

COMPUTER SCIENCE

University focusing on expanding IT department

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Newly appointed Dr. S. Sitharama Iyengar, with support from the University and the School of Computing and Information Sciences, has been working to attract the best and brightest students and faculty in an effort to break into the country's top 30 research institution.

"I fell in love with this university, and it's potential to be great," said Iyengar, who completed his first semester at the University. "Prior to me being at FIU, I spent 20 years at LSU taking their Robotics Research Laboratory from obscurity into prominence to which it today enjoys a top 30 ranking. I feel that this department and FIU as a whole can compete with the likes of MIT, Cal Tech and Stanford."

Recently, *The Huffington Post* noted FIU as a university "working hard to expand their allure to those wishing to get into

IT fields, entrepreneurship in tech, etc," after hosting the 2011 Venture Capital Conference.

Aside from regular funding the school receives, it has procured external funding in excess of 4 million dollars from the Department of Energy, and National Science Foundation to name a few in an effort to develop cutting edge systems for the public and private sector to use.

The Department has also developed a partnership with Citrix Systems, a leading developer in cloud based technologies, to bring world renowned Computer Scientists as part of their Distinguished Lecture Series, of which some are from the Oak Ridge National Laboratory.

When asked why the University is focusing its resources on information technology, Iyengar responded, "Computer Science and Information Sciences is like a heart, we sit in the center of the

information world and connect every discipline to each other."

When asked how CIS accomplishes this he gave a few examples.

"Whether it be in collaboration with the Architecture school and their students in Urban Planning, we facilitate software that will allow for the efficient flow of traffic and the ability to develop a system where if a student needs to find parking they will be able to look on a screen and be given the information with the highest probability of parking."

Shaynne Mantilla, a junior studying business administration felt it was "interesting, to see how small businesses could capitalize on the efficiency the IT field could provide in expanding their growth, and if the benefit would out value the initial cost of implementation and the sustained cost of maintaining an IT department."

Emily Silva, Senior

SEE CLASSES, PAGE 2

GETTING CRAFTY



ALEXANDRA SARDI/THE BEACON

Students gathered in the GC Pit to customize their own corkboard, an event hosted by SPC for the Week of Welcome in an effort to promote academic organization.

STUDENT EVENTS

Martin Luther King parade receives extra funds

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In honor of doctor Martin Luther King, Jr. FIU hosts a myriad of events to commemorate his work every year, and has been doing so for the past 21 years.

This year's is expected to be one of the largest yet, having combined the efforts of Multicultural Programs and Services, the Black Student Union, the Student Government Association, Parking and Transportation and other groups around campus.

Last year, MPAS was able to ascertain donors for the purposes of providing buses for students to attend the event.

This year, such was not the case.

Unable to get a hold of the donations necessary to fund the transportation, MPAS ultimately sought help from the SGA.

"We dipped into our discretionary fund," said Sanjeev Udhvani, SGC-MMC

vice president, "this is the third time this year; the discretionary fund is meant to fund services to students. This was something important, as was sending Body and Soul to London, and giving money to Hope for Children of the World this summer."

SGA put forward \$1,400 from the discretionary account that will go towards providing two buses and three drivers for the MLK event next week.

"We want 1-2 buses more for students. MPAS would like to see more buses. We're playing to what we have right now," Udhvani said, "The event is only a week away, we funded what he had originally expected."

According to Udhvani, 250-300 students went last year to participate in the parade and more are expected to come this year.

Buses will arrive on campus at 7:30 a.m., and leave at 9 a.m.

"A lot of students are going and

“We want 1 to 2 buses more for students... We're playing to what we have right now.”

Sanjeev Udhvani,
Vice President
SGC-MMC

this year we have a float to represent the FIU community."

The event will be broadcast on television, and will be located along 54th street and 17th avenue.

It is projected that between 5,000-8,000 people will attend the event next week.

has been an active contributor every year to the events that commemorate the legacy of MLK.

Jerron Jackson-Johnson, president of BSU, explained the contributions that the organization has made this year to the events sponsored by MPAS.

"BSU has produced volunteers for the various events as well as financial contributions," he said, "There are ushers and volunteers that will be helping out with the breakfast, day of service, parade, youth forum and peace walk and MLK dinner. BSU has planned the MLK Dinner

SEE MLK, PAGE 2

wearing their organization and club t-shirts," Udhvani said, "unlike last year where we had a caravan of convertibles,

COMING UP | Life!

Check out the Jan. 16 issue for the Spring Arts Preview on the University's upcoming theatre, art and music season.

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NEWS FLASH

LOCAL

Renowned Violinist Visits Florida Schools

A renowned violinist is visiting South Florida high schools, hoping to encourage a love of classical music among younger generations.

Russian-born Alexander Markov will meet with students from more than a dozen Miami schools this week. He has performed at Carnegie Hall and often adds a rock twist to his classical repertoire.

Markov will rehearse with students and some will perform with him in the Rock Concerto at the Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden on Jan. 27.

Money raised for the concert will go toward Spend-for-ED, a non-profit organization that provides schools with financial support to pursue new initiatives.

NATIONAL

Ky. Amish men say they won't budge on buggy fight

On Jacob Gingerich's farm in western Kentucky, there is no phone or electricity for his family of 12 children. He even sees putting an orange safety triangle on their black horse-drawn buggy as a violation of the simple and pious life his Amish faith requires.

He and other Amish men in rural Graves County have become scofflaws for not using the reflective signs, ignoring state law, disobeying orders from a judge and even going to jail for not paying fines.

To Gingerich and others in the conservative Amish community known as Swartzentruber, using the bright reflective symbol amounts to blasphemy. They consider it garish and believe they should rely on God, not symbols, for protection on the highway.

