

EDITORIAL

## Global Campus remains on shaky ground

Last week's board of trustees meeting yielded quite a contrast between two University initiatives. Officials claim each will help globalize this institution's reputation but for the moment, only one seems to have a real chance.

Trustees approved a brand new \$50 million facility that will be built in Singapore. The entire project is funded by the government of Singapore and will see students and faculty travel between both campuses to earn advanced degrees in certain areas, including engineering and computer science. This partnership is

also a huge opportunity for this campus' best and brightest to collaborate with their foreign colleagues in cutting-edge research that has given this university its most recognized achievements.

The other side of the coin is Global Campus. In January, the program launched with an anemic 15 students — 14 of them hailing from Illinois.

At that time, 75 students were expected to be enrolled by May. As it turns out, the number of current enrollees is only 42. Original expectations of 250 enrollees at this point in the calendar have proven to be incor-

rect.

Then, as the case is now, administrators cited a lack of marketing as the main reason why the program was not up to speed. While it's understandable that students cannot enroll in something they don't know about, there are lingering doubts about the overall worth of the program.

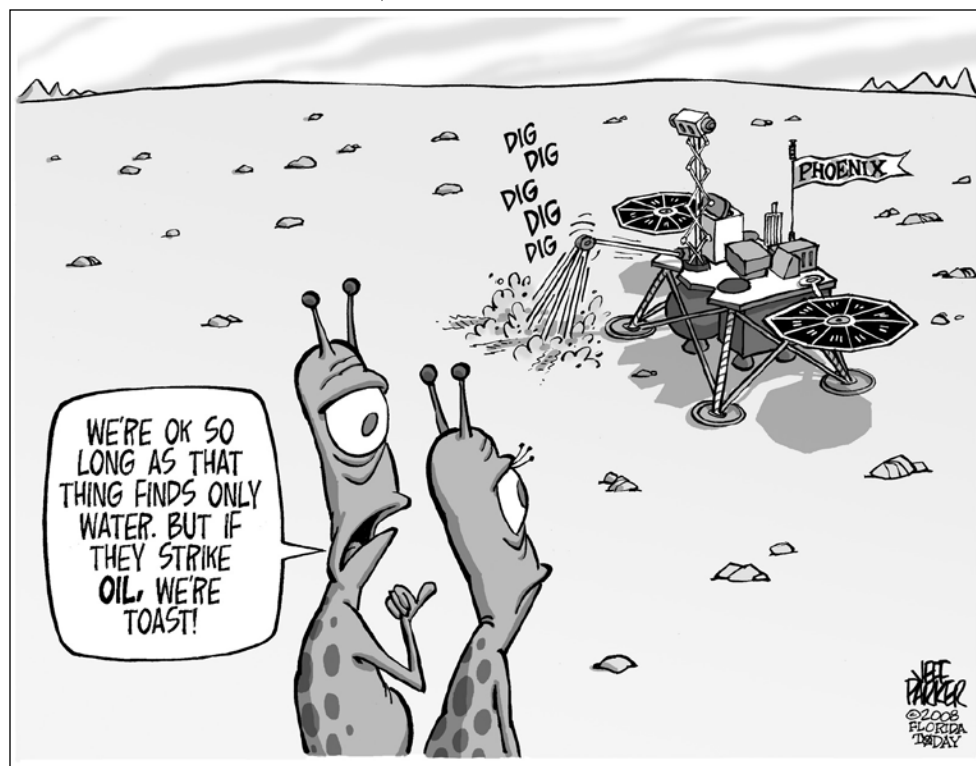
With the \$3.4 million approved by the trustees last week, the total amount of money spent on Global Campus is close to breaking the eight-figure mark. Considering the unlikelihood of the University receiving any increase in state fund-

ing — which, adjusted for rising costs, translates into a de facto cut — that investment looks shakier with each disappointing progress report.

Before its inception, Global Campus was only projected to be profitable after three years. Since it's safe to assume that the best case scenario will not be met, trustees should adjust their expectations accordingly. Firm benchmarks for the program's success should be adopted and adhered to before the University continually pours money into the project in the face of diminishing hopes of return.

EDITORIAL CARTOON

JEFF PARKER, FLORIDA TODAY



### Our Opinion

Editorials represent the majority opinion of The Daily Illini Editorial Board, whose members are Steve Contorno, editor in chief; Kathleen Foody, assignment editor; Andrew Mason, opinions editor; Meghan Montemurro, assistant assignment editor; Wes Anderson, copy chief.

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The Daily Illini reserves the right to edit or reject any contributions. Summer letters must be limited to 200 words. Contributions must be typed and include the author's name, address and phone number.

University students must include their year in school and college.

Inquiries about possible guest columns should be submitted to opinions editor Andrew Mason via e-mail or by calling 217.337.8366.

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## Vice President Jindal?

Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal is a first-generation Indian-American. When he went to college, his dad told him he could be any kind of doctor. Piyush's — err, Bobby's — parents speak with accents. And yes, chances are he does like curry.

Jindal has been hailed as the future of the conservative movement and the next Ronald Reagan. John McCain has praised him as personally engaging and intellectually impressive.

Last weekend, Jindal was invited to McCain's Arizona ranch along with Florida Gov. Charlie Crist and Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, fueling speculation about McCain's finalists for "American Vice President," the spot for his number two man this November.

Since February, rumors have been swirling about McCain choosing Jindal for the vice presidential nomination. Whether a McCain-Jindal ticket will translate into Indian voters jumping aboard the Republican Jindal-train, may not be so easy to predict.

Political pundits have said that Jindal may be the perfect running mate for McCain. Jindal's strong conservative views appeal to the far right who may not gel with McCain's moderate stances. His religious awakening and conversion from Hinduism to Catholicism as a teen call to the Religious Right.

At 36, Jindal is a shot of fresh, young air to the prehistoric McCain campaign. And in an election that may pit McCain against the African-American Barack Obama, an Indian-American vice presidential candidate may counter the diversity blow.

But can Jindal corral the Indian-American voters?

There's nothing that makes Indian people happier than seeing one of our own in the spotlight. We go berserk at the sight of an Indian in the audience of "American Idol" or "The Price Is Right."

But when you think of a famous mainstream Indian, who immediately comes to mind?



SUJAY KUMAR

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Uhhh, that famous musician with the drums, what's his name Ravi something, Ravi Baichwal? Isn't there some lady running Pepsi right now? Oh, I know! That girl on ER, no not John Stamos. Kumar from White Castle, they're all on the tip of my tongue — Kal Penn!

If Kal Penn is the answer, then we have a problem. And no, ABC-7 Chicago News Anchor Ravi Baichwal does not count. You're good Ravi, but not that good.

Enter Jindal. He's a classic Indian success story. His parents were Indian immigrants who came here with nothing, and he worked his way to the position he's in today in American politics. The Indian community would love to see one of their own a heartbeat away from the White House.

But really, this is all purely speculation better left for cable news networks to argue over. It's impossible to judge how a complex group of people will vote in November. Jindal's Indian background may be as effective as Hillary's experience or John Kerry's war heroism when it comes down to the voters.

So all predictions aside, Jindal should be viewed as what he is, an intelligent and charismatic Republican successfully working the job he wants right now. Ravi Baichwal and the other voters will decide his future this November, or in 2012.

Sujay is a senior in biochemistry. He saw Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull at a Universal Studios Ride. Not in a good way.