

MEETING AND GREETING



ALEXIA ESCALANTE/THE BEACON

Boris Aparicio, candidate for senator at-large in the 2012 Student Government elections, speaks to the crowd at the Meet and Greet event at Lakeview North on March 29.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

New initiative to raise math passing rates

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A new administrative proposal may solve the problem of below average student passing rates in lower division math courses.

Through the Math Task Force comprised of more than 15 faculty members from FIU and Miami-Dade College, the initiative called Math Reform will restructure the approach taken by the University to teach college algebra by implementing computerized learning and peer tutoring. The program is set to begin in fall 2012.

“For years, student performance in lower level math courses at FIU has been below the State University System averages,” said Vice Provost of Academic Affairs Irma Becerra-Fernandez and math professor Enrique Villamor in their report to the FIU Faculty Senate on March 27.

The interdisciplinary task force, brought together by University Provost Douglas Wartzok, came to the conclusion that “college algebra should not be taught in the regular format any more.”

Data from the group’s proposal showed that University students struggle with passing college algebra, with only a third of students passing the first time.

More than 66 percent of the students end up repeating the class and having to take the course several times in order to pass.

“The department of mathematics has been trying actively throughout those years to improve those rates through different programs and

methods,” said Villamor, in a presentation of the initiative, adding that passing rates for the Math Reform approach are at 50 percent.

During summer 2010, the University’s math department piloted three sections of college algebra using the learning model. The pilot involved students’ attending a lecture on a specific topic and then being required to practice the concepts presented in class at a computer lab. Students practiced on the computers for several hours a week, while receiving guidance and assistance by peer tutors.

“It’s overdue but I’m glad we’re finally doing it.”

Alan Gummerson,
Arts & Sciences Senator
Faculty Senate

Transfer students from Miami-Dade College are also targets for the program, according to Becerra-Fernandez.

“Because their college algebra is lighter than what we teach here, students that come from Miami-Dade to FIU have no chance to pass calculus,” said Becerra Fernandez, who has been working with the math department chair at MDC.

Through the initiative, placement in specific math courses for incoming freshmen and transfer students would be determined based on their

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SIPA

Political science student wins year-long German fellowship

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Intensive language training, internship experience and \$25,000 to live for a year in Germany all await political science senior Timur Kuzibaev, the second FIU student to win a Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange fellowship.

“Winning this fellowship is a great honor and privilege,” Kuzibaev said.

Kuzibaev is one of three FIU students to make it to the finals of the Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange program this year.

The program, sponsored by Congress, the German Bundestag and the Department of State, selects 75 Americans to take part in two months of language training, four months of courses at a German university, and a five month internship.

“Initially, Timur felt he was not competitive because no one had empowered him,” said Hilarion Martinez, associate dean of undergraduate education and Diplomacy and National Security professor. “He met other FIU students who had applied and won national awards. In

the end, he empowered himself and that is what I love about FIU leadership. Their goal is to empower our students.”

“I found about this wonderful opportunity in my Diplomacy course which I took this fall semester with Professor Martinez,” Kuzibaev said.

“I fully recognize the responsibility which has been placed upon me. During my fellowship, I will be representing not just myself, but FIU as well as the people of South Florida.”

The CBYX requires their fellows to represent the nation diplomatically, a task Kuzibaev feels prepared for.

“I am planning to perform this flawlessly,” Kuzibaev said. “I fully recognize the responsibility which has been placed upon me. During my fellowship, I will be representing not



Timur Kuzibaev

“The application process for CBYX was lengthy but manageable.”

Martinez, also a former US Foreign Service officer, said that through the application process Kuzibaev learned “the importance of researching global opportunities, of drafting a convincing personal statement and the ingredients of a strong faculty reference letter.”

just myself, but FIU as well as the people of South Florida.”

Last year, international relations alum Nestor Perez became the first FIU student to become a CBYX fellow.

Kuzibaev plans to specialize in international law at the University’s law school after finishing his bachelor’s degree.

COMING UP | News

Check out Wednesday’s issue for coverage of the 2012 Student Government presidential and senatorial debates.

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NEWS FLASH

NATIONAL

Justices meet Friday to vote on health care case

While the rest of us have to wait until June, the justices of the Supreme Court will know the likely outcome of the historic health care case by the time they go home this weekend.

After months of anticipation, thousands of pages of briefs and more than six hours of arguments, the justices will vote on the fate of President Barack Obama's health care overhaul in under an hour Friday morning. They will meet in a wood-paneled conference room on the court's main floor. No one else will be present.

In the weeks after this meeting, individual votes can change.

Even who wins can change, as the justices read each other's draft opinions and dissents.

WORLD

Clinton, Saudi Arabia explore Syria crisis

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton sought to work out a unified strategy on the crisis in Syria in talks with Saudi officials on Friday as further violence stymied U.N. efforts to convince Damascus to implement a cease-fire.

Clinton's talks with Saudi King Abdullah and other officials come ahead of a 60-nation gathering of the "Friends of the Syrian People" in Istanbul over the weekend aimed at finding ways to aid Syria's opposition.

The U.S. is hoping to help unify the splintered opposition's ranks while pushing for humanitarian aid and further isolation of Assad's regime.

Saudi Arabia, along with fellow Gulf nation Qatar, has called for a more aggressive approach, including arming the rebels and carving out a safe haven inside Syria from which the opposition can operate.

—Compiled by Melhor Leonor

CORRECTIONS

In Vol. 23, Issue 80 of *The Beacon* in the Sports section, the article titled "Burri's sacrifice fly hands FIU series win over UNT" Erika Arcuri's name is misspelled.

