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Task force proposes mandatory insurance

MARIA CHERCOLES
News Director

Students at Florida’s public universities could need proof of health insurance to register for classes by the year 2010.

According to a proposal before the Board of Governors, a student health insurance task force of 25 professors, doctors, administrators and members of the student government body from Florida’s 11 public universities is working to develop a mandatory insurance plan for its over 200,000 students. This task force is asking university students to show proof of insurance or to purchase an insurance plan from their university before they can register for classes.

The proposal is a response to the large student population dropping college every year due to health problems.

According to Dr. Robert Dollinger, executive director of University Health Services and co-chair of the task force, over 4,000 Florida students left college for medical reasons last year, 630 of which were from FIU. He believes this could be prevented with health coverage.

The reason insurance is so expensive, Dollinger said, is because at present those most likely to enroll are those already suffering from a medical condition or those at risk.

By bringing together so many students, the state will be able to find better plans.

He hopes that by enrolling all Florida students into an insurance plan, the premium would be lowered to $1,000 or less.

But this is not the only reason why the task force believes the mandatory insurance will enhance the lives of college students.

The task force conducted a study showing that today’s college students have a greater number and more complex physical and mental health issues than ever before.

Mental illnesses, the study concluded, are the number one medical reason students drop college. He believes that if students have access to mental care and prescription medications, they will most likely stay in college.

The study also showed that 90 percent of the nation’s private universities require insurance.

“The state invests lots of money into education and scholarships, but unfortunately some of these students are withdrawing and wasting the money spent on them because of health costs,” Dollinger said.

The mandatory health insurance would also make Florida a more marketable state at the research and graduate level. The task force proposed to offer free insurance.

INSURANCE, page 2

Clinic offers HPV vaccine to students

LIS-MARIE ALVARADO
Contributing Writer

Agnesia Montalbo wants to get vaccinated against the Human Papillomavirus, known as HPV, after learning disturbing figures during one of her ordinary gynecological examinations.

She learned that at least six million new cases of genital HPV occur in the United States each year and that 20 percent of the pap smears done at the FIU clinic present abnormal results and pre-cancerous HPV, which can be deadly if not treated early.

A pap smear is a standard procedure performed by gynecologists when women go for their annual check-up. The pap smear checks for changes in the cells of the cervix, which would indicate cancer.

“I do not want to be in that situation,” Montalbo said. Students like Montalbo can now get their first dose of Gardasil, a vaccine that prevents cervical cancer, at the Women’s Health Center at FIU.

The vaccine is only administered to female students who are not pregnant or allergic to the active ingredients of the vaccine, such as purified inactivated proteins from HPV 16, 11, 18 and aluminum.

Students like Juan Blanco are excited about the new vaccine.

“Even though it’s not for me, I think it is wonderful because it saves a woman’s life,” he said.

Gardasil, which is delivered in three shots, prevents infection from four HPV strains – types 6, 11, 16, and 18 – which cause about 70 percent of cervical cancer cases and 90 percent of genital wart cases. Gardasil does not fully protect everyone and does not prevent all types of cervical cancer, making some students, like Francine Salas, skeptical.

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INSURANCE, page 2
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grew up using crayons and watercolors
her father, who has a doctorate degree
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and unique marriage of art and science,
HPV shot now available to students

“Kathy Kleinert, Registered Nurse Practitioner

We did not have the budget for the vaccine and were unable to advertise it right away. We had to pay for it.

“AT THE BAY

Kathy Kleinert said that the vaccine is not a replacement for paper smears tests, and that people who have taken the vaccine can still get cervical cancer since the duration of the effectiveness of Gardasil is still unknown.

“It is important to continue regular cervical screen-ings” she said. “Only a doctor or health care professional can recommend the use of Gardasil” she added.

For more information call the Women’s Clinic at (305) 348-2401 or BBC University Health Services at (305) 919-5620.

“Women’s Health Center recommends students interested in the vaccinations should check their insurance coverage before visiting the doctor, and are welcome to call and ask if Gardasil is a good option.”

“WANT YOU!

If you have an interest in writing, photography, or even grammar, pick up an application at WUC 124.”

“Kathy Kleinert, Registered Nurse Practitioner

While students can look forward to working out at a new fitness center this Fall, a new dining facility will not be part of the Biscayne Bay Campus' food options until possibly next Spring.

Vicor Citiarella, associate vice president for the department of Facilities Management, said construction of the new cafeteria and fitness center began in August 2004, but was delayed due to "undeniable underground conditions" which required a redesign of the building's foundation.

Citiarella said the structure was built by the Stob Bros construction company, is part of an approximately $5.4 million project. According to Citiarella, the shell is scheduled for completion this month pending the final construction of the "punch list." The punch list could include painting or plumbing adjustments. Completion of the punch list, however, is "not determined at this time.

