

THE BATTALION

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Tuition Policy Advisory Committee

University President Robert M. Gates announced Wednesday that he has established a 15-member committee that will advise the administration and the Board of Regents on proposed tuition increases. Committee members include:

- Chairman G. Dan Parker, associate executive vice president
- Five representatives from administration and faculty
- Seven representatives from the student body
- One parent
- One former student

ANDREW BURLESON • THE BATTALION
SOURCE: UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT ROBERT M. GATES

Gates forms tuition advisory board

By Rhiannon Meyers
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M President Robert M. Gates announced Wednesday the establishment of a Tuition Policy Advisory Committee responsible for advising the administration and the Board of Regents on proposed tuition increases.

The committee is comprised of six representatives from administration and faculty, six representatives from the student body, a parent and a former student.

"I think it's important to have a structured way for students, faculty and parents to have a chance for decision making," Gates said.

The committee will meet for the

first time in January to discuss proposed tuition increases for Fall 2004. Gates said he hopes the group will act as a liaison between students and parents and the Board of Regents. Gates said he would like students to be able to approach the committee with their questions and concerns.

"I think that people feel better about a process in which they've had some say, rather than someone in Rudder Tower just dictating tuition increases," Gates said.

Student Body President Matt Josefy, who will serve on the committee, said he is excited about the committee's purpose.

"It provides an avenue for students to speak up in a coordinated way,"

Josefy said. "With this committee, it will be obvious who to get your voices to because they will have direct access to the officials."

Josefy said the committee could look at recommendations relating to differential tuition, flat tuition and special summer tuition.

Gates said he got the idea for a tuition advisory committee from University of Texas President Larry Faulkner, who established a Campus Tuition Advisory Committee in August 2003.

Faulkner said the UT committee consisted of four student leaders, with representatives from student government, the Senate of College Councils, the Graduate Student Assembly and a student at large.

The committee also includes five officers from administration.

The committee at UT is responsible for reviewing the budget and presenting tuition proposals to the president. The committee, which recently proposed an increase of \$1,200 for incoming out-of-state students, reviewed the budget, held open forums for the student body and then submitted a proposal to the administration for the tuition increase, Faulkner said.

"I think what we've done has worked beautifully," Faulkner said. "No one has been enthusiastic about the tuition increase, but under the circum-

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Drive to aid Aggies stationed in Iraq

By Sarah Szuminski
THE BATTALION

Two former Texas A&M students stationed in Baghdad who lost their belongings in a fire last month need help from A&M students and members of the Bryan-College Station community to make their holidays a little brighter.

Capt. Marshall Tway, Class of 1995, Lt. Jeremy Naylor, Class

of 2000, and fellow unit members lost all of their personal property and most of the units' flight equipment when a fire broke out in a hangar at Baghdad International Airport Nov. 20.

No one was injured and no aircraft were damaged in the fire, said Tway, who is the commanding officer of Desperado (Troop D), 1st Squadron, 1st

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HELP AGGIES IN IRAQ

Donations benefiting Aggie soldiers and their units stationed in Baghdad will be collected Friday, Monday and Tuesday at the following locations to replace items destroyed by a fire.

Rudder Fountain	From 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Kirk's Cleaners at FM 2818 and Southwood	Regular business hours
Kirk's Cleaners at Rock Prairie and 29th Street	Regular business hours
Aldersgate Church	From 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Bryan-College Station Chamber of Commerce	From 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

RUBEN DELUNA • THE BATTALION
SOURCE: PROJECT COORDINATOR LINDSEY HAFNER

Sign of an Aggie



SHARON AESCHBACH • THE BATTALION

Plano Aggie Moms club members Kathy Foster, left, from Frisco, and Janet Davis, right, Class of 1979 from Plano, buy signs from a booth at the Winter in Aggieland Craft Fair. The fair is on the second floor of the Memorial Student Center and will run until 5 p.m. Friday.

Student senate seeks place for Bonfire in master plan

By Sarah Walch
THE BATTALION

The Student Senate passed a bill Wednesday supporting the inclusion of a site on Texas A&M's main campus specifically reserved for Aggie Bonfire in the University's Campus Master Plan, a plan that will guide the changes to the physical campus of Texas A&M over the next 50 years.

Speaker of the Student Senate Matthew Wilkins, a junior philosophy major, organized a task force that met twice to discuss what the effects of the changes would be.

Included in the legislation as "essential

and absolutely non-negotiable elements of any campus master plan" are the memorial lawn at the Memorial Student Center, which honors Aggies killed during World War II, the 55 memorial trees surrounding the O.R. Simpson Drill Field, and the memorial to the residents of the Fowler-Hughes-Keathley complex on Northside who died when Aggie Bonfire fell in 1999.

