

Blue Ribbon Task Force recommends system reforms

MELHOR LEONOR
News Director

In a report finalized last week, Gov. Rick Scott's Blue Ribbon Task Force on State Higher Education Reform may have just outlined the future of the State University System.

The task force, created by Scott in May through Executive Order 12-104, was commissioned to provide recommendations on the state's higher education system, with attention to the interaction between the Board of Governors and the individual universities, according to a release by the Governor's Office.

With the report already before Scott, the 12 state universities are now looking at 11 different recommendations to reform higher education in the state in the areas of accountability, funding and governance.

The accountability recommenda-

tions reflect the increasing pressure on the system to measure universities' performance through key metrics. Under the Accountability section, the task force recommends the BOG "continue to enhance its metrics-based accountability framework as a management and decision-making tool..." consistent with Scott's emphases.

"I agree that there should be accountability, that decisions should be based on data," said Douglas Wartzok, University provost. "Universities within the State University System have different missions, and...the universities have to be funded adequately to meet agreed upon goals."

As outlined by the report, these include the percentage of graduates employed or continuing education,

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HELPING OUT ISRAEL



ANDRES BEDOYA/THE BEACON

Students gather support and awareness for Israel. Over the past week, residents of Israel have been victims of Hamas rocket missile attacks, putting millions of citizens in bomb shelters.

TEDxFIU inspires, motivates and educates



PHOTOS BY STEPHANIE MASON/THE BEACON

Tickets were sold out for the TEDxFIU event on Thursday, Nov. 15. Students gathered and listened to lectures about legal death, natural disasters, the future of online education and other topics. Ileana Rodriguez, Ximena Prugue and Elizabeth Price Foley were some of the speakers at the event.

STEPHANIE MASON
Staff Writer

Solar-powered flashlights, 12-year-old leaders and Latin artists performing Michael Jackson songs were some ideas discussed at the TEDxFIU event on Thursday, Nov. 15 in the GC Ballroom.

"TED is an acronym, platform and global phenomenon," said the master of ceremonies, Alberto Padron as he welcomed guests.

Narrowed down from 60 submissions, eight people from the University were selected to speak at this event entitled "Beyond the World You Know."

From space exploration to legal death to overcoming a disability, each of the eight speakers brought something different to the table.

Stephanie Alteta, senior in marketing at the University, said her favorite speaker was student philanthropist Ximena Prugue.



After discussing her journey to help people in India, Prugue received a standing ovation and ended her discussion on energy poverty.

"Sometimes to achieve extraordinary things, you have to be a little crazy," Prugue said.

Raymond Pereira, a junior majoring in advertising, found Prugue to be very inspirational.

"One of my philosophies is to take everything that you learn here and you might have to take that knowledge and go somewhere else to help somebody else out or help yourself out," Pereira said.

Christiana Serle, graduate student in public health, said she liked all of the talks and "thought they were all very impactful and interesting in their own unique way."

Randa Ellmalki, junior majoring in public relations, shared what she got out of TEDxFIU.

"The talks were just saying that it's up to you to change stuff and to get educated and go out and do something," Ellmalki said. "It's one thing to think about it, but it's another thing to go out and be proactive and make a difference."

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No compromise in contract talks between union and FIU

ASHLEY MARTINEZ
Staff Writer

The University and the union that represents support staff at the University could not come to an agreement for a new contract during the collective bargaining session on Tuesday, Nov. 13.

The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 3346, and the University have been trying to negotiate a new contract since July 2012.

AFSCME represents support staff, such as mechanics, electricians, painters, plumbers, etc.

On Tuesday, AFSCME declared impasse with the University administration.

An impasse occurs when the parties fail to reach an agreement. Following an impasse declaration, a process of arbitration would begin.

The arbitration process could last six to eight months and will end in a decision by a magistrate that would be accepted as final by both parties.

The University and AFSCME were in talks over an extended wage package for support staff in Tuesday's session.

"Even though we meet, it doesn't give us any leverage," said AFSCME representative and head bargainer, Madeline Gonzalez. "We've been doing this far too long."

The University proposed a wage package that would give support staff a 2.5 percent wage increase during the first year of the contract, a 2 percent increase the second year and a 1 percent increase during the third, with the condition that AFSCME accepts a new three-year contract.

"The [union] bargaining committee has communicated that they feel the wage

proposal is good," Gonzalez said. "The union is proposing a lower pay raise in exchange for just cause. We are accepting your wage proposal, but not your package."

Just cause means the employer must have a reason to fire an employee.

It is a form of job security that allows the employee to appeal the decision to an arbitrator who evaluates whether or not the employer's action was justified with the employer bearing the burden of proof.

"The Board of Trustees doesn't want 'just cause,'" said Elizabeth Marston, associate general counsel representing the University. "The wage package is more than generous."

In the negotiations over just cause, both the University and AFSCME remained grounded in their positions.

The University does not want to add just cause to the contract, and AFSCME does not want the contract without just cause.

Some affected employees present at the meeting saw the issue more pragmatically.

"The employees are disillusioned because they haven't seen results from the union," said Carlos Fernandez, a mechanic who has worked at the University for several years. "We are more than happy to accept the contract."

