

PROGRAMS ON THE CHOPPING BLOCK

Board of Governors threatens “low performing” programs

DESTINEY BURT
Staff Writer

A handful of academic programs are under the Board of Governors’ magnifying glass-- each at risk of losing funding if they do not increase the number of degrees they award every five years and the students who get jobs within a year of graduation.

Those programs at risk include the bachelor’s degrees of: art teacher education, Portuguese language and literature as well as statistics. They also include doctoral programs such as: educational leadership and administration, social work, dietetics and dietitian, nursing and science.

The listed bachelor’s programs awarded fewer than 30 degrees in the last five years and the doctoral programs awarded fewer than 10 degrees in 5 years.

Some of these programs are few in the nation, or even unique to the University.

“It would be a great loss, because we have so many resources and if they cut back the funding then we have no other option,” said Venkataraghavan Ramamoorthy, a PhD candidate in dietetics and nutrition -- a program that is only offered at two other schools in the nation, according to him.

Marianna Baum, a dietetics and nutrition professor, does not think it is a reasonable decision to cut the program either.

“If it’s reasonable or not depends on where you’re sitting

“We’ve been working with the deans and the departments to lay out a plan for how we want to improve the programs.”

Douglas Wartzok
Provost

from,” Baum said. “Where I’m sitting, it’s not. But from where people who make the decision are sitting, it is and they are calling us low productivity.”

BOG looks at the amount of degrees that are produced in a span of five years, which it thinks should be at least 10. But what it is not considering is the effort it takes to produce those degrees, Baum said.

“It is not easy to graduate ten PhD students with a high quality degree,” she said. “What we aim for is high quality dissertations. We don’t give PhDs to people who want them -- we give them to people who deserve them and it’s a long and difficult process.”

Provost and Executive Vice President Douglas Wartzok said he has known about BOG looking at low productive programs for a few years now.

“We’ve been working with the deans and the departments to lay out a plan for how we want to improve the programs,” Wartzok said. “We have taken some of them off the list through improving them and getting more graduates out of the programs.”

But Augusta Vono, director of the Portuguese program, said she was shocked to open the University-wide memorandum from Wartzok and President Mark B. Rosenberg on Jan. 20.

“You can imagine how I felt when I opened that email and saw the Portuguese program on the list,” Vono said. “I said it doesn’t make any sense. I was caught by surprise.”

Vono has been the director for 10 years. Five years ago she was operating the department on her own. She said the program has seen major growth that would only continue.

“I worked very hard to bring the program to what it is now,” she said. “There are five of us now, but five years ago the program was myself. I was teaching literature, linguistics, everything.”

The Portuguese program at FIU is the only one in South Florida and Vono said it could not be in a better position because it’s expanding and outreaching with partnerships inside and outside of the University.

“We have very good relations with the Brazilian consulate

SEE BOARD, PAGE 2

New funding system spells trouble for master’s programs

ADRIAN SUAREZ-AVILA
Staff Writer

Seven master’s programs deemed low performing by the Board of Governors are being scrutinized for their ability to graduate a certain number of students and land them jobs in the future.

African studies, adult and continuing education and teaching, music teacher education, liberal studies, geology and earth sciences, physics and fine and studio arts are all on the chopping block. Each have rewarded fewer than 20 degrees in the last five years.

But some professors think BOG’s threat to remove these programs will do more harm than good to not only the University, but to the governing body as well, given that it may not save as much money as the BOG thinks.

Some professors couldn’t contain their discomfort at the thought of some programs being removed from the University.

“I feel that the BOG has decided to devise, in a top-down fashion, the new funding system without any form of consultation with the various university academic bodies in the state university system,” said Jean Rahier, director of the

African & African diaspora studies program.

Other professors, including Tonette Rocco, director of the graduate program in adult education and human resource

other University faculty, a main concern when dealing with enrollment in master’s programs is the amount of graduate-level teaching assistantships provided to these programs for their

“What one learns here can be applied to a variety of professions, and that is overlooked often.”

Shaneequa Castle
Graduate Student

development, and Kiriake Xerohehona, director of the master’s program in liberal studies, declined to comment.

Executive Vice President and Provost Douglas Wartzok and President Mark B. Rosenberg outlined BOG’s criteria as well as the endangered programs in a Jan. 20 memorandum to the University.

Rahier said cutting funds from programs that don’t receive sufficient funding already will only make matters worse, and that certain programs cannot be expected to graduate more students than their current levels of funding allow.

According to Rahier and

students.

“It is a challenge for a full-time student to get through a master’s program without the financial benefit of a teaching assistantship or a research assistantship,” said Laurel Collins, professor in the department of earth and environment.

As a result, more students tend to enroll in doctoral programs, where teaching assistantships are more common.

In the State of the System Address, BOG Vice Chair Mori Hosseini declared the Board would not continue to tolerate “degrees that don’t

SEE FUNDING, PAGE 2

GOING ONCE, GOING TWICE, SOLD!



OSCAR LIN/THE BEACON

In preparation for Valentine’s Day, the Asian American Student Association held a Date Auction at the University of Miami. Khiem Nguyen, senior in biomedical engineering, performed a song named “Fish Song” to get his bid higher and earn the date from his bidder.

WORLD NEWS

Asia leaders join Sochi as Obama, other stay away

When top Western leaders decided to stay away from Russian President Vladimir Putin's Winter Olympics, he wasn't exactly left friendless: he has the heads of leading Asian nations and others to help show the world that not everyone is put off by his human rights record and the anti-gay law he championed. Unlike President Barack Obama, who declined to attend the Sochi Olympics, the leaders of China and Japan, the world's second and third largest economies, are attending. Both say they hope their visits will boost relations with Moscow. In both China and Japan, gay rights are not a hot-button political issue and officials say they do not link human rights with the Olympics.

Scientists find 800,000-year old footprints in UK

British scientists have discovered human footprints in England that are at least 800,000 years old - the most ancient found outside Africa, and the earliest evidence of human life in northern Europe. A team from the British Museum, the Natural History Museum and the University of London uncovered imprints from up to five individuals in ancient estuary mud at Happisburgh on the country's eastern coast. British Museum archaeologist Nick Ashton said the find - announced Friday and published in the journal PLOS ONE - was "a tangible link to our earliest human relatives."

For more world news, check out FIUSM.com.

New lottery process decides who is in and who is out

JEFFREY PIERRE
Asst. News Director

On Wednesday Feb. 12, current housing students looking for on-campus housing next year will either be on the good or bad side of a housing lottery.

