The Beacon, February 26, 2007

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DECIIONS, DECIIONS
Preparations commence for SGA elections

CHRISTINA VEIGA
Contributing Writer

Election time is nearing, but Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama won’t be contenders in this race. FIU students will again have the opportunity to try their hand at politics in the Student Government Association election process beginning this month.

The race for office begins Feb. 26 when applications are made available for students. In an effort to increase the number of applicants this year, the SGA Elections Committee plans to make the forms more readily available on the first floor of the Graham Center. Applications may also be picked up in the SGA office located in the Graham Center, room 211.

Elections Commissioner Judene Tulloch hopes that an increase in the number of applicants will ultimately increase voter turnout.

According to Tulloch, a good rule of thumb is “if you can vote for it, you can run for it.”

But there are still requirements to meet. Those running for president and vice-president, committee chairs and appointees, or representatives must be FIU students and attend at least 50 percent of classes at the campus they wish to represent, according to the SGA constitution. Students must also have a minimum cumulative undergraduate grade point average of 2.5, and not be under any “academic or disciplinary sanctions.” Further requirements include minimum credit hours which vary for graduate, undergraduate, and law students.

It is also important to note that presidential candidates must have held a previous position in SGA for at least two academic semesters, or 154 days prior to running for, or holding office. Also, housing representatives must reside on the campus where they are running for office.

Applications should be submitted to the SGA office before March 9 at 5 p.m. in the SGA office.

According to Andrews, the possibility of online voting through the Pantersoft system is being considered. The ballots, created by an outside company called Acceleration, would “probably begin it in case scenario, we’ll probably begin it in the fall,” said Charlie Andrews, director of Campus Life and Advisor for UP-SGA.

“The ballots, created by an outside company called Acceleration, would only allow students to vote for the positions they are qualified to vote for. “From a hacking standpoint, it’s actually easier to hack in-person voting sites,” according to Tulloch. Also to be confirmed are the final locations are still to be confirmed, according to Tulloch. Also to be confirmed is the possibility of online voting through Pantersoft.

“From a hacking standpoint, it’s actually easier to hack in-person voting sites,” she said. She mentioned that the new schedule will allow for longer business hours for students.

Voting sites are traditionally located in GC, the Green Library, and housing, but the final locations are still to be confirmed, according to Tulloch. Also to be confirmed is the possibility of online voting through Pantersoft.

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The ballots, created by an outside company called Acceleration, would only allow students to vote for the positions they are qualified to vote for. “From a hacking standpoint, it’s actually going to be more secure,” Andrews said.

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Students mainly expressed concern about the resources they felt their respective academic departments were lacking and wanted to know what administrators were doing to improve certain services. The president often asked the appropriate administrators what each department was doing to serve its students. At times he answered with a simple “I’ll work on it.”

Keeping the BBC food court open for longer hours on Fridays and paying the extra $300 in tuition for online classes were just some of the issues students felt strongly about.

“We have not been funded to do an adequate job in online teaching,” Maidique admitted.

Other students wanted to know the current status of the new three-day schedule, which begins Fall semester. Questions were raised about how the new schedule will affect Panther Express shuttle service prices. Maidique then asked students if a weekly bus pass with unlimited rides at a fixed price would be appealing. The audience nodded in approval.

Due to the number of questions regarding the schedule change, Corinne Webb, vice-president of Enrollment Services, was asked to explain some of the move’s advantages.

“By pushing the schedule out to five days, there will be greater student activity,” Webb said. She mentioned that the new schedule will allow for longer business hours for student services such as the food court at BBC, and that the parking situation will be evenly distributed with the new schedule.

Before Maidique answered questions from the audience, he gave a presentation that focused on FIU’s immediate and long-term goals, as well as highlighting its previous achievements and how to make the University go from “bigger to better.” He also acknowledged BBC’s 30th anniversary.

“We have evolved from a small upper division college to a large branch campus,” said Maidique of BBC, which is the biggest branch campus in Florida.

Maidique’s plan centered on allowing FIU to gain national recognition by strengthening existing programs and creating new opportunities for the school, such as opening new academic departments.

JESSICA SOUS
Staff Writer

Students stand in line and voice their various complaints – some personal, others relating to academics – during a Town Hall meeting soon after University President Modesto A. Maidique offered the crowd a glimpse into FIU’s future.

To help students get involved in the meeting, the Student Government Council at the Biscayne Bay Campus created a batch of questions that students could ask during the president, but students like senior Julie Ruiz came prepared with their own inquiries for Maidique.

“I want to ask him why some classes aren’t offered every semester,” she said. “It’s hard to graduate in four years when you don’t have all the classes.”

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NAIHOBE GONZALEZ
Staff Writer

Imagine seeing tuition rise by $1,000 from one year to the next. In the State of Florida, where average yearly tuition is $3,326, this would be a 30 percent spike.

Florida has the lowest public university tuition rates in the nation and earlier this month, Gov. Charlie Crist’s budget blueprint for 2007-08 included a no-increase stance on tuition.

Currently, public universities have no say on the tuition they charge undergraduate students. So how is it that future undergraduates at the University of Florida may stand to pay an extra $1,000 per year?