Fernandez brought with him various employee signatures he obtained during his lunch breaks, petitioning to put the contract and wage package to an employee vote.

"The raises are important to us," Fernandez said. "I only know three cases in which support staff were fired and all three times the University was right in terminating them. They don't fire anyone here unless they are lazy."

Gonzalez acknowledged Fernandez's plea, but insists they continue to fight for

CLEANING UP THE MESS



CARL-FEDERICK FRANCOIS/THE BEACON

Due to the Lakeview incident, Student were granted three days of free laundry. Everyone affected is taking advantage and have all machines running strong.

the just cause clause.

"We sent out a survey to employees regarding just cause, and the responses showed that at least 70 percent of them wanted the union to keep fighting for it," Gonzalez said. "We also understand the money is very important."

At the end of the session, Gonzalez declared impasse on behalf of the union, saying that throughout the process, the union would consider putting the contract to a vote.

Marston addressed the potential fiscal cliff that, if unresolved by Congress, could raise taxes and spending cuts. If that were to happen, by the time the impasse comes to an end, the contract may not include a raise at all.

"Our wage package is contingent on [the union] accepting the entire thing," Marston said. "We're getting to the end. We've done the best we can. Our position is clear."

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CORRECTIONS

In Vol. 24, Issue 41, of The Beacon, the caption for the photo titled "Panther Family Feuds" should have stated that the next SOBE Wine and Food Festival will take place February 2013.

The Beacon will gladly change any errors. Call our MMC office at 305-348-2709 or BBC at 305-919-4722.

Task Force report before Rick Scott

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bachelor's degrees in areas of strategic emphasis, salary of graduates, cost per graduate and cost to graduates.

According to Wartzok, the University ranks third in the SUS in terms of the percentage of bachelor's degree recipients who are continuing their education in Florida and in the percentage of bachelor's degree recipients who are employed full-time in the year after graduation.

Wartzok said the University ranks third lowest in the SUS in terms of cost per graduate, spending an average of \$36,848 for each degree produced. The average tuition and fees cost to a student at the University is \$6,825 over four years, minus Pell grants and other financial aid awards that students don't have to pay back.

The report also highlights reforms in terms of funding for the SUS, which suffered a \$300 million non-recurring budget cut last year. In the report, the task force recommends the state maintain a full-time, resident, undergraduate tuition option of approximately \$15,000 for a bachelor's degree. Currently, FIU is

at approximately \$25,000 per bachelor's degree.

Also, in funding recommendations is the proposal for a "differentiated tuition model" that would prevent tuition increases in a set of degrees established by the legislature.

Currently, there are 111 programs in science, technology, engineering and math, 28 programs in globalization, 21 in health professions, 19 in education-critical fields (math and science) and nine programs in security and emergency services. These degrees are referred to as "high-skill, high-wage, high-demand" and are programs deemed as strategic areas of emphasis for the state.

"I think there needs to be more thought given to whether we want greater state subsidization of high-wage jobs, Wartzok said. "This would be a major change from the thinking across the country where if tuition differential among programs is considered, the lower tuition is often associated with degrees such as education that serve a public good but are not high-wage rather than lower tuition for degrees in fields where the

graduates will receive high wages and can more easily pay off any associated loans."

Josh Numa, a senior in business administration, said the recommendation would be a "direct incentive."

"I think it's a great idea because of what they are trying to build in Florida. They want to create a new industry. It's not fair to everyone, but I see what [Scott] is trying to do," Numa said. "People want business and to generate money."

According to Wartzok, Florida ranks 51 out of 50 states and the District of Columbia in the ratio of STEM jobs available for STEM graduates.

"Many of our STEM graduates have to leave Florida to find jobs," Wartzok said, adding that 47 percent of the University's STEM graduates at the bachelor's level are employed full-time in Florida within a year of graduation with an average salary of \$41,345.

The report also adds that the BOG will use performance in this area to allocate additional funding.

"The assumption would be that state support will... allow for resident student tuition in

legislatively-determined high-skill, high-wage, high-demand...bachelor's degree programs to remain lower, by comparison, than resident student tuition in other bachelor's degree programs," according to the report.

Also in the report is the creation of "Preeminent Universities." This designation would reward institutions aligned with particular state performance measures with flexibility in tuition and decreased regulation.

The task force report also outlines the need for the BOG to develop system-wide and institution-specific metrics. The report recommends that state institutions align annual and strategic plans with BOG strategic goals.

Additionally, other recommendations would give the BOG control over budgets and direct involvement in the search and appointment of university presidents.

The board also recommends further research be conducted to determine the impact that the other recommendations would have on the Florida Bright Futures and Florida Pre-Paid programs.

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FIU'S MOST FASHIONABLE



ILLUSTRATION BY CAROLINA GUILLOT/THE BEACON

Students aren't the only ones slacking

LOURDES GINART
Staff Writer

As the end of the fall semester approaches, so do final exams.

The Green Library becomes a little more crowded each day, classmates you have not seen all semester begin to show up again, and the professors have begun to handout what seems to be a murderous amount of work.

If there is anything I have learned thus far, it is that those classes you chose because the professor was deemed "slack," really meant "the professor is slack until the last three weeks of the semester."