Consequential to the high demand of housing applications received, the office of Housing and Residential Life's lottery will randomly select the students who will have the opportunity to live on-campus next year.

The deadline to apply for on-campus living was Friday, Feb. 7.

Once selected, each student can choose his or her dorm type and can even pull other students selected into their dorm room. The students not selected through the lottery, have the option to be placed on a wait-list, which Director of Housing, Joe Paulick, heavily suggests.

"Stay on the wait-list if you really need on-campus housing," Paulick said, "because each year after students apply, we get about 300 cancellations from students who choose to live off-campus."

The wait-list will be active

until Aug. 1, right before the fall semester is due to begin.

The new lottery selection process is the result of a higher demand for on-campus housing, and one more important factor as Paulick explains: freshman students.

The biggest change in the housing application process from last year is that, currently, the selection process will be geared more towards making on-campus living more attractive and available to freshman and returning sophomore students.

"Freshman who live on-campus tell us that they feel more connected to the university, that they get better grades, that they're more likely to come back next year and that they're more likely to graduate," said Paulick. "We're all about students graduating."

Although partial to freshmen and sophomore students, the lottery isn't meant to curtail upperclassmen from living on campus, as Paulick explains. Rather, it is a way show consideration to returning sophomore students, who Paulick believes, were at a disadvantage competing with juniors and seniors.

"The lottery is the result of a compromise," Paulick

said. "We're doing this to give everyone an equal chance."

Certain student groups, though, could be given a higher preference in the selection process and could even be exempt altogether.

Students within the Florida's prepaid dormitory plan, Presidential Scholars, staff, students with disabilities, international students and student athletes will be the first students placed because of the respective roles they play on campus and because of prior arrangements made that guarantee them housing.

Next year, students displaced at the Biscayne Bay Campus through the recent Royal Caribbean partnership will also have preference in the selection process.

Some housing students seem worried about the effects the lottery could have on out-of-town students.

"Some students don't live local and if they don't get housing, they'll be forced to find an apartment," said Mariah McKenzie, psychology major. "It's not fair not that they're putting us in a lottery."

Paulick urges students like McKenzie to schedule an appointment with him to try and resolve any possible prob-

lematic scenarios for out-of-town students.

Kali Davidson, a presidential scholarship recipient, honors student and international business major, feel upperclassmen have earned some seniority.

"I don't go through the lottery, but I think it's harsh," said Davidson. "I think upperclassmen should get first pick and I'm a freshman."

Paulick says that FIU is a growing school and still in transition. "People need to understand that we take over 50,000 students but only have enough beds for 3,200 students"

The addition of Parkview Hall, Tower 109—FIU's first privately built off-campus housing project expected to be built by Fall of 2014—and off-campus apartment websites like campus.fiu.edu, are all aimed to help alleviate the potential pressures placed on housing students.

Paulick opens his door to speak with all students and with the results of the lottery being emailed to students Feb. 12, his office will officially commence a new era in housing selection.

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CORRECTIONS

In Vol. 25, Issue 59 on page 8, the credit for the photo titled "Friendly Competition" should read Maria Lorenzino/The Beacon.

In Vol. 25, Issue 60 on page 4, the byline for the article titled "Martinho becomes man on campus for Delta Phi Epsilon" should have read Rhys Williams.

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

Bachelor, doctoral programs to improve under new system

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in Miami and the Brazilian embassy in Washington," Vono said.

Another amongst the remaining 14 programs being monitored is the University's statistics program.

Hassan Zahedi, an associate chair and director of the statistics department, thinks that with the proper support the program could increase enrollment.

"The statistics department isn't having a hard time graduating their students, but

difficulty recruiting them," Zahedi said. "We teach on average about five classes, we are very active in our department, we are not professional recruiters and we don't have as much time to dedicate to that."

According to Zahedi, when statistics students graduate, most get high-paying jobs within a year. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the median annual wage for statisticians is \$75,560.

Still, the program doesn't cut it under BOG's criteria.

Wartzok said the low performing

programs were publicly announced because the chairman of the board said in his speech that rather than leaving everyone to wonder what the at-risk programs are, BOG better just go ahead and identify them so no one is left guessing.

Despite the threat and concerns of the programs being cut, Wartzok said he is optimistic that most of the programs will show the proper level of growth.

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Faculty thinks cutting funding will make matters worse

FUNDING, PAGE 1

create jobs or address workforce needs."

But some of the master's programs listed actually provide financial perks, according to their faculty.

"What is sometimes not recognized is the fact that some employers prefer students with master's degrees for certain jobs," Collins said.

Collins pointed to the geology program's focus on developing skill sets rather than research knowledge.

Others shared similar views on the value of the master's programs in which they are enrolled.

"I am planning to apply what I learn here in life," said Shaneequa Castle, a graduate student and assistant in AADS. "I want to teach students about my culture, students who haven't had to chance to learn about it."

According to Castle, other students in the program are interested in applying their acquired knowledge to make contributions to other sectors, such as business.

"What one learns here can be applied to a variety of professions, and that is overlooked often," Castle said.

"Eliminating a master's track will save the BOG no money whatsoever," said Brian Raue, professor and graduate program director in the department of physics.

"The master's program isn't an emphasis, as far as physics is concerned," said Raue. "The coursework that's tied to the PhD program is linked to the master's, so no coursework is being saved."

According to Raue, if the issue is to produce more graduates from the master's program, then the department has a solution.

"We can make it a requirement for our students to get a master's degree en route to a PhD."

Despite the concern that the news may inspire, the BOG's new funding determination system has yet to undergo legislative approval.

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“The Walking Trio” proves to have fan favorite characters

JENNIPHER SCHAFER
Staff Writer

It's February and we all know what that means. On the ninth many of us will be shut in our homes glued to the television for the midseason break to be over. AMC has some big gaps to fill in with the midseason finale of the hit show “The Walking Dead.”

We were left shocked and grieving for Hershel, gloating over the defeat of the Governor, and worried for little baby Judith.

There's been a lot of speculation over the gang but here's what we know right now: the trio fans love are still alive as best as we know. That's right, Glenn, Michonne, and fangirl favorite Daryl all seemed to make it safely out of the prison. So why do the fans seem to love these three?

Glenn is the everyman. He's a bit quirky. He's not in the best physical condition. He seems to have an unusual aura of luck about him. He's you and I. He even used the zombie, er walker, apocalypse to date out of his league according to some.

I know many of us were nervous when he contracted that nasty flu virus and seemed like he was done for. Glenn has a subtle charm that defies normal social standards. Then again, it may just be that whole apocalypse thing working in

his favor.