– Compiled by Melissa Caceres

CORRECTIONS

In Vol. 23, Issue 50 of *The Beacon* in the News section, the article titled "Pell Grants avoid government cuts" states that Carlos Becerra is attributed to the quote "The changes are geared to tackle students who have been here too long," he continued, "the reactions from students towards what has been discussed with regards to Pell over the past few months are overall positive. The cuts have to come from somewhere." The quote was made by SGA President Patrick O'Keefe.

Celebration continues to recognize King

MLK, PAGE 1

that will be co-sponsored by Campus Life and Residential Life."

This year there are a few new events for the MLK events.

These include a movie night on January 17th,

"We know that our contributions ... are another way for us to do so, but it does not stop there."

Jerron Jackson-Johnson,
President
Black Student Union

MLK Law Night about the murder of Emmett Till on January 23rd and a Forum on January 25th.

"The MLK Breakfast will hold about 570 people, the Day of Service will have about 250 students from FIU, Parade will have about 240 students, and the MLK Dinner will have about 170 in attendance,"

detailed Jackson-Johnson.

"SGA has helped substantially towards the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. initiative," he said, "They have supplied funds that helped the committee secure buses for students to travel to the MLK Parade and other MLK events as well. SGA supports in any way they can and we appreciate their efforts."

The different organizations around the University have taken part in orchestrating the events in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and provide an opportunity for students to remember and reflect on his deeds.

"The goal of BSU is to make a difference," Jackson-Johnson said, "We know that our contributions to the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemorative Celebration are another way for us to do so, but it does not stop there."

Students are encouraged to go to the events that start next week, and moreover those who can are encouraged to donate what they can for events of this nature in the future, and for the provisions the University's

TWENTY-FIRST ANNUAL REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. COMMEMORATIVE CELEBRATION CONTINUED

Monday, January 16, 2012, 8:00 am – [Free to Public]
MLK Parade
Location: Liberty City

Tuesday, January 17, 2012, 7:00 pm – 10:30pm – [Free to Public]
MLK Movie Night
Modesto Maidique Campus – DM-100

Wednesday, January 18, 2012, 10:00 am – 12:30 pm – [Free to Public]
MLK Youth Forum and Peace Walk – Local Schools
Keynote Speaker: Raquel Wright, Assistant Director, Career Services, FIU
Biscayne Bay Campus, Wolfe University Ballroom

Wednesday, January 18, 2012, 7:00 pm – [Free to Students]
MLK Dinner
Modesto Maidique Campus – Graham University Center – GC-243

Monday, January 23rd, 2012, 6:00 pm – [Free to Public]
MLK Law Night
Modesto Maidique Campus – College of Law – RDB-1000

organizations make available for students to access higher education.

Jackson-Johnson further elaborated, "Information for the events can be found on the website, mpas.fiu.edu. Donations are accepted for the MLK Scholarships that the Office of Multicultural Programs and Services gives."

CLASSES, PAGE 1

focusing in computer

Professor develops department

science didn't really seem to concern herself with possible outcomes she took an opportunist approach.

"I'm glad to hear the IT field is making headway in the job market, having the ability to be involved in various industries allows for personal growth. The IT field is one of the pioneering industries when it comes to connecting people, and businesses globally with each other."

For Iyengar, no amount of faculty could ever replace quality students. He attributes all of his success to his students, having graduated 42 Ph.D. students and author of over

400 research papers he believes in "exploring and nurturing every student's creative talent and point their effort in the right direction."

One program Iyengar hopes to inaugurate before the end of the semester is what he calls a, "Discovery Lab."

The sole concentration of this lab is to behave as an arbiter for the students at FIU to apply for Patents and Intellectual Property Rights all in an effort to bring further visibility and notoriety to the students, University and region. Dr. Iyengar continues, "Much like Silicon Valley in Cali-

fornia, I want that same attention to be paid to Miami and FIU so that a sort of 'FIU Valley' is in essence born."

Jessica Robles, sophomore studying art put it plainly about the growing interest FIU has in IT students, "I think it's cool, it's just like the IBM commercial making a smarter planet, it all seems to be coming true!"

"Our goal as professors of CIS is to master the art of global innovation and in that regard give our students the tools they need to be the leaders of the world for the next century," said Iyengar.



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MEN'S BASKETBALL

Allen packs a scoring punch in Panthers backcourt

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The game of basketball has been good to senior guard Jeremy Allen. While traveling is seen as a negative play within the game, because of basketball, this Detroit native has been afforded the opportunity to travel across the country to be around some of the best talent the game has to offer. For Allen, his introduction to basketball had its humble beginnings.

Allen first stepped foot on the hardwood while in elementary school.

"I was horrible when I first started out," Allen said. Through his hard work and the guiding hand of his then coach, Robert Giles, Allen made steady improvements.

"I really had to teach myself and coach Giles was the first one to really give me a chance to play basketball."

With early success on the court came expanded opportunities entering his high school years. AAU basketball is reserved for the best talents within its local area to travel across the country to play other high schoolers with the hopes of grabbing the attention of Division I coaches for a potential scholarship.

For Allen, his chance to play on the big stage against some of the best in the nation was during his junior year at the Big-Time basketball tournament in Las Vegas. His play garnered him first-team all tournament honors. His name on the first-team was alongside current NBA players O.J. Mayo, Eric

Gordon, Jeff Teague, Bill Walker, DeAndre Jordan, Brandon Jennings, Kevin Love and Derrick Rose.

"Just to see my name on that list, that was a big moment in my life," Allen said.

One of his running mates on his AAU team is another "Motown" native who also calls U.S. Century Bank Arena home: DeJuan Wright. "We grew up together. We've been playing together for a moment," said Allen.