Those professors that regularly cancel class, change exam dates, and postpone assignments do so for one reason – they procrastinate as much as students.

What was once the best professor you ever had, more accurately the professor who never attended class, has now become the enemy.

Chapters upon chapters of reading assignments and quizzes, and lengthy tests where no amount of studying is helpful, begin to drown you, and that is only one course.

Suddenly, taking five courses doesn't seem like such a great idea anymore. And the worst part is, not much can be done but to suck it up and embrace a caffeine addiction.

But it is important to note there is a difference between lazy professors and those professors that are just tough and hand out mountains of assignments regularly; you actually learn from the latter.

Postponing exams because grading is "difficult" and cancelling class because your dog died for the fifth time this semester is not, in any way appropriate.

Rather, what a procrastinating professor could do at this point is acknowledge they made a mistake and seek to help their struggling students – make a study guide, allow notes for the final, upload PowerPoint presentations on Moodle; the list goes on.

In part, students cannot complain for the amount of reading there now has to be done, it is part of our responsibility to keep up with the syllabus, whether the professor chooses to do so or not.

But that responsibility is not an adequate reason for professors to combine three exams into one and blame the high fail rate on students not being prepared.

Thankfully, there are evaluations. And even though evaluations do not seem like they make much of an impact, it helps to know that the professor's superiors do read them.

So for those students now drowning in a sea of 12-page essays, it's almost over. Let the early Christmas decorations and the 12th replay of "Jingle Bell Rock" motivate you for the next few weeks.

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Breaking the mold on higher education

DIANA ANAYA
Contributing Writer

From elementary school to college we're placed in a bubble in which our friends will always be with us and all we need to worry about is getting that degree.

Real world issues and problems are irrelevant – what really matters is memorizing that chapter, spewing it out onto a paper, and then forgetting everything you studied.

It's a commonly accepted idea that the United States' education system is lacking in almost all respects.

To be specific, the state of Florida has consistently ranked low when compared to the other states in education.

But what's to blame – the budget cuts, the paltry wages professors make or the economic state of the country as a whole?

We can't fix the economy in a day, and all the picketing in the world won't make the Florida government give education the money it deserves.

However, all hope is not lost. While we can't make sweeping changes, we have to power to make small ones. As a start, we can address the lecture format.

“
In the real world people must ask and answer questions, defending arguments as common as why you deserve a raise.
”

The lecture format -- the platform by which I've mostly seen professors teaching -- is one of the least effective.

It's essentially standing in front of a classroom and parroting back information from the textbook or on a PowerPoint (which they often have behind them) with a extra facts here or there.

The students aren't really taking in this information, but engaging in an almost mechanical movement of the hand, taking down every word without giving it a single thought.

In some classes, lectures may be considered necessary; but for many, they're not.

Socrates used the Socratic Method, in which students would be asked questions and be prompted to debate

with one another. This kind of teaching requires close attention to the material, critical thinking, and an ability to think on the spot, which can be immensely helpful in any career.

In the real world people must ask and answer questions, defending arguments as common as why you deserve a raise.

Of course this method requires the students to participate and someone always needs to be the first to raise their hand in order to "break the ice", and once the conversation begins it can be hard to watch it.

Which brings me to my next point: the bubble. The material of many classes is frequently considered challenging not only because of

the level of critical thinking or memorization it requires, but because it's static. All this information is locked away in a time capsule that has nothing to do with current events.

This is another point Socrates made, which is to bring present day issues into the classroom. Students would be far more interested in the material if professors made a habit of relating it to contemporary issues.

I realize all of these changes require an obscene amount of work by the professor, who may not have the time or energy to do so because of the many classes they teach.

Not to mention why someone would invest so much care into a class that the students themselves don't respect, blatantly texting in the middle of class, leaving early and only showing up the day before the exam to ask questions that were already answered.

But for those professors who have the time and the drive, some of those ideas could be quite helpful. Because in the real world, memorizing a bunch of facts isn't going to cut it.

SEND US YOUR LETTERS

Have something on your mind? Send your thoughts (400 words maximum) to jonathan.szydlo@fiusm.com or drop by our offices at either GC 210 or WUC 124. With your letter, be sure to include your name, major, year, and copy of your student ID. The Beacon will only run one letter a month from any individual.

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CAMPUS LIFE!

Bullying important part of University's policy

YANAISIS COLLAZO
Contributing Writer

160,000 students will stay home today because of fear of being bullied, according to stompoutbullying.org.

Bullying occurs in a variety of ways -- physical, emotional, relational or online. Among the types of bullying, students also experience hazing.

According to HazingPrevention.org, 55 percent of college students experience hazing. The University's Victims Advocacy Center and Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution take the cause seriously.

According to the University policy statement, any form of violence towards an employee against another employee, student, vendor or visitor to the University will be cause

for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal and may result in criminal prosecution, if federal, state, or local laws are violated.

Kirsten A. Kawczynski, director of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution assures if you break the rules there is a series of steps to take after the occurrence is reported. Starting from an investigation and ending with the University's Student Conduct process and disciplinary sanctions.

"Education on what hazing is and its negative effects is how it's done," said Kawczynski, when it comes to preventing hazing.