Daryl is the redneck crush of nearly every fan of the show prone to crushing on good looking men. He had rough beginnings on the show.

Under the misguided wing of his brother it was a mercy that with Merle the racist tendencies died too. Now Daryl has been a bit flirty with Michonne despite his relationship with Carol. Fans swooned when he held Judith seeing the nurturer in him.

Still he's quite intelligent and resourceful to the group.

“That's right, Glenn, Michonne, and fangirl favorite Daryl all seemed to make it safely out of the prison. So why do the fans seem to love these three?”

Anyone who knows walkers knows that noise attracts them so his skill with a crossbow is undeniably beyond value. Then again, he also rides a loud motorcycle through walker ridden zones because, well quite frankly, he can.

Michonne is arguably one of the greatest female charac-

ters on television right now. To say she is multi-dimensional is a gross understatement. On the surface she is the tough female warrior whose skill with a katana is formidable. However, looking deeper she has her softer side.

Her apprehension about holding Judith and her soft spot for going on dangerous runs for Carl's comic books show a mothering side of her which nobody can deny. For most shows female characters are given the choice to be strong, kind, or intelligent. Michonne has all of these qualities and more.

Moreover, in most shows the women with these qualities are Caucasian. As a woman of color she is even more vital as a presence on television in this age when we all need to find someone to relate to in entertainment.

What the next half of the season holds is anyone's guess. I have some theories of my own naturally.

I think Tyrese saved Judith and escaped. I think Carol returned against Rick's orders and drove the bus with the children out of harm's way.

I also think that Carl will continue to save his father's life as the season goes on. I hope they'll be reunited but I doubt they'll ever reclaim the prison. Happy watching.

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Haste makes waste: slow down your life

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Contributing Writer

Being a 90s baby, witnessing the computer revolution, and growing up in the information age is a blessing. Access to information technology, life-saving healthcare and an overall high standard of living are just a few benefits most of us enjoy today.

The allure of convenience and efficiency robs society of interpersonal connections. While waiting in line, people rarely engage in conversations; all you see are people on their phones texting or checking their Facebook newsfeed.

We ignore the people in front of us for the people we already know.

Although there is a tremendous amount to be grateful for living in the informa-

“We are robbed of the experience of going to a quaint neighborhood coffee shop or bakery and making small talk with the owner as they prepare our order.”

With the turn of the century, convenience and efficiency have become characterizing elements of the lifestyle most people have access to—at least in developed countries.

We can go to one mall and shop at multi-billion dollar department stores, satisfy our appetite for Chinese and Mexican food simultaneously in the food court, and find every accessory we may ever need at smaller kiosks and push carts. Everything is centrally located to promote swift transactions.

Such an environment allows us to quickly check-off tasks on our daily to-do list, but at what cost?

When we choose to buy a tall mocha frap with an apple fritter at the Starbucks in the mall, we miss out.

We are robbed of the experience of going to a quaint neighborhood coffee shop or bakery and making small talk with the owner as they prepare our order.

Although we get our task accomplished at Starbucks, we lose the opportunity to make a meaningful connection, not to mention support small businesses.

tion age, there is a lot to mourn. I mourn the missed opportunities we all let slip by every day because of our preoccupation with our own busy lives.

I understand we are all busy. I'm a full time student, a part time employee, and an avid volunteer—all while trying to juggle family, friends, and continue my never-ending search for a significant other.

But that doesn't give me, or anyone else with a full schedule, the leeway to ignore life. At the risk of sounding cliché, life truly is what happens when you're busy checking off tasks on your to-do list.

So take the time to notice the small things.

It's within the small, seemingly insignificant moments in life that profound meanings lay.

Learn to value the irrelevant details and you will gain a newfound understanding and appreciation for literally everything around you, maybe even yourself.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR RE: LONG DISTANCE RELATIONSHIPS

Recently, The Beacon published an article on long-distance relationships that left me a bit bothered and discouraged, especially since I am in a long-distance relationship of almost two years.

I live in Florida and she lives in Michigan. We met through mutual friends over Facebook and since then have been inseparable, even when our family and friends were against us. Though I have to agree that a LDR isn't for the faint of heart, I do question the source's

research on the topic.

Being in a LDR, it is almost imperative that some research be done for those who hope to overcome it and eventually break the distance.

The author had stated that not many people are in LDR's, however, this is false. As of late, 14 million people are in a LDR, including 3.75 million married couples, and these numbers keep rising due to the fact that the distance barrier could be broken by using social media, phones, and video/picture chatting.

I'd also like to add that 75 percent of engaged couples said that they have been in LDR's and 10 percent of the marriages in the U.S.

started as a LDR. Furthermore, in a LDR, the total percent of break-ups is at 40 percent, whereas 85 percent of local dating ends in a break-up.

Although I don't mean to nitpick at something like this, I thought that an honest opinion from someone who has “been there and done that,” might be slightly more significant, because a primary source is usually more valid than the source of an outsider looking in.

The reason the success rate of an LDR is so high is the idea of loving the personality before anything else. Not to mention the chronicle created through letters, cute gifts, the visits, the heightened communication skills, and the freedom that

comes with a LDR.

Many people enjoy this because they can work on their careers, go attend university, or get shipped off in the military, without the burden of feeling like you have to sell yourself short for somebody you love.

I feel that an LDR really teaches people a lot about the foundations of love and that if you have love, then you can't let distance destroy that. Again, for those who prefer local relationships, I wholeheartedly accept your choice. If you'd have asked me a few years ago if I'd ever be in a LDR, I'd say that it would be too hard for me, but here I am.

For those of you reading this that are currently in a LDR, you're

not alone, and don't let any others discourage you or convince you that what you're doing is wrong or downright ridiculous, because they won't be reaping the benefits of your beautiful journey.

They might not understand it, but that's because it's not their journey to take. Enjoy the benefits you may have and turn away from the negative, you might find that one day you'll have a beautiful story to tell.

Marissa Pardo
Freshman
Early Childhood
Development and Services

SEND US YOUR LETTERS

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

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STEPPING IT UP



ROBERTO RAIMUNDEZ/THE BEACON

At a "Get Hired Workshop" involving government employment and internships, business students listen to Vladimiri Diaz, a recruiter with the United States Department of Agriculture, explain how to balance school and internships.

Career fair provides potential "dream jobs"

ARIEL WEINSTEIN
Staff Writer

Everyone wants to be successful when they grow up, but not everyone knows just how they want to go about doing this. There are endless career paths one can take, and it can sometimes be a bit overwhelming deciding which path to take.

