President, Provost Forum follow-up questions answered

Here are the questions that were not addressed in the time span of the SGA President and Provost Forum on February 28th, 2013. *TechNews thanks SGA, & the Office of the Presi*dent for their cooperation.

While we are currently competing in the NAIA, what can the student-athletes expect in the development of new athletic facilities? We understand that IIT hopes to be accepted into the NCAA soon, but we feel the overall performance of athletics will suffer unless we build a state-of-the-art facility. For example, Keating is already crowded and will soon be overflowing with additional athletic teams, such as Lacrosse and Basketball. Not to mention ROTC members, club teams, intramural leagues, and students attempting to work out as well. As we continue to bargain for practice times, we believe that this improvement will not only increase overall performance of IIT Athletics, but will attract prospective student-athletes who are searching for a school to proudly represent. -Phil Cano

This summer we will improve the soccer field by re-grading it, putting in proper drainage and installing artificial turf. The field will have multiple purposes including men's and women's soccer, women's lacrosse, intramural and recreational activities, and ROTC drill events. Because of the lighting, the field can be used in the evening and should take some pressure off Keating, for example, by allowing pick-up and intramural soccer games. We are also making available office space outside Keating for coaches and other staff of Athletics. The long-term goal is to build a fieldhouse/recreation center, but to date no funding is potentially available.

Can you make IIT's budgets and/or general salary information public so that we can more easily see where our money is go-

Salary information will not be made available because of privacy issues. We will work with the President of SGA and the SGA Finance Committee to determine what information is desired and what information we can release about the budget. Tuition money goes to support the operation of the university.

What would it take to get IIT scholarships to increase along with tuition increases? It is really frustrating to work hard to close a gap in funding only to have the gap widen with no recourse.

If there is a significant change in the financial status of a student's family, the student should work with a Financial Aid officer to appeal for additional aid based on a need basis. Merit based scholarships are given on entry based on academic excellence, are not based on need and are therefore not linked to tuition.

How much of the tuition increase is going to pay for fixed housing costs/maintenance since residents pay so little after the "Housing Scholarship" discount? If none, what makes up the funding difference that was lost when so many students began receiving housing scholarships? -Alex Welk

The increase in tuition is not being used specifically for housing costs and, in addition, your supposition that "residents pay so little" is not correct. We receive sufficient revenues from housing fees to cover the operating costs of housing.

The real problem is to find funds to upgrade facilities – buildings only last so long and operate properly if they are structurally rehabilitated on a continuous basis and the need for upgrades, the addition of air conditioning in MSV (for example), is a significant expense. We are funding facility improvement across the university, which we call capital renewal, from a combination of sources such as tuition and gifts from alumni and friends of the University. Where possible, such as in housing, some improvements are funded from housing

Is there any way that you could let students get involved in cost cutting, moneysaving, and general reduction in budgets so that our tuition doesn't rise as quickly? Many private companies have incentives for employees to find innovative ways to cut costs, maybe some sort of program like that but include students. With hundreds more



Photo by Kevin Zheng

minds looking into a problem, perhaps novel approaches can be found that save all students money and make IIT a leaner, meaner institution (not to mention how good such it would look on a student's resume and an IIT advertisement). -Alex Welk

This is an interesting suggestion. We always welcome input, and students might have a special perspective on our operations. We will consider any suggestions. The Students Speak surveys have helped guide us in some cost-cutting measures.

A practical way you can become involved immediately is to support the efforts of our student sustainability organizations focusing on cost saving initiatives in multiple areas including energy conservation, water conservation and recycling. Visit www.iit.edu/campus_sustainability/.

Why is the cost of tuition still increasing even after raising over \$131 million dollars in the fueling innovation campaign? And why has the undergraduate scholarship remained constant for years while tuition and housing costs increases? Why shouldn't scholarships be awarded on a percentage basis (e.g. 30% tuition, 40% housing) and not as a fixed amount (say \$7,500)? This way students know that they pay the same percentage of the actual costs each year. -Anonymous

Of the \$132M raised to date since the beginning of the campaign in June 2010, 40% is deferred (i.e., in multi-year pledges and estate gifts realized when the donors die) and restricted (i.e., the money can only be used for specific purposes).

Of the \$79M received in cash since the beginning of the campaign, 18% is directed for capital projects (the Innovation Center, and E1 and Life Sciences buildings), 48% is for endowments (professorships, fellowships, scholarships and research centers), and 34% is used in our annual operations (maintenance, salaries, utilities, etc).

Note that the 34% expense for operations is needed to offset the deficit created because the tuition we collect from students does not pay for the true cost of education.

Where does the 58% of my money go when I convert \$12 Commons meals into \$7/meal bonus points? -Douglas Wilhelm

It is part of your meal plan and helps cover the cost of offering dining services.