Bernard “Bennie” Machen, UF’s president, came up with an answer that so far has received the approval of that university’s Student Government Association and the State’s Board of Governors. Revenue from what has been named the four-year Academic Enhancement Program, which would charge students $500 per semester, would be used to hire 200 new faculty and 100 academic counselors.
**FEE, page 1**

The program is estimated to generate $25 million.

“The notion that UF is significantly under-funded is generally recognized,” Machen said in a student forum last November.

Howard Rock, a senate member, is among those who believe that the same notion applies to FIU.

“Florida has some of the lowest tuition in the country, which means that we are a seriously under-funded university system,” Rock said. “You get what you pay for.”

In the Jan. 16 Faculty Senate meeting, Chairman Bruce Haupli referred to the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program, which less than 30 percent of FIU students receive (as opposed to more than 80 percent at UF). He called the program “a middle to higher-middle-class entitlement,” where most of the students receiving it have little financial need. Alfonso “Alfie” Leon, president of the Student Government Council on his recent visit to Tallahassee for a meeting of the Advisory Council of Faculty Senates.

At the Jan. 16 Faculty Senate meeting, Chairman Bruce Haupli reported on his recent visit to Tallahassee for a meeting of the Advisory Council of Faculty Senates.

Sunday • March 4

**Teach English in Japan!**

Enthusiastic and professional individuals are invited to apply to teach English conversation to adults and children in one of our 300+ AEON schools throughout Japan.

Recruiting in Atlanta on March 18th

**Howard Rock, Faculty Senator**

Sometimes students are so nearsighted that they don’t see the forest, they only see the trees. Last year the library didn’t buy any books because there wasn’t enough money. You can’t run a great university this way.

But students should pause before releasing a sigh of relief.

“Sometimes students are so nearsighted that they don’t see the forest, they only see the trees. Last year the library didn’t buy any books because there wasn’t enough money. You can’t run a great university this way,” Rock said. Haupli shared a similar sentiment. “We’re getting more money for enrollment growth, but also more students. At one point we become stretched, and the money is not enough extra,” he said. “The new MWF schedule will free up a lot of classroom space, but we won’t necessarily have all the instructors in those classrooms. This worries me, and it should worry [students] too.”

Leon echoed Haupli’s concern over enrollment growth, saying that FIU would “one day reach a point where it can’t grow anymore.”

Leon was optimistic about the University’s ability to rely on fundraising, while Rock cited uncertainty in the future of FIU.

Bills allowing Florida universities to charge an educational enhancement fee, which less than 30 percent of FIU students receive (as opposed to more than 80 percent at UF), called the program “a middle to higher-middle-class entitlement,” where most of the students receiving it have little financial need.

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Haupli agreed that the answer may lie in tuition rates.

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Week-long events focus on school diversity

KHADIA HARRIS
Contributing Writer

In order to represent the diverse community found at FIU, the Student Government Association along with organizations such as Residence Life and Counseling and Psychological Services founded the Peer Educators Advocating Cultural Enrichment group in 2000. PEACE is run by students trained to be peer educators who advocate a multicultural environment which understands and respects people of various races, physical conditions, religious, national origins, genders, ages and sexual orientations.

In an effort to spread understanding on diversity, PEACE has planned four days of events in both University Park and the Biscayne Bay Campus throughout this week.

The events, called "PEACEs of Culture," will start Feb. 26 and go on until March 1.

Monday’s theme will focus on the effects culture has on spirituality. One of the main events will be a discussion called “Spirituality: LGBT Style,” a forum of how one’s sexuality has an effect on their spiritual beliefs, and vice-versa.

This will take place in the Graham Center, room 150, at 12 p.m.

PEACE also plans to have a spirituality fair from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., as well as a spirituality forum from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. in GC 243.

Tuesday’s topic for the day in cultural sexuality traveling exhibit from the African-American Museum will be on display from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the GC Pit.

On Thursday, an information session on gender, religions and around the world,” said Jennifer Camacho, graduate assistant at the Women’s Center.

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The Beacon office is located in the Graham Center, room 210, at the University Park campus. Questions regarding display advertising and billing should be directed to the Advertising Manager at 305-348-2709. Mailing address: Graham Center, room 210, Miami, FL 33199. Fax number is 305-348-2712. Biscayne Bay Campus is 305-919-4722. Office hours are 9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. E-mail: Bea-web@fiu.edu. Visit us online at www.beaconnewspaper.com.
Top athletics, Nobel Prize among Maidique’s FIU goals

Erin M. Watson - The Beacon

Student debt: a growing problem

As a student leader myself, it frustrates me that countless students never get the chance to be involved on campus because they have to work full-time to pay their tuition. The way I see it, the country’s current administration is seemingly dead-set on making higher education out of reach for the working class, and students who do scrape by are being robbed of their college experience because of it. For many, a minimum wage job still isn’t enough, and students are left to take out loans in order to finance their education, which results in massive debt for several years after graduation. I myself had no choice but to go that route. The non-profit sector suddenly becomes a lot less attractive when the good folks over at Sallie Mae want their $30,000 back. With gradates burdened with the task of repaying loans, the very dreams that inspired them to attend college in the first place are now deferred – like purchasing a home or starting a family. With the cost of a college education now more like a shackles to a sacrifice, the question is whether or not it’s worth it. Why work so hard and spend so much, just to have a sizeable portion of your post-college income go towards repaying loans? Frankly, there’s not much of a choice anymore. In today’s highly competitive job market, a post-secondary degree is practically a basic requirement. Through the opportunities I’ve had to interact with other students from around the country, I’ve realized both how common my story is and how many students face even greater challenges such as juggling classes, a full-time job and a family life, all while depending on borrowed funds to pay for their education. As an international student, I am neither eligible to vote nor to receive financial aid; and yet in my time with Student Government, I’ve organized campaigns on both these issues. They might not affect me directly, but I still recognize the fact that if students don’t take a united stance on the issues that affect us, then we will continue to be ignored.

