

THE BATTALION

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Texas A&M University

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Board of Regents approve tuition increase

By Brad Bennett
THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M Board of Regents approved a tuition increase of \$2 per credit hour and increases in parking and international student fees and the Independent Study Abroad fee Thursday.

Gates said the new \$50 Independent Study Abroad fee is a one-time fee for all students. The fee will allow A&M students to use A&M financial assistance while attending study abroad programs not associated with A&M.

Gates said he asked the board not to raise the fees to show students that administration

is accountable to the student body.

Although the student service and computer fees were voted down in a February student referendum, the board still had the power to raise the fees, said A&M President Robert M. Gates.

"A lot of students feel administration doesn't listen to them. I wanted to send a message that when students vote down a referendum we will listen," Gates said.

Gates said he hopes students realize that there will be repercussions for not raising the computer fee.

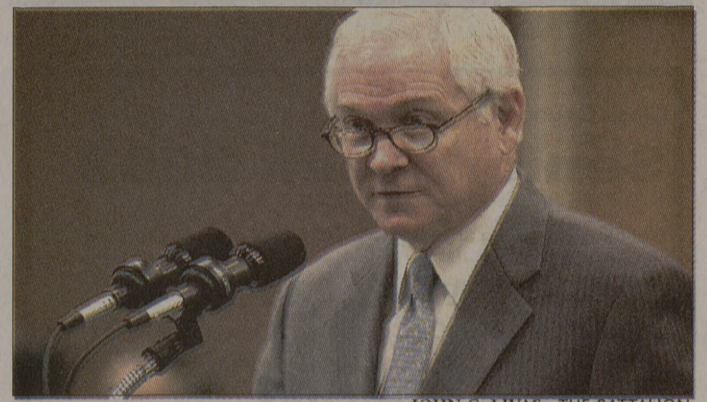
The international student fee increase from \$36 to \$46 applies only to international students and is necessary to cover the

implementation costs of the Student Exchange Visitor Information System, a federal computer tracking system mandated by the USA Patriot Act.

"(Immigration and Naturalization Services) just wants to make sure people who get visas show up where they said they would," Gates said. "(Administration) feels that once someone is here we will treat them no differently than if they were from Texas."

Resident and commuter parking fees are now \$141, an increase of \$8.

Students had an opportunity Thursday morning to voice their opinions about the fee and tuition increases to the Board of



JOHN C. LIVAS • THE BATTALION
President Robert Gates addresses the Board of Regents regarding the fee increase Wednesday morning at the MSC.

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Beautiful bovine



Senior agricultural development major, Glenna Pruitt, and her heifer, Miss Norman, get ready for the Dairy Science 202

Showmanship Event at the Dairy Science Center, this Saturday. The show is free and open to the public and begins at 10 a.m.

JOSHUA HOBSON • THE BATTALION

U.S. airborne seize airfield, troops move closer to Iraq

By David Espo
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Army airborne forces parachuted into northern Iraq on Wednesday, seizing an airfield for a new front against Saddam Hussein. U.S. and British warplanes bombed an enemy convoy fleeing the besieged city of Basra in the south, and sandstorms cleared to ease the advance toward Baghdad.

One week into the war, the possibility of a major battle loomed within 100 miles of Baghdad as another convoy — this one made up of elite Republican Guard forces — moved in the direction of American troops aiming for Saddam's seat of power.

Jumping from low-flying planes into the Iraqi night, an estimated 1,000 paratroopers from the Army's 173rd Airborne Brigade landed near an airstrip in Kurdish-controlled territory less than 30 miles north.

Hundreds of miles to the south, the unchallenged bombing of Iraqi forces leaving Basra raised hopes that U.S. ground troops could soon enter the city, feared at risk for a humanitarian crisis.

The military developments unfolded as the first food aid convoy rolled into southern Iraq, greeted at the border by hungry children.

With American and British forces massing to the south, west and now the north of Baghdad, the

Iraqi regime kept much of the news from its own people. Instead, it emphasized a claim that two American cruise missiles had killed 14 civilians in Baghdad and wounded dozens more.

"This war is far from over," President Bush said in a quick trip to the Florida headquarters of U.S. Central Command, which is overseeing the war. Still, he said victory was only a matter of time, adding, "There will be a day of reckoning for the Iraqi regime, and that day is drawing near."

Bush later flew to the Camp David presidential retreat for a meeting Thursday with British Prime Minister Tony Blair, his partner in the Iraq invasion.

Swirling sandstorms that have hampered American units over the past two days abated early Thursday. The swarming dust had also been crimping the bombing campaign, although U.S. airstrikes did manage to knock out Baghdad television for several hours, and explosions were heard near the oil-rich city of Kirkuk in the

"There will be a day of reckoning for the Iraqi regime, and that day is drawing near."

— President George W. Bush

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Tuition deregulation discussed in forum

By Janet McLaren,
Esther Robards-Forbes
THE BATTALION

With budget cuts and tuition hikes looming, less than 20 students showed up to forums held Wednesday and Thursday night to discuss proposals for tuition deregulation with University officials.

Student Body President Zac Coventry and several student government representatives were on hand to answer questions and explain the situation surrounding budget cuts and possible deregulation.

Coventry, a senior agricultural development major, said there is currently a shift away from state responsibility for public uni-

versity funding.

"The atmosphere in the legislature is that the cost of education is being passed to the students," he said. "I don't like that, but what we have to do now is decide how to deal with it."

Six bills that deal with tuition deregulation have been filed with the state legislature. These bills would remove the cap on tuition and place it in the hands of a university's board of regents.

Some of the bills propose deregulating tuition for out-of-state or summer school students, while others propose total deregulation.

Because of state funding cuts Texas A&M will be forced to give up more than \$56 million during the next two years. The administration has attempted to streamline opera-

tions and trim where it can, but it is not enough.

Associate Executive Vice President Dan Parker spoke about the possible consequences of budget cuts without tuition deregulation Wednesday night.

"The president has asked us to prepare a plan of a 15 percent cut in non-academic and 10 percent in academic budgets for next year," he said. "We hope it won't happen, but it will if there is no deregulation."

Even with this streamlining, some programs may have to be eliminated, Parker said. One victim of the proposed cuts may be the Dairy Science Center, he said. The struggling Dairy Center has been facing the chopping

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French consul discusses European Union

By Melissa Fowler
THE BATTALION

J.P. BEATO III • THE BATTALION
The Honorable Denis Simonneau, Consul General of France, speaks at the MSC Stark Gallery on Thursday.

Although Simonneau's speech

focused on the European Union, he began his speech talking about the current situation in Iraq.

The EU is comprised of 15 member states including France, Belgium, the United Kingdom and Italy.

According to the EU Web site (<http://europa.eu.int/>), the union started with just six countries after World War II when France proposed the creation of a "concrete foundation of a European federation." To join the EU, countries must apply and prove that they adhere to a set of criteria requiring the stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the existence of a functioning market economy and the

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STUDENT BODY ELECTIONS 2003

STUDENT BODY PRESIDENT RESULTS

Stoney Burke	2,665
Matt Josefy	2,573
Ed "El Ramos" Brown	600
Kyle Carlton	1,518
Luke Cheatham	2,472
Karl Pfluger	1,949

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SENIOR YELL RESULTS

Tim Bailey	8,330
Jonathon Lusk	8,231
John Magruder	5,968

JUNIOR YELL RESULTS

Ryan Bishop	5,426
Keith Lane	1,796
Paul Terrell	4,771
Mike Winn	1,731

*These four will compete in runoffs next week