The new cafeteria, which will have an array of different food options, including the FIU Bookstore, has taken the place of at least 4,000 women in the academic year began, many studentsEvery Friday.

"Health is accessible in the cafeteria and new facilities in line with the growth of the University," Kleinert said. "Either Aramark will finance the project or the University will.

New cafeteria’s opening delayed due to lack of funds

"The current cafeteria has been there for 30 years and it’s old and dated. Just to have something new and vibrant will really rejuvenate the campus," she said.

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Proposal for mandatory healthcare program

CHRISTOPHER CABRAL
Staff Writer

If only poor and working class students are burdened by this. Recently, a group of 25 administrators, professors and doctors, giving themselves the imposing name of the Student Health Insurance Task Force, met with members of the Board of Governors at FIU and proposed a plan that would supposedly help Florida's students. After the group concluded that many students drop out of school due to medical expenses. The cost of health insurance would be a boon for the insurance companies, giving them thousands of new beneficiaries from this plan. Millions of people around the country cannot afford health insurance. Finding a way to make sure that all of Florida's students have access to health care is a noble goal. But this proposal would only put an additional barrier in front of these students who are struggling to get an education. Many of these students struggle to hold a job, attend school, pursue their career and pay their bills. At the end of the day, they just don't have enough money to buy health insurance. It's ironic that this proposal, which is being sold as a way to help curb dropout rates and help the uninsured would only raise the cost of getting an education for them, thereby making it harder for them to get good jobs that offer benefits-like health insurance.

Students fortunate enough to be able to purchase health insurance if forced to do so would provide insurance companies with thousands of new customers, who are younger, healthier, and less likely to need insurance. Health insurance companies, who already can't afford health insurance unless financial aid was increased substantially to cover the costs. Supporters of this proposal say that financial aid might be increased to help poorer students pay for health insurance. That would be great. There's only one problem with that.

In the midst of a massive push to cut property taxes, Florida's state government is trying to cut back spending across the board. Many in the state legislature worry that funding for education will have to be greatly reduced to pay for property tax cuts. So it seems highly unlikely that the state government would support a multi-million dollar effort to increase college access for Florida's working class students. Some members of the task force say that if all students get health insurance, the premiums will drop. This too, seems unrealistic and naïve. Private insurers are in business to make as much money as possible for their owners and shareholders. If a law passing required thousands of people to do business with them, why on earth would they choose to lower their rates? They'd make more money if they kept their rates high.

FIU offers a health insurance plan for students who can't afford their own plans. The cost? $1,700 per year. And that's with FIU paying for 75 percent of that cost. With the state planning to cut back on the budget, would they be able to continue paying so much of the cost, for thousands of students? That too seems unlikely.

The bottom line is, making health insurance mandatory for all students without raising financial aid significantly, would be a disaster for the students who can't afford it and it is those students who need an education most of all. Depriving them of an education essentially because they are too poor to afford insurance would be perverse.

FIU and the BOG should follow the lead of schools like California State, Old Dominion University and Kent State University by rejecting this proposal. Maybe working class students should start a "task force" to get them to listen.

The recent controversy that has surrounded Coca-Cola's international business practices brings numerous concerns about the University's decision to renew its contract with the company.

A story published in The Beacon, March 29, 2007, made reference to the American Anthropological Association's findings that Coca-Cola had collaborated with guerilla factions and has had some complicity in political assassinations and labor abuses.

These same allegations have been suggested by various student organizations and critics of Coca-Cola, among them is the Students Against Sweatshops – who have spearheaded the Killer Coke campaign on campus.

It is our belief that in the interest of the University's reputation as a respected institution, these accusations be taken into consideration during the entire renewal process.

In the past, the University has made it a point to distance itself from any breaches of ethics or morality; we advocate that these claims be investigated to insure that no unsavory practices have transpired and that FIU has not bought into any criminal activities through its support of Coca-Cola.

The University must follow its own precedent under such circumstances and maintain some sort of consistency in its policy when dealing with matters of ethics.

Furthermore, the student body should have a stronger say in the process than has been the case thus far, with only two Student Government Association representatives attending the proceedings.

SGA should do its part and get feedback from the rest of the student body, as ultimately they will be the consumers buying the product.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Would a small raise in tuition be accepted if it meant receiving a better quality education?

- Yes – My education is most important. The cost is not an issue.
- No – FIU could improve in certain areas.
- Sure – I really don't care.
- No – I'm satisfied with the education I'm receiving as well as the cost of tuition.

