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UNC schools fail affordability test

JUSTIN BOULMAY
Senior Staff Writer

North Carolina schools received a report card of their own last week. The report, issued by the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, rates the educational services of each state. North Carolina schools received a D- for affordability, but that grade was still above most of the country. Many states received an F

"North Carolina has lost

ground in providing students and families with an affordable higher education," according to the report.

The report also studies preparation of high school students for college, participation, completion, benefits and learning. North Carolina schools received a B for preparation and completion, and C's for participation and benefits.

The state's ranking in affordability was its lowest grade.

In 2000, the report gave N.C. schools an A for affordability, and a C in 2002.

"Over the past decade, the share of income needed to pay for college expenses after financial aid at public four-year institutions has increased from 19 percent to 25 percent," according to the report.

While the report acknowledged an increase in financial aid distribution, it also noted families are spending more of their yearly income on higher education.

Steven E. Brooks, executive director for the State's Education Assistance Authority, said the results of the report were surprising.

"I'm really appalled that anybody would give out a report like that with the data they have," Brooks said.

Brooks said the data was not reliable because it did not look at the state's higher education on a per-student basis. He also said another report had been completed two years ago looking at the

Year	Grade
2000	A
2002	C
2004	D-

Source: National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education

same issues. "What we found was, North Carolina has remained as affordable as it has been

five years ago," Brooks said. "What the General Assembly

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Psst... What did you put for political party?



Freshman interior design major Brandy K. Harmon (left) from Boone gets help with voter registration from Agatha M. Cole, a sophomore international law major from Memphis, Tenn.

9-11 flag raises emotions in LLC

JENNIFER SCHNEIDER
Staff Writer

Unintended controversy exploded at the Living Learning Center (LLC) over a 9-11 commemorative artwork.

Three students erected a cross in the courtyard of the LLC with a torn and desecrated American flag draped around it.

"It was the three of us trying to express our feelings of what our nation and our generation has become," sophomore business education major Michael S. Gubbins said. "That is what the flag symbolized; a torn, tattered and divided nation and generation. It also spoke to the American ideals that so many hold true such as life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; which have been crucified for the sake of money, power and greed."

The controversy began when a group of students, some involved with the ROTC, became upset about the defaced flag.

"Certain members of the community that live here ob-

jected to the fact that the flag had been torn and written on," Living Learning Center Director Dr. Joseph J. Gonzalez said. "They perceived the flag as having been desecrated but that is not necessarily how the people who put it up felt."

"I am proud of the artwork we created," Gubbins said. "However, at the same time I feel like we were largely misunderstood."

Although the Supreme Court has upheld that anyone has the ability to burn or desecrate an American flag in the act of free speech, the state of North Carolina has a statute which makes it a misdemeanor to deface the flag.

According to Gonzalez, the Appalachian State University police were informed that a flag had been desecrated and were called in to handle the situation. They then demanded the students take the artwork down.

"The students realized that their memorial was offensive

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SGA, GSAS: diversity not just a black and white issue

STEPHANIE MARSHALL ANNA OAKES
Staff Writers

While leaders of the Appalachian State University Student Government Association (SGA) and Graduate Student Association Senate (GSAS) acknowledge that diversity may not be visible in a physical sense, they contend their organizations are diverse in many other ways.

"I think when people look at ASU from a diverse standpoint they look at what is physical," SGA Director of Diversity Alex E. Elliott said.

Elliott said people on cam-

pus do not see other forms of diversity such as religion and sexual orientation. In this respect, SGA is very diverse, Elliott said.

"I think, initially, we present ourselves as an unbiased cabinet, so everyone can feel comfortable in the organization," SGA President Miriam N. Makhyoun said. "From there, it's up to the student to be a voice for their specific demographics."

Makhyoun said diversity includes different ethnicities, worldviews and frames of mind.

"The state of SGA is always changing; it's imperative that the organization represent all cadres of stu-

dent life," Makhyoun said.

Makhyoun said SGA tried to reach out to as many students as possible during Club Expo and continues the effort through contact tables in Plemmons Student Union.

SGA will continue to recruit throughout the year, she said.

"I would encourage students that feel under-represented to join SGA," Makhyoun said. "It is the perfect venue for expression."

Elliott said SGA works with diverse organizations on campus and helps with events such as the Diversity Celebration and the Unity Festival in Boone.