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

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Chemistry students object to current grade deflation method

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In the grading scheme for chemistry labs at the University, not all A's are created equal.

As the lab syllabus reads: "Course grades will be assigned based on your rank within the class. Historically, only the top 25 percent of each section has received an A."

That means that if the entire class earned an A, only the top 25 percent would actually receive that grade. That also means that a few students' chances at medical school could be put in jeopardy.

"It may not seem as it will have a great effect on the students," said Kirstie Downs, a junior majoring in biology and minoring in chemistry.

"But when you know there's only 23 slots available and only 25 percent will be getting A's, you know only roughly five students will pass with A's," she said.

FIU, as with most universities and medical schools, requires chemistry majors to take and pass laboratories along with their class lectures.

These labs consist of hands-on experiments, led by teacher assistants who aid students in following the instructions in their lab manuals. The purpose is to teach students the basic fundamentals of working in that field of study.

"Labs are really helpful," sophomore Christian Ramirez said. "It is a way to apply what we learn from the lectures and I think every student benefits from labs."

Yet, some students say they are not receiving the grade they earned or, perhaps worse, are not being "chosen" to receive the higher grade. That is something that weighs hard on students, especially those wanting to get into medical school.

"You could have an A average in the class and instead get a B or B plus," Downs said. "At the end of the day, it is not fair because this scale does not reflect your true knowledge of the material."

Palmer Graves, general chemistry lab coordinator and senior lecturer, has been in charge of overseeing these labs as well as the policy that has existed since before he arrived at the Univer-

sity in 1998. "concerned about, they should use a uniform grading policy or use a group of individuals to do the grading for them to ensure conformity of grading standards."

Some students don't accept it as a benefit. They see it as a competition among classmates to try and gain that slight advantage.

"I didn't feel that I could enjoy myself," said senior Adriana Gonzalez,

“At the end of the day, it is not fair because this scale does not reflect your true knowledge of the material.”

Kirstie Downs,
junior
biology

sity in 1998.

"It's like I have the students back because when I look at it, ultimately there are going to be A's whether the best score is 75 or 95," he said.

The policy is in place due to the difference in grading from teacher assistants.

As some TAs grade harsher than others, no matter how they grade some students will still manage to get A's.

"Many of the students don't understand what the policy is," he said. "It's for them. If 90 and above is an A, there would be no A's in a lot of lab sections and that is what students don't see."

Not all students agree that the policy is the right way of making it fair for all.

"I think that logic is even worse than the policy itself," junior Steven Castillo said. "If that is what they are

biology major with a chemistry and physics minor.

"I was always stressing about doing my best and making sure that my lab partner and I completed all of our work on time to ensure all of the evaluation points from the teacher assistant," said Gonzalez.

Although faculty and students' views differ, there does not seem to be any changes coming.

"It is not a competition," Graves said. "That policy that only the top 25-30 percent get A's is for the student's protection and not to limit the number of A's. It's not punitive at all, nor is it competitive."

This story was researched and written for JOU 3300 Advanced News Writing taught by Dr. Fred Blevens in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

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Math Task Force to also target transfer students

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performance on the ALEKS, the mandatory math placement test for all first-time students.

But, instead of completing the online exam at home as has been done in previous years, students would need to take the test during orientation in a proctored classroom.

The task force members agreed that several students may not be taking the exam themselves at home.

They mentioned in the report that

"a parent called to complain about the questions on the exam, but she was not supposed to be the one taking the exam."

"[Proctoring the exam at FIU] is going to make a big difference," Villamor said.

Faculty Senate members showed support for the program during their meeting.

"A lot of us here in the Senate have thought that this kind of thing has been needed for a while," said Arts & Sciences Senator Alan Gummerson, an economics professor. "It's overdue but I'm glad we're finally doing it."



studentmedia
at florida international university

BASEBALL

Questionable calls could not prevent Panthers victory

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The ninth inning on March 28 was a game of inches.

Despite issuing three walks, being the victims of a controversial call at third base and almost giving up a bases-clearing double, FIU managed to escape game one against last-place University of Louisiana-Monroe with a 4-3 win.

FIU (13-12, 3-4 SBC) extended its winning streak to three, defeating ULM (13-13, 1-6), one of the worst offensive teams in the Sun Belt Conference.

Left-hander Mason McVay struggled on the mound, pitching only 4 2/3 innings while allowing four walks and two earned runs.

McVay ran into trouble in the third inning when he struggled to find the strike zone. The tall lefty walked two batters and could not get away unscathed after Warhawk outfielder Taylor Abdalla lined a double to knock in the first run of the game.

"[Mason] was not getting the breaking ball over the plate," said head coach Turtle Thomas after the game.

FIU wasted no time responding, however, as senior slugger Mike Martinez knocked in his 170th RBI of his career with a single to score junior Nathan Burns and tie the game in the bottom of the same inning.

The Panthers struck again the very next inning after junior Adam Kirsch walked and ended up on third base on a wild pitch. Freshman Julius Gaines drove him in with a fielder's choice to second base.

The seesaw battle fell back to the Warhawks' side in the fifth inning when left fielder Les Aulds got on base and caused havoc with his speed to get to third base. The speedster scored on a fielder's choice to make it 2-2.

After an error (FIU's first in 26 innings) and a walk, McVay was pulled from the game and replaced by right-hander Eddy Pidermann.

FIU scored for the fourth-consecutive inning after a Gaines RBI single over the first baseman's head in the sixth inning made it 4-2. Henry, who

had reached base with his third hit of the night, came around to score.

"He's starting to get on track and get it going," said Thomas of Henry.

A ULM RBI double brought the Warhawks to within a run of FIU in the seventh inning. While that would be the final run of the game, it would not be the final threat.