NEWSFLASH

Lecture discusses holistic approaches to communication

Lou Capozzi, communications expert and chairman emeritus of the PRCC group, will be a guest at Biscayne Bay Campus as part of the Hearst Distinguished Lecture Series. His lecture, “Future of Communications in a Conversation Age,” will focus on a holistic approach to communications. The event will take place Feb. 26 at 5 p.m., in the Mary Ann Wolfe Theater.

Diversity Week held at both campuses

PEACE, an on-campus organization that promotes cultural awareness with the holding of yearly Diversity Week called “PEACEs of Culture from today until Thursday with events in BBC. A variety of events will be held both at University Park as well as Biscayne Bay campus, including a discussion Tuesday, “LBGT 101” from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in WUC 155. An event called “Diversity and Perspective” Thursday from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. in WUC 253 as well as the play “The Devil’s in his God’s House” at 8 p.m. in the Mary Ann Wolfe Theatre.

AT THE BAY

JOURNALISTIC INTEGRITY

Going to college is expensive—really expensive. The tuition seems to go up every year, text books seem to release a new edition as soon as the last one leaves the printing press, and of course, the ever growing list of fees. Even in low tuition states like Florida, the college experience is becoming less and less accessible to many young people. With federal financial aid taking cut after cut, many students are forced to work employment as a means of offsetting costs. According to The Project on Student Debt, an organization that investigates the economic implications of student borrowing, three out of four full-time students have jobs and nearly half of them work more than 25 hours a week. As a student leader myself, it frustrates me that countless students never

SGC-BBC Notes

SGA: Emergency Meeting
Mon. Feb. 19
President (Camilo Silva):
• Appropriation: That SGA fund the amount of $1,200 to student organization A.N.S.W.E.R. for conference and protest being held in Washington, D.C.
• Passes, 4-1

New Business:
• Pioneer Winter resigns from his position as clerk of council because of time constraints: “I have meetings every other week.”
• Winter sought to be appointed to a new position as Student Union Board chairperson to handle event space usage and advertising for the Wolfe University Center.
• Winter said of the position: “It would enable me to carry out my position duties outside of the meetings. I’d be able to set up my own meeting times.”
• Vote: Unanimous decision to appoint Winter to new position.
• Zach Trautenberg: “He has the SGA smarts to do this position.”

Compiled by Jessica Solis

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Compiled by Cristina Guerra

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Top athletics, Nobel Prize among Maidique’s FIU goals

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Building a stadium will boost FIU's prestige

JUAN CARLOS CURA
Contributing Writer

Our University is not a prestigious institution; it has never been. Prestige is an attribute earned, not given, and moreover, it is difficult to obtain.

Proven universities have an unfair advantage – time. Their tradition and reputation have naturally evolved while ours is newly grown. It is a daffy phenomenon, but it is more exclusive in their selection, be it more prestigious than being the ambitious, the best students – the ambitious, the best students – the ambitious, the best students – the ambitious, the best students – the ambitious, the best students – the ambitious, the best students – the ambitious, the best students – the ambitious, the best students – the ambitious, the best students – the ambitious, the best students – the ambitious, the best students – the ambitious, the best students – the ambitious, the best students – the ambitious, the best students – the ambitious, the best students – the ambitious, the best students – the ambitious, the best students – the ambitious, the best students – the ambitious, the best students – the ambitious, the best students – the ambitious, the best students – the ambitious, the best students – the ambitious, the best students – the ambitious, the best students – the ambitious, the best students – the ambitious, the 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the double Filet-O-Fish® i remember. everything else is a little foggy.

it’s only here for a limited time, so get it while it lasts.

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YOUNG ADULTS CONSIDER COSTLY, RISKY SURGERIES

EDDITH SEVILLA
BBC Assist

Growing up, FIU alumna Jessica Lopez was not too fond of the birthmark on her forehead.

“I was a little bothered by it because a lot of people always asked me what it was,” Lopez said.

When she had the birthmark on her forehead removed four years ago, she didn’t have to spend a single dollar.

“The insurance covered it because it was really a medical procedure,” Lopez said. “The doctor wanted to do a biopsy to make sure it wasn’t cancerous so it was removed.”

With the popularity of cosmetic surgery among our generation, some have found that plastic surgery and similar procedures come with a significant cost. According to statistics posted on the American Society of Plastic Surgeons website, Americans spent approximately $9.4 billion dollars on surgical and minimally invasive cosmetic procedures in 2005.

“I would consider plastic surgery if I had the money to do it. I would get my nose done and I would get rid of this mark,” says Dorca Castillo, an assistant manager at a private medical facility, while pointing at a dark spot on her lower lip.