This is why on Tuesday February 11, 2014 from 11 a.m -3:00 p.m in the WUC

Ballrooms at the Biscayne Bay Campus (BBC), the University Career services office will be hosting a career fair.

Students will have the opportunity to meet with recruiters, potential employers, and other leaders of companies and organizations of different fields, to find out more information of what that particular job is all about, and getting the chance to explore possible fields they would like to work in.

This event is offered once per semester, at both the BBC and MMC campuses. Although the MMC date has already passed, students who did not attend that particular career fair can still take the opportunity to attend the fair at BBC.

With over 140 employer representatives expected at the fair, students and alumni should present themselves wearing formal business

SEE CAREERS, PAGE 5

#TransformMiami on innovation, leadership

GISELLE CANCIO
Staff Writer

Last week, City Year, Student Government Association and the Center for Leadership and Service came together to present #TransformMiami.

#TransformMiami was a conversation around the nexus between social innovation, entrepreneurship, leadership and service. It also covered the unique role that millennials can play as a force multiplier and how solutions can be provided for the post-millennial generation.

"It's essentially an idea, an idea to discuss how we can all play a part in social innovation, leadership and service with our community," Liane Sippin, Student Government President at MMC said.

The key note speaker for the evening was Dr. Irma Becerra-Fernandez, who is the Vice President of the FIU Office of Engagement. Her speech covered a quick introduction on the idea

and what the different panelists would be speaking about. The panelists were also open for questions from the audience, as they wanted to make it a conversation rather than a lecture.

The five panelists were: Dr. Pablo Ortiz, Tere Blanca, Jaret L. Davis, Vance Aloupis, and Binsen J. Gonzalez. Dr. Ortiz is the Assistant Superintendent of Miami Dade County Public schools and works in the educational transform office. He has been working with Miami Dade County Public schools since the year 2000, and has a Doctorate Of Education from Nova Southeastern University. Blanca is the President and chief executive officer of Blanca Commercial Real Estate, Inc. She has more than 25 years of experience in the South Florida real estate sector, and serves as the chair of the Board of Directors for City Year Miami. Davis is the co-managing shareholder for the Miami office of Greenberg Trauig, LLP. He oversees approximately 160

attorneys and 200 business staff members. He serves on a number of philanthropic and civic boards including The Miami Children's Initiative and City Year. Aloupis is the State Wide Director of the Children's Movement of Florida

"It's essentially an idea... to discuss how we can all play a part in social innovation, leadership and service with our community."

Liane Sippin
President
SGA-MMC

Aventura. He joined the team in 2010 and focuses primarily on building the movement statewide through organizational collaborations, regional strategies, fund-

raising and building public awareness. Gonzalez is the founder and CEO of Our City Thoughts Inc. This organization aims to give a voice to Miami's emerging community of startups and entrepreneurs with thought-provoking content. They want to inspire individuals to access, connect and redefine the city.

Throughout the night, the panelists answered a range of questions from how to take on leadership roles and make a difference in the community, to how to build on things that already exist but need to improve.

"This is important Civic Engagement which allows students to inspire, lead and transform spaces to fulfill the mission of keeping students in school and on track to graduation." Sippin said. "It was also great to hear from Community leaders about what path to take after college and beyond, and more importantly, how to become a vital piece of society."

Students were reminded to

seek for advice and seek mentors to help you throughout your college experience. Now are the years to be a "change agent," be informed of what's happening and take a stance to make a difference.

Miami is the smallest big town where there are so many network opportunities that are sometimes overseen.

Liane Sippin - "It reminds us to ask for advice, seek mentors and take on leadership roles within your passion and learn to be a change agent. Not only that, but become a part of our community and more importantly, be an informed Miamian."

If you would like to learn more about any opportunities, contact city year or the Center for Leadership and Service office on how to get involved in the community

As Dr. Ortiz said "The education is important and so is the leadership aspect. Education is the cornerstone of democracy, we don't turn anyone away."

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Walk Off the Earth on importance of YouTube

CLAUDIO ZELAYA
Contributing Writer

Walk Off The Earth is an innovative Canadian rock band originating from Burlington, Ontario.

Since 2006, this band has toured all over the United States and Canada with their brand of rock 'n' roll mixed with reggae. They have released two original albums, "R.E.V.O" and "Smooth Like Stone On A Beach", as well as two volumes of covers.

In the new age of social media, Walk Off The Earth has embraced the opportunities that advertising through YouTube brings, by putting out creative versions of chart topping singles like "Somebody That I Used To Know" by Gotye.

In this interview, Ryan Marshall,

guitarist and vocalist, talks briefly of how the band started and their success in the music industry.

How did all the members meet and create the brainchild that is Walk Off the Earth?

Gianni and I started the band and then began recruiting: similar to what happened with the Miami Heat.

What were some important influences for you growing up that can be seen in what you've released?

A lot of Police, Bob Dylan, and reggae were in the mix for me. I think you can hear those styles in our music.

Each of you knows how to play more than one instrument. Who or what inspired you to pick up any instrument and take the path that you have?

Mrs. Smith, my grade 6 music

teacher, was very influential. She helped me stick to the arts in school and not worry about what anyone said about it.

Do your Florida shows have a different kind of energy for you than in other states?

Warm weather definitely elevates our level of enthusiasm.

What was it that swayed you away from the conventional way of promoting the band and turning to social media?

It was the only avenue we could control and not have to wait for someone to help us or call in a favour.

As a band whose success was made not only through talent but also the internet, how crucial is social media in today's music scene?

It's likely the most important

part next to having good music. No matter how great you can be in social media, if your songs stink or you don't have talent it's not going to help you.

Did you expect the response that you got from the "Somebody That I Used To Know" cover with currently more than 152 million views?

No one can ever predict a viral video. We pour our hearts into every video we do and Stiuk was just another video when we did it. Obviously it became more than that.

With the success of all your videos do you feel pressured to come up with the next video? Or is the process frustrating?

We don't overthink videos or try to beat anything we've done. We just try to have fun and continue to love what we do.

How was the transition from being independent artists, and successful ones at that, to now having the spotlight on you more than you might want it to be?

We love the spotlight. I don't really feel we have it yet, but we are ready for it if it finds us.

What do you think the fate of the band would've been without YouTube or social media in general?

Who knows? It would have been a different avenue, but I feel the people in this band would have found a way to succeed with or without it.

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Sitdown with local band Jean Jacket

JUNETTE REYES & DIEGO SALDANA-ROJAS
FIUSM Staff

In the series of sitdowns with local artists, FIU Student Media has had the opportunity to previously sit down and interview artist Smurphio from Afrobeta, hip-hop artist Flight Williams from Outta This World, and DJ and producer Jesse Perez.