She said it also helps "to hold organizations [accountable] for hazing and show it's not appropriate in the University."

Hazing is associated with orga-

nizations, clubs and even teams. Ensuring it does not happen on campus, the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution organizes hazing prevention and sanctioned workshops to organizations. More specifically, the workshops are for the victims.

"If you report the incident, it actually increases," said Kawczynski. "Alerting them of the situation instead is the key to stopping the issue."

Similar Kawczynski's views on hazing, Alexis Hamilton Fulks, assistant director of Sorority and Fraternity Life, already knew she didn't want to join a sorority if it meant being talked down to in a demeaning way and forced to do things against her will.

However, after deciding to join

a sorority, she realized it was not an issue here at FIU. Since Order of Omega and Campus Life consecutively plan a hazing prevention week annually, the outcome of it occurring is minimum.

"We are here to be educated... not be exploited to bad practice," said Fulks. "It is against the law, a federal offense."

In addition to hazing, bullying in general is another concern at the University. Many students who have been bullied in the past, or still are bullied, go to seek guidance at the Victims Advocacy Center.

Jonathan Batson, president at FIU's Chapter of Minority Association of Premedical Student has been bullied in the past.

"From a personal experience in ninth and 10th grade, I was

bullied," said Batson, who was bullied through an online video on YouTube. "Sometimes it felt like it would never end. Now as a college student, I want to let [other victims] know that it gets better."

According to StompOutBullying.org, one out of four teens are bullied.

"It is wrong that somebody is treated unfairly and unjust due to them expressing who they are as a person," said Batson. "It is wrong."

To prevent bullying, students are asked to report the incident before it gets out of hand, and most importantly, do not bully back.

To speak to someone at the Victims Advocacy Center, contact the 24-hour hotline at 305-348-3000.

-life@fiusm.com



How to deal with writer's block

Q. Dear Nick,

I've been suffering writer's block and I can't find motivation to write. What can I do to get inspired?

J.S.
Freshman
Elementary Education Major

Dear J.S.,

A. So often we are bogged down with multiple activities that it can be hard to focus and let the creative energies flow. Writer's block, or creativity block, can be helped by slowing down, creating an outline of what you would like to write about and bringing your awareness into the present moment.

Once you have an outline, begin by just writing keywords-not sentences. Once you have sufficient keywords in each section of your outline, you can begin to create sentences. If you begin to feel overwhelmed, you could engage in meditation or a mindfulness activity to help center you and push out those feelings. Focus on your creative endeavor and return to the process of writing. Take a break if your mind wanders or you become distracted.

Go outside and get some fresh air to help get oxygen to the brain. Exercise and let the endorphins give you a little kick. Make sure your environment is quiet and peaceful and let the inspiration guide you. Your words are on the way; it is ready to spring forth from your fingertips onto the paper. Enjoy the process and good luck with the writing!

Be Well,

Nick



Nick Scheidt, M.S. is a Doctoral Psychology Intern at FIU Counseling and Psychological Services. He is a Clinical Psychology Doctoral Candidate from Carlos Albizu University. Once he completes his internship at FIU, Nick plans to work as a Psychologist, Writer, and Professor.

Do you have questions you would like to Ask Nick? Send an email to: Nscheidt@fiu.edu

REEL TO REEL

'Skyfall' brings out the best in Daniel Craig's Bond

"To hell with dignity," M, the head of the Secret Intelligence Service, says in "Skyfall," the latest and arguably greatest Daniel Craig entry in the James Bond series. "I'll leave when the job's done."

"Skyfall" doesn't just keep its dignity, it breathes a new life into a series that is now fifty years old. Director Sam Mendes and writer John Logan have reminded everyone that Bond has a long way to go before he runs his course, and what great news that is. Betrayal and a lack of trust run rampant in "Skyfall" as Bond recovers from a near-death experience brought on by M.

When someone from M's dark past returns to exact vengeance, targeting MI6 and all of its personnel, 007 is specially assigned to discover and eliminate the threat.

After the disappointing "Quantum of Solace," it looked as though Bond was headed down a track in which he was entirely stripped of everything that made him more than just a spy with a license to kill.

"Skyfall" instead chooses to turn back time and deliver Bond at his most human, allowing audiences to see him at his best and worst. Rather than continuing Bond on the trajectory to becoming an action machine, "Skyfall" brings back the silly charm of vintage days. There's a fresh introduction of Eve Moneypenny and Q, played rather well by Naomie Harris and Ben Whishaw respectively, plenty of humor written into a rather dark script and enough references to the Bond of old to keep most fans happy.

The film is gorgeous, courtesy of Roger Deakins, director of photography. His work is always top tier, but "Skyfall" features some amazing uses of shadows and lighting. A frequent collaborator with Mendes, it's no surprise that Deakins is allowed to do what he does best, notably in the riveting final act.

John Logan, who rewrote much of Neal Purvis and Robert Wade's original script, delivers a tight screenplay that brings out the best of both cast and crew.

Audiences will likely notice the influence from Nolan's Batman trilogy, but that should come as

no surprise as plenty of Bond films draw from the popular films of their time.

