

Ch *Kwantlen* Chronicle

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Langley • Newton • Richmond • Surrey

InSide

Rate

professor p. 3

Athletes

Two of the
week

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Stephen Kronstein/Kwantlen Chronicle

Stephen Lee and Johnny Woo attended the special general meeting at the Surrey campus on Thursday, Sept. 29, where controversy erupted over undiscussed bylaws.

Bylaws passed with no consideration

Controversy surrounds new bylaws that were barely discussed in a recent KSA special general meeting, where prizes were the main concern

By Stephen Kronstein
Kwantlen Chronicle

Controversy has erupted after the Kwantlen Student Association passed a new set of bylaws at its special general meeting on Sept. 29.

The main purpose of the meeting – which was run by Aaron Takhar, director of finance, chairperson of the KSA board and member of the Reduce All Fees Party – was to hold a vote asking students whether or not to adopt a newly adjusted set of KSA bylaws.

“We have a new set of bylaws that we are presenting, and to approve these we can get straight onto the prizes,” announced Takhar at the meeting. Takhar introduced the bylaws as the only item on the agenda.

Kulvir Gill, Richmond campus staff representative and member of the Reduce All Fees Party, moved that the changes to the bylaws be accepted, and Raman Mann seconded the motion.

According to a video of the meeting supplied to *The Chronicle* by Steven Lee, KSA Richmond campus director, the bylaws were approved at the meeting without debate.

The video shows one student saying, “I would like to know, before we take a vote, what this is about.” As well, Laura Anderson, KSA Langley campus representative, also requested discussion.

Discussion was cut off, though, when Takhar said: “Before we get to what this is about, we have a lot of people who came for one reason,

which is to win prizes, so why don’t we take a show of hands here?”

Takhar declared the motion to approve the new bylaws passed, announced the winners of the prizes and adjourned the meeting.

The video also shows Takhar claimed that the new bylaws had been available for students to read for three weeks prior to the meeting, but that’s being disputed by Anderson and others.

Anderson said she spoke with Takhar on Sept. 21 and asked to read the proposed changes to the bylaws, but “he said they wouldn’t be ready [to view] for about another week,” perhaps until only a couple days before the special general meeting.

What took place at the meeting was “an absolute example of the in-

credible corruption” in the KSA, said Anderson.

Johnny Woo, KSA Richmond campus council representative, and Steven Lee, KSA Richmond campus director, also said the bylaws were not made available as Takhar had claimed.

Woo says he and Lee had asked to see the bylaws numerous times, by email and in person, including, once about a week before the meeting, but were told the document wasn’t yet available.

“I asked Kulvir [Gill], I talked to Aaron [Takhar], we emailed them, and either it’s no response or ‘hey, you’ll find out soon enough,’” said Woo.

Rob Evans, student representative to the board of governors, which is a non-voting position on the KSA council, was critical of the role that prizes played in the process. “Unfortunately, the prizes were used for more than just getting people out to the meeting,” he said. “They were then used to facilitate the voting on the bylaws.”

“There was no dialogue” and no chance for the students to realistically consider

the bylaws, he said.

“The bylaws are clearly invalid,” said Evans. “There was somewhere around \$20,000 spent with no results.”

That’s not the view of the KSA executive.

“What took place at the meeting was “an absolute example of the incredible corruption” in the KSA
– Laura Anderson

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International students benefit from award

The ILOT Award helps those in need of financial assistance to further their post-secondary education

By Carol Liu
Kwantlen Chronicle

The University of B.C. has set up an annual award that caters to international students who do not have the finances to study at a post-secondary level.

According to the Kwantlen website, early this year, Vladimir Mezhonov is the second Kwantlen University College student to win UBC's International Leader of Tomorrow Award. He came to Kwantlen in 2003 from Russia to study economics and international business. Mezhonov is now attending UBC's

Sauder School of Business.

Amy Yiu was the first Kwantlen student to receive the award. In May, she graduated from UBC.

The ILOT Award is given to students who are not Canadian citizens or permanent residents of Canada and are currently or planning to study at UBC on a student visa.

"Students can't ask for applications. Schools nominate them" since there's a one nomination per school limit, said Karen Mckellin, the Associate Director of the International Student Initiative. "The degree of financial needs" is the key factor for applicants.

In the past, students have been known to search the web and stumble on the award, says Mckellin. In situations like these, they can go directly to their school counsellor and ask to be nominated.

The award program started in the academic year of 2000/2001. In 2004, there were 170 applicants and 150 applied in 2003, according to Mckellin.

Besides demonstrating a need for financial aid, applicants must also show academic achievement, extracurricular accomplishments and leadership skills in order to be considered.

The amount in what a student receives varies between \$14, 000 and \$34, 000, since it depends on how much financial help the student needs.

"We assess what parents can't buy and the amount they can contribute," said Mckellin.