This time around, FIUSM got to interview local act Jean Jacket. Jean Jacket is fronted by mastermind Harlowe G.

How'd you get started in Miami's music scene?

I didn't know where I was going to go at first but I knew that it was different from what I was doing at the time. It just developed naturally and then I took a trip to L.A. to record with my good friend at Paramount Studios. He's been recording me for years. So, he's my go-to-guy, if you will. I just recorded it, came back and started doing shows.

What were your inspirations for this album?

Well this project, a lot of the inspiration is from Miami itself. The music scene here just blew me away. I hadn't been here in a long time. The weather here, the women, everything just

really goes into what I wrote. I wasn't necessarily inspired from music but definitely from my surroundings.

Are there any artists or genres that you would cite as influences?

Bass music for sure, I try to throw that in. I'm into a lot of the synth-pop, chillwave type of stuff. Bands like Washed Out, Million Young, Empire of the Sun. So many bands, so many people contributed to the sound. It's a mix of everything. But really, synth-pop is at the core.

How long have you been around?

So I recorded it in 2012 and then got the band together in 2013. So this is like a one-year anniversary kind of deal as a band. She's played one show so far. The band is always changing. I've brought on Million Young on stage, Alex from Krisp and [Lauren]. **From a technical standpoint, how do you make your music?**

Everything is on Ableton. I'm like obsessed with Ableton. I do everything on there. Sometimes I write first and then I go into Ableton but I try to just play in there and educate myself by trial and error. And each day I learn something new that I can do on

there. I love that program. And synthesizers and APC 40s.

And how is the music-making process as a whole?

Harlowe G: Sometimes I'll have something written and just ready to make the music for what I wrote. Other times, I'm just making a beat. There really is no structure. It's like all mayhem.

However it comes, you know. Sometimes I write lyrics for months. Other songs just come to me. I just know what I'm going to say and sing. So, there's no set process. Just whatever happens.

Lauren: You always just start by messing around with the keyboard and then it just goes from there. It just doesn't stop, it keeps developing. We kind of both help each other with that.

Do you ever improvise during live shows?

Harlowe G: I do that a lot, especially when I started playing with Million Young. We did like three shows together and those dudes are awesome. We just get up there and one of them just starts dropping a beat and we go along with it. It's really cool.

Tell us a bit about your upcoming self-titled album.

Harlowe G: This is our upcoming album out on



JUNETTE REYES/THE BEACON

Jean Jacket is a local band fronted by Harlowe G and has an ever changing lineup of performers that includes Lauren.

Decades Records Frenchkiss Label Group, March 25 of this year. We're pretty stoked about that. That whole album was recorded in 2012. I went through hell to get to L.A. and you know, starve myself, to record it basically.

I just wrote it all myself, took my time with it. I really wanted to be honest about what I was doing. So it was like the most personal, intimate piece of work I've ever done. Which is sometimes hard to do, to strip down to that. But really, with music, I've tried everything else and by doing that, it's gotten me a lot further with my career.

What do you have to say about the local music scene in Miami?

I love the scene here. We were talking about the differences between Miami and other cities. The thing I love about Miami's music scene is that people go out and they support.

Thought it's kind of like flakier, like your following here would be flakier than other cities, I find that everybody is always out at the shows, everybody is supporting, everybody is always having a good time. And the bands are all really cool here; they're all down to earth people. Not like wannabe

rock stars.

Lauren: It's a lot like a community in a way. Just like a communal effort of people coming together for music and art. Just that whole scene in Downtown and Wynwood. There's an energy.

Harlowe G: There's an energy and as the city is growing and developing, I'm just glad to be part of it.

Jean Jacket will be performing this month alongside local act Pretty Girls at The Vagabond on Valentine's Day and will be paying tribute to The Cure.

For the full interview, go to fiusm.com

Career Fair brings jobs

CAREERS, PAGE 4

attire, and remember to bring their resumes to consult with a representative.

The representatives at the fair are looking for University students from all majors to recruit. This event is significantly important to students seeking to find the right career. The University Career Services office will also be hosting workshops that improve interview techniques, resumes, and general tips to do their best at the fair, on February 7, 2014.

Harold Clayton, Associate Director with responsibility for Career Services at the Biscayne Bay Campus, explains just how important the fair is.

"The choice and selection of a career or job, is one of the most important but often times also the most difficult task that students and alumni will ever make. Having the opportunity to meet directly with employers and recruiters from all industries, federal and private, and company sizes ranging from startups to fortune 500 companies

at a career fair is important in getting students into their right careers or internships and often times their "dream" jobs."

Clayton also explained how this is one of the most popular career services events.

"Many have been hired into their dream jobs or internships while others have been able to meet and network with employers and recruiters that continues to influence their career."

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Ariel Sharon: war hero or war criminal?

JOSE VELEZ
Contributing Writer

Ariel Sharon, seen by some as a war hero and others as a war criminal will be the headline topic on the "Tuesday Times Roundtable" titled "Was Ariel Sharon a Hero or Monster?" This event will take place Tuesday, Feb. 11, 2014 from 12:30pm-1:30pm in Graham Center 150.

Dr. Tudor Parfitt will be the moderator for this event. Why is Ariel Sharon considered by some a hero and by others a monster? Some saw Ariel Sharon as a hero starting in the 1967 Six Day War when

Israel attacked Egypt, Jordan, and Syria as a counter attack with the assumption of an upcoming attack by Arab nations. Sharon even earned the nickname "The Lion of God" at one point of his life by the Israelis.

Why would he be considered a monster by some? Sharon was held responsible for the massacre of Palestinians by a Lebanese Christian military. This led to Sharon's resignation.

This event will feature an in depth talk on Ariel Sharon and the subject of Sharon being a hero or monster.

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Saying goodbye to Hoffman, legendary actor

COLUMNIST



JENNIPHER SCHAFFER

The entertainment world is mourning the loss of award-winning actor Philip Seymour Hoffman. With the topic trending on Twitter, it is easy to find actors who are expressing their grief. Tom Hiddleston tweeted, "Philip Seymour Hoffman. This is so unbearably sad." Some of his most recent co-stars in the "Hunger Games: Catching Fire" film also tweeted in his memory. Sam Claflin, who played Finnick Odair, said, "PSH - I am genuinely shocked, saddened and speechless. A truly wonderful man, with a

magical touch. My hero. Thoughts are with his family." Jennifer Lawrence, who played Katniss Everdeen, and Josh Hutcherson, Peeta Mellark in the film, haven't spoken out publicly yet, but are expected to do so soon.

