

OPINION

The Appalachian

Your student newspaper since 1934.

ASU Box 9025
Boone, N.C. 28608

Founded 1934.

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Our Perspective ...

Easley needs to put money where mouth is

Governor Mike Easley appears to be the champion of higher education.

Disapproving of higher education's higher costs of attendance would make anyone popular with the students of the University of North Carolina system.

But it all comes down to execution.

For the past four years, the UNC-system budget has been slashed by the North Carolina General Assembly.

At the same time, tuition and fees have increased to make up the difference. The increases are not subtle either: from more than \$1,800 in the 1999-2000 academic year to more than \$3,000 this year.

Board of Governors members insisted financial aid and decreasing class sizes will take top priority in using the monies raised from the increases.

BOG members spoke to the strong student showing in Chapel Hill, and told them they should make the same appearance during the May General Assembly.

Students cited Easley's February letter for support during their protests.

The Appalachian hopes he continues to stand his ground when it comes time to write the 2004-05 budget for the UNC system.

Easley has already warned

the Board of Governors there will be budget cuts to the university system.

These cuts almost negate the money raised through increased tuition and fees.

The BOG cannot be fully blamed, nor fully excused for the affordability of higher education in North Carolina.

The ultimate budget responsibility lies in the laps of legislators in Raleigh.

BOG member Ray S. Farris said the purpose of the first board-based tuition increase was to quell the increases imposed by the legislature.

"We will not be out of the woods next year," Farris said. "I say this in the context of the state having been through five recessions ... And yet increases

in those years in today's dollars were relatively low as compared to what we have done as a board in recommending tuition increases since 2000.

"In 2004-05, we are about to add more wood to a raging fire which has ignited a frenzy of expectations for new monies on each campus," he said.

Now it is out of the hands of the BOG and it is up to Easley to put his money where his mouth is to ensure the UNC system will not elude parts of the population that may never be able to afford higher education.



Don't raise tuition, use alternative measures

Every year, my parents call to let me know how much I am costing them to go to college, and every year the cost is more than it was the year before.

I often wonder if I am paying for the new library, the new dorms and the new recreation center, with a cute little juice bar, which I will never be able to enjoy during my college career.

Of course, future students will enjoy these fine facilities, but I have trouble understanding why I have to pay for it now.

Many middle-income families who are just above the level to receive financial aid have difficulty paying tuition increases every year.

When students pick a college to attend, the cost of tuition is a deciding factor in where they will go, and after enrollment and tuition hikes, families have no choice but to pay the difference.

It does not help when the slow economy makes paying for college more complicated for many families who have had significant decreases in income.

Many colleges have trouble recruiting and retaining faculty, and administrators must make the decision to either increase



tuition or decrease the quality of education.

Of course, decreasing the quality of education is not an option because this is what students are paying for in the first place so, administration raises tuition and fees in order to keep up with the competitiveness of other schools.

But is it too much to ask taxpayers to fork out a little extra money in an effort to support higher education for their future leaders instead of increasing tuition?

I do not think it is too much to ask.

Tuition hikes discourage economically disadvantaged students

from applying to college.

Low-income students who apply for loans, grants and financial aid have trouble paying for college costs in the first place.

When costs increase each year, it begins to take a toll on those who are already struggling.

Each year I apply for student loans, and the money I receive pays for part of my tuition and costs for living while my parents pay the rest.

Without loans I would not be able to go to college because my parents cannot afford to pay the cost on their income alone.

Tuition hikes increase my worries each year because higher tuition means I need more loan money to cover the costs, and I know I will have to pay back all the loans when I graduate.

One of my former roommates was not as lucky as I am to be able to afford the high costs of college because her parents could not help her pay for her college education.

She received financial aid and loans, but after being in school for two years she realized that it was not enough money, even though she was working two part-time jobs to help with expenses.

She soon realized that her only choice was to drop out of college, move back home with her parents and get a job in the "real" world.

Not only did my former roommate not finish college, she is still paying back all the loans she received.

One alternative to raising tuition is a sliding tuition scale, which bases each student's tuition amount on each individual family's income.

The sliding tuition scale would require students from high-income families to pay more than students from low-income families.

There are many alternatives to tuition hikes, but it seems administrators do not take forceful measures to develop alternatives into working plans of action.

I am against increasing tuition because there are alternative measures that can be taken, but, until then, good luck to all those who need to rob a bank to pay for college.

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OUR MISSION

The Appalachian, a student-run publication at Appalachian State University, strives to provide fair and accurate news for the campus community; to inform, entertain and create a forum for ideas; to be a watchdog for student, faculty and staff interests; and to remain independent and reserve its First Amendment rights.