The decision to humanize Bond works in Craig's favor, showing more range than the typical action star, especially in his interactions with co-star Judi Dench.

In her seventh appearance as M, Dench delivers her biggest and best performance of the series and that's something to be thankful for considering the film's story heavily involves her.

Javier Bardem, already well known as the villain of "No Country for Old Men," is one of the most valuable players of "Skyfall" as the vengeful and unbalanced Raoul Silva. His late introduction to the film makes for one of the best scenes and his banter with Bond may leave some conservative viewers in shock.

"Skyfall" isn't the best Bond film, but it certainly turns out to be a memorable one that will open the door to hundreds of possibilities for the series over the next few years.

Juan Barquin is a junior FIU English major. For the past year and a half, he has written more than 80 movie reviews for YAM-Magazine, and is pursuing a certificate in Film Studies at the University.

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PHOTO FROM IMDB

Daniel Craig returns as James Bond and Javier Bardem plays cynical ex-agent Raoul Silva, who seeks vengeance against M.

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VOLLEYBALL

Dismal season ends with blowout loss in SBC Tournament

JONATHAN JACOBSKIND
Staff Writer

Before the FIU volleyball team took the court for the very first game of the 2012 season on Aug. 24, the unthinkable happened. All Sun Belt outside hitter Jovana Bjelica broke a bone in her right hand while colliding with a teammate in warm-ups. Any hope of winning the Sun Belt Conference shattered along with it.

The disappointing, injury-ridden season came to a screeching halt last Thursday as the Panthers (10-19) (7-8 SBC) were sent home packing by the No. 17 Western Kentucky Hilltoppers in the first round of the Sun Belt Tournament in a 3-0 sweep. WKU has ended FIU's season the past three seasons in the Sun Belt Tournament.

The Panthers were able to sneak into the tournament as the eighth seed. However, based on head to head matchups, Head Coach Theroulde believed the Panthers deserved the seventh seed, which would have paved the road to the Sun Belt Finals.

"When we made it to the conference tournament, we



JASEN DELGADO/THE BEACON

Jessica Egan (left) and Jovana Bjelica (right) missed nearly the entire season. Egan played in only six games this year after having mono and Bjelica broke a bone in her hand before the first game which held her out for the season. It is uncertain whether Bjelica will take a medical redshirt to return for a fifth season.

thought we had the seventh seed and start on opposite brackets than Western Kentucky and we said you know what, we can make it all the way to the finals again," Theroulde said. "However, according to some strange rule

the coaches of the league voted on we were stuck with the eighth seed."

FIU hobbled into the Sun Belt Tournament as injuries swept the team, a theme that plagued the team all year.

Bjelica, who was originally given a 4-6 week timetable to return, was sidelined for the entire season along. Senior Jessica Egan played only six games before going down with mononucleosis and

junior transfer Maryna Samoday missed the season with an elbow contusion.

The laundry list of injuries did not stop there as senior setter Renele Forde played the majority of the year with a strained abdominal muscle, as did freshman Ashlee Hodgskin with back and ankle injuries.

Among the five, more than 100 combined missed games.

With an injury depleted team, new faces emerged as the squad's top scorers. Freshmen such as Lucia Castro, Gloria Levorin and Ashlee Hodgskin became frequent starters in the line up.

"It was the worst feeling coming to practice and being told you had another player out for the match or the rest of the season," Theroulde said. "We had four scholarship athletes out for the year from the 12 total scholarship athletes we have. Out of the remaining eight, we had four playing with severe injuries."

Trevor Theroulde's head coaching debut year was just as painful as the Panthers matched their entire 2011 loss total in just over the first month of the

SEE VOLLEYBALL, PAGE 7

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Panthers open Sun Belt play on the road at Western Kentucky

RUBEN PALACIOS
Staff Writer

A trip to Bowling Green, Ky., has never looked so good. No, really, it doesn't look so good.

The FIU women's basketball team will head to Bowling Green to face off against the Western Kentucky Hilltoppers on Nov. 19 to open up conference play.

"You never want to have to start the conference season going to Western Kentucky and having to play on their home court," Head Coach Cindy Russo said. "I would never have wanted to do that in my whole life, but I don't make the schedules."

The matchup against WKU pairs the two East Division rivals against each other for their 32nd all-time meeting. WKU (1-0) leads the all-time series with 23 wins and only eight losses. Despite their history, FIU (1-1) enjoyed recent success against their foe, winning three out of the last four matchups.

Junior guard Jerica Coley enjoyed her fair share of success against WKU. Last year, in two matchups against the Hilltoppers, Coley averaged 34 points and 8.5 rebounds per game. Coley also tied a career high in points, with a 36-point outing in Miami. With that outstanding performance, Coley helped her squad to a, 60-56, win at home.

"Jerica is every one's game plan," Russo said. "When teams play us they say, 'if we can stop Jerica Coley, we can win the game' and they're absolutely right."

The matchup against WKU could not come any sooner as the squad is coming off a lopsided, 69-45, loss at Florida Gulf Coast on Nov. 14. FGCU dominated the game throughout; they took a 14-point lead into the half by holding FIU to 25 percent shooting from the field.