IIT loves to encourage students to do research. Some students think that this takes away from the required practical experience that every engineering student should have. While theory is great, many undergraduate engineering students have little to no practical experience in their field. Even the IPRO program, which was supposed to be for this reason, has now changed into a research-oriented program. Do you think there should be more opportunities for students to gain practical experience?

While the IPRO program is intended to give students an exposure to open-ended, more practical problems, it also has the goal of teaching elements of team building, leadership and communications.

Truly practical experiences are best obtained in real work situations, which occur through student internships and coop work in for -profit and non-profit organizations; sometimes volunteer work in the community will achieve this goal. Students who desire such experiences should investigate possibilities through the Career Management Center.

For all that we are to get a new fabrication lab in the innovation center and the money raised goes toward further scholarships and hiring new teachers, why are we only looking at improving academics as the way forward and the way to attract new students? There are opportunities to start huge clubs here, but so few people around; in what ways do you think we could retain a larger population on campus? I believe it will take innovative leaps and bounds to settle our social bankruptcy here and more students with higher drive will come and push the school to the top. -Karl Ochmanek

First, we do not accept the premise of "social bankruptcy" at IIT; on the contrary, student leadership and activity is on the high end of the scale here. But you raise a good point about clubs. The administration should encourage the growth of clubs and help students initiate and grow them. We are open to guidance as to how we might help and be supportive.

I understand there may be complex reasons behind electing to build a new highly visible building on campus, but I was wondering what some of those reasons might be. When I think of visible, five story buildings capable of housing ID and other programs, can already think of an existent building on campus, old main! Will we save it? As a sustainable campus, is that perhaps the best option? -Karl Ochmanek

"Old Main" fits its description - it's very old and in poor condition. While it has important historical significance, it has never been a good building for academic purposes.

Its construction (brick and mortar) is incompatible with both its location next to a busy railroad line and the architecture of the campus. The available interior square footage is less than 40,000, which is far below what is needed for the Institute of Design, IPRO classes and spaces, the Idea Shop, the Leadership Academy and the Entrepreneurship Academy. Old Main is a nineteenth century building that cannot possibly be reconfigured into a twentyfirst century academic facility.

In this day and age I don't know if I can think of one thing which goes back down in price significantly, college tuition or anything else. So I am not calling for IIT to stop tuition increases all together, but what about transparency? What about knowing where our money goes so we can know that the investment we make not only harnesses the best resources to study under for a degree, but also that it is placed wisely toward e future students here? Can we get another just a little but a lot more transparency as to the financial situation here at school?

Where does my money go when it is converted to bonus points? Why did msv housing increase fifty dollars from last semester? Where does my tuition go? Can we get more democratic? Can we innovate that change and be a pioneer in financial openness in colleges?" - Karl Ochmanek

The administration is in discussions with the SGA about a mechanism to discuss the questions the student body may have concerning budgetary issues.

As to your specific questions: (1) Dining dollars stay within dining services, to cover the overall costs of the dining services.

(2) MSV increases are approved by the board of trustees on an annual basis and increase as the costs of operation increase. MSV and SSV rates have not increased in the last two years.

(3) Your tuition is used to cover costs incurred during operation of the university.

(4) The university is not operated by a committee but by a management team led by the president who has the responsibility to operate the university. The President reports to the board of trustees who are the governing body of the university, we are not operated by consensus.

(5) We are open in our finances and our annual statements are audited and public. The investment you are making is in yourselves, not the university, by paying tuition. Your tuition is an investment in your future, not the future of the university. Alumni donations are an investment in the future of the uni-

There was just a reception for families who have donated over one million dollars to the school. Why is the money being used for a new building rather than maintaining and repairing the buildings we already have? -Carly Ilg

Seventy-six families have contributed more than \$1 million each since IIT's founding, and are members of the Philip Danforth Armour Society, named for our founding donor.

Contributions from these families are evident in every college and every campus at IIT. They have supported scholarships, faculty, new facilities and the renovation of existing buildings and academic programs. We are working to raise \$40 million to build the new Innovation Center because we currently have no single facility on campus that can meet the needs of the academic units and offices that will be located there. It will be the "creativity center" of IIT.

But you are correct that we must also invest in our existing buildings; to this point we have already raised \$13M for the renovation and improvement of buildings E1 and Life Sciences, and will continue to look for donors for these projects.

How would you feel about making an email ticketing system mandatory for all offices, similar to what OTS has? -Bill Molchan

We will look into whether this is possible within our current systems.

Where are current efforts to improve the quality of IIT professors' teaching, in previous forums you mentioned a program projected to start as early as this summer. -Bill Molchan

I believe you are talking about establishing a teaching and learning center. We still have plans for this and are in the process of raising funds to begin the center.

With tuition increasing, is there any program designated to help undocumented students financially?

There are programs available to support all of our students based on their need and academic standing. We do not have programs aimed at any specific group but consider all cases individually. Students should contact our financial aid office for specific information as regards their specific situation.