The current duo in the backcourt has been the scoring punch for the Panthers this season. Wright leads the team with 15.9 points per game, while Allen follows with 13.6 points per game.

Allen's next step was



JOSEPH KOSANKE/THE BEACON

SEE ALLEN, PAGE 4

Allen [right] ranks eighth in the Sun Belt in points per game (3.3) and first in steals (2.9).

SAND VOLLEYBALL

FIU set to begin competing in NCAA level by spring of 2013

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Though the sands of time have expired for former FIU head volleyball coach Danijela Tomic, the New Year has rung in the sands of change. Literally.

Coinciding with Tomic's departure was the announcement of women's sand volleyball being added to FIU. The program is set to begin competition in spring 2013 at NCAA Division I level.

According to the American Volleyball Coaches Association, there are currently 17 programs of sand volleyball in the nation. FAU and FSU already have established programs.

Sand volleyball encompasses five doubles teams on each side that square off against another program. According to the AVCA, matches between sand volleyball pairs could be conducted as best-of-three-set competitions, with rally scoring to 21 points in the first two sets and to 15 in the third (teams must win by at least two points in all cases).

Tabbed to be the head coach of the new Division I program is the newly appointed Assistant Athletic Director and Director of Volleyball Operations, Rita Buck-Crockett. Buck-Crockett is a former Olympic medalist in sand volleyball with over 30 years of experience both as a coach and player.

Before joining FIU, she owned and operated the North Florida

Volleyball Academy, while also coaching the Maclay High School varsity squad. She served as the associate head coach in FSU from 2004-06 and the head coach for the University of Iowa from 1998-2004.

Buck-Crockett is excited to see the program launch at FIU and anticipates that the student body, as well as the athletes themselves, will quickly grow to enjoy sand volleyball.

"It's a growing sport. It's a fun sport. It's very athletic. It's an Olympic sport. It's got the glamor to it," said Buck-Crockett. "I think that it will be very popular with the NCAA."

Buck-Crockett stated that there will be three sand volleyball courts to be built at the Modesto Maidique Campus to host tournaments and train student-athletes. There are already two sand courts in place at MMC. In addition, she foresees South Beach as a possible destination for future tournaments.

Buck-Crockett wants to host a Beach Indoor Day later "some time in March or April" where she invites several schools that already have sand volleyball programs to FIU to come and play for a mini tournament.

Though there are currently no players officially listed as playing for FIU sand volleyball, Buck-Crockett is confident she will have a makeshift roster by the Beach Indoor Day. In addition, she plans on having the first recruits for sand

volleyball by fall 2012.

"I know we have some players that want to play. I'm sure I can get 2-3 teams that would want to represent FIU [on Beach Indoor Day]," said Buck-Crockett. "There have been beach players that are FIU students that have contacted me also."

Buck-Crockett was quick to mention that she will not force any of the current indoor volleyball players to participate in Beach Indoor Day, but that she is confident that a few of them will want to partake in the event.

Though the ongoing national search for the indoor volleyball coach is still underway, Buck-Crockett already has lofty goals for the program Tomic helped be a force in the Sun Belt Conference.

"Our goal is to be a powerhouse in Florida and also nationally. The gauge of that would be top 20, top 10, Final Four. That's not easy," said Buck-Crockett. "FIU has everything there to do it."

SAND VOLLEYBALL FACTS

- There are only 17 programs of sand volleyball in the nation.
- Five doubles teams on each side will square off against another school.
- Matches will consist of best-of-three-set competitions, with rally scoring to 21 points in the first two sets and to 15 in the third set.

MEN'S SOCCER

Munga Eketebi ousted as head coach after four losing seasons

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It has been over two months since the soccer season finished. Now, Munga Eketebi, men's head coach for soccer, is finished at FIU. He has been a Panther for over 25 years, where he played college soccer from 1983-86. After that, he was an assistant coach before being hired as the head coach of the team in 2007 as the successor of Karl Kremser.

In his head-coaching career, Eketebi posted a record of 25-52-10, never being able to capture a Conference USA championship. Executive Director for Sports and Entertainment Pete Garcia has begun to look for his replacement.

"We expect our men's soccer program to compete at the highest level and we'll bring in the best possible candidate to accomplish that goal," Garcia said.

The men's soccer program at FIU has a very storied past. In 1982, the Panthers won the first and only national championship in the history of the school, defeating Southern Connecticut State 2-1 for the Division II championship. Eketebi scored six goals in the playoff run that the Panthers made toward the championship.

Then, two years later, the Panthers won the title again after defeating Seattle Pacific University 1-0. Then, in 1996, the Panthers reached the highest point in the Division I history of the school. They reached the national championship game, but failed to win, falling to St. John's 4-1. Since 1991, the Panthers have qual-



COURTESY OF FIU SPORTS

Eketebi served 25 years at FIU as a player, assistant, and head coach.

ified for the NCAA tournament eight different times, but never under Eketebi.

They have also won four Atlantic Sun Conference titles from 2000-2004 before joining Conference USA in 2005. Since joining Conference USA, the team has gone 13-39-5, finishing in last place three of the past four seasons.

"We have begun a national search for FIU's next men's soccer coach. We want to thank Munga Eketebi for over 25 years of service here at FIU as player, assistant coach and head coach," Garcia said.

Although the search has begun, no candidates have surfaced yet and a date has not been announced as to when the position will be filled. The season is set to begin in August.

In his career at FIU, Eketebi scored 50 goals, tied for the most all-time. He also had 124 career points, which ranks him second among Panthers.