Because of the demand for beauty and youth among men and women, there are now numerous alternatives to surgery. Botox, Restylane, permanent makeup and injections to dissolve fat are some of the services available to those who may not want to go under the knife.

Castillo, who had her eyebrows permanently tinted 4 years ago, goes back to get them redone every few years because of a childhood accident.

“I don’t do it to follow what the media says [about beauty],” she said. “I do it to cover up a scar that resulted from a fall as a kid because I didn’t get stitches as I should have. I also barely have eyebrow hairs and, in my opinion, eyebrows have high value on a woman’s face.”

With the media portraying a perfect image of what the female body should look like, some people such as Dionne Stephens, associate chairperson of the FIU Psychology Department, believe that women associate popularity and success with society’s ideals of beauty, especially the women who live in Miami.

“Physical attractiveness has been identified as an important measure when looking at idealized women,” Stephens said. “Our popularity and success is closely associated with our ability to meet society’s beauty ideals. Miami, in fact, is one of the most popularized cities for having beautiful, young, sexy women. It is of no surprise the show ‘Nip/Tuck’ is based here.”

However, alternative facilities, such as Radiance Medspa in Miami, promote the importance of health and beauty by offering non-invasive beauty procedures for both men and women.

“If you see the movement from the last 20 to 30 years, people are looking after themselves – they want to look better and they want to feel better, too,” says spa owner Dipak M. Parekh. “So those movements really started in this country and I think it’s a good thing. If you look at the smoking rates in the older population it’s going down so I think it’s a positive thing.”

The following costs are for select procedures at a Miami-area Plastic Surgeons office. Costs are national averages provided by the American Society of Plastic Surgeons.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Cost</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eyelid surgery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cheek implant</td>
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<td>Rhinoplasty</td>
<td>$3,332</td>
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<td>Botox® injection</td>
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<td>Breast implants</td>
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<td>Thigh lift</td>
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<td>Tummy tuck</td>
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<td>Lower body lift</td>
<td>$6,425</td>
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<tr>
<td>Liposuction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Upper arm lift</td>
<td>$3,106</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cellulite treatment</td>
<td>$127</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facelift</td>
<td>$4,822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laser hair removal</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ROCK, page 9

But I was singing loud, and most singers weren’t singing loud.

‘Little Richard

He can’t play an instrument or carry a tune, but Brian Offenherr is a rock star. His image is instantly recognizable as he struts his way through his alma mater, the University of Florida: a lanky frame topped by an excess of frizzy curls; buggy eyes behind thin-rimmed covered shades; shoes splotched with marker doodles.

Wherever he goes, students stop him to find out what his plans for the night are, who he’s currently dating or why he chose to wear that pink beanie.

“Wow, I don’t even know who that was,” Brian mutters after his latest female fan pays tribute near the UF library’s exit.

Since the movement of Gainesville in 2003, the wavy Jewish boy from South Florida has done everything from designing his own clothes to reporting for various local newspapers to deejaying parties. In his free time, Brian likes to travel, taking what he calls “Weekend Adventures” around Central and North Florida and sometimes out of state.

If he’s not volunteering at a shelter, dabbling in radio or hosting a mock talk show, Brian likes to watch rock documentaries on concert films of artists as varied as The Sex Pistols, Roy Orbison or Jimi Hendrix.

And everywhere he goes, he’s recognized, and if not loved, at least admired.

“I’m looking for something really big,” he says of his goal in life.

Brian’s been saying this for a long time now. We’ve been friends since high school and have continued throughout college – I even make it a tradition to visit him in Gainesville at least once a semester.

But my memories of high school Brian aren’t the same as the ones I’ve kept from my many UF trips. Back then, he was just another Broward kid dreaming of escaping suburban life, annoying classmates with his eccentric shirts and spontaneous dances.

“I know I’ve never belonged to any clique or group,” he said. “I don’t doubt they can find happiness that way, but it wouldn’t be my happiness.”

Because I’m familiar with the Brian who never belonged, seeing him catapulted into a state of uber-popularity has become a bit unsettling for me. We can’t walk a block without someone stopping him for a chat or asking for a music recommendation. His feats have become part of Gainesville legend and even friends who don’t personally know him talk about his adventures like the day he jokily wrote an unpleasent letter to UF’s paper, The Alligator, after a reporter called his hamster ‘mousy’ in a story about a hamster race.

To me, Brian is still that guy who locked
Comedic actor discusses serious role in upcoming film

**The Namesake**

GEORGE ANDERSON JR. Asst. Life! Editor

In The Namesake, the difficulties and extremes of adapting to a new culture are brought to the forefront as members of the Ganguli family face homesickness, loss and rejection after moving from India to New York. Directed by Mira Nair (Monsoon Wedding, Vanity Fair), the film is a poignant adaptation of Pulitzer-Prize winning Jhumpa Lahiri’s novel of the same title and bolsters a cast of Bollywood stars and White Castle enthusiasts that carry the movie until its fitting end.

The story revolves around the life of the Ganguli family. Following an arranged marriage in Calcutta, Ashoke (Irfan Khan) and Ashima Ganguli (Tabu) move to New York, leaving behind one culture for another. As the Gangulis attempt to steady themselves in a new country, Ashima eventually gives birth to two children, Gogol (Kal Penn) and Sonia (Sahira Nair).