The award is renewed up to three additional years of undergraduate study or to degree completion, implemented the student remains in the top quarter of his or her studies. Also, the student must maintain their student visa to study in Canada.

Anyone who is graduating from

high school or transferring from a smaller post-secondary school is eligible to apply.

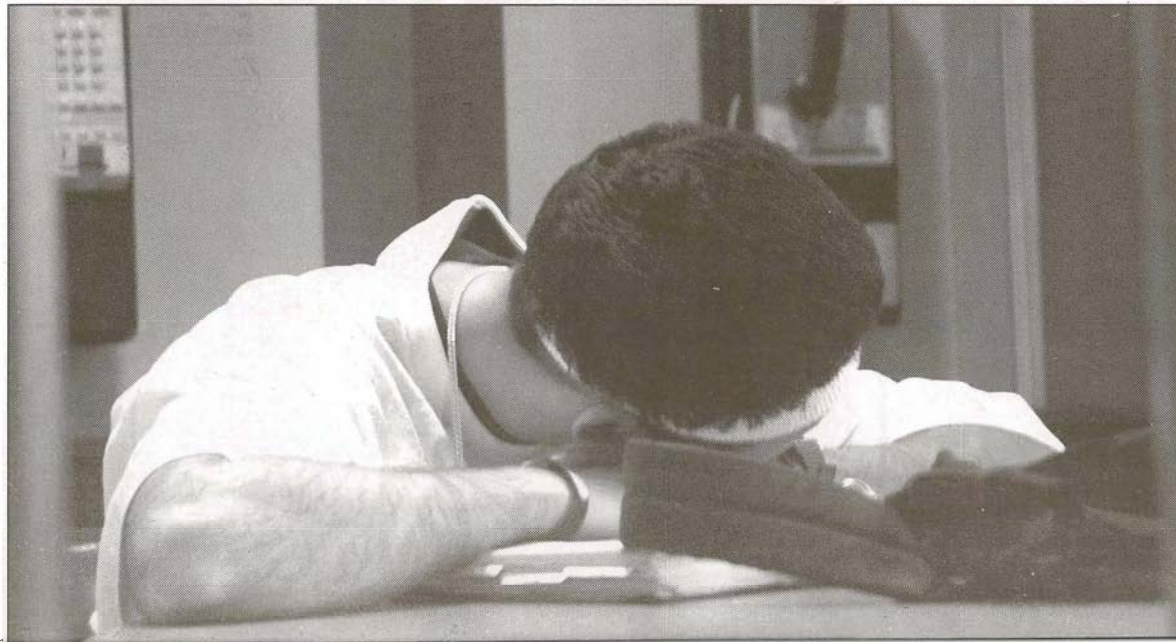
Information on the award is available online at www.ubc.ca. School counsellors, can request a nomination package from UBC's International Student Recruitment and Reception office. For next year's applicants, nomination packages are to be completed by Feb. 28, 2006 along with a written statement of what you plan to do, an essay and a reference letter from an instructor and counsellor. The International Student Awards Selection Committee will notify winners in mid-April.

Scrutiny emerges concerning KSA prizes

By Stephen Kronstein
Kwantlen Chronicle

The way the Kwantlen Student Association bylaws were changed wasn't the only controversy from the Sept. 29 KSA meeting. An internal investigation is underway regarding prizes that were handed out.

Mariana Nakhla said she "and four other members" of the



Do you get what you pay for?

opinion

Christina Hoyle



When students are paying an average of \$300 per course, they should feel they're getting their money's worth, but is that the case