With a two-out, one-run lead in the ninth inning, closer Michael Gomez's heart must have done a few somersaults.

A blown call at third base on a steal enraged FIU fans and players alike. It would have been the final out of the game.

"The throw beat the guy by quite a bit," Thomas said. "He said our third baseman missed the tag but he laid the glove right there in front of the batter."

Gomez escaped an eventual bases-loaded situation to win the game and secure the save.

Asked why the game the win was important to FIU, Thomas shrugged his shoulders and replied, "You don't want to go 2-5 in the conference."



JONATHAN SEGAL/THE BEACON

Mason McVay allowed four walks and two runs on March 30.

TENNIS

Losing streak up to three after home loss to Brown

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The FIU Panthers dropped their 3rd straight home loss this Friday in the hands of the No. 49 Brown University Bears, losing 6-1, sinking to a 5-13 overall record for the 2012 season.

"It was just one of those days that just didn't go our way," Applebaum-Dall'au said. "We just need to regroup and get ready for next Friday and finish the season on a high note. Bottom line we need to get ready for Conference play with the Sun Belt Tournament coming up."

Right out of the gate FIU played themselves into a hole as they went winless in doubles going 0-3. Even the dynamic duo of Senior's Lisa Johnson and Christine Seredni could not take down the Brown Bears tag team of All-Second team Ivy League Senior, Carissa Aboukacre alongside Ft. Lauderdale's own and freshman, Laura Wiley.

Despite the high velocity serves and powerful returns, Johnson and Seredni came up short in a 8-5 loss.

Junior Rita Maisak and freshman Sarah Mclean, who claimed the only win for FIU, also added to the Panther's woes in doubles suffering a 8-5 defeat to Brown's other All Ivy League second teamer Cassandra Hertzberg and Sophomore Jessica Harrow.

"I definitely did not think I played as well as I could in doubles," Mclean said. "I just need to stay focused and keep playing aggressive."

FIU wrapped up doubles with a lackluster performance from Sophomore, Giuletta Boha and freshman Nina Djordjevic, as Brown's Misia Kraowski and Julie Flanzer shut them out, 8-0.

As for singles, the Panthers could not claw their way back and get the victory, tallying just one win out of the six individual matches. Mclean was the lone Panther of the pack to clinch the win, as she started slow by dropping the first set 3-6, but regained her composure and came back with a vengeance in the second set, winning 6-4. This set victory sent the match into a tie-breaker where Mclean sealed the deal with 10-8 win beating Cassy Hertzberg.

"I think I really picked it up in singles," Mclean stated. "I'm very proud the way I fought back and won the match."

Lisa Johnson could not follow up on her spectacular performance versus FAU, and didn't seem as if she came out with the right energy, dwindling to a (6-3, 6-2) defeat to Brown's Harrow.

Maisak also came out on the losing end of (6-2, 6-2) of a slugfest by getting defeat by Junior Misia Kraowski. Maisak just could not establish a consistent rhythm, as went for the kill shot on almost every point and did not focus on hitting the open spots on the court.

Djordjevic avoided a serious facial or head injury in her (6-3, 6-1) loss as she leapt and dove onto the court in attempt to salvage a point. The side of her face only inches away from the hard surface, was uninjured and popped right back up and finished the match.

Junior Magali Holt, who has not seen action all season, filled in for Giuletta Boha, as she could not shake off the rust falling to a (6-2, 6-0) loss in her 2012 debut.

The Panthers play host to the Fresno State Bulldogs, April 6th where the Bulldogs look to avenge their 4-2 loss to FIU back on January 27th. The match is set for a 1 p.m. start at the FIU Tennis Center.

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Thomas devoted to build team

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With three seasons in the books as the head coach of the men's basketball program, Isiah Thomas is beginning to see a shift in the way that the FIU basketball program is viewed by potential recruits. "When I first got here, we were trying to sell a program that people hadn't heard much about," Thomas said. "Now we have name recognition. It is an easier sale right now."

Although FIU has made some inroads in recruiting nationally, Thomas also feels that the program is making progress in obtaining recruits from Florida. "We are starting to get more traction in the state of Florida," Thomas said. "Kids that traditionally looked at bigger programs out of state are now considering us."

Although the program has not produced a season with a record over .500 under Thomas' stewardship, the Panthers have received early commitments for the 2012-2013 season. The Panthers currently have one recruit signed out of high school, with the addition of Milton Doyle from John Marshall High School in Chicago.

Doyle signed with FIU last October. He is a 6-foot-4 shooting guard whose skill set impresses Thomas. "[Doyle] is one of the top-five players coming out of the city of Chicago," Thomas said. "To be able to land a recruit

like him is a big feather in our cap."

Along with Doyle, the Panthers will have the services of 6-foot-11 center Lekan Ajayi who transferred from Wyoming. Ajayi has been practicing with the team since January. "We will have him for four years," Thomas said. "He will be just like a freshman. Bringing in Lekan will be great for our frontcourt."

Outside of Doyle, the Panthers apparently have landed two more high school recruits. According to reports, point guard Gio Guzman from Gorman High School in Las Vegas has committed to the Panthers. Guzman is listed at 5-foot-10 and appears to be a pass first point guard. He led his high school team to the Class 4A state championship in the state of Nevada.

Tim Williams from Home-wood-Flossmoor High School in suburban Chicago has also committed to FIU for 2012. The 6-foot-7 forward will bring an athletic forward to the Panthers' lineup that consists of Gilles Dierickx, Joey De La Rosa, Ajayi, Brandon Moore and Dominique Ferguson. Williams also played football in high school.