The family’s struggles with a new culture are blatantly apparent, foregiving any subtlety. In one scene following their son’s birth, Ashima and Ashoke are informed that the baby cannot leave the hospital without being named. Unlike their past culture where a baby can be named years after its birth, Ashima and Ashoke encounter an immediate and unexpected decision. They choose both a pet name and a “good name”: Gogol and Nikhil, respectively; the names are based on Ashoke’s favorite author, Nikolai Gogol.

As Ashima Ganguli, Tabu delivers the film’s strongest and heart-wrenching performance. Her portrayal of a mother trying to find stability in a foreign country while attempting to keep touch with her children is honest and believable. Similarly, Irfan Khan does a convincing job supporting and understanding Tabu’s character.

Despite the film’s marketing, there’s no telling whether the marketing may have you think, Kal Penn’s Gogol is not the main character of the movie – he doesn’t even appear until the film’s second half. Still, Penn (Harold and Kumar Go to White Castle, Van Wilder) delivers in one of his first dramatic roles. While retaining some of his trademark wit, Penn shows his sensitive (and insensitive) side as his character tries to break away from the path his family’s Indian culture, showcasing Penn’s versatility.

Although the film has a strong cast and captivating sets (The Namesake was partially shot in Calcutta), the movie has one noticeable fault: it’s rushed. While this may be attributed to trying to capture all of the detail in the source material, it can be somewhat confusing for the viewer. Kal Penn’s love interests Maxine (Jacinda Barrett) and Meen (Zuleikha Robinson) leave abruptly and are never heard of again. With each member of the Ganguli family having his or her own little story, the hurried pace can make it hard for some to keep track of everything.

Nevertheless, the film is enjoyable and, with such great acting performances, it’s hard not to feel for the family – you’ll laugh, cry and smile as the Ganguli family experiences life’s turns. The Namesake, at its core, shows us that family is paramount in a world where everything else is uncertain.

Q: What was it like for you growing up Indian-American in New Jersey? Did you face any stereotypes?

Yes, thanks to the genius of The Simpsons and Chandler & The Temple of Doom, it took a little bit of work to explain to people that I am neither a cartoon character nor a monkey brain eater.

Q: How did the Ganguli family in the film compare to your own family?

They’re similar and different. I’m a first-generation, similar to Gogol – my parents moved here in the late ’60s. I guess the differences are probably that Ashoke is a professor and Ashima is a housewife; my dad’s an engineer and my mom got her degree in chemistry so they both work – that’s a little bit different.

In the book, they grow up outside of Boston and I grew up outside of New York, and that’s another similarity to the movie.

Q: A lot of the stuff that happens in the final product of the movie doesn’t involve you at all. There’s a good chunk of the movie that involves the parents. How did you fit your character into the larger scheme of things?

I think you just do your job as your character, it automatically fits in. If you’re in a scene where you don’t say anything, don’t focus on what other people are saying, you focus on exactly why you’re in that scene to begin with, of sort of like in real life. Anything from taking a drink of water to scratching your head to walking down the street, there’s a reason why you’re doing all of that – it’s the same when you’re acting. Every action has a justification.

Q: What was it like filming in India? Have you been there before?

I had been there when I was five, but I don’t remember any of it. It was intense. [The Taj Mahal] is a beautiful, beautiful building. I really enjoyed Calcutta. Contrary to the bulls—in movies like City of Joy, it’s a very clean city. They have a communist government, so their literacy rate is astronomical — it’s almost at 100%. The treatment of men and women is a lot less disparate than other places. Because their literacy rate is so high, they post—granted, it’s a government newspaper—the newspaper on the street corners so that everyone has access to the news. It’s a very artistic, very literate, very cultural and clean city.

Q: Did you think that the adaptation from the novel to the script is accurate? Was there anything changed in the movie form?

I think so because the themes of the novel are the same as the themes of the film. It ends with the feeling of family and the feeling of hope. Regionally, it takes place in Cambridge—outside of Boston versus the film adaptation, which is New York—that’s number one. There are also chunks of it missing like when

**MOVIE**

**The Namesake**

**GEORGE ANDERSON JR. Asst. Life! Editor**

Actor Kal Penn of Harold and Kumar Go to White Castle fame sat down for a roundtable interview with college reporters at the Intercontinental Hotel in Los Angeles to talk about his latest film, The Namesake, where he plays Gogol Ganguli. The film, which will see limited release in the theaters on March 9, details the experience of the Ganguli family adapting to a foreign culture after moving from Calcutta, India, to New York.

Q: What was it like for you growing up Indian-American in New Jersey? Did you face any stereotypes?

Yeah, thanks to the genius of “The Simpsons” and Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom, it took a little bit of work to explain to people that I am neither a cartoon character nor a monkey brain eater.

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Q: The film is about the spiritual journey of the Gangulis. Did you take away anything away from your character such as connecting or finding yourself? Did the film give you a new appreciation for life?

Not really, but it depends on what you mean. On one hand, not really. On the other hand, it’s my favorite film I’ve worked on so far. We’d work 18-hour days and I would be exhausted and go home, and I couldn’t wait to get up in the morning to do it all over again. In that sense, I was like, “Okay, so it doesn’t all have to be like Van Wilder.” I can actually look forward to going to work in the morning and feel really passionate about what I am doing.