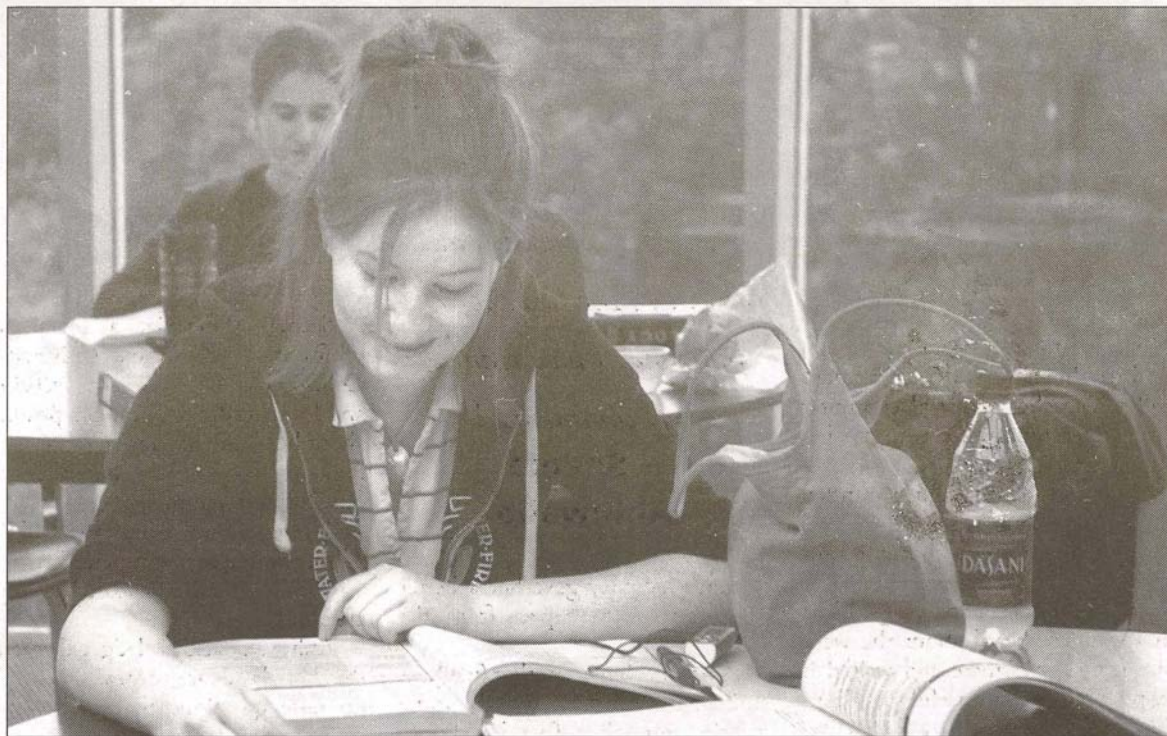
tive board of the KSA are conducting the investigation. Nakhla, director of academic affairs for the KSA and member of the Reduce All Fees Party, said, "I can't say anything else about that."

According to a KSA attendance sheet, 256 students signed in, said Nakhla. Each student signed in was eligible to win prizes in a raffle-style giveaway. The advertisement campaign for the raffle was focused on the Surrey campus, said Nakhla. "We did give away some advertisement in Richmond, though."

The prizes, which were paid for with student fees, included two iPod shuffles, three iPod nanos, three 27-inch TVs, five DVD players, and a grand-prize \$8,000 vacation to anywhere in the world for the winner, who must invite a minimum of three friends to accompany her or him.

It's not clear which aspect of the giveaway the executive is investigating. The Chronicle will update students in a future article when more information is available.

On their breaks at Kwantlen Aijaaz Gazdar takes a nap, while Deanna Streifel studies.



CHRISTINA HOYLE/Kwantlen Chronicle

for all classes? Six out of 10 Kwantlen students do not feel that the education they are getting matches what they are paying for.

Of 10 students asked about the quality of their classes at Kwantlen, six said they weren't satisfied with the quality of learning in at least one of their classes.

"I work hard all summer and all breaks I get from school so that I can afford to come here, so when I am here I want to be learning," said Brenda Sampson. "Some classes are good but then you have those other ones with lazy teachers, those are the ones that frustrate me."

When students end up leaving class each week trying to think if they learnt anything in the 3-hour lecture they just sat through it is not a comforting feeling.

Students should not have to pay to sit through a three-hour class listening to teachers drone on with stories that have no relevance to the course content. Usually, the last class before a midterm or a test is when the teacher decides to cram six weeks worth of classes into a single lecture.

Students pay for the time that they spend in class. When teachers decide to cut classes short by half an hour, it might seem like a nice thing at the time, but when this happens week after week it seems to be more of a matter of the teacher being too lazy to teach the entire time that students are paying for.

According to a B.C. press release, B.C. tuition rates in the past have gone up 6.6 per cent for each upcoming school year.

As tuition rates go up, so should the quality of education that students are getting.

KSA officials avoid interviews with The Chronicle

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The bylaws are considered approved, according to Nakhla. "We've changed (the bylaws). We've changed the system - the whole hierarchy," she said.

Despite attempts before the deadline, the Chronicle was unable to get comment from Takhar or other members of the executive, including Joey Atwal, KSA director of events, who did not return calls, and Jaivin Khatri, KSA director of external affairs, who said he was too busy studying for midterms for even

a short interview.

Gill also refused an interview with the Chronicle.

"I'm not giving an article to the Chronicle," said Gill, who wasn't happy about a previous Chronicle article.

As for a reaction to what the changes will mean, Lee said: "They've basically given the president and the executive board all the power. Even general meetings don't really have any power any more under this system."

Lee said that students should also be concerned that "the ombuds

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"They've basically given the president and the executive board all the power...meetings don't have any power anymore."

- Steven Lee

section is gone" from the bylaws, referring to the internal body that is normally in place to investigate

complaints.

To offer some perspective, Lee points to the student association at Simon Fraser University as an example of how things should be running.

SFU's student association had a special general meeting Sept. 28, said Lee. "Their bylaw changes had been posted online and in the student society offices for about a month beforehand," he explained.

The Chronicle will publish an article look at the new bylaws and what they mean for students in our next edition.