Junior college prospect Antonio Myers from Pensacola State College has verbally committed to the Panthers. Myers is a 6-foot-3 shooting guard from Baltimore who can drive to the basket and can hit the mid-range jumper.

The Panthers will also have

a familiar face return for the 2012 season as Tola Akomolafe will be cleared to play with the Panthers. Akomolafe was deemed ineligible last January, which forced him to sit out the remaining games of the season.

MULTI-YEAR SCHOLARSHIPS

Last October, the NCAA made changes to the type of scholarship that athletic programs could offer to student-athletes. Currently, student-athletes receive scholarships that are renewed on a yearly basis. Athletic programs can now also offer student-athletes multi-year scholarships up to the full term of a student-athletes' eligibility. When asked if he plans to offer a multi-year scholarship, Thomas stated, "We will use it when we need to."

COMMITTED TO FIU

During his tenure at FIU, Thomas has been linked to possibly returning to his former employer, the New York Knicks. In 2010, Thomas initially accepted a consultant role with the Knicks, but rescinded the offer.

With two years remaining on his contract with FIU and the recent resignation of Mike D'Antoni as Knicks' head coach, Thomas was asked if he had any interest in the Knicks head coaching position. Thomas stated, "As I have said since I have gotten here, my intention is to build this program."

FOOTBALL

GOLDEN NIGHT



PHOTOS BY PHILIPPE BUTEAU/THE BEACON

Robert Boswell (**top left**) saw significant playing time on March 30 during the Blue and Gold game. Not to be easily outdone was Jeremiah Harden (**top right**), who scored twice during the scrimmage. Defensive coordinator Todd Orlando (**bottom left**) looks on at his group. The defense forced four turnovers, including two interceptions by Sam Miller and one by Justin Halley. Defensive lineman Giovanni Francois (**bottom right**) gets prepared just before the scrimmage begins.

Defense shines bright as quarterbacks struggle

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As the spring practice started to get under way, redshirt sophomore Jake Medlock began taking some shots behind the line of scrimmage, even though he was wearing the red jersey which signifies no hitting permitted.

Medlock picked himself up and ripped off his chin-strap in frustration, the sign of a long night, and eventually, a long summer, ahead for the Panthers.

The Jacksonville native knows that there is a long road ahead.

"The quarterbacks as a whole really struggled today," Medlock said. "We got to bounce back and get ready for Duke."

Medlock realizes he is being thrown into the leadership role and that he, among others; need to become the leaders of the team.

"They're the type of group that likes it when someone steps up and talks to them. It's something that the team needs. We're missing it now losing Wes [Carroll] and T.Y. [Hilton]. Me as a person, Wayne Times, and Kedrick [Rhodes], we got to step up."

But with being a leader means staying healthy and Medlock realizes that as much he wants to hit, he cannot continue to do it.

"I kind of wish I was in a white jersey to be honest. I understand I got to be healthy," Medlock said. "If I'm not healthy, were in trouble I think. I need to be able to lead this team and be

the leader they need."

The rest of the quarterbacks on the roster got their chances to showcase their skills, and one in particular did not disappoint head coach Mario Cristobal.

"There were some flashes. I think Jake does have an edge," Cristobal said. "You could see what Lorenzo [Hammonds] could do with his feet as well as his arm, which has improved. Jake still is the starter, [but] Lorenzo has made tremendous strides, If not for a penalty, he would have probably had over 200 yards of offense on his own."

That play that Cristobal mentioned was a 70 yard scramble by Hammonds where he made numerous cuts down the field until he eventually dove across the goal line for the score,

however, a holding call on the offensive line erased one of the bright spots of the

Carolina Player of the Year a couple of years ago. He played in a spread system,

“

I kind of wish I was in a white jersey to be honest. I understand I got to be healthy. If I'm not healthy, were in trouble I think. I need to be able to lead this team and be the leader they need.

Jake Medlock,
Redshirt Sophomore
Quarterback

”

offense's night. Cristobal noted that he would need to compete this offseason for a shot to play next year.

"He's got to keep competing. He obviously has a lot of value to this football team," Cristobal said. "I think a lot of people don't realize he was the South

which coach Cramsey has brought over here and he's feeling real comfortable."

A player that burst onto the scene last year and was expected to play a big part of the spring game, Kedrick Rhodes, saw limited action. Cristobal decided to hold Rhodes out of the game

due to a bruised tailbone he sustained earlier in the week of practice.

As much as the offense seemed to struggle, the defense, however, did not have those same issues.

A swarming first unit that always had a nose around the ball carrier picked up right where they left off from last season, where they ranked 22nd in the nation against the run. Redshirt sophomore Justin Halley feels that having continuity is going to be a factor this year.

"I think that last year, scheme wise, we weren't all the way there," Halley said. "We have a new coach every year basically so it took us a little while to get the scheme down but having [another] spring and summer to learn everything is going to help us for next year."

ARTS BEAT

TV/Film acting class offered to broaden curriculum

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The transition from theater to television and film for student actors on campus is being made easier with the help of Introduction to Acting/Directing for TV/Film, a class that exposes them to the various differences between the three types of performances.

“To have a four-year program in the 21st century and not have [a] film [course] is a sin,” said Phillip Church, an associate professor at the Department of Theatre and instructor for the course. “We are doing the students such a disservice without giving them an appreciation for the film.”

Church, who has been battling to get a film program off the ground in previous years, states that the interest is there if only the many factors involved would come together to create it.

“I have gotten student petitions and would have these classes of 30 kids shoot up at the idea of a film program. There are so many nomads who are just wandering, and many of them could find themselves hooked on the new technology—but we have

nothing to offer them.

“I worked out a whole curriculum and presented it to the provost 10 years ago and got shot down because of the football team or [parking] garage or all the reasons why a film program will never happen. I’ve since stopped the battle,” said Church.