Hoffman was by many measures an actor of extraordinary talents. Over his career he won many awards including an Academy Award, a Screen Actors' Guild Award, and a Golden Globe for his role in "Capote." He had a range that made the audience love him or hate him as he filled his role. He was quite skilled at making people believe his role and not see him in its place. Some of his other memorable performances were in "Twister", "Almost Famous,"

"Mission Impossible III," "Charlie Wilson's War," "Doubt," "The Master," and most recently "The Hunger Games: Catching Fire." He also spent some time on Broadway in several shows including a 2012 revival of "Death of a Salesman." What his roles had in common were characters that seemed to have a deeply unique and troubled soul.

Hoffman was found Sunday morning with a needle still stuck in his vein and several bags of heroin in his apartment. The number of bags is unconfirmed and varies between news sources, ranging from two, according to early CNN reports, nine, according to NBC, and a mind-blowing 70, according to the New York Post. Last year, after 23 years of sobriety, Hoffman

spent time in a drug rehabilitation facility for an addiction to prescription pain pills and heroin. Police did confirm that at least five empty pre-sorted envelopes of the lethal drug were found in his Manhattan apartment. The envelopes were labeled "Ace of Spades" and "Ace of Hearts" which are popular street names for heroin.

Hoffman was born on July 23, 1967. At 47, his life was cut short by his addiction. Sources told the New York Post that Hoffman and his common-law wife were not living together. In fact, the discovery of his body happened when he was late in picking up his three children for a visit. It is unconfirmed whether this had to do with his drug relapse or not, though

there were no public announcements about a divorce pending.

Hoffman is survived by his wife Mimi O'Donnell and their three children whose names are not publicly disclosed; a son and two daughters. His family requests privacy and prayers for the moment, as they try to pick up the pieces scattered by his loss.

Addiction is a powerful and painful disease. It hurts not only the afflicted, but everyone that they love as well. If you or someone you know is hurting, the time to get help is now.

The South Miami Hospital Drug and Alcohol Addiction hotline is open 24 hours a day and seven days a week: 786-662-8118.

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CLUSTERWIN: 700 FOR RUSSO



JASEN DELGADO/THE BEACON

Head Coach Cindy Russo (crouching) has been leading the Panthers since 1977-1978 and has accumulated 700 wins. Win 700 came against the University of Texas at San Antonio.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Russo joins short list of coaches with 700

STEVEN ROWELL
Staff Writer

When the women's basketball team won 53-40 over the University of Texas at San Antonio on Wednesday, Feb. 5, it became a milestone moment for Head Coach Cindy Russo.

In season number 35 for her at FIU, Russo now is part of the 700 win club. Russo became number 14 to join the list of head coaches among Division I women's basketball coaches to amass at least 700 wins. Among active women's Division I coaches, Russo sits at number nine in victories.

While Russo is mainly focused on this season, the head coach took some time to reflect on the journey.

"It's a great milestone and I'm very happy and proud in accomplishing it and what goes into it is a lot of people in getting me here," Russo said.

"It's a pretty big deal I think, it just shows how much knowledge about basketball and all the experience that she has, it's pretty amazing to have her as a coach, and it's a great accomplishment," senior guard Jerica Coley added.

Russo gives most credit to current associate Head Coach for FIU in Inge Nissen who has been alongside Russo for the past 25 years starting as an assistant coach before being promoted to Associate Head Coach in 1992.

The milestone only added to an already impressive resume that Russo built over the years roaming the sidelines for the FIU women's basketball team.

In the 35 seasons for FIU, Russo has guided FIU to six appearances in the NCAA Tournament, seven trips to the Women's National Invitational Tournament. Russo also led

FIU to 22 consecutive winning seasons from 1981 to 2003 and also FIU has 18 seasons of winning at least 20 games.

The list of accomplishments goes on, such as winning six conference tournaments back when FIU competed in the Trans America Athletic Conference and in addition to winning the

“

I would rather them remember me as a person that cares and made a difference in lives.

Cindy Russo,
Head Coach
Women's Basketball

Sun Belt Conference Tournament back in 2002.

The best season under Russo which arguably could go down as the best season in program history includes 1997-98 when FIU finished 29-2 and reached the second round of the NCAA tournament and climbed as high as No. 11 in the AP top 25 poll and No. 12 in the USA Today poll. Another memorable moment was in the 1992-1993 season Russo guided FIU to a 25-6 record despite only having nine players for the season.

With all the accomplishments, Russo can't pick any single memory that stands out, but has said she definitely can keep the opportunity of coaching seven All-Americans but most recently in coaching Coley.

"She [Coley] is just a prize [to have] on the court," Russo said.

Russo has helped Coley become a two-time Sun Belt Conference player of the year, shatter several school records while Coley led the nation in scoring last season and is doing so this season. Coley gives major credit to Russo for her development on the court.

"She [Russo] has been a big help making me smarter telling me how much film I should watch and taught me to be a student of the game," Coley said.

Sophomore guard Taylor Shade was no stranger to Russo's resume and her resume played a key role in Shade's decision to play at FIU.

"It's actually an honor to be a part of win number 700 for her. It is one of the reasons I chose FIU because of her legacy," Shade said. "She developed great players at FIU and has had some people go to the WNBA and play overseas; I just think it's her experience and her wisdom that defines everything with her legacy."

When it comes to legacy and it all being said and done for Russo, the head coach doesn't necessarily want to be just remembered for all the statistical accomplishments.

"I would rather them remember me as a person that cares and made a difference in lives," Russo said.

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COLUMN

FIU rebuilding by getting better, faster and stronger

COLUMNIST



FRANCISCO RIVERO

After a season in which the FIU football team only won just one game thought's of doubt and below average expectations began to enter Panther fans minds. Why would any big time prospect want to come to FIU? Why would any top of the line athlete choose FIU over the powerhouse that is the University of Miami?

If you're asking those questions the same way I was, you better not tell Head Coach Ron Turner that. During signing day Turner explained just how he was able to get all 19 players that attended one of his camps to commit to FIU.

"During the first week of January we had 19 kids in our facility and out of those 19 we got 19 commitments," Turner said. "So as I said if we get them on campus we are going to have a good chance of getting them and that shows that our guys are doing something right. To have 19 out of 19 commit I don't think I've ever been around that in a lot of years of recruiting."

Turner also explained how having multiple camps around the state really helped during the entire recruiting process.