The Eagles soared away in the second half, outscoring FIU 34-24 in the latter period. Junior Marita Davydova played a solid game. Davydova scored 16 points on six of 13 shooting and also snatched down a team-high 11 rebounds. Coley had a rough game. She scored just nine points on four of 12 shooting. Despite Coley's shooting

trouble, she still managed to aggressively pull down nine rebounds.

"This is a good thing to happen in the beginning of the year, because now they realize that we are not really good yet," Russo said.

Russo recalls the first time her team was nationally ranked back in the '93-94 season. Her team played an away game at Texas Tech, which happened to be the second ranked team in the country at the time. At halftime, the squad was down by 45 points, and Russo jokingly suggested during her halftime speech that the team just skip the second half and catch an early flight back to Miami. The team came out strong in the second half, though they still lost the game. They won the half by 25 points.

"They came out and they played, so that was the beginning of them realizing that we are there too," Russo said. "They realized how tough it's going to be if they want to be a good team in the nation and right now this team has not committed to that."

Coley, the Preseason Sun Belt Player of the Year, will have to adjust her game in order to help her team garner success against upcoming conference opponents.

"Jerica is going to have to learn to distribute a little bit more. She's going to have to learn to get on the weak side more, and we are going to have to learn to find her that way," Russo said.

The Hilltoppers are in their first campaign under the reign of new coach Michelle Clark-Heard. Clark-Heard and the Hilltoppers won their first game of the season against Murray State.

In order to successfully top the Hilltoppers, the squad will have to be aggressive on the floor and stay tough at all points throughout the game.

"We have to be more physical. We are a soft group. We have to be tough and hit the boards consistently," said Russo. "We need to get tougher mentally and do the small things to win the game."



JONATHAN SEGAL/THE BEACON

Marita Davydova (left), a junior transfer from Moscow, Russia, is averaging 15 points and 8.5 rebounds per game as a freshman so far this season.

SWIMMING

Senior transfer overcomes adversity after being cut

OSCAR BALDIZON
Contributing Writer

Scholarship athletes face the harsh reality that their “free ride” can be taken from them at any time. For some, it’s a motivator that pushes them beyond their limits everyday.

Just ask swimmer Marina Ribí, a senior transfer student from Switzerland.

Before coming to FIU, this year Ribí was expecting to return to Tennessee for her senior campaign. But that all changed when two weeks into the summer, her coach at Tennessee, Matt Kedrich, informed her that she wouldn’t be receiving anymore scholarship funding.

“I was devastated, truly devastated... For about a day I felt like nobody. I didn’t know who to trust or where to turn,” Ribí said.

After receiving this news, Ribí contemplated what to do and decided this wouldn’t determine her future. She was going to keep training in the US to achieve her goals through another path. She contacted Coach Randy Horner, decided to come to FIU and the rest is history.

The native of Schaffhausen, Switzerland, has burst onto the FIU swimming scene in a big way helping lead the squad to its highest national ranking ever, 15th.

She has five overall wins this year and set a new FIU record in the 200 Butterfly against Florida State and Florida Atlantic.

Ribí’s mother was also a skilled swimmer and got her into the pool at the age of seven. By the time she was nine, Ribí had joined a club team in Switzerland and the foundations of her future triumphs would

be laid. Her family and friends were vital to the start of her career, always making sure she enjoyed her childhood.

“They never put any pressure on me and always told me to do what I loved and not because they wanted me to,” Ribí said.

Ribí has always been very self motivated and after her first Swiss National Championships, at the 13 years old, she started training harder and won her first top place medal at the next year’s Swiss Championships.

“I won my first medal at the Swiss Championships when I was 13, and I realized I could become a lot faster and that’s when I really started dreaming about future accomplishments and goals,” Ribí said.

Ribí attended both the European Championships and World Champi-

onships twice representing her home country of Switzerland. She broke her first Swiss national record, the 200 IM, in 2009 at the World Championships in Rome, Italy.

“There are still a lot of things I would like to accomplish, but I could have never imagined everything I have done so far and I am enjoying every moment,” Ribí said.

While expectations were high for her at the beginning of the season there was a lot of mystery shrouding her and what she would actually accomplish.

But she has far surpassed every one’s expectations for this year and broke her first FIU record in only her second meet as a Panther.

Ribí is not one to shy away from stating her expectations and has her eyes set on re-braking that record and many others.

“When I finish out my career I would like to be considered the best Swiss female swimmer ever, but I still have a lot of work to get there,” Ribí said.

Ribí loves the weather in Miami and enjoys going to the movies and hanging out with her friends. Her favorite movies are “Star Wars” and the “The Lord of the Rings” trilogy, but she also enjoys the Harry Potter books.

After losing her scholarship, Ribí has rebounded and looks poised to reach her goals.

“Now looking back, losing my scholarship was the best thing that could have happened because I am happier now,” Ribí said. “It made me stronger and I can appreciate the good days better now.”

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Hopes of star outside hitter returning for fifth year slim

VOLLEYBALL, PAGE 6

season. Theroulde summed up the 2012 season in one word: unpredictable.

“From day to day, I did not know what team I was going to have on the court,” Theroulde said. “We came from having championship aspirations to barely making it into the conference tournament.”