While the course, which began five years ago, is only available to bachelor’s of fine art performance majors, Church cannot stress enough the importance of a film or television component for student actors.

“Only BFA performance students can take it, but [theater majors] are all headed into a world of technology that we shouldn’t pretend doesn’t exist. I don’t think TV and film as entertainment forms have been given any serious thought,” said Church.

For Stephanie Sandoval, a junior BFA theater performance major, the class has introduced her to acting in front of the camera and has exposed her to directing behind the camera.

“We realize that, in the U.S., TV and film is bigger and provides more income for actors than theater. It has been very interesting and eye-opening in many ways

that have made me want to pursue acting in front of the camera more than I had thought of before,” said Sandoval.

As part of their training, Church set up auditions for the students at the WLRN studios as well as various camera angles on the first day of class.

“The class started and

but it has to be expanded in front of the cameras; TV is reflective of everyday life.”

Church also notes the wake-up call many students receive when they begin the class after having solely trained for theater, especially with typecasting.

“The typecasting is the big one, but it’s very good because many times

Church. “The theater actor prides themselves in being transformational; being this character one week and another next week. When we go to a movie, however, we all expect to see George Clooney. It’s not a put down but the very life of film.”

The importance of the exercise, Church said, is revealing the reversal energy

the class is more than ready to take on.

“We have to take it seriously and make it big so that people can see what you do; however, you can’t show a moment of dishonesty in front of the camera,” said Franciscus. “One group will write and do the storyboard and another will act, then we will switch. It’s open for the company to use if they should choose to.”

For Church, the class offers a creative outlet for students waiting for their chance.

“They don’t need a theater; they’ve got their cameras and have friends. They can write a script, get a daytime job and wait, but now at least they have this capacity in the area they love the most. It’s win-win; it’s just a shame it can’t get developed into something more,” Church said. “In the meantime, we have to serve our theater and performance students and this class, for my money, is a major element in their development as performers in the 21st century.”

Introduction to Acting/ Directing for TV/Film is being offered for non-BFA performance theater majors this upcoming Summer B.

“We are doing the students such a disservice without giving them an appreciation for [film].”

Phillip Church

Department of Theatre, Associate Professor

[Church] had three cameras set up, and he made us do a screen test. We ended up with four screen tests with us just being in front of the camera and being ourselves—but it helped a lot,” said Missy Franciscus, a junior BFA theater performance major.

“TV is more time-consuming. [Every work day is] 16 hours, and they do different angles. In the end, you have only filmed five minutes,” said Jason Caceres, a junior BFA theater performance major. “There is realism in theater on-stage,

the theater actor can think they’re above TV and film and all of that. It’s a shame because TV and film is the bread and butter—it just can’t be theater,” said Church.

“Beneath the Skin of the Actor,” an exercise in which Church requires the students to pick an actor of the same sex and study their physical and vocal techniques, demonstrates this very idea.

“It starts with the George Clooney syndrome; there is something very bankable and marketable about him,” said

presently going into theater performances.

“There wasn’t one student that didn’t apply things from themselves that they don’t normally apply. It’s trying to touch the essence of that person. Theater today is so open and loose, and reverence seems to have gone out the window,” said Church.

The final project for the course—in which two pairs of students will get together with another to act, write, direct and edit an original commercial of a preexisting product or service—is a task

CAMPUS TRENDS

Ninja Warrior TV preliminaries taped on campus

VANESSA PAREDES
Asst. Life! Editor
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One typically stays late on campus to study or complete an assignment, but last week, hopefuls from all over the east coast stayed into the late hours of the night on the Modesto Maidique Campus to compete for the chance to be the next “American Ninja Warrior.”

Among these competitors was Daniel Lopez, a senior majoring in biology. “I’ve been watching [the show] since it came out,” said Lopez.

Only three locations in the entire country were chosen to film the preliminaries—and the University was one of them.

“We were trying to find a place where it was easy to get everyone together. [Here], there is great weather, people and a good location,” said segment producer Scott Eldin.

The preliminary was filmed in front of the Ryder Business Building between March 27-29

from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m.



PHOTOS BY JAMES LEZCANO/THE BEACON

Students gather to watch the contestants for American Ninja Warrior by the RDB building.

“American Ninja Warrior” is the United States’ version for the original “Ninja Warrior” based in Japan. The series consists of preliminaries and finals where challengers from all over the nation compete against each other. The competition is simple: complete the obstacles with a better

time than the rest.

The actual obstacles are not so simple, though. Contestants face a series of hurdles that only the well trained can conquer. Potential warriors must climb rope ladders at extreme heights, run up a very angled ramp and even make their



way through an alleyway with no floor that is suspended over a pool.

The winner of “American Ninja Warrior” will take home \$500,000, among other prizes.

“[This competition] promotes health and fitness; it’s not a joke,” said Edlin.

The preliminaries will air on

G4, and the finals will air on NBC, according to Eldin. The finalists will then fly out to Las Vegas where they will compete for the prize money, the title of “American Ninja Warrior” and a chance to go to Japan for the ultimate title of “Ninja Warrior.”

SEE NINJA, PAGE 6

EXPLORE INTERNATIONAL

Europe and Asia bring the Turkey to the table

If you happen to be undecided on whether to visit Asia or Europe, why not visit both? Nestled in between Asia and Europe, Turkey, a country considered to hail from both of these continents, is a highly welcoming and multicultural place.

COLUMNIST



HOLLY MCCOACH

Lovers of good food, sunny weather and beautiful Mediterranean beaches will thrive here. Bilal Ciplak, president of Turkish Studies and a graduate student in politics and international relations, is very knowledgeable of the different cultural cities in Turkey. Although Ankara is the capital, his No. 1 tourist spot suggestion is Istanbul, a city that is located in two places at once—no magic involved.