"This year we were able to sign a total of 26 players with 19 of those attending

one of our camps which is unbelievable," Turner said. "About 14 of them came to our camps here in Miami, about eight or nine went to our camps up in central Florida, we also had a camp at the Tampa Bay Buccaneers facility and about nine guys went up there and finally about five of them

in at 175 pounds Turner is known for his amazing speed and catching ability. He recorded over 1,100 receiving yards and 14 touchdowns in 2013.

On top of his outstanding numbers what was also very impressive to me is that D. Turner originally committed to the Univer-

University.

"This is great for our program, Dennis is a high profile guy for good reasons because he's an amazing player and a great kid," Turner said. "We've known him for a long time and we just stayed consist on him and our coaches did a tremendous job of

off the field well."

Now having 19 guys commit to FIU and even having one de-commit from UM is a great accomplishment and all but what I was looking for were the big boys. The guys on the offensive and defensive lines, because just last season the Panthers gave up 52 sacks on offensive while finding a lack of depth on the defensive line.

And that's what Turner and the rest of the FIU football coaching staff was thinking as well. The Panthers were able to sign 10 linemen this year, five on the offensive side of the ball and five on the defensive side.

"As far as our recruiting class I believe that we met our needs. Going into it we had a goal, a vision about what we needed to get signed," Turner said. "I definitely feel that we improved our depth in all areas especially in the offensive and defensive line. That's the foundation of your success, you can have all the skills guys you want and they get all the credit for everything but in reality the foundation of your program are the guys up front."

Leading the way for this group of young linemen is Josh Deuyour out of Hollywood Hills. Standing at an impressive 6-foot-9 and weighing in at 325 pounds Deuyour was a not even a man he was a beast amongst boys. Even Turner

acknowledged that his size makes all the difference on the field.

"Josh Deuyour is huge. At 6-foot-9, he is an offensive lineman that moves well for his size," Turner said. "If he continues to work on his technique, flexibility and leverage, he can develop into an outstanding offensive lineman."

The one thing that I found interesting about this class is the fact that there are also many players coming in that play multiple sports. That shows me that FIU is bringing in guys that are athletes not just someone who can run fast or hit hard. In fact even Turner pointed out the significance of having multiple sport athletes in this year's class.

"We definitely improved our teams speed and athleticism this year. We have a lot of multi-sport guys in this year's class," Turner said. "Guys who play football, basketball, track or baseball even some guys who play up to three sports. So we definitely have athletes and athletes who can play at a high level."

There's no doubt that FIU improved in its depth and athletic ability but now comes the challenge of seeing how many of these signed players will translate to division one level of play. Many questions still remain for the Panthers and none of them can truly be answered until the season is underway.

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JAHREL FRANCIS/THE BEACON

Linebackers coach Rob Harley has joined the coaching staff after a two-year stay at Michigan State University. The linebackers in the 2014 class are Fred Russ and Anthony Wint.

attended the camp that we had up at the Jacksonville Jaguars facility."

Out of the 26 players that signed there is no doubt that the most impressive signing was wide receiver Dennis Turner out of Dillard in Ft. Lauderdale. At 5-foot-11 and weighing

city of Miami. However, after visiting FIU and all the coaches D. Turner decommitted from Miami and signed with the Panthers.

For Turner having a player leave one of the big three schools of Florida to come to FIU is a great sign for both his staff and the

staying on him like writing him notes weekly, calling him and doing everything we can do to let him know how we felt about him and how important he was to this program. While also letting him know what we can do for him on the field and what we can do for him

SAND VOLLEYBALL

FIU returns to the sand

OSCAR BALDIZON

Staff Writer

There is a team right here on FIU's campus that has legitimate national championship hopes; but you might not have heard of them yet because they just started playing last year.

The sand volleyball program is led by Head Coach Rita Buck-Crockett, who doubles as the indoor coach, and she knows this team has the talent to perform exceptionally at Nationals again this year.

"Playing wise, everybody on the team has stepped up a notch. Our team is definitely better than we ended last year and we have a lot more depth which is great," Buck-Crockett said.

If that is the case, the rest of the country needs to start paying attention to what's happening down here at the sand courts of FIU. The Panthers competed in their first ever AVCA Collegiate Sand Volleyball Nationals Championships last year and placed two pairs teams in the top five. A better finish to their rookie season than longtime sand volleyball powerhouse, the University of Southern California.

It's pretty impressive when a team has two pairs selected to the championship field. When both of those pairs to come away from pool play undefeated, then reach the Elite Eight and Final Four that's a great achievement. FIU had a phenomenal first season and set the bar for what you can expect years to come.

Then juniors, Jessica Mendoza and Maryna Samoday finished in third place nationally, with now graduated Kate Stepanova and senior Ksenia Sukhareva concluding their season with an impressive fifth place finish as well. Which

means there will be three seasoned senior Panthers with championship bracket experience to help guide this team, which also boasts plenty of young talent, throughout this season.

While those two pairs had fantastic performances, the Panthers were unable to qualify to Nationals as a whole team, and it's no secret that's the goal for this season as it is for every team at this time of year. Coach Buck-Crockett had an amazing first offseason bringing in an impressive first recruiting class to help make that push nationally.

The team began training Jan. 13 for the upcoming campaign and it's clear that this group is much deeper than just those three seniors who burst onto the collegiate sand volleyball scene during FIU's inaugural campaign.

"It's going to be pretty interesting this season, we've got a lot of good players, including freshmen Maja Rosko, Marina Boulanger, Aren Cupp, and Savannah Davis," said Buck-Crockett when asked who to also keep an eye on this season.

This year's team will be captained by Camila Rosado, a senior from Aguas Buenas, Puerto Rico with plenty of experience.

"The way we get along on and off the court is what's going to help us the most this year. From top to bottom we had amazing chemistry our first year is only going to get better," Rosado said.

All of these athletes will be putting their talents on display for the first time this year during the Navy & Gold Game which be played Feb. 28 here on campus from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m.

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PANTHERS BASKETBALL



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Rosenberg heads up to BBC for open forum

ALYSSA ELSO
Staff Writer

President Mark Rosenberg will be heading up to Biscayne Bay Campus on Monday, Feb. 10, to address students' growing concerns at eighth annual Town Hall meeting.

The Town Hall meeting was an initiative created eight years ago by the Student Government Association at BBC in order to allow students to have an open discussion with President Rosenberg.

"President Rosenberg will provide University updates, and students will have the opportunity to ask any questions or address any concerns," said SGC-BBC Vice President, Richard Azimov.

According to Azimov, President Rosenberg has continuously supported meeting with the University's students and helping to address concerns.