Since transfer, Allen has found recent success

ALLEN, PAGE 3

to the college ranks and to nearby Central Michigan University. In his two seasons as a Chippewas, Allen struggled as his scoring average was less than 10 points per game in both seasons. Compounded with less playing time in his second season, Allen was granted to transfer from Central Michigan.

The transfer process was made easier for Allen when his former assistant coach at Central Michigan, William Eddie, was named an assistant at FIU. The man who hired Eddie was none other than Detroit Pistons legend and current FIU head coach Isiah Thomas.

"They came to a camp that I was playing in a scrimmage and coach Thomas came down and [was] sitting there watching me. I think that was the hardest that I have ever played in my life," a chuckling Allen said. "I just wanted to show how many skills I had."

Allen's skills also included his knack for stealing the basketball.

"He is very active. He is one of the leaders in steals in

the country," coach Thomas said of Allen's defensive abilities. Not only does Allen's 42 steals lead the Panthers, but he is ranked third in Division I basketball in individual steals this season.

His hard work paid off as Allen was given a scholarship to begin play at FIU in the 2010-2011 season. During his transfer year in 2009, Allen put in the work to learn coach Thomas' offensive and defensive philosophy.

In this, his final season at FIU, Allen is posting some of his best numbers in his college career. His points per game, rebounds and assists are all up from previous seasons. This season has also included a dramatic game-winner against Coastal Carolina and being voted team captain.

"It's a great honor. I just try to lead by example and [try] helping the younger [players]," Allen said of his captainship. As Allen comes down the stretch of his college career, he wants to leave his mark on FIU basketball. "I leave it all on the floor and I play every game like it is my last."



JOSEPH KOSANKE/THE BEACON

Allen ranks second in the Sun Belt in free throw shooting percentage (92.5), only missing four foul shots all season.

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CAMPUS LIFE

Develop awareness by studying religion

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Some professors can teach a student more about themselves than the subject that they teach. Erin Weston, professor of religious studies, is one of those people.

"We live in a diverse world, and students will undoubtedly come into contact with people who have vastly different world views than they have," said Weston. "We have many world-class scholars in our department who can help you explore these various perspectives."

Weston, a former student and current adjunct professor in the Department of Religious Studies, feels passionate about what she does here at the University. Last semester she taught a course titled Sects and Cults online, and is now teaching Magic and Religions during the Spring semester.

"I have been doing some research on the Santo Daime religion, as well as Neo-Shamanism in the States. My research tends to focus on the syncretism that occurs during cultural contact. I am also highly interested in the visual and artistic manifestations of these ideas as they occur in popular culture," Weston said.

That all can seem a little confusing and technical to someone

whose major does not seem at all related to culture or religion. One may consider religious studies to be a field for only the devout or the intellectual. Not so, Weston said.

"I tend to believe that anything that will increase your understanding of the world will also help increase your enjoyment of life. Frankly, I study it because I think it's fascinating. Of course there are many practical benefits, too. A student in any field or business that is at all international will benefit from this knowledge. Why not give yourself that extra edge?" she said.

According to Weston, students who seek to be "Worlds Ahead," religion could be that important "extra edge" in a well-rounded education.

"Ultimately, I am interested in people and culture, and I don't think that you can understand a group of people without understanding their basic religious and cultural assumptions," Weston added.

Be that as it may, there are students who undoubtedly are seeking a deeper spiritual fulfillment as they participate in these courses.

As students begin to develop their understanding of the world, many naturally develop religious and spiritual questions. Weston

SEE RELIGION, PAGE 6

CLASS REUNION

Inner city kid turned violinist

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Alumnus Kev Marcus credits his musical beginnings to the desk job he had at the Green Library while he was an undergrad.

"As Black Violin was being created, I was just starting to mess around with the production of music. There was a music lab on the fifth floor [of the library]. I was working at the info desk on the second floor, so I would spend hours on the fifth floor producing music. FIU gave me that outlet," said Marcus.

Since graduating in 2003 with a bachelor's in music, Marcus has become an accomplished musician and producer.

The violinist's lengthy resume with his partner Wil B. in their group Black Violin includes performing with Alicia Keys, touring with Mike Shinoda of Linkin Park and a contract to perform at the Super Bowl tailgate later this year. Black Violin fuses hip-hop and classical music to create a totally unique sound. The South Floridian natives will be performing at the Miramar Cultural Center on Saturday, Jan. 14 at 8 p.m.

Q: Where did the inspiration for Black Violin come from?

A: [My partner Wil and I] grew up in tougher neighborhoods in Ft. Lauderdale, and we weren't afforded a lot of opportunities. But one of our opportunities was playing music and interpreting music in [a] public magnet school. Coming from a hard background, we listened to Biggie,



PHOTO COURTESY OF BLACK VIOLIN

Kev Marcus [right] graduated from the University in 2003 and has since become a musician and producer that has worked with big names.

Busta Rhymes or Jay-Z and then headed to second period orchestra class. It was almost fate. We were hip-hop enough and classical enough to make this work. We were young inner city black kids who studied the violin and took it seriously.

Q: How did you two meet?

A: We met as band partners at Dillard High School in Ft. Lauderdale, and we were in the same orchestra class.

Q: How do you describe your style?

A: I would say we're hip-hop meets classical. That alone sounds crazy. Imagine going to iTunes and seeing hip-hop and classical. That's our sound—and it works. Because people like hip-hop, you'll like us, and if you like classical, you'll like us, but you don't need to like both to have to like us. That's the cool thing.

We have a little funk in there, and we play a lot of jazz. And we play classical instruments in a classical way. A little bit of jazz, funk, reggae — there's something for everybody.

Q: You have worked with a number of very talented musicians. Who did you have the most honor to work with?


