

Go to **page 6A** for a game preview of the Spartans looking to clinch a sole Big Ten title tonight, and log on for our live blog of the 7 p.m. tip at stateneews.com.



MSU men's basketball senior guard Travis Walton leads the team out from the locker room before their game against Indiana Feb. 7 at Breslin Center. The Spartans won 75-47. JOSH RADTKE/THE STATE NEWS

The State News

TUITION

COMMITTEE TO TALK FUNDING WITH MICH. UNIVERSITIES

By Allison Bush and Justin Harris
THE STATE NEWS

MSU President Lou Anna K. Simon and two other in-state university presidents will testify to the importance of higher education before Michigan legislators today, less than a month after Gov. Jennifer Granholm's proposed 3 percent cut in funding for MSU.

Simon, University of Michigan President Mary Sue Coleman and Wayne State University President Jay Noren will meet with Michigan's House Appropriations Subcommittee on Higher Education at 9 a.m. in room 350 of the Capitol Building.

Although meeting with the states' 15 public universities is done annually, this year's discussions come at a time when higher education funding faces a proposed 3 percent cut, which would be the largest since 2003-04.

"Certainly, this is critical," said state Rep. Bill Caul, R-Mt. Pleasant. "This is the part that gives the committee an opportunity to ask questions of university presidents."

MSU spokesman Terry Denbow said the presidents of the three universities — which comprise the University Research Corridor — will discuss their collective importance.

"It's going to be about the individual and collective clout of the University Research Corridor, contributing as each institution," Denbow said. "It's about the collective clout in areas that matter to the state and nation from health care to energy, education, alternative energy and biotech."

Simon was unavailable for comment Monday evening.

Caul said one of the main

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Behind on bills

Rising costs, fewer lenders putting more students into debt



By Pat Evans
THE STATE NEWS

When he came to MSU last fall, criminal justice freshman Griffin McCarthy knew he would accumulate mounds of debt by the time he graduates. "I'm in a financial situation where my family can't pay out-of-pocket for school," McCarthy said. "I'm in a single-parent home, so some of the financial burden is too much."

ILLUSTRATION BY CHELSEA MCGORISK AND LIZ KERSJES | THE STATE NEWS

As education costs rise and private lenders become more difficult to borrow from, McCarthy's situation is increasingly common among students.

The economy has made the incidence of debt much higher than in the past, said Larry Haman, a food industry management professor and expert in debt and credit markets.

"When prices fall, the interest stays the same, so it seems like more," he said. "So in deflationary times, like right now, the rates will be more noticeable."

McCarthy expects to have about \$20,000 in loans to pay off when he finishes school, just under MSU's average student

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PHILANTHROPY

Foundation started in memory of MSU student

By Kyle Feldscher
THE STATE NEWS

Throughout his life, Don Ausman spent his time working to better the lives of those less fortunate than he.

Now a month after his death, Ausman's family is continuing the MSU senior's mission of volunteerism with the creation of the Don Ausman Foundation.

The foundation has established a fund to help MSU students pay for trips to participate in Alternative Spring Break, a program in which Ausman was heavily involved.

The foundation has raised \$5,000 and donated \$1,500 to the group of students participating in the ASB trip to New Orleans last week to spread HIV awareness. Ausman's mother, Renee Wauldon, said her son had planned to be a member of the New Orleans trip.

Wauldon said the foundation is selling T-shirts to raise money to donate to ASB. The shirts bear the foundation's name and logo on the front and read "I'm Don's Friend" on the back. They are available at the foundation's Web site, www.donsfriends.com.

"I'm so proud," Wauldon said. "I'm sad, but I'm proud."

"Everyone is so excited and can't wait to get their shirts," Ausman was found dead in his Spartan Village apartment on the morning of Jan. 28. An autopsy performed the next day was inconclusive, and the Ingham County Medical Examiner's office said results from a toxicology report could take up to eight weeks.

Jim Wauldon, Ausman's stepfather, has done much of the work setting up the foundation's Web site and working with MSU. He said the foundation plans to get the university's permission to combine the foundation's logo with MSU's logo to print on T-shirts.

Through licensing fees and the money donated to ASB, the foundation would be donating money

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LECTURE

Evolutionist draws largest-ever speaker series crowd

By Brittany Hammas
THE STATE NEWS

About 1,900 people gathered Monday at Wharton Center to hear ecologist, evolutionary biologist and controversial author Richard Dawkins present the first sold-out lecture in the history of MSU's World View Lecture Series.

Dawkins, who has incited controversy with his rejection of creationism, lectured on the question of purpose in human existence and the body's purpose as a "survival machine for our genes."

The question of "why" has been central in the human mind for years, he said, but it is only

"It's important to be open-minded. It comes back to his argument: If you don't have an open mind, you're not capable of survival because you're not adaptable."

Shruti Sevak, first-year College of Human Medicine student

appropriate in some contexts. While man-made machines are thought out and designed, animals have evolved through natural selection.

Many people traveled from out of town for the event, which attracted far more people than a typical lecture, Wharton Center Assistant House Manager Stephanie Kribs said.

"We had Naomi Klein, (who is) pretty well known for a lecturer, and she had less than 500," she said.

Tickets were sold out as early as September, said Kevin Pietrick, a political theory and constitutional democracy and social relations and policy freshman, who paid \$45 for another student's ticket. Tickets were free to students

before the lecture sold out.

"If there's one belief I've held my whole life, it's been a rejection of religion and want to separate church and state," he said. "And right now, (Dawkins) is the face of that movement."

But the event also attracted students from outside the anti-religious movement. It was an interest in and respect for other viewpoints that brought MSU first-year College of Human Medicine student Shruti Sevak to the lecture.

Although she was born into the Hindu religion and attended Catholic school, Sevak said she can move past Dawkins' rejection of religion because it is his

personal belief, and is founded in science just as other peoples' beliefs are founded in religion.

"And I respect that, which is why I came," she said. "It doesn't matter if you believe in religion or not — even to consider the thought of purpose in physical things can greatly enlighten you mentally."

"It's important to be open-minded. It comes back to his argument: If you don't have an open mind, you're not capable of survival because you're not adaptable. You could miss an opportunity to believe something that could help you survive."

COUNCIL TALKS RIOTS

An ordinance introduced last month regarding riot behavior is up for discussion, 3A

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Partly cloudy
High 28° | Low 15°
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