



Weather  
Partly Cloudy

High 31° | Low 23°

Three-day forecast, Page 2

Michigan State University's independent voice | [www.statenews.com](http://www.statenews.com) | East Lansing, Mich. | Wednesday, January 20, 2010

**Former MSU student recently named Chicago 'It' girl**

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**Comley impressed by team's ability to stay in games**

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**Lansing airport starts flights to Cancun, Mexico**

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ECONOMY

## GOP budget plan could cut faculty salaries

By Marissa Cumbers  
THE STATE NEWS

Following last week's announcement that Michigan will face a deficit as much as \$1.7 billion next fiscal year, lawmakers from both sides of the aisle are searching for a solution to the state's budget crisis.

Because federal stimulus dollars are drying up, lawmakers have to erase the deficit without much assistance, which could mean cuts affecting MSU faculty and students.

Michigan Senate Republicans proposed a budget plan Tuesday that would save the state between \$2.24 billion and \$2.6 billion, said Senate Majority Leader Mike Bishop, R-Rochester. The savings would be made with government reforms and cuts, including a 5 percent pay cut to all state employees, including MSU faculty and staff.

"The Michigan economy requires huge and immediate attention to the size of our government," Bishop said. "We have to stop treating the symptoms and treat the disease itself, and we believe that is the cost of government."

The public servant pay cut would save an estimated \$1.2 billion, Bishop said.

State Rep. Joan Bauer, D-Lansing, held a town hall meeting Tuesday night to address Mich-

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ACADEMICS

## MSU Academic Governance bylaws on hold

By Brittany Shammass  
THE STATE NEWS

Updates to MSU's Academic Governance bylaws failed to move past Faculty Council for the second time this academic year after members sent the final substantive piece back to the committee-level Tuesday.

The changes, some of which would restructure academic governance system communication, are four years in the making and involve minor cleanups in wording and naming of governance bodies, as well as the significant issue of communication between bodies, said Robert Banks, a senior associate to the provost.

At Tuesday's meeting, Faculty Council approved several items designed to clean up the bylaws and make council names parallel. The remaining issue, which was sent back to the University Committee on Academic Governance, or UCAG, involves the reporting lines of the standing committees.

The communication concern stems from a dichotomy between redundancy and control between the govern-

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# OBAMA REPORT

In the midst of two wars and a long struggle to pass a health care reform bill, President Barack Obama marks his first year in office today. MSU students weigh in on his performance.

— Compiled by Marissa Cumbers, Ian Johnson and Andrew Kriezt, The State News.



### BRYCE COLQUITT ENGLISH JUNIOR

Politicians always seemed to be catering to an older crowd, which is why Bryce Colquitt gravitated toward Obama.

Colquitt, the president of MSU Students for Barack Obama during the presidential primaries, said he finally had a candidate in Obama who was concerned about education and issues facing young people today.

"A lot of politicians talk to people who are older than us, and that's all they've concerned about," Colquitt said. "It's partly young people's fault because we don't exert ourselves in the political process as much as we should... He spoke to students and he actually tried to reach out and compel students to get involved in the process."

Although once Obama was elected president, Colquitt said the president needed to turn his priorities to issues such as the economy, health care and two wars, which left Colquitt feeling like his voice wasn't being heard.

"I don't feel like he has made young people a focus, but I'm not necessarily sure that should be his priority right now," he said.



### CHRIS NOFFZE POLITICAL THEORY AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACY SOPHOMORE

Obama made more than 500 promises on the campaign trail, and although Chris Noffze didn't support Obama in his run for president, he would be impossible for any candidate to meet every promise.

Noffze, who volunteered at campaign events for John McCain on campus said he has been disappointed in how much time Obama has devoted to health care since the inauguration.

"When the economy is in the state in which it is and he is spending so much time on health care reform it makes people wonder could that time be better spent," he said.

The public's faith in Obama, including college students, is starting to wane, Noffze said. "It's too early to judge success of this past year," Noffze said. "Most people would say we have to look at what track we are headed on right now and a lot of Americans are scared about where we are headed and that is definitely felt on MSU's campus, too."