A: First was Alicia Keys. We did the Billboard Awards with her in 2003, and we were playing a hard violin line with her live in front of millions of viewers. Now, she's a hall of fame-r, but she was really hot at the time. I'm just honored to have been part of her career in any way, shape or form. I gained valuable experience from playing with Alicia. The second person was Mike

SEE VIOLIN, PAGE 6

REEL TO REEL

"Tinker" not enough substance for spy film fans

Unlike the action-packed James Bond films you might know and love, Tomas Alfredson's film, "Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy," is the sort of movie that will pique the interest of any espionage fans.

COLUMNIST

JUAN BARQUIN

Based on John le Carre's 1974 novel of the same name, the film stars Gary Oldman as George Smiley, a recently retired intelligence officer. Smiley is enlisted to investigate and expose a mole in the Circus, the highest rank of the Secret Intelligence Service.

Along with the help of Peter Guillan (Benedict Cumberbatch), Smiley must look into the lives of all four members of the Circus, each nicknamed by the previous chief control (John Hurt) before his passing. These code names, used in order to relay information about the identity of the spy, are Tinker, Tailor, Soldier,



PHOTO COURTESY OF FOCUS

Gary Oldman plays George Smiley, a retired intelligence officer, in Tomas Alfredson's new film.

Poorman, and Beggarman.

Having previously directed the stunning film "Let the Right One in," Alfredson reminds audiences that he still knows how to make something absolutely gorgeous. Working with Hoyte van Hoytema, director of photography, he creates an entrancing image of England in the 1970s that fits perfectly with the film's dark mystique.

Art direction, especially set

design, is particularly notable, especially when contained in smaller locations such as the brilliant orange, smoke-filled room where the Circus congregates for many discussions.

The music for the film, composed by Alberto Iglesias, is used ever so subtly throughout. It is never distracting and adds to the mood that has been set, filling those moments where

silence just does not feel right.

With a large cast like the one featured in this film, it is often hard to recognize the best players. Practically everyone — including Colin Firth, John Hurt, Tom Hardy, Tom Jones and Mark Strong — did a fine job playing their characters, each giving believable performances and fitting right into the events taking place around them. However, the two most

notable performances are those of Oldman and Cumberbatch.

Oldman, who never ceases to amaze regardless of the role, dives into the character of Smiley without hesitation. His clever and soft-spoken performance as Smiley manages to be commanding without taking away from anyone else.

Cumberbatch, who is best known for his work in "Sherlock," stands out due to his ability to take on any role he is given. He portrays the character's naivete without compromising his intelligence and ability to hold his own against his superiors.

Unfortunately, looks and performances — while extremely beneficial — do not make a great film on their own. One of this production's biggest problems is pacing, which is quite uneven within the film's span of two hours. "Tinker, Tailor" is a slow burner, lingering on silent glances or stares fairly often and taking

SEE TINKER, PAGE 6

HAUTE TOPIC

What to wear when the weather is down to 70 degrees without going overboard

I love the brief winters we have in South Florida because I get to break out the boots and blazers that have been lurking in the back of my closet for months. For most of the year, I live in shorts and tank tops, but for a few weeks (or months, if we are lucky) I can wear layers and pretend like I live in the northeast.

I see two types of sartorial reactions by students when cooler temperatures hit: half throw on peacoats and scarves leftover from a vacation to New York City, and the other half are still wearing shorts and flip-flops. The solution to this confusion about weather-appropriate ensembles in the cooler months is transitional dressing.

A few months ago, I noticed on thesartorialist.com a tag

called transitional dressing. Girls in New York and Paris were wearing shorts with blazers or a heavy sweater with a minidress. It sounds like it would look ridiculous, but it looks totally appropriate for the beginning of fall, which is similar to the temperatures we have down south.

The key is to integrate winter-friendly items into your summer wardrobe so you can wear them all year-round.

As far as clothing goes, a few pieces that I would recommend are a blazer or light jacket, a leather jacket and an oversized sweater or cardigan.

Blazers are excellent transitional pieces. Throw one over a button-down and jeans and you are sure to stay cozy through the sometimes bone-chilling mornings. During the spring and summer, blazers do well with breezy minidresses or a tank top and shorts.

An oversized sweater in a neutral color would look

great in the winter with bright skinny jeans and boots, but is also appropriate in the spring with a miniskirt and sandals. A leather jacket could be thrown over a summery maxidress or a tee and shorts. As far as shoes go, a pair of leather knee-high boots and a flowy mid-length dress looks effortless.

A lot of these combinations depend on mixing and matching textures. Do not be afraid to clash; a masculine black leather jacket looks great with a floral top or lace dress. Structured and unstructured works very well, too, like a long flowing dress and a blazer with sharp, architectural lines.

Making sure you know your proportions well is important. Short boots do not work with every length bottom; try to avoid them with short dresses or skirts. Unless your legs are unbelievably long, you will most likely end up shortening yourself. Instead, wear long boots with shorter bottoms to

elongate your legs.

Another easy way to winterize your wardrobe is investing in a few pair of cozy tights and scarves. Worn with dresses and shorts, tights can easily make any dress ready for a night out in January. Scarves — not knitted, only fabric — can be worn with a cardigan to keep you a little warmer in the subzero temperatures in classrooms.

Lastly, do not get overzealous about the opportunity to break out your winter threads. This is hardly the type of weather that calls for hats, gloves or fur-lined boots.

Experiment with your closet and inject a few cooler-weather-friendly pieces slowly but surely. The more you wear them, the more you will realize how double-duty a blazer or jacket could be.