Total participants: 37
Cast your vote at www.beaconnewspaper.com

SEND US YOUR LETTERS

Letters to the Editor must be dropped off at GC 210 at University Park, WUC 124 at the Biscayne Bay Campus or sent to beaconopinion@yahoo.com. Letters must adhere to a maximum of 300 words. Letters must include the writer's full name, year in school, major/department and a valid phone number for verification purposes. The Beacon reserves the right to edit letters for clarity and/or spacing constraints.
Throughout history, humans have used body language as a form of communication. Tribal languages, for instance, were often composed of sounds and movements. This variation of communication is seen through what is modernly known as stepping, a dance form that combines military precision and hip-hop moves along with the use of hands, feet and other objects to make rhythmic percussion sounds.

According to uppercountysteppers.org, a step team website dedicated to informing people of the art form, stepping can be traced back to an African dance called the “Gumboot Dance,” which contained chants, foot movements and hand clapping among other techniques.

The current form of stepping, however, didn’t materialize until the early 20’s, when members of black fraternities in the United States would gather around and sing.

Soon, movements were incorporated with singing and speaking, in turn creating stepping.

Stepping is a known art form in black fraternities and sororities, but stepping also serves as a representation of Black culture.

Senior Brandon Bartley, a member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., places emphasis on how stepping has distinguished black culture for centuries.

“I think stepping is what separates us from others,” said Bartley. “I’ve heard people say that we are separated by culture, not race.”

For some fraternity members such as junior Fabian Pierce, few of these movies portray stepping accurately.

“Stomp the Yard was unrealistic because it was out of character compared with how stepping really is.”

One of the characteristics of stepping is the “cane,” which was first introduced by Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. during its inception in 1911 and was later incorporated into the step routines of this fraternity. The cane is made of wood, wrapped in the fraternity’s particular colors and has a hook at the end. Used by fraternities such as Kappa Alpha Psi and Phi Beta Sigma, the cane is used for tapping and twirling, but it also holds a very strong Christian belief for some, particularly the brothers of Kappa Alpha Psi.

The J-hook cane was used by shepherds. The cane upside down represents Jesus and a cross and that’s not our roots. We don’t want to disrespect what isn’t ours,” she said. “[Strolling] displays the unity and bond between sisters. It’s a display of our passion through our organization. It’s something that’s yours and no one can take that away.”

This Fall promises to bring many events to campus that feature stepping and strolling, including the Homecoming Step Show that features most of the black fraternities and sororities at FIU.

Various “stroll-off” competitions and a diverse assortment of parties are also planned.

Despite the fun from performing and competing in such shows, stepping isn’t easy.

For Sophomore Alex Miller, a member of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc., stepping takes passion and commitment.

“It’s hard work and it takes time, but it’s fun.”

For the rest of the holiday, I wondered how we tend to use freedom as a synonym for independence.

We move away from our parents and we think we’re free; the Americans gained independence from the British, so they must’ve been free.

But freedom is more than a severing of ties – it’s the understanding that life really can bring joy and it’s not foolish to hope for this.

The woman in the wreck found freedom in the wet grass just outside her overturned car.

For Johnston, freedom was a haircut, a drink with friends and a walk through familiar places.

As for me, freedom became eating steaks with my parents on a rainy Fourth of July and loving it.

I spent the Fourth of July with my family, though I originally didn’t want to do that. I live on my family, though I originally didn’t want to do that. I live on my family, though I originally didn’t want to do that. I live on my family, though I originally didn’t want to do that. I live on my family, though I originally didn’t want to do that. I live on my family, though I originally didn’t want to do that.
The film even has some of the original voice actors from the cartoon, including Peter Cullen, the voice of Autobots leader Optimus Prime. If you haven’t seen Transformers, you’re missing a great movie this year.

It’s a movie for everyone – you don’t have to be an avid fan of the Transformers franchise in order to enjoy it. But if you really want to get the full experience, it couldn’t hurt to watch a few clips of the cartoon on Youtube.

As for the special effects in the film, watching the various robots transform into cars or other vehicles is one of the best parts, especially when the classic transformation sound effect from the 80’s cartoon is heard.

Even more amazing is how real the robots all look. It’s not a case where you’re looking at blatant CGI effects. Instead, there are a lot of times where you think the moviemakers actually built working giant robots to film.

While there are distinct and numerous differences, the film remains true to the essence of the 80’s classic.

czyć, but lots of one-liners really make it seem like it is – the comedic elements complement the action perfectly. A quick laugh in the middle of a fight scene is usually a prelude to some huge explosion.

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There are some interesting rules, however. In one coliseum, your team of pokemons is selected by roulette; you could end up using one of your opponent’s creatures.

The game really should have had more special rule battles such as this – it would have made the game a lot more enjoyable.