With the constant shifting and switches to the line up, Theroulde could never find the team cohesion and consistent play he

wanted. Despite showing a slight glimpse of improvement towards the latter part of the season, the inconsistency and lack of experience for the team resulted in one of the worst statistical seasons in program history.

FIU remained at the bottom of the Sun Belt cellar in most statistical categories as they were ninth in hitting percentage with a dismal .154 kill per set average. They also finished 10th in kills in the Sun Belt, averaging just 11.29 per set and eighth

in digs. The sole bright spot was on the defensive end as they lead the Sun Belt with 2.64 blocks per set.

Despite all the negativity surrounding the 2012 squad, Forde and the rest of the seniors including Bjelica, Marija Prsa and Ryanne Milligan, will cherish their tenure playing for the blue and gold.

“It really hit me when I was subbing out for the last time and I was like, ‘wow, that was the final time I was going to play on FIU’s court’,” a teary eyed Forde said

about her final home game on Nov.10. “It was very emotional and I loved my time here but at the same time I did my job and it’s time to move on.”

Although their Sun Belt Championship aspirations are over, the Panthers still have one last regular season matchup on the road against in-state foe Central Florida. First serve is slated for 7:00 p.m. on Nov. 24 in Orlando, Fla.

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Legalized Marijuana sparks blazing discussion

MARISOL MEDINA
Contributing Writer

While marijuana smokers in Colorado and Washington can legally “toke up,” those in Florida shouldn’t hold their breath in waiting.

On Election Day 2012, a historic amendment legalized the recreational use of marijuana in the states of Colorado and Washington.

Amendment 64 in Colorado has legalized the recreational consumption of marijuana and permitted possession of up to one ounce.

Consumers may have, at most, three flowering plants and must be 21 years of age or older.

The news was celebrated with joy by cannabis consumers all over the states.

Ramon Garo, a senior in mechanical engineering, agreed with the legalization because of the disparity between the state and

federal laws.

“Alcohol, tobacco and certain medicinal drugs have just as many or more known negative effects than marijuana,” he said. “Taking into account that marijuana’s status makes it more lucrative for criminal activity, it becomes pretty obvious that the federal stance is not only inconsistent, but irrational.”

Shearon Lowery, associate professor in Department of Global and Sociocultural Studies, feels that the benefits of marijuana have been overlooked for far too long.

“It’s about time. Marijuana is less harmful than alcohol and has many medical benefits. There is no way that marijuana should be classified as a Schedule 1 drug,” said Lowery.

She is referring to a categorization that places drugs with high abuse risk and without any accepted medical use in a Schedule 1

“Hopefully, the federal government will start reviewing research on the medical benefits of marijuana, which was stopped by George H.W. Bush when he became president in 1989.”

Shearon Lowery
Associate Professor
Department of Global and Sociocultural Studies

category.

Marijuana is placed in Schedule 1 alongside heroin, LSD, PCP, and crack cocaine.

“Hopefully, the federal government will start reviewing research on the medical benefits of marijuana, which was stopped by George H.W. Bush when he became president in 1989. However, other countries did continue to do research on the drug’s health benefits and it is extremely promising, to say the least,” she said.

Some say legalization will permit the government to benefit from taxing marijuana, an industry that will generate considerable revenue to not only the government but to producers as well.

“According to a 2011 Gallup Poll, 50 percent of the American public favor the legalization of marijuana. Prohibition has obviously failed, just as it did with alcohol. Since prohibited drugs are connected to criminal networks of suppliers,

decriminalization brings the trade into the public sphere where it can be properly regulated and taxed,” she said.

In Washington, marijuana will be taxed at a 25 percent rate three different times: when the grower sells it to the processor, when the processor sells it to the retailers and when the retailer sells it to the customer.

Raquelle Rodriguez disagrees with the use of marijuana but agrees with the legalization. She said

too many people are incarcerated because of charges for possession of marijuana.

“Considering alcohol is legal, there is no reason marijuana shouldn’t be legal too. I don’t think people should go to jail or prison over using marijuana either. We are overcrowding our prisons over dumb charges like these and minorities are being disproportionately arrested because of them,” she said.

Derrick Christopher, a senior double-majoring in political science and international relations, said the state legalization is a groundswell for eventual legalization throughout the country.

“I, for one, will celebrate the day when some of the most peaceful people on Earth, marijuana smokers, are no longer made out to be criminals for growing, cultivating and using a plant,” said Christopher.

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STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

Shortage of funds not to hinder students’ progress

ASHLEY MARTINEZ
Staff Writer

Student Government Association will look into a proposal that would create 10 new scholarships.

The Student Government Association will present today, Nov. 19, a bill titled The Student Body Scholarship Act of 2012, which is proposing to add Article IV University Wide Scholarship Code to the Student Government University Wide Statutes.

Article IV University Wide Scholarship Code proposes a Student Government University Wide Scholarship program that is dedicated to help students to achieve academic and professional goals and it would help ensure that no student deserving of the scholarship will be deprived of higher education due to shortage of funds.

The bill states that earnings from available activity and services funds will be invested into student loans and scholarships and that 10 percent of the 2 percent interest allocated from the Student Government University Wide Scholarship committee will be allocated to the scholarships as well.