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The Appalachian is published every Tuesday and Thursday of the academic year with the exception of selected holidays and breaks. The opinions expressed in the commentaries appearing in The Appalachian are those of the individual columnists and not those of The Appalachian. The opinions represented in the unsigned editorial are the majority views of those on the Editorial Board of The Appalachian.

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The Appalachian welcomes Letters to the Editor. Letters should be 250 words or less, typed and double spaced. They should include the author's name, ASU Box, phone number, year in school and campus affiliation, if any. The Appalachian reserves the right to decline publication of any letter and to edit letters for the purpose of clarity and space.

Although we are unable to acknowledge those letters we cannot publish, we appreciate the interest and value the views of those who take the time to send us their comments. Letters must be submitted electronically via email. The email address is theapp@appstate.edu. Letters to the editor that are of proper length, and contain proper identification may be published online rather than in print. Letters can be accessed online by the Web site: <http://theapp.appstate.edu>.

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Is reality television a quick cure for ugliness?

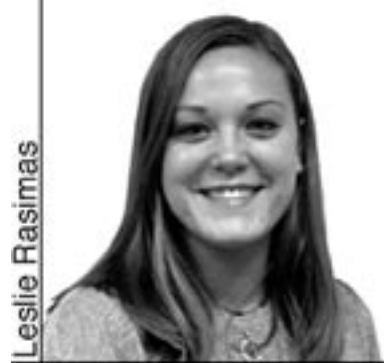
With MTV leading the way in trash television, a new wave of hysteria has hit the screen: extreme makeovers.

Nobody loves a makeover as much as I do, but with skin slitting and bone chipping, the idea of making someone look "better" has exceeded the basic principles of the makeover.

The premise of a makeover used to be that with a little lipstick and blush, and some new jeans and shoes, a woman could feel better about herself. Now women must invest \$12,000 in rhinoplasty and a boob job to feel they are worthy to blend with our society.

Twentieth Century Fox will broadcast the premier of "The Swan" on Monday, March 29. Fox.com claims this show will give women a chance to turn their lives around.

According to the Web site, "The Swan" takes women who are stuck in a rut and revitalizes them by restoring their beauty and confidence. It offers women the incredible opportunity to undergo physical, mental and emotional transformations and follows them through the process. This groundbreaking idea culminates in a pageant in which one woman will be crowned "The



Ultimate Swan."

I couldn't have written a more sarcastic and absurd synopsis myself.

What this message is telling women of the country is that women who are simply "stuck in a rut" now have only one option: surgery.

Your beauty and confidence can only be "restored" by one thing: surgery.

Physical, mental and emotional transformations come with surgery. Really? I had no idea that taking fat and tissue from your southern cheeks, and cramming it into your northern cheeks could cause changes in attitude, well being and appearance.

And after all that, women who were ripped apart, poked at and scrutinized under the knife will have to do it all again under the spotlight. Only one woman will win the "beauty" pageant. Only one woman will undergo life changes to be told, "NOW you are good enough."

And good enough for what? Showbiz? Vogue? Reality television?

And the major prime time networks are not the only ones documenting the morphing craze.

Yes, MTV has infiltrated the makeover madness with "True Life: I'm getting plastic surgery" and its new hit, "I Want a Famous Face."

The latter is the climax of media-meets-real life. "I Want a Famous Face" documents impressionable and weak young adults going through the processes of plastic surgery. But these crazies want to look like icons, and specific icons at that.

The guinea pigs aren't just saying, "I wanna look hot." They have picked out exactly whose face they want as their own.

Mike and Matt wanted to look like Brad Pitt. Actually, Mike wanted to look like Pitt from "Legends of the Fall," and Matt wanted

to look like Pitt from "Meet Joe Black." Huge difference.

Today Matt and Mike look nothing like Pitt. After cheek and chin implants, nose jobs and lip jobs, Matt and Mike look just as bad as they did from the beginning.

These boys had so much facial acne that they could not even shave their faces. But MTV never thought about taking Matt and Mike to a dermatologist. MTV took the boys to a plastic surgeon and a hair salon where they got bad makeup jobs for the "photo shoot."

Now Jennette wants to look like Kate Winslet, Jesse wants to look like Elvis and Sha wants to look like Pamela Anderson.

Michael, a pre-op transsexual, wants breast and cheek implants, his eyebrow bone shave, his eyebrow lifted and his hairline lowered.

Michael, after eight months of hormone injections, wants to become "Jessica," and Jessica desires a career as a runway model.

Stay tuned to see if her dreams come true...

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