“There is a bridge that connects both sides of Istanbul to Asia and Europe,” said Ciplak.

The bridge, known as the Galata Bridge, may separate both sides of

the city, but the city is no different on each side. As a whole, the city is still full of hustle and bustle and full of many different cultures, much like Miami. It was even voted Cultural Capital of Europe in 2010.

Incredibly ancient and rich with various types of breathtaking architecture, Ciplak suggested visiting the Grand Bazaar (a vast mall with thousands of shops), Hagia Sophia (Istanbul’s chief mosque) and the Blue Mosque. Turkish rugs are quite famous and are popular souvenirs that can be found in the Grand Bazaar.

Food and beverage is a big part of Turkish life as well. Chai tea is a capital drink that is akin to coffee for American culture. Drunk various times throughout the day, chai tea is the principal go-to drink.

“Wherever you go, they give you tea,” said Ciplak. “We have Turkish coffee that we drink, but it is very strong.”

Despite their famous coffee, Turks stick to their tea, which is offered in various restaurants and food shops.



GRAPHIC BY ALEXANDRA SARDI

As for food, the Turkish live on their personal dishes. Fast foods such as Burger King and McDonald’s can be found, but it is rare to dine there, unless you are a homesick American.

Gyro stands are commonly found throughout the country, making it one of the No. 1 food dishes. However, kebabs and hamsi (made with native fish) are quite popular.

Baklava, a sweet pastry dessert, is native to the city of Gaziantep (southern Turkey), but dorma and

salma (stuffed vegetables and leaves with olive oil) can be found in the Mediterranean region.

Due to a combination of Middle Eastern and European culture, fashion is quite diverse.

“The way people dress is very beautiful in Turkey. It is a very cosmopolitan city,” said Ciplak.

Fashion is very important, and it consists of a combination of religious and secular clothing.

Muslim catwalks provide clothing lines for very religious women. As

for secular folk, dressing sloppily is not an option, for the Turkish take their style and fashion seriously.

Although most Turks own cars, a lack of one does not create difficulty as it would in the United States.

“We have very efficient public transportation,” said Ciplak. These forms of transportation include trains, buses, taxis, boats, ferries and so forth. Cars are more of a luxury, and since transportation is so attainable, it is normal for tourists and natives alike to travel publicly.

Although Turkey is generally very sunny, snowbirds can head to the northern border by the Black Sea for cooler weather, while beach lovers can enjoy hot weather on the southeastern border by the Mediterranean.

With rich culture and gorgeous weather, anyone with desperate traveling fetishes will not be disappointed on their Euro-Asian trip to Turkey.

Explore International is a bi-weekly travel column where Holly McCoach interviews students and alumni about their native countries.

Warriors try out at RDB

NINJA, PAGE 5

Lopez hoped that the skills he honed as a gymnast and a martial artist gave him that extra edge he needed to stand out among the rest. The results of Lopez’s attempt will not be made available until the show airs in July.

Students were surprised to see the immense obstacle course being set up last week on campus.

“I was shocked, but it’s a great way to get

the University’s name out there, and in general, is going to be awesome for the students to see all the production and TV series in their own college,” said Jorge Cardenas, a freshman engineer major.

Whether you attended the overnight competition or just noticed the obstacle course being set up on campus, “American Ninja Warrior” was a part of the University for three days—and many students were excited that this campus was the chosen one.

UPCOMING EVENTS

2 MONDAY

NATURE PRESERVE, GARDEN & COMPOSTING TOUR

WHEN: 10 -11 a.m.
WHERE: Preserve main entrance across from the Rec Center

MEATLESS MONDAYS LUNCH KICKOFF

WHEN: 12-1 p.m.
WHERE: Fresh Foods Company in GC

WINDOW GARDENS WORKSHOP

WHEN: 4-5 p.m.
WHERE: Housing Quad

NATURE PRESERVE, GARDEN & COMPOSTING TOUR

WHEN: 5:15-6:15 p.m.
WHERE: Preserve main entrance across from the Rec Center

SCREENING OF “DIRT! THE MOVIE”

WHEN: 8-10 p.m.
WHERE: GoGreen Lawn between Panther Parking Garage & Century Bank Arena

3 TUESDAY

FIU FACULTY JAZZ ENSEMBLE

WHEN: 3:30-5 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$15.00 General Admission, \$10.00 Seniors and FIU Faculty/Staff, \$5.00 FIU Students and Alumni Association Members
WHERE: Herbert & Nicole Wertheim Performing Arts Center, Concert Hall

AGROECOLOGY SYMPOSIUM

WHEN: 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
WHERE: MARC Building Pavilion

CAPTAIN PLANET & THE FIU PANTHERTEERS

WHEN: 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
WHERE: GC Pit

GO PLANET! BASEBALL GAME

WHEN: 6 p.m.
WHERE: Baseball Stadium

TO HAVE YOUR EVENT FEATURED EMAIL:

CALENDAR@FIUSM.COM

Tweet Beat!



@TIME: Canada cancels its penny. Is the US penny next? - On Canada's decision to stop making the penny because it doesn't make "cents."