You can’t compare them because immediately it’s a supporting character versus a fully fledged character. If I had not done Van Wilder, I would never have done The Namesake. Van Wilder was one of the reasons I got Harold and Kumar because the studios want an actor who has done something in the past so they know their investment will be recouped eventually and that an actor is not going to screw it up.

Q: How does it feel to kind of pave the way for Indian-American actors?

It would be great if the way was already paved. I hope more people enter the field. It’s weird to think about that. I think Mira paved the way for that—I don’t credit myself at all. There are a whole number of South Asian actors and actresses who are trained and studied in it and go to theatre school and are living in New York and L.A. and Chicago doing things. I don’t think it’s a commercial success should be used to measure whether people are entering the industry.

Q: Anybody you’d like to work with?

I’d like to work with Natalie Portman. I don’t know—you know how you think about this stuff all the time and somehow you think about it—MySpace and I’ll get back to you.

**For the full interview and more life! articles, check out The Beacon newspaper at www.beaconnewspaper.com**
Similar friends share different visions of rock’n’roll life

ROCK, page 7

I me out of the car on a rainy day after I’d told him how I hate getting wet. While people admire his unique style and confidence, I think of the guy who keeps an emotional distance from his family and friends, complaining only when the girl he’s willing to break his heart for won’t break hers.

Behind the wicked smile and radiantly-dyed hair, I can see the convinced atheist struggling with what he calls his “Jewishness,” only recently trying to understand the religion and culture he has denied for most of his life.

So how did my insecure high school pal become this boisterous stranger with a rock’n’roll gait, and why is it that his transformation unsettles me?

Despite our similar interests and goals, our biggest difference is that we’ve come to accept opposite visions of life and our role in it.

While living in Broward, Brian always seemed like a stunned dynamo, biding his time by singing along to David Bowie and Chuck Berry while waiting for his energy to be released. Once he was settled and independent, he let loose and wasted no time in living the kind of life his rock’n’roll heroes had sung about. He never waited for the adventure to happen because he was the one in control.

Although I can agree that life is full of wonderful perils and adventure, I haven’t been as keen as Brian to take hold of them. Where he throws himself into life like a drunken star falling beautifully into a clear pool, I just stand and let it wash over me like an uncomfortable shower. I don’t search for life—life comes after me and does whatever it wants.

Right now, Brian is deeply involved with his girlfriend, is getting ready to graduate and will soon be joining the Peace Corps. He is also rarely haunted by the thoughts of death and anxiety that often plague adolescents, two things he is grateful to live without.

Brian believes in the individual and is fascinated by the thought that men and women can rise out of the mass and wield enough influence to change those masses. He may even hope that one day he’ll be one of those individuals.

“You have to find whatever it is that you can find the most fulfilling and do it, and if for some reason that changes, you do something else, and you do that ‘til you die,” Brian said.

I’m glad he’s been able to find a vision of life where happiness is all that matters. That may not be my vision, but that’s why I keep searching through this column.

I only slightly regret that, while Brian rose to the stage and became a rock star, I’ve been left in the stands.

Join The Beacon as it searches for the answers to “The Meaning of Life” every other Monday.

Various products alternatives to plastic surgery

SURGERIES, page 7

think they are conscious about their health but also about looking good and feeling good.”

With visibly smooth skin, Parekh admitted to using the products offered in his office.

But with all the alternatives available, some would still consider being cut up.

“I don’t have the time or the will to exercise,” Castillo said. “Dieting won’t let me enjoy the tastes of foods. With surgery, I’ll just get cut and that’s it.”

Stephens advises that clarification on surgical procedures and its consequences are important for those seeking this measure.

“The key is to consider why we are doing something,” Stephens said. “With any kind of medical procedure, a person needs to be clear on all the positive and negative things that could happened.”

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Women’s softball fails to record first win of season

SOFTBALL, page 12

The rest of the Golden Panther defense was stout as it forced the Cardinals to leave seven base runners stranded.

In the bottom of the seventh inning, senior catcher Tabitha Embry hit a double to right field, but the Golden Panthers couldn’t score the tying run as Penna struck out Rodriguez for the last out of the game.

“It’s not disheartening, considering the way our season has been going so far,” Houck said. “A [1-0] loss is actually a major step up, especially against a good team like Stanford.”