Haute Topic is a weekly fashion column. Esra Erdogan has many credit cards. Email: esra.erdogan@fiusm.com

Readers may gain more from 'Tinker'

TINKER, PAGE 5

its time to build up to anything substantial. The chronology of the film bounces around plenty, and with an immense set of characters, it is hard to keep track of what is going on at times without previously knowing the material.

On a first viewing, one might find that it gets exhausting after a certain point, but this does not mean that it is not worth watching. In fact, the complex plot is well-deserving of multiple viewings, slowly piecing together the film with each consecutive watch.

However, it is more than likely that the lucky individuals who have read the novel or watched the BBC miniseries based on it will have a better chance of enjoying this film the first time around.

With any luck, anyone who found "Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy" interesting but felt they needed more information (like myself) will choose to heed my suggestions and explore the film further, allowing themselves a broader perspective on what is quite the well-made espionage that just needed to offer a little more substance for its audience.

Reel to Reel is a weekly book review column. Juan Barquin is an intern for the Miami International Film Festival. Email: life@fiusm.com

Professor believes that study of religion teaches reflection

RELIGION, PAGE 5

understands this very well, and is not here to only research and grade papers.

"Because of the types of classes that I teach, many students have come to me over the years in search of advice or guidance for spiritual and mystical matters. I am deeply moved by their entrusting me with such personal experiences. I always do my best to point them in a positive direction."

The University's Department of Religious Studies is very impressive. It includes a host of very highly qualified professors, and has even been visited numerous times by the Dalai Lama. Yet, despite this, the department is still often underrated, according to Weston.

"I hope to see this change. Much of this is probably due to some confusion as to what we do. Many people, even other colleagues at the University, do not realize

that we teach about religion; we are not teaching people to be religious."

However, Weston has personally been satisfied with her time at the University.

"Ultimately, I have been very happy with my choice [of institution]. I have been so impressed with FIU's continued growth over the years," Weston said, "and I have had many wonderful experiences over the years as both a student and as an educator."

Marcus bends genres by fusing hip-hop, classical

VIOLIN, PAGE 5

Shinoda from Linkin Park. [He was doing a side project], and we toured Asia. It was incredible to travel the world and see everything through the rock star lifestyle. We were so lucky to work with two superstar artists, but they were so humble and chill and cool people. I loved every second working with them.

Q: What is your dream collaboration?

A: You know what would be crazy? Stevie Wonder would be an amazing dream collab. I've never worked with Beyonce, and I'm in awe of her. I like Lady Gaga because she's crazy. That would be an insane collaboration. Stevie is number one, [though], because he's a legend; there is no denying his legend.

Q: You are more than a performer. You are also a producer and writer. How does the

behind-the-scenes perspective affect your work?

A: I like to think that me and Wil — we can do so many things. Because we can do so much, it keeps us versatile and we can move and adapt, even from the touring side of it. We're playing colleges, we're playing the Super Bowl tailgate party and the Kennedy Center.

We play so many different types of things. You can look at the performing side and the producing side of it. We can score commercials and TV shows like "CSI," and we scored the Kobe [Bryant] and LeBron [James] Vitamin Water ad. As artists and entertainers, it's great to do different things like perform at the Super Bowl or score a commercial. We just came back from Iraq last year and performed for the troops. We're blessed; [we] couldn't ask for a better job.

Q: Exposure to classical music at a young age was important for you. Would you like to see all

Sudoku

	6		7				5	
		4				3		
1			2					7
		8					2	
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2	1			9				
				1	7			5
				3			4	
5	8							

Go online at <http://www.sudoku9x9.com>
Enter puzzle L4 #: 328162700
to get your answer key.

primary school students with the same exposure?

A: I think it's important for them to be exposed to music, in general, in a creative way. Maybe not just music, but arts in general. It's a different part of you that works when you're being creative. To deprive students from being artists or dancers is the main problem. I look at my career and think, "What would I do if I hadn't had the opportunity to be creative in my public school education?" I wouldn't know what I would be doing. I learned everything in public school. It's not just about dollar signs, but it's impor-

tant because of the kind of people that it creates.

If I had it my way, every kid would be playing something, especially classical music because it teaches discipline. But who am I? I'm just a violin player.

Q: What are you working on now?

A: Right now, we're working on so much. We had a great last six years, and we're looking to grow — to be bigger and better than last year. We have an album coming out called "Classically Trained." It's challenging to the ear but in a good way.

SCG-MMC COMMENTARY

Apathy, miscalculation shuts down party system plan

First, for closure's sake: the political party system proposed in Fall 2011, which seemed so enticing at first to senators and students alike before losing its luster and stagnating toward the semester's end, has been tabled indefinitely.

COLUMNIST



ALEX SORONDO

Speaker of the Senate Donovan Dawson announced the tabling at the Student Government Council meeting held on Jan. 9 at the Modesto Maidique Campus, suggesting that the plans were being set aside on grounds of Senate inactivity and disinterest, and having underestimated the complexity of the party system.

According to Dawson, SGC-MMC's party system had been modeled after the strongest features of party systems at larger universities such as Florida State Univer-

sity, University of Florida and Ohio State, schools, Dawson acknowledged, where student involvement is stronger, and enterprises of such ambition can be pursued, achieved and maintained with less rigor.

Dawson's speech, public and private, is measured for pace. Rarely on professional matters can a judgment be discerned from his tone, at least when speaking to press, and one can see from the occasional pensive pause during conversation that he chooses his words carefully so as to not reveal more than he cares to. He speaks now of the party system endeavor, however, as though exhausted by the thought of it.

"FIU is a commuter school," he said after the meeting. "Student participation is not robust enough to warrant implementing a whole new system."

Dawson suggested that the same plan might be right for reconsideration "five or ten years from now," when the University's

"The fact that it was tabled and not pursued out of an eagerness to compete with larger schools is a surprising and mature move."

student body has grown enough to not only warrant the effort, but require less of it.