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

SGA ELECTIONS

★★ 2012 ★★

CAMPAIGN WEEK • 3/28 - 4/4

WEDNESDAY 3/28 • KICKOFF
GC PIT • 12 NOON

THURSDAY 3/29 • MEET & GREET
LAKEVIEW NORTH LOUNGE • 5PM-6PM

MONDAY 4/2 • SENATE DEBATE
GC PIT • 11AM

MONDAY 4/2 • PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE
GC PIT • 12 NOON

TUESDAY 4/3 - 4/4 • FIU ELECTIONS

THURSDAY 4/5 • ANNOUNCEMENT

SGA.FIU.EDU



THE BEACON RECOMMENDS VOTING GUIDE

Visit fiusm.com for an updated elections guide

PRESIDENT/VICE PRESIDENT

Modesto Maidique Campus

SANJEEV UDHNANI (P)
CONNOR MAUTNER (VP)



Sanjeev Udhvani and Connor Mautner are MAD—Making A Difference.

The Beacon commends them for their dedication to the student body and recommends that students give their vote to the team that plans on improving the University.

As current Vice President for the Student Government Council at the Modesto Maidique Campus, Udhvani will be able to easily transition into the role of president and continue ongoing projects with expertise and ease.

If elected as president, Udhvani will vote against all proposals regarding tuition increases.

“It’s not enough for us to complain that tuition is high, we need to collaborate across the state,” said Udhvani.

Mautner has been the executive assistant to SGC-MMC President Patrick O’Keefe.

In addition to sustaining his responsibilities, Mautner was able to prepare and present a comprehensive solar panel proposal.

The proposal aims to save the University over \$30,000,000 in just six years.

Through his proposal, it is evident that he is meticulous, organized and prepared to work—necessary qualities for a successful vice president.

SAMIR PATEL (P) / ANDRES WU (VP)



Samir Patel and Andres Wu are a good team; however, Wu’s inexperience with Student

Government is disconcerting.

Although, Wu has been actively involved with the Residence Hall Association, his lack of participation within Student Government suggests an isolated understanding of student politics, whereas, with the Udhvani/Mautner ticket, both candidates will have spent a full academic year immersed in executive

politics, with an eye over—and, hopefully, a firm grasp on—the ripple-effect of the needs, productivity, and indiscretions of every government element.

Additionally, Patel’s involvement with the Coalition of Students for Reform brings into question his potential governing skills. We believe that their platform is too similar to CSR’s.

LAURA FARINAS (P) / ALEX CASTRO (VP)



Laura Farinas and Alex Castro want to “Put Students First.”

However, their platform merely

states what they plan on accomplishing, not their tactics to achieve those goals. We do feel that this ticket’s ideas are innovative, but outside issues surrounding them discouraged our vote.

While their platform aims for transparency, we question the integrity of their ticket due to Farinas’ involvement with underage drinking at last year’s intern retreat

and her failure to directly address it to the student body.

Additionally, Farinas and Castro are currently dating. While they claim that they are able to keep their relationship separate from their work, we can not help but be skeptical.

Should they break up while in office, its influence on the presidency could be problematic.

Biscayne Bay Campus: Uncontested



PABLO HASPEL (P)
OLUWATOBI ADEKOYA (VP)

Due to the fact that Student Government Council elections at Biscayne Bay Campus are uncontested, *The Beacon* will not recommend any of its candidates.

Platform aside; however, it’s doubtful that these two will be able to work together.

There have been two separate grievances filed with the SGC-BBC Supreme Court.

Presidential candidate Pablo Haspel has filed a grievance against his running-mate, Oluwatobi Adekoya, and Adekoya filed one against Haspel.

SGC-BBC politics have been plagued all year with strife among its members, and even now change seems unlikely given that, before elections have even begun, the single presi-

dential ticket has already been divided by personal differences.

Realistically, knowing that the elections were going to be uncontested, the candidates should have reconciled their differences.

It just goes to show that if Haspel or Adekoya is your running mate, you don’t need an opponent.

SGC-MMC SENATE

SEATS

SENATOR-AT-LARGE

ARTS AND SCIENCES

HOUSING

BUSINESS

LOWER DIVISION

HONORS COLLEGE

ENGINEERING

ARCHITECTURE AND THE ARTS SENATOR*

EDUCATION*

GRADUATE*

NURSING AND HEALTH SCIENCES*

PUBLIC HEALTH AND SOCIAL WORK*

THE BEACON RECOMMENDS

Giovanni Castro, Nicole Buchely, Boris Dan Aparicio Jr.

Carlos M. Chueca, Kristen Barros, Andrew Garcia, Andrew Withers, Stephanie Wietrzychowski

Christopher Lebrun, Michele “Mich” Feldman

Celia Valle, James Harden, Jocelyn Cardenas

Nicholas “Nick” Alvarez, Benjamin “Ben” Rosa, Vanessa Martinez

Raul Alvarez

Bryand Acosta, Laura Gutierrez

N/A

N/A

N/A

N/A

N/A

*CANDIDATES DID NOT RETURN INFORMATION PACKET QUESTIONNAIRE

VOTING INFORMATION

Polls will be open on April 3-4. Voters will be able to vote on either my.fiu.edu or various locations at Modesto Maidique, Biscayne Bay Campus, Pines Center and the Engineering Center.

For an up-to-date version of this voter guide, which includes coverage and analysis of the SGC-MMC Senatorial debates and SGC-BBC Candidate forum, log on to

www.fiusm.com

ELECTIONS

Despite a near splitting of ticket, candidates unite for ‘greater good’

JONATHAN RAMOS
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The Student Government Council at Biscayne Bay Campus’ presidential election is uncontested, but it hasn’t been free of controversy.

Initially a presidential ticket featuring SGC-BBC Speaker of the Senate Pablo Haspel running for president with SGC-BBC Senator at Large Oluwatobi Adekoya as Vice President, there were a slew of dealings that preceded the ticket being finalized.

Adekoya emailed Elections Board Commissioner Weiye Wang on March 5, a week after the deadline, attempting to split the presidential ticket.