In the past, some issues

that have been presented at the meetings have included: food services, parking and transportation and academic advising.

As a result of these annual meetings, some improvements have been made on campus.

“The turnouts have been increasing, which shows students are involved with FIU.”

Richard Azimov
Vice President
SGC-BBC

"I remember one concern that many students had one year was regarding the vending machines," said Azimov.

Many students were unhappy with the vending machines—which are located throughout various spots on campus—stealing their money or not dispensing drinks or snacks.

In order to correct this issue, SGA contacted the Pepsi Company to fix the

issue. Now, every vending machine has a sticker that will inform students to go to the OneCard office in order to obtain a refund. As the Town Hall meeting goes into its eighth year, student turnout

has increased, according to Azimov.

"The turnouts have been increasing, which shows students are involved with FIU," said Azimov.

So far this semester, student concerns have been heard as improvements to the Biscayne Bay Campus have been approved to include a Subway and Starbucks by fall 2015 and the renovation of the Wolfe University Center,

DOLLAR 'DOUGH'NUTS



STEPHANIE MASON/THE BEACON

Derek Duque (far right), helps support Sigma Chi's group in fundraising for the annual Relay for Life event hosted at FIU. Brothers (from left to right): Luis Burbano, senior in communication arts, Christian Chavarro, junior in public relations, and Marlon Velez, senior majoring in history and philosophy. All are members of Sigma Chi which is partnered with Phi Mu to raise money for Relay for Life this year.

which will be completed in March.

To achieve improvements of this nature, students can attend the Town Hall meeting in order to ensure that their voice, as tuition-paying

students, is heard on campus.

Azimov hopes that this year student turnout is at its highest, in order to change the University for the better.

"My expectations are for the ballroom to be filled

with many students and to have students ask or address anything that may be improved to make our FIU more globally competitive," said Azimov.

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Comedian attempts to end racism in one hour

ALYSSA ELSO
Staff Writer

Ending racism in about an hour may not be easy to accomplish, but comedian W. Kamau Bell had people thinking about racism and race in a whole new way on Wednesday Feb. 5 after performing his one-man show at Biscayne Bay Campus.

In his one-man show, "The W. Kamau Bell Curve: Ending Racism in About An Hour," Bell had students laughing and cringing as he covered the touchy topic of race. His presentation providing an honest and straightforward look at what racism is, where it comes from, who is affected and how to stop it.

Bell, who previously hosted his own show on the FXX network, "Totally Biased with W. Kamau Bell," began the night by showing

a clip from the year 2005, in which he discusses how a senator named Barack Obama had a name that was "too black" to ever be elected President of the United States.

Nine years later, Obama is now in his second term of office, yet not much has changed in ending racism as Bell gave various examples that blatantly illustrated racism in America.

Bell's first example discussed how America seems to be more offended by a mixed race family in a Cheerios commercial than by a dog and a horse that appear to be in love, as depicted in the popular Budweiser commercial.

"America would rather see a dog and a horse fall in love than support a biracial family," stated Bell. "And notice that in the Cheerios commercial the couple is never shot together, they are always in separate frames."

He also goes on to show racism in

the casting of "The Hunger Games" movies after many people took to Twitter to discuss how much they detested the casting of a black girl to play a character that was described as such in the book.

“Racism will not end today, but I hope I can at least encourage people to discuss it with others to change racism in the future.”

W. Kamau Bell
Comedian

Bell goes on to provide other instances of racism by using the US census. He points out that the term "Arab" is considered white, therefore maintaining his position that race is

not real, it is something made up, but it has allowed for racism to be very real.

"I thought he was very funny and the way that he approached the issue of race and racism was engaging," said Rogihanne Avin, a junior english major.

Not a stranger to racism himself, Bell is constantly judged by people because of his interracial marriage and mixed daughter.

"Whenever I am walking down the street with my daughter or my wife, people tend to give looks," Bell said.

"Once when I was out with my daughter, being a comedian, when someone looked at me weird I'd give them a look and then start running down the street and they would start yelling like I stole the baby."

By the end of the night, Bell was encouraging white people to reclaim

the idea of "white power" from white supremacists by leading a chant: "I'll say 'Say it loud,' and you'll say 'I'm white and I'm proud.'"

Though hesitant, a few people in the crowd could be heard repeating the chant.

And as for a way to start ending racism, he suggests that everyone not ask these two questions to black people about their hair: can I touch it and how do you wash it?

Though attempted, racism cannot be ended in an hour, but in order to do so, Bell encourages everyone to discuss it even though it may make them uncomfortable.

"Racism will not end today, but I hope I can at least encourage people to discuss it with others to change racism in the future," said Bell.

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SEAS hosts lecture about the environment and evolution

ARIEL WEINSTEIN &
ROBERTO RAIMUNDEZ
FIUSM Staff

Every day, humans are altering the natural environment. Cutting down trees, dumping waste and polluting the air affects many species of animals because of the changes in their environment.

This Tuesday February 11, 2014 the "Eat, Think, and Be Merry" series is hosting the first talk of the spring semester: Evolutionary Traps.

Jennifer Rehage, assistant professor of the University's department of earth and environment, will be talking about how traits animals have developed are now affected by human

interference.

"Essentially animals are misreading cues from the environment thinking its natural when in fact it's been cause by humans," said Rehage.

This has caused various issues within the environment, such as causing animals to become confused of their whereabouts in their own environment, therefore making it difficult for these species to reproduce. This, in turn, has led to endangering the survival of several species.

"A common example of an evolutionary trap is that of baby sea turtles," said Rehage. "When the turtles hatch, they begin to head to the light which is normally moon light reflected in the water."

The problem is that when artificial lights

from buildings on the beach confuse the turtles.

"The man-made lights confuse the turtles into heading away from the ocean and into the city streets," said Rehage.

Cues that help animals determine direction, such as light, are now also being produced by humans instead of just naturally. An animal's natural environment can also be reduced by humans.

"Dragonflies use polarized light to find water for laying eggs; they have a colorized light range that allows them to locate water," said Rehage.

However with the increasing amount of cement and cars, dragonflies light range identifies these man-made objects as similar to water and they begin attempting to lay eggs."

This set of lecture series is hosted by FIU's School of Environment, Arts and Society and funded by the National Science Foundation.

The idea behind this lecture series is to bring together scientists and the general public in conversation about their research and recent discoveries.

Elaine Pritzker, coordinator at SEAS, said the series is modeled after the "National Science Foundation science cafes held across the country which features engaging conversations between scientists and the community."

This event is free, open to the public.

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