It will also require the committee to review quarterly reports, provided by the University Chief Financial Officer and Comptroller and signed by both the SGC-MMC and SGC-BBC presidents.

The reports will order continuance and help determine whether the Scholarship code is financially feasible.

The bill written by Alex Castro, vice president of the SGC-MMC, was presented at a University wide meeting on Wednesday, Nov. 14, at Biscayne Bay Campus.

It also includes sponsors Mish Feldman, senator of housing, James Harden, senator of business, and Giovanni Castro, senator at-large.

At the meeting, Laura Farinas, president of the SGC-MMC, and Pablo Haspel, president of SGC-BBC, presented a new proposal which led to a motion that created a committee that would unite both scholarship proposals.

Haspel said that even if the bill passes though both senate sessions after being presented on Monday, it must be approved by the University Wide Committee in order to move forward and that it is ideal for it to be approved on one of the last meetings that will take place on Nov. 27.

The University Wide Scholarships are planned to reward students for leadership, academics, serving in the military, being a parent, for having between 60 and 90 credits, for being an engineering and computing student, an international student or a resident on campus.

Scholarships will apply to

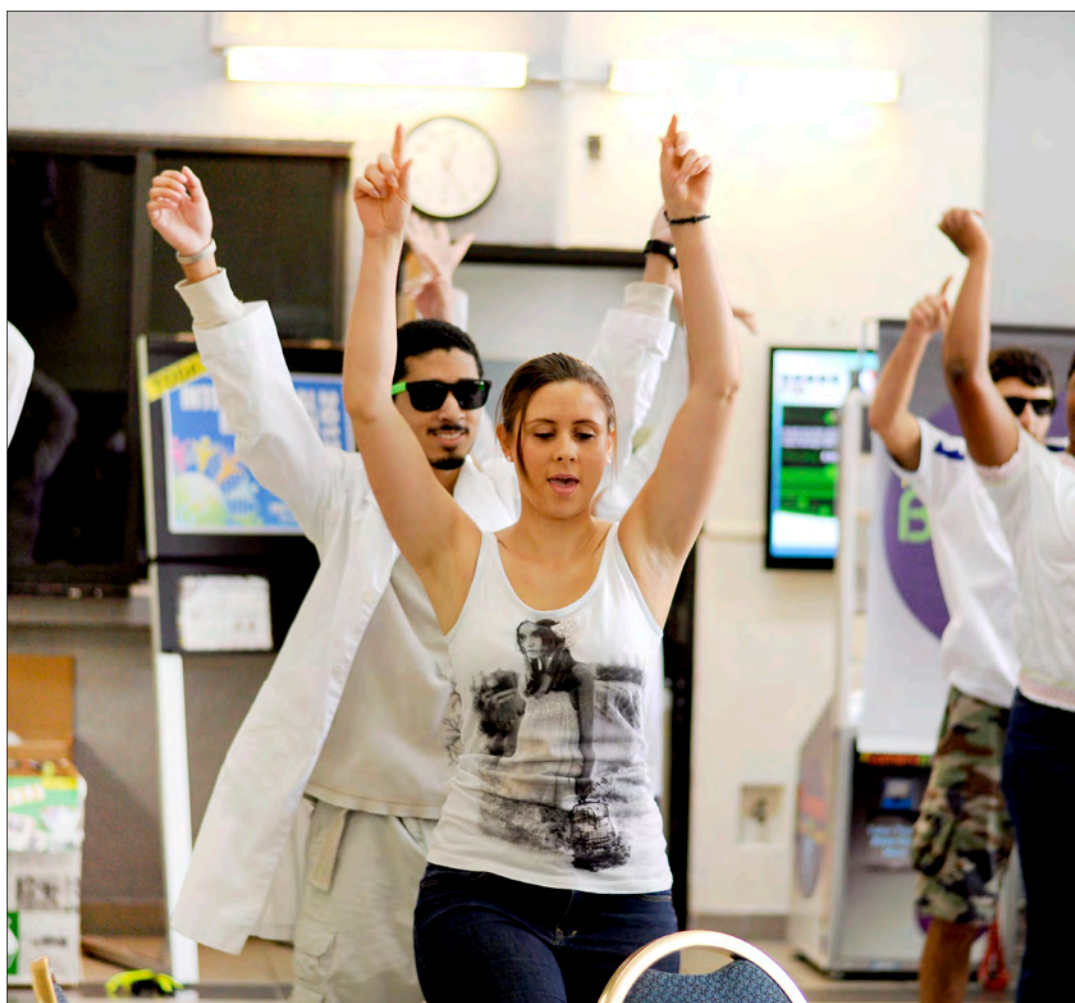
both undergraduate and graduate students who meet the credits and regulations estab-

lished by the University. The criteria to award the scholarships haven’t been final-

ized yet.

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OPPA PANTHER STYLE!



SANA ULLAH/THE BEACON

Students from The International Student Club at FIU’s Biscayne Bay Campus danced to Oppa Gangnam Style, a popular song by South Korean rapper, PSY. This dance was coordinated to kick-off the Panther Power Pep Rally at Panther Square for International Education Week.