In addition, Adekoya also filed a writ of certiorari on March 21 in an attempt to disqualify Haspel because of application concerns, asking the SGC-BBC Supreme Court to rule Haspel ineligible to run for office. Neither of Adekoya’s complaints came to fruition, however, as Haspel was ruled eligible and the original ticket was restored in a March 26 hearing.

“Those are the types of things you need to set aside for the greater good, in this case the student body,” Haspel said. “He’s not here to serve me. I’m not here to serve him. We’re not here to serve each other. We’re here to serve the student body.”

Haspel has since spoken to Adekoya to clear the air, and is confident his running mate will become better acquainted with the council’s governing documents. Adekoya was unavailable for comment at press time.

“I’ve worked with him the entire year in Senate. I am comfortable with his knowledge,” Haspel said, while adding that everyone in the council is thoroughly briefed on the governing documents at the beginning of each semester. “They are very long documents, so every now and then you might have a mishap. You might forget a certain part of it, and that’s completely acceptable.”

Haspel’s platform includes addressing communication between the council and student organizations. This could also alleviate what he calls a “lack of overall student involvement.” Haspel says that although it is hard to tangibly quantify this, he is committed to it.

“I would like to build a foundation,” Haspel said. “Student involvement is not something that happens overnight. It’s something that you set the groundwork for and it begins to transform the student body and student interest. [Working with] SGA, SPC, SOC, Panther Power, BBH, to make sure that they have the tools and we are there to support them to make sure they are able to expand and we are able to expand.”

Haspel feels that communication within the council has also lacked this year.

“Currently there is very little communication between the branches,” he said. “The different branches don’t necessarily always know the sufficient amount of time and what each other is doing. That would be one thing, making sure that Senate know about appointments, about different things that are coming up before nominations

prior to the actual day.”

Haspel will graduate this semester with a bachelor’s degree in economics, international relations and political science and has been accepted to graduate school, where he will pursue a master’s in public administration. Haspel initially joined Student Government as a Senator At Large and Speaker Pro Tempore in the spring of 2011. He was an Honors College Senator from fall 2011 to this spring, in addition to his Speaker of the Senate duties.

Among Haspel’s other goals for his upcoming presidency are pushing for more classes at BBC. While this means ensuring that students voices are heard in regards to class demands, Haspel sees technology playing a big part in the future.

“We have done a lot of expansion in terms of technology in the last few years,” Haspel said. “So what we can do is have smart classes with video links and you are able to have classes here and at [Modesto Maidique Campus] going on simultaneously where you’re able to interact while you’re here, with the professor and with the rest of the class.”

In his SGC-BBC tenure, Haspel has played a large role in the rewriting of the councils statutes last year, while also working closely with Wolfe University Center Director Greg Olson on crafting a three phase plan to renovate the Wolfe Center beginning in the summer of 2012.

SGA elections will take place on April 3 and 4, and students can vote on my.fiu.edu or by stopping by Academic One between 9 a.m. and 7 p.m.



ANDRES BEDOYA/THE BEACON

Presidential candidate Pablo Haspel [left] and his running mate, Oluwatobi Adekoya [right] are running in an uncontested election.

GAS GUZZLER

Increase in gas prices a deciding factor in daily commute

KATHERINE MAS
Contributing Writer
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Gas prices are higher than ever and students affected by it are finding new ways to deal with this economic dilemma and share tips on how to save money and gas.

Prices have risen steadily these past couple of months. According to an article about the US economy on About.com, “High gas prices are usually caused by high prices for crude oil which accounted for 72 percent of the price of gasoline as of February 2012. Distribution and taxes influence the remaining 28 percent of gas prices.”

Other reasons why gas prices have gone up are also due to fears about unrest in Libya and Egypt which sent oil prices up to \$113 a barrel, and summer is right around the corner and prices tend to spike during the summer driving vacation season.

There isn’t much students can do to influence the change in pricing but many are finding ways to save money during these times when jobs are scarce, living is expensive and



ANDRES BEDOYA/THE BEACON

transportation is not a commodity but a necessity.

The lines at the bus stops near the Biscayne Bay Campus grow longer every day and it’s no surprise. Ezell Raudez, a sophomore hospitality major, explained that she used to drive to school occasionally but with prices rising on a daily basis, she would rather wait for the bus to

save money.

Jeffrey Sodusta, a junior and journalism major on campus described how it has affected his daily routines as a student and his personal life.

“I’m not going out as much,” Sodusta said.

He went on to explain how he had to find an alternate route to school in order to conserve gas and

how he keeps a good eye out to not let the car go less than half empty or half full depending on your personal point of view.

Sodusta was also able to share some helpful tips on how to manage and stretch a dollar.

“Plan your routes,” Sodusta said. “If you don’t know where you are going, you are going to waste gas

and money.”

He encouraged eco-friendly cars that offer valuable gas mileage and to shop around for cheap gas without compromising your safety. Pumping gas at a desolate and sketchy gas station offering a cheaper price is not a good idea. “Your life is more valuable than possessions,” Sodusta said.

According to fueconomy.gov, some tips to conserve gas include observing the speed limit, removing excess weight, avoiding idling, and using cruise control when possible.

Aggressive driving such as speeding, rapid acceleration or braking also affect gas. According to fueconomy.gov, “It can lower gas mileage by 33 percent on highways and 5 percent around town.”

Reginald Thermitus, a junior information technology major, commutes from BBC to the Modesto Maidique Campus on a daily basis. Although he drives a BMW 745, Thermitus prefers using the shuttle to take him there and back.

“Gas costs too much,” Thermitus said. “I would rather spend the \$5 to go there and come back rather than spend \$100 in two days.”