The bill stressed the importance of the preservation of the cohesive community on Northside by building residence halls in close proximity to one another if the current residence halls are torn down.

The Senate also passed the Human

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Student Senate Legislation

The Student Senate passed the following bills at its meeting Wednesday:

- A bill supporting the inclusion of a site on main campus reserved for Aggie Bonfire in the University's Campus Master Plan.
- The Human Rights and Labor Standards Investigation Bill, which will allow the student body president to form a committee to research labor conditions in factories where A&M-licensed clothing is manufactured.
- Recommendations for improvements to sidewalk, lighting and water drainage conditions on campus, which will be submitted to the Physical Plant.

RUBEN DELUNA • THE BATTALION
SOURCE: TEXAS A&M STUDENT SENATE

Profs to develop strategies to maintain aging aircraft

By Eric Ambroso
THE BATTALION

Professors from Texas A&M, along with professors from the Georgia Tech Research Institute and the University of Dayton Research Institute, will help the U.S. Department of Defense develop new strategies to maintain aging aircraft.

The A&M-based Texas Engineering Experiment Station has received more than \$4 million for the research, which is expected to begin in January. The increased budget, donated by the U.S. Air Force, will go toward developing technologies that will increase the lifespan of aircraft in military aspects.

"Rather than having an issue that is common to all three military services studied separately, they are getting together to do it all at one time," said Skip Mills, manager of the San Antonio department of the Texas Center of Applied Technology. "They are getting more bang for their buck."

Mills said most of the planes and helicopters used by the military have been designed for a certain number of flight hours. Small fighter planes have a much shorter lifespan than larger planes. The length of time the military can use certain aircraft depends upon the type of plane and the type of flight that it is used for, Mills said. Rather than build new aircraft, TEES is working to develop ways to make the old ones last longer. The research will focus on areas that all aircraft are having

problems with, he said. "The fleets are maintained very well, but many components are failing and we need to anticipate how to replace them," Mills said. "The B-52, which was developed in the 1950s, may still be flying for the next 20 years. These planes could be used when they are 100 years old."

Mills said the research done at the three universities will be compiled and tested at the Aircraft Sustainability Laboratory located at Brooks City-Base in San Antonio. TEES will be bringing the information to the professors at A&M to conduct the research in their labs, Mills said.

John Ayala, manager of the Aircraft Sustainability Lab for the Texas Center for Applied Technology, said the research will most likely be divided into thirds, with A&M acting as the executive agent among the other universities. As the project is still in the developing stage, TEES does not know how many professors will be involved or which will be participating in the project.

"We will probably find out what specific kinds of aircraft we will be looking at in January," Ayala said. "Right now we are focused on the military, but we would like to get into commercial airliners as well."

Ayala said the team will then recruit professors from all three universities to conduct the research. The team will most likely be multi-industrial from each

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A&M livestock judging team wins championship

By Natalie Younts
THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M Livestock Judging Team can now boast an achievement that few teams at the University can: back-to-back championships.

The 2003 judging team took first place in the 98th annual National Collegiate Livestock Judging Contest Nov. 18 in Louisville, Ky., by 40 points and set the all-time record for highest team score with a total of 4,742 points, said Ryan Rathmann, a graduate beef cattle reproduction student who coached the team.

"This shattered the old record that was held by the 1961 Oklahoma State team," Rathmann said. "This was the ninth time Texas A&M has won and the first time A&M has ever won back-to-back national

championships."

Tobin Pennington, a senior animal science major and team member, said the biggest rewards of winning were prestige for himself and A&M and the creation of lifelong opportunities and contacts.

"It kind of means it's the end of the road, I guess, in our judging careers," Pennington said. "But other than that it's something that we can always look back on and say, 'We won that. We were the national champions.'"

The students judged 12 classes of animals in the competition. Each class consisted of four animals of the same species: swine, cattle or sheep. The students ranked the animals in each class from best to worst and then had to justify their reasons for the rankings.

The order that the team ranked each class was worth 50 points, and each set of reasons was worth 50 points.

Kansas State's team came in second overall and a Kansas State student won the top individual overall.

Pennington said the team has been preparing for the contest for a year.

"Something we've worked for that long finally came down to winning the national championship," he said. "It was just a great feeling. It was awesome."

Jeff Thayne, a senior animal science major, won third place individual overall.

"It's given me a better background in the livestock industry and helped out with public speaking skills, provided a network of people to reach out to later on and an opportunity to meet a lot of friends," he said.

Rathmann said the 2003 A&M team would probably end up as one of the greatest

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