FIU – 8

TOTALS

FIU                           AB  R  H  RBI  BB  SO  PO  A

Murray, Deomni              4    1    0  0        0      0    1    0
Fink, Desiree               3    0    0  0        0      0    3    0
White, Monique             2    0    0  0        0      0    0    0
Bell, Katie                 2    0    0  0        0      0    0    0
Falk, Ashley               3    0    0  0        0      2    2    0
Spiers, Lauren             2    0    0  0        0      0    2    0
Rodriguez, Kim             3    0    1  0       0      0    1    0
Aggabao, Tricia            2    0    0  0        0      1    0    0
Schroeder, Michelle       2    0    0  0        0     11    1    1
Neill, Rosey                3    0    1  0       0      1    0    0
Smith, Michelle            3    0    1  0       0      2    3    1
Coon, Maddy                3    0    0  0        0      2    1    6
Zaragoza, Devin            2    0    0  0        0      0    2    0
Matteo, Danielle           0    0    0  0       0      0    0    1
Riley, Whitney             1    0    0  0       0      0    0    0
Patin, Montana             3    0    0  0       0      1    2    0
Zaragoza, Devin            3    0    2   4       0      1    3    1
Embry, Tabitha             3    0    1   0       0      2    0    0
White, Monique             2    0    0   0       1      0    0    0
Fink, Desiree               2    0    0   0       0      1    1    4
Murray, Deomni              4    3  3   2       0       0    0    0
Zaragoza, Devin            3    1   0   0       1      0    2    3
Watkins, Alex               2    0    0   0       0      0    2    0
Riley, Whitney             1    0    0   0       0      0    0    0
Patin, Montana             3    0    0   0       0      1    2    0
Zaragoza, Devin            3    1   0   0       1      0    2    3
Parker, Ashley             4    3   3   2       0       0    0    0
Parker, Ashley             4    3   3   2       0       0    0    0
Falk, Ashley                3    0    0   0       0      2    2    0
Elliquist, Suzy             1    0    0   0       0      1    5    0
Cox, Amanda                 2    0    1   0       1      0    7    0
Rodriguez, Kim             2    0    1   0       1      0    0      0
Embry, Tabitha             3    0    1   0       0      2    0    0
White, Monique             2    0    0   0       1      0    0    0
Fink, Desiree               2    0    0   0       0      1    1    4
Murray, Deomni              4    1   0   0       0      0    1    0
Fink, Desiree               3    0    0   0       0      0    1    0
White, Monique             2    0    0   0       1      0    0    0
Embry, Tabitha             3    0    1   0       0      2    0    0
Parker, Ashley             4    3   3   2       0       0    0    0
Zaragoza, Devin            3    1   0   0       1      0    2    3
Watkins, Alex               2    0    0   0       0      0    2    0
JESSICA MARSHALL/BEACON FILE PHOTO

SAFE: Senior outfielder Deomni Murray steals second. Coach Grydir said Murray’s spectacular defensive plays are a normal part of her game.

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THE BEACON – FEBRUARY 26, 2007
SPORTS

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Ferguson reflects on season’s success

FERGUSON, page 12

as a person? I think I am an all around player. I think I have a good knowledge of the game and I can flip-flop positions. As a person, I am really goofy. I think I am just a normal, happy person who likes to have fun.

Q: You have led FIU in scoring 10 times this season. How do you do it? I work hard. I have been working through all summer and practicing on my own. I think it is all about confidence.

Q: You are 15th on FIU’s all-time career 3-pointer list. Do you think about the record? I don’t know. I did not know about the record. Well, that is good, but you know, I am not interested in personal achievements. I work hard with my teammates everyday, and my ultimate goal is to win the championship.

Q: Who would you credit as your mentor? First is my mom who taught me to stay humble and keep my head up. Then, there is my high school coach, Richard Walker, who was a great influence.

Q: Do you have a favorite professional basketball player? My favorite player is Dwayne Wade. What I like about him is his determination and maturity. He definitely is an all-around player.

Q: What has been your most difficult moment in your career? I think being a redshirt was the most difficult thing, because it was horrible to go to practice everyday and not play in the games.

Q: You are studying criminal justice. What are your goals for the future? First, I want to win and become a champion while at FIU. Then, I want to turn pro – WNBA or go overseas and play professionally in Europe.

HOCKEY, page 12

limited to just one game this season. Despite his injury, he is part of the club and has bonded with his teammates.

“We spend so much time together that we become interested in each other’s lives,” Hernandez said.

Hernandez supports his teammates and watches his goalie counterparts – senior Carlos Novoa and freshman Juan Vinueza – perform on the ice.

The duo has combined for 442 saves out of 524 opportunities in 20 games.

“We can either make or break the game,” Novoa said. “The goalie can be the hero or the villain.”

Novoa and Vinueza alternate games to avoid fatigue and have aided the club to a 13-3-4 regular season record and a first place tie in the Southeast Regional division. The regular season has reached its conclusion for the Golden Panthers and the playoffs begin March 13-15, which means the seniors are nearing the end of their careers.

“This is my last chance to win it all,” Novoa said. “I’m going to miss traveling and just being with the team.”

The season’s end also concludes the playing career of senior assistant captain Carlos Tuledo. However, he has been with the team before he wore the team’s uniform. He was in charge of providing players with beverages throughout the course of the games.

“I always remember the friendly banter,” Carlos said. “It’s great to be friends during the season [and] outside of the game.”

Golden Panther hockey club heading to playoffs

BASKETBALL REPLAY

Men’s basketball wins final home contest

FIU (MEN) 71, ULL 68

Despite losing, sophomore forward Alex Galindo with 5:42 left in the first half, the Golden Panthers (12-15, 7-10) managed to pull off a 71-68 victory against the Ragin’ Cajuns (9-19, 7-10) at Pharrm Arena Feb. 22.

Guard Mike James led the Golden Panthers by scoring a career-high 16 points in the victory. The Golden Panthers will move on to the Sun Belt Conference championship for a first-round game next Wednesday, Feb. 28.

ULL (WOMEN) 75, FIU 52

In its last home game of the season, the women’s basketball team fell to the Ragin’ Cajuns 75-52 Feb. 22 at Pharrm Arena.