It seemed clear last semester, from the Senate's reluctance to move forward with the proposal, that if anything were to come of it, the product would have been somewhat contrived.

As a result, our elections would have been forcibly tailored to a system of miserable complexity and unanimous disdain.

While the gradual atrophy of the party proposal might not be a testament to any supreme ambition on the behalf of SGC-MMC, with the exception of those

who actually worked on the proposal and braced themselves for the necessary efforts of implementing it, the fact that it was tabled and not pursued out of an eagerness to compete with larger schools is a surprising and mature move.

Granted, it would have been more mature for the senators to speak up and voice their disinterest to begin with rather than let the idea flounder for months, but still.

SGC-MMC Commentary is a feature that evaluates the student council's performance. Look for it every Friday.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Kaplan prep courses an inadequate test resource

While reading the article about requiring students to take a Kaplan course, published in *The Beacon* on January 9, 2011, I was shocked and rather appalled by the article and wrote down the following thoughts:

While I readily agree that the average student is woefully uninformed when it comes to all of the possible services that are offered by FIU, being a student here has tremendous advantages and resources that most are content to simply let that opportunity pass them by. However, it would represent a very slippery slope if the administration were to require us to use, much less take advantage any of them.

Kaplan is foremost a "for profit" company, while partnered with FIU is not subject to the same standards of education or accreditation as the university. Secondly, have you ever taken a Kaplan course? It might as well be call (*sic*) socially awkward smart kids who can't teach imparting knowledge to students who realize studying alone is a better use of their time. Personally I do not want to put my graduate school chances in the hands of others who are both competing against me and have little oversight.

Granted, Kaplan would not still be in business if their programs did not work, however it is a business out to make money. They turn out the largest amount of student "prep" courses for the largest amount of money they think the students will pay, the lawsuits show that.

It also gives me pause that Kaplan would not release information about

their enrollment of students. It's bad business to snub the news, it's even worse to snub the newspaper of a business partner who is both trying to bring awareness to your program and will no doubt increase traffic in some fashion through advertising.

The issues at hand are not Kaplan as a whole or even Kaplan as a possible service for students. The issues are fixing the rampant uninformed student complex and further adding more requirements on us to graduate.

To the first I would suggest a larger and more interesting orientation process consisting of not what you can/need to do for the university but what this university can do for you!

Its (*sic*) one thing if you approach a situation and make a decision based on the options in front of you, it's a travesty if you did not even know that another option existed.

To the second I say forget requiring students to take a prep course for a graduate exam. That should be on you.

Responsibility is one of those things that goes along with that nice fancy diploma. If you cannot pass the test you probably should not be going.

Finally lets (*sic*) be serious: do you want stupid people running around flaunting the FIU name in advanced degree programs who are not necessarily qualified to be there? When I go out and apply I want schools and employers to know that FIU turns out a quality product not people who know just tricks and shortcuts to problems.

-Kyle Schmitt,
Senior, Undeclared

College education no longer enough for stable employment

PAOLO RAMOS
Staff Writer
opinion@fiusm.com

In today's struggling economy, it is essential now more than ever to ensure that you are qualified for any job you apply for.

The acquisition of a college degree has been the quintessential tool for making oneself more employable in the job market.

It continues to provide a solid foundation for success in the professional world by providing students with both an interdisciplinary and discipline specific education in preparation for their chosen career paths.

Over the recent years, however, the value of a college education has diminished, ceasing to be the advantage it once was and becoming a prerequisite for even the slightest chance of success.

The American economy is still suffering from the recession that hit in 2008, and the true signs of recovery are still elusive.

According to a study done by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in 2010, the unemployment rate for college graduates is at an all-time high of 5.1 percent.

This is the storm that recent college graduates have been thrown into, most of them unprepared. Most of them were told that going to college was the sure way to entering a successful career, which is not entirely untrue.

Yet, in an economy that is suffering, there are so few jobs that businesses will be financially able

to offer, in which case they seek out the most qualified candidates: those who actually have professional exposure in the careers that they want to work in.

"The value of a college education has diminished, ceasing to be the advantage it once was and becoming a prerequisite for even the slightest chance of success."

In the past, a typical entry-level position job would require only a college degree.

Today, the same position requires years of experience upon graduation, and additional skills such as multilingualism or advanced computer knowledge that the average student may not have known were necessary.

These posted positions are intimidating for most students because they have been disillusioned that their degree was the only thing necessary for them to land a job upon graduation, and upon being rejected after the umpteenth time, realize the mistakes of being unaware too late.

Being a public relations major, I have done research in positions that would be available to me upon graduation.

Such an example of an entry-level position in that field would be a communications editor. Several job listings posted for that position on Monster.com asked for one to two years of professional experience.

This is an example of how imperative it is to be prepared and qualified once you enter the job market. Students should take advantage of the freedom and assistance available to them while in college.

The University offers career services that introduces students to important aspects of the professional world, offer networking opportunities and provide consultations with those already employed in various industries.

Many departments and organizations within the school also have connections with internships that students should take advantage of to get a head start in their careers.

It is imperative that students plan ahead for their futures. The college experience simply cannot consist of merely going to class if the end goal is to make oneself employable.

The chances of finding a job right away after college are slim, and unemployment does not show any signs of decreasing anytime soon. It is up to students to be more proactive in their education, take advantage of the opportunities offered to them by the University and use the freedom that they currently have to groom themselves professionally before it is gone.

