a long recruiting history with A&M and considers the University to be one of the top five schools from which the company recruits.

"Dow has always had a close relationship with A&M," he said. "We hire at least five to six students a year from A&M and will continue to work with the Career Center."

Birkelbach said he is pleased with the improvements the center is making.

"I am impressed with changes like the pre-selection process for interviewing," he said. "A&M's center is doing a good job of meeting our recruiting needs and looking at future hiring needs."

Erika Steffens, a senior agriculture business major, said she wished she had started working with the career center sooner.

"I came to the center because it's hard to find many job openings without one central location," she said. "I wish I would have started sooner because the Career Center offers a fair chance for all students to interview for jobs."



Turner