Senior center Lassma Jekabsones led the Golden Panthers (15-12, 9-9) in the loss, scoring 11 points. The Golden Panthers weren’t able to contain ULL’s (22- 7, 13-4) Yolanda Jones, who scored 27 points.

The women will play their first round Sun Belt tournament game Feb. 28; the opponent and site are yet to be determined.

-Compiled by Charlie Grau

Hockey: Junior forward Nick Correa has contributed to the Golden Panthers’ success. Correa has transferred from Suffolk University in Boston, where he played collegiate hockey under the NCAA. In the regular season, he has recorded six game-winning goals and leads the nation in that statistical category.

“Never feel we lose until the game is over,” Correa said. “I always want the last shot.”

In joining FIU, Correa has also transitioned from playing under scholarship to being charged to play. The Hockey club is not affiliated with NCAA. Therefore, they are not considered an official FIU team. External sponsorship does not exist for the hockey club. Every player pays for their own equipment and travel expenses.

“We have fundraisers, but the rest is paid by us,” Hernandez said. The experience has been well worth the expenses for Hernandez, who recalled his early FIU career.

“I came in as a freshman and I didn’t know anybody,” he said. “I joined the club and I couldn’t be happier.”

Last season was one plagued by injury for the Golden Panthers. This year, the team is healthier and more in sync.

“‘They’ve played together longer now,’ coach Frank Tuledo said. ‘There’s more chemistry in the team.’

Despite finishing last in the Southeast Regional division with a 4-16 record last year, the coach is confident his players can go from worst in their division to best in the country in one year.

“I’ve never been so excited about a team before,” he said. “I think we’re going to win it all.”

Basketball: In its last home game of the season, the women’s basketball team fell to the Ragin’ Cajuns 75-52 Feb. 22 at Pharrm Arena.

Senior center Lassma Jekabsones led the Golden Panthers (15-12, 9-9) in the loss, scoring 11 points. The Golden Panthers weren’t able to contain ULL’s (22- 7, 13-4) Yolanda Jones, who scored 27 points.

The women will play their first round Sun Belt tournament game Feb. 28; the opponent and site are yet to be determined.

-Compiled by Charlie Grau

Basketball: Despite losing, sophomore forward Alex Galindo with 5:42 left in the first half, the Golden Panthers (12-15, 7-10) managed to pull off a 71-68 victory against the Ragin’ Cajuns (9-19, 7-10) at Pharrm Arena Feb. 22.

Guard Mike James led the Golden Panthers by scoring a career-high 16 points in the victory. The Golden Panthers will move on to the Sun Belt Conference championship for a first-round game next Wednesday, Feb. 28.
FIU hockey club ranked sixth in nation

SERGIO BONILLA
Asst. Sports Editor

The Golden Panthers’ roller hockey program is ranked No. 6 in the nation out of 174 programs. However, the program is not considered an official FIU team – only a club.

The hockey club began in 1996 and is now led by one of the club’s founders, coach Frank Tuledo. “I was a player here when the team first started,” Tuledo said. “The team was a big part of my FIU experience.”

Tuledo graduated in 2000 and returned to coach the club in 2006.

The University does not recognize the club as part of the athletics department, but team members practice together, play together and travel together, just like any other team.

None of the games are held in Miami. Games have been held in cities such as Tallahassee and Savannah.

“When we travel, we bond, spend time with each other and explore the downtown nightlife together,” sophomore goalie Christopher Hernandez said.

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MISS: The Golden Panthers softball team struggled offensively, scoring one run in the two games combined.

CHARLIE GRAU
Sports Editor

Following their early exit from the Louisville Desert Classic in Las Vegas the Golden Panthers (0-12) looked to better their fortunes in the Adidas Golden Panther Invitation held Feb., 22-25 at the University Park Softball Complex.

Their fortune on day one of tournament play was similar to past results as they lost to Texas Tech (7-4) and Stanford (10-2) in a doubleheader.

TEXAS TECH 8, FIU 1

The Red Raiders got off to a fast start, scoring a run in the first and second innings to put them ahead 2-0.

Sophomore pitcher Penny Eastman ran into trouble in the first inning after giving up the game’s first hit to Red Raiders senior outfielder Ashley Parker.

After stealing second, a single to left field by Jennifer Corkin drove in the game’s first run.

“It’s a combination of a lot of things. It’s just a bunch of little things that aren’t going our way,” Eastman said. “They have balls that are falling and ours aren’t falling. It’s nothing that can’t be fixed.”

Parker would again hurt the Golden Panthers after singling to left field, driving in another run for the Red Raiders.

“This has been a very difficult start,” coach Kim Gwydir said. “This has been the most difficult schedule we’ve started with ever.”

Through two weeks of play, the Golden Panthers have already played against four teams in the ESPN.com/USA Softball Collegiate Top 25 poll: No. 1 Tennessee, No. 5 Stanford, No. 6 California and No. 21 Louisville.

“We want to play the best of the best. We pride ourselves on not only playing a great schedule – teams want to come because of the good competition,” Gwydir said. “I knew these first twelve games were going to be a test and we’re either going to pull together as a team or fall apart.”

So far, the team has remained together and players believe their level of play is picking up and will be where it needs to be before their first conference game March 10 against Western Kentucky.

“We’ve never been down or anything, we’ve only been a little soft...