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SEND US YOUR LETTERS

Have something on your mind? Send your thoughts in (500 word maximum) to neda.ghomeshi@fiusm.com or drop by our offices at either GC 210 or WUC 124. With your letter, be sure to include your name, major and year.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Editorials are the unified voice of the editorial board, which is composed of the editor-in-chief, management, and the editors of each of the five sections. The Beacon welcomes any letters regarding or in response to its editorials, send them to neda.ghomeshi@fiusm.com

NO ROOM, NO PROBLEM



BARBARA CORBELLINI DUARTE/THE BEACON

As students arrived to class in room 265 of the Glenn Hubert Library on Jan. 10, they were surprised to find that the room had been booked for three separate courses during the same block. Introduction to Journalism professor Frederick Blevens seized the moment and opted to hold class outdoors, instead.

CAMPUS EVENTS

MLK's memory to be honored by Youth Forum & Peace Walk

NADRA MABROUK

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On Jan. 18, middle and high school students will walk along the bay to model the Montgomery, Ala. walks that Martin Luther King, Jr. organized during civil strife with flowers in their hands. As part of the University's 21st annual commemorative celebration for MLK, the Youth Forum will begin at 10 a.m. in the Wolfe University Center ballroom and lead into the peace walk around 11 a.m.

According to Senior Secretary of Multicultural Programs and Services, Sonya Anderson, five schools have confirmed the attendance of their students at the Youth Forum and Peace Walk. Madison Middle School and John F. Kennedy Middle School along with Carol City Senior High, Miami Central Senior High and William Turner Tech are the schools that have confirmed. Each participating school's principals and College Assistance Program advisers will select the students that are able to attend the day's events.

"We want to educate them on different struggles and encourage them to fight for what they want," Anderson said.

The Youth Forum will begin with

the National Anthem and the Negro National Anthem sung by Mara Moline. A welcome will be given by Steven Moll, vice provost of the Biscayne Bay Campus and Rosa Jones, vice president of Student Affairs. The keynote speaker for the Youth Forum will be Raquel Wright, M. Sc.

Wright received a bachelor's in sociology and politics from Ithaca College and a master's degree in higher education administration from the University. Wright won Miss Jamaica Universe in 2005, and was appointed as the national spokesperson for HIV/AIDS awareness in Jamaica.

She is now the assistant director of Advancement, Alumni and Corporate Relations for the College of Business at FIU. Wright will speak at the Youth Forum and students will have a chance to ask her questions with a question and answer session.

The Peace Walk will be 20 minutes long, according to Jeffrey McNamee, associate director of MPAS. McNamee hopes the walk will encourage participating students to excel in high school and to make it to a university in order to achieve their dreams.

"Just like Dr. King, they can be the change. We want them to see they can change their lives and the lives of others in a positive way," McNamee said.

STATE LEGISLATION

New law to give citizens the right to be heard at meetings

BILL KACZOR
Associated Press

Florida's citizens would get the right to be heard on public issues, not just be seen, at meetings of local government and state executive branch bodies under a bill that cleared a Senate subcommittee Wednesday.

The measure (SB 206) was filed in response to a pair of appellate court rulings that noted Florida's open government "sunshine law" requires officials to meet in public but does not give citizens a right to speak at those meetings.

The legislation filed by Sen. Joe Negrón would give the public that right with certain limitations.

"We're a country founded by revolutionaries," said the Stuart Republican. "Guess what, if you're serving on a board or you're representing the voters you're going to have to hear from the voters and sometimes it won't be pleasant. And if you can't handle it then do something else with your time."

The bill would still let governmental bodies set time limits on public comment. They also could limit comment to representatives

of large groups or factions rather than give everyone a chance to be heard. They also would set procedures citizens must follow to give notice of their intent to speak.

Purely ministerial and quasi-judicial actions that affect an individual's rights would be exempt. So would emergency situations affecting public health, welfare or safety.

The bill was heard by the Rule's Committee's subcommittee on ethics and elections. Negrón promised he would ask the full Rules Committee, which gets the bill next, to remove a provision that would nullify any actions taken in violation of the public comment requirement.

League of Cities legislative counsel Kraig Conn said that would alleviate much of the angst that local officials have over the bill because they were worried about unintentional violations. Officials could still face up to 60 days in jail and a \$500 fine for knowingly violating the measure.

Conn also urged lawmakers to make it clear governmental bodies could set other reasonable restrictions besides those cited in the bill, but Negrón rejected that

proposal.

Local officials are afraid that courts would rule against local policies, such as those restricting placards and allowing for the removal of unruly citizens, Conn said.

"Why is the League of Cities so afraid of its constituents and their voices and their placards?" asked Sen. Don Gaetz in what the Niceville Republican acknowledged was a rhetorical question.

Conn, though, responded that he was simply bringing technical issues to the panel's attention and that the league did not oppose the bill.

Gaetz' question also came a day after Senate security officials kept Occupy Florida demonstrators out of the chamber's public gallery because of fears they might be disruptive.

The bill would not apply to legislative meetings.

The 1st District Court of Appeal in 2010 rejected complaints by two citizens that Pensacola's Maritime Park Associates, a local governmental body in Gaetz' Panhandle district, had violated the sunshine law by refusing to let them speak at a public meeting.

The Florida Supreme Court subsequently refused to consider the citizens' appeal. In October, the 5th District Court of Appeal made a similar ruling in a case involving the St. Johns Water Management District.

Negrón acknowledged those

cases are the exception and said most governmental bodies do allow public participation.

A similar bill (HB 355) has been filed in the House but has not yet been heard in committee. The Legislature began its 60-day session on Tuesday.

LONG LINES, LONG WAIT



ANDRES BEDOYA/THE BEACON

As the spring semester commences, so too do the long lines at the bookstore. Students patiently wait to purchase their textbooks on Jan. 11 at the BBC bookstore.