### BRITTANY GRIFFIN COMPARATIVE CULTURES AND POLITICS SOPHOMORE

Two summers ago, Brittany Griffin was all "fired up and ready to go," canvassing for Obama before Election Day in 2008.

"People (were) saying they strongly believed that Obama was a different type of candidate," Griffin said.

Griffin's family always has been involved with the political process — her uncle is state Rep. Martin Griffin, D-Jackson. Given her political ideology and family history, Griffin said she supports the current administration's first year of work.

"I think he is doing the absolute best he can given the circumstances," Griffin said. "His major speed bump has been Congress. It's disappointing to see them being so... childish."

Griffin said she credits the president for continuing to listen to the American public through his first year in office.

"I think it's pretty big that he's doing a lot of the same things he did while campaigning," Griffin said. "I think it's awesome he's continuing to do that."



### BRAD DENNIS INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS JUNIOR

Brad Dennis knew the 2008 election would be pivotal. When he found John McCain wouldn't be the country's next president, fear set in.

"I felt pretty poorly about what policy was coming," said Dennis, the former co-chair of Students for John McCain. "It isn't like we are surprised about the different policy trying to be pushed through Congress now, whether it is cap and trade, whether it is health care or a second stimulus."

Many Americans would call Obama a "uniter," Dennis said. But efforts to pass universal health care and heal the economy are pulling the country apart, he said.

"(Congress is) not really willing to work with both sides of the country because they have the majority to avoid the ability to pass legislation," he said.

Obama's efforts to pass universal health care are so urgent that he is forgetting about his commitments to the people, Dennis said.

"Not only does the nation not know what is in the bill, despite the guarantees of a transparent discussion of this bill... also with a lot of the favors and back door deals granted, it's becoming obvious the legislation isn't going to be a pie for people," he said.



### BRAD O'NEIL INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS JUNIOR

On this day last year, Brad O'Neil celebrated five months of political advocacy with millions of Americans in frigid Washington, D.C.

O'Neil said he is relieved to be celebrating Obama's first year in office in his warm apartment and the changes of the past year will be at the forefront of his thoughts.

"There has been a lot of criticism about how little he has accomplished, but I continue to support President Obama," he said. "He has taken the country in a fundamentally different direction. He deserves our patience and our support so he does have a chance to follow through on the promises he made on the campaign."

The progress made toward universal health care and the closure of Guantanamo Bay prove Obama's dedication to change, O'Neil said.

But most importantly, Obama has created a change in the American psyche, O'Neil said.

"His general approach to the world, his philosophy," he said. "He has created an environment conducive to preserving and maintaining the peace even in the midst of two wars."

PORTRAITS BY ANGELI WRIGHT AND KAT PETERSEN/THE STATE NEWS

To hear more of the students' discussion about Obama, visit [statenews.com/multimedia](http://statenews.com/multimedia).

MSU BUDGET

## MSU discusses options to cut faculty health care costs

By Brittany Shammass  
THE STATE NEWS

Ideas to reduce the MSU's faculty health care costs by nearly \$11 million were presented at Tuesday's Faculty Council meeting as part of what could be years of changes to the university's current system.

A switch from current health care provider Physicians Health Plan, or PHP, to Blue Care Network, preservation of Community Blue as a health care option and creation of an MSU-provided health care option were among the faculty health care recommendations presented at the meeting.

The changes likely are option

the biggest health care decisions to happen at the same time, said Howard Hughes, chairman of the Executive Committee of Academic Council, or ECAC.

"The insurance program at MSU is under a lot of strain," he said. "Compared to a lot of other places, it's still pretty good and there's a strong commitment from upper administration to maintain

that some way or another; trying to reduce the cost of it and keep the coverage in effect."

The proposed changes are expected to lead to a 10 percent reduction in health care costs for the university, UCFA chairwoman Deborah Moriarty said at Tuesday's meeting. The university spends about \$10 million per year on health care.

Changes are expected to be implemented during the next few years, with the first — the generic prescribing program — going into full effect in March. Some faculty members already have begun switching to generic drugs, Moriarty said in the meeting.

Under the UCFA recommendation, See HEALTH on page 2