There are also student educators who work to make students, faculty and staff more aware of diversity, Elliott said.

"There are programs that ... we participate in each year, but I think there needs to be an expansion there and more people need to be involved at looking at the factors of diversity," Elliott said.

Elliott said the SGA Diver-



Elliott

sity Committee hopes to host four diversity panels, two diversity programs and work alongside diversity educators this year to increase awareness.

Russ R. Marino, a junior elementary education major, was a member of last year's SGA Senate.

"SGA is definitely diverse; anyone can be a part of it. They do not exclude anyone because of differences," Marino said. "SGA does its best to represent the student body, no matter what. It does this by electing senators who share differences."

GSAS President Arwen A. Carter said GSAS is diverse

in terms of academic majors, but not in other respects.

"With graduate students, so many people are focused just on their student career that a lot of them do not feel like they have time to branch out and do things like student government," Carter said.

Carter said GSAS is focusing less on diversity and more about letting graduate students know that they are there. Graduate students may apply to GSAS for research funds, she said.

"We are trying to let [graduate students] know that we are much more than a funding opportunity, that we are here for them,"

Black Eyed Peas bring love to the Convocation Center

APPS to bring Black Eyed Peas to campus

ELIZABETH ASHFORD
Staff Writer

Let's get it started in here!

The Black Eyed Peas will play in the Holmes Convocation Center on Friday Nov. 12 at 8 p.m. Doors will open at 7 p.m.

The Black Eyed Peas have

accepted an offer from the Appalachian Popular Programming Society (APPS) and contracts will be signed in a few weeks, APPS Program Coordinator Randy M. Kelly said.

"I'm excited because it's something different. It's not typically what we've brought [in the past]," Appalachian Popular Programming Society Concerts Chair Tom E. Crowley said.

Crowley said they have had success with other hip-hop groups in the past, such

as OutKast and Nappy Roots. They are hoping that the Black Eyed Peas concert will share similar success.

"Once again we were fortunate enough to get a hold of an artist just as they explode nationally, like we did with Hootie & the Blowfish, Dave Matthews Band, and OutKast," Kelly said.

"They're unique in the sense that it's not traditional message that comes out of hip-hop, not the derogatory comments, not the promotion of drug use, not the promotion of violence towards women or towards people. It's a very neutral message; it's a very 'have fun' message," Crowley said.

"We were looking very much at the possibility of doing a show last spring, and we took what we thought the popular trend was. People have compared the Black Eyed Peas to being the next OutKast. We did well when

OutKast played here many years ago; and then we had Nappy Roots a couple years ago along those same lines and that's what we were going for," Crowley said.

"They're a huge name group. They've blown up over the past couple of months. I think the school will be really excited about this show and I don't think they're playing anywhere close by really, so we should get a big draw off the mountain as well. It's a new genre, it's hip-hop/pop/good music, it'll be different from what we normally bring, very different," APPS President Billy C. Morris said.

Crowley said tickets should go on sale Oct. 1 at the Holmes Center Box Office.

Student tickets will be \$20 all others will be \$25 and will be sold on a first come, first served basis. Tickets will also be available at www.musicstoday.com but they

will only handle 10 percent of the total facility. Tickets on-line will be \$25, plus a

"I'm excited because it's something different. It's not typically what we've brought [in the past]."

Crowley said they are hoping for a sell-out crowd, which would be 7,000 tickets sold.

"I'm just excited that it's different and it's something that appeals to a larger audience than what normally like a Legends show would or what a typical name on a list would," Crowley said.

Crowley said The Black Eyed Peas would pick an opening act at their discretion.

Depending on how well this concert goes and how many tickets are bought will help determine if APPS brings in more groups like The Black Eyed Peas in the future, Crowley said.

"I don't want to say we're trying to stay mainstream; we're trying to just appeal to the students that are here now. It's definitely not an attempt to go mainstream, it's wanting to have student satisfaction," Crowley said.

Who: Black Eyed Peas
When: Friday, Nov. 12 at 8 p.m.
Where: Holmes Convocation Center

APPALACHIAN POPULAR PROGRAMMING SOCIETY CONCERTS CHAIR
TOM E. CROWLEY

service charge.

Kelly said students could save on service charges if they pay at the Box Office.