

Tuition may be sole funding for new plan

I'm sure the Academic Plan has some great objectives and ideas to it. It also has its share of faults.

Where will the funding come from?

Ohio State President William "Brit" Kirwan appears to expect the funding to come from a combination of state allocations, private funds, increased federal research support, entrepreneurial endeavors and a temporary relief from Ohio's 6 percent tuition cap (now expecting about a 50 percent increase over a five-year period).

Wow, what a lot of places for money to come from to pay for the expected \$750 million cost! But wait, OSU isn't guaranteed everything. Let's look closer at where the money will come from.

Ohio State already has some money coming from state allocations. Not nearly enough to cover the \$750 million, so OSU is expecting an increase in the allocation in the next state budget.

The problem is Ohio's General Assembly and governor have been pretty stingy with money for education. Ohio ranks 42nd for higher education funding out of the 50 states, and don't forget how the current school system funding method has been ruled unconstitu-



**BRIAN
CLARK**

tional by the State Supreme Court.

OSU isn't likely to pull much money in from this place at all.

The university second spot is private funds.

It sounds like OSU will be erecting new buildings to name after big-money donors. That's a leading way to pull in private funds. OSU could go to our alumni, but it just finished its \$1.32 billion fundraiser, the Affirm Thy Friendship campaign.

Lots of alumni have affirmed all the friendship they can afford, leaving OSU searching for private funds still. Don't count on this covering a large chunk of the cost.

The third way President Kirwan expects to pay for the Academic Plan is increased federal research support.

Again, this relies on a governmental body evaluating OSU and deciding it is worth sinking an amount of money into it and is not a guaranteed source of funds. The university should raise its record

as a research institute before it expects more money for these endeavours.

OSU says it needs the funds to be a leading research institute though. If I go to the federal government and tell them I need a couple million dollars more than I receive in student loans to improve myself, the government will buy that and give me some more money? I doubt it.

The fourth way OSU expects to pay is just as risky: entrepreneurial endeavors.

The state of Ohio passed several laws last year, allowing professors and researchers to help found companies using their inventions. Now we just need enterprising professors and researchers — or at least more of them to raise more money than we currently do — but how will OSU attract these professors who are in higher demand without the money?

Same problem as above; OSU needs money before it can raise money as it expects to.

Which brings us to our fifth and final way to raise the \$750 million to run this whole Academic Plan. The last way goes right to the heart of the student's pocketbook — a tuition increase.

Not your normal run-of-the-mill

or annual-maximum-allowed 6 percent tuition increase. We're talking about a lift-the-cap raise of 57 percent over a five-year period.

Of course, supposedly, this increase is only going to go to help improve the undergraduate experience (read OSU isn't prepared to give you better advisers or a better library unless YOU foot the bill, it has too many other things to do with its money).

Of course, the Academic Plan can be twisted around so that it is in the interest of undergraduate students.

Implementation of the plan is supposed to make our diplomas worth more. By using this reasoning, students will benefit from the Academic Plan.

So much for better advising and financial aid comparable to tuition increases.

This is the only way Ohio State is guaranteed to bring in money for the Academic Plan: By charging it to its captive payers, its students.

Brian Clark is a junior journalism major and the Lantern Opinion Editor. If Ohio State is allowed to raise tuition more than the 6 percent cap, he expects another riot off-campus. He can be reached at clark.682@osu.edu.