One saving grace that the game does have is the ability to log onto the Internet via Nintendo’s wireless connection and fight random opponents; a feature that was missing in the Nintendo DS games. Once logged on, all you have to do is wait for the Wii to locate a potential opponent.

Once the battle is over, you can even register the person as a friend, so if you ever want to battle again, you won’t have to rely on randomly being paired up again.

Despite the game’s Internet capabilities, this game has no replay value whatsoever. Once you clear all of the coliseums and win a special Pikachu that can be downloaded to your Pokemon DS games, there isn’t much left to do.

Speaking of downloading, the interface between the Wii and DS is remarkably smooth and easy to use in this game.

One feature of Battle Revolution is the ability to copy pokemons raised in the Diamond and Pearl games into the game, so that you can use your own customized team.

Gamers can also purchase rare items to be sent back to the DS games as well as buy clothes and other accessories to customize your avatar; within the game, you can adjust your avatar to look however you want.

The downside is that the items and clothing accessories are very expensive.

In order to get the points you need to buy the items you have to play through the coliseums, a process that is boring.

Overall, this is not a stand-alone game.

If you don’t have Diamond or Pearl, do not get this game under any circumstances, as it will be a big waste of money.

Sadly, the few good features the game has are overshadowed by the game’s obvious shortcomings.

Two jobs, how to adjust to life in not only a fast-paced town, but in the cut-throat, take-no-prisoners New York City, NY and how to finally snag her prince. The characters she meets and the situations she is faced with soon expose the reader to the world where the importance of self-confidence and truth in one’s self balance one another into where maturity grows, life keeps changing and the nice girl finally wins.

This book is a great read for people looking for something positive to help keep them culturally-fed this summer or just for a nice pick-me-up as the book explores the ideas of being accepted and kind to others while maintaining a well-deserved respect among peers; a lesson you’re never too old to revisit. Furthermore, the world Cabot creates for Lizzie as well as all her other maps to the far from unrealistic or unbelievable. The reality that she reveals is the notion that even a silly girl from a small town can be a hero and save the day, one person at a time.

As the name implies, Pokemon: Battle Revolution for the Nintendo Wii is all about fighting it out – the game is a battle simulator for the Pokemon Diamond and Pearl games.

Beyond that, the game is severely lacking in just about every aspect and is a big let down following the above mentioned games.

In Battle Revolution, graphics have barely advanced since those of the last Pokemon game that appeared on the Nintendo Gamecube.

The lack of graphical advancement is a real shame considering the extra power the Wii offers.

The graphics may be bad, but the gameplay is even worse.

The way the battles work is that you fight in various coliseums, each of which has a different set of battle rules.

For the most part, the rules are simple: fight and win.

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GIVING BACK

PLAYING CATCH: Former Golden Panther defensive end Antwan Barnes, who was the first FIU player to be selected in the NFL Draft, shows his versatility by throwing passes to the participants of the first annual Miami Beach Blitz Youth Football Camp at Memorial Field. The camp was put on with help from Miami Beach resident Drew Rosenhaus and the Miami Beach Bulldogs youth football team.

Best players with no links to steroids should be All-Stars

BONILLA, page 8

In MLB this season, he’s a one-dimensional player. His 42-year-old knees have wasted away his speed and hindered his fielding abilities as he has yet to record an outfield assist this season. His offensive production has not been potent enough to overlook that his fielding and running are a liability.

In addition, the player he edged out in voting, A l f o n s o S oriano, is batting .305 with 15 home runs from the lead-off position. Soriano has stolen 12 bases and transitioned well in his second year as an outfielder recording 10 outfield assists and committing no errors.

Statistics aside, Bonds does not deserve to attend the All-Star game because if he attends, then MLB is once again turning a blind eye to the drug company BALCO cheater.

However, one player painted a bull’s eye on himself by making a stupendous leap from great hitter to the best and most feared hitter to ever swing a bat.

Punishing Bonds by not allowing him to participate in the All-Star game would make the biggest statement because of the same reputation that voted him into the Midsummer classic.

It would not be logical because he has never tested positive, but it would set a severe precedent in the relationship between drug use and sports.

Public outcry would be overwhelming because one of the fundamental reasons the All-Star game is held is to allow fans to vote in their favorite players, but stripping Bonds of his All-Star honors is the only means of discounting his journey to 756 home runs.

MLB has been very obscure about his voting status, but his numbers don’t make the game easier for everyone else.

People rip Bonds when they get the chance, but no one rips guys like Roger Clemens or Eric Gagne who have been rumored to on the juice.

Many in the industry believe pitchers were juicing more than batters.

How is it that archaic pitcher like Clemens is still throwing 94 m.p.h. fastball at the age of 44?

The only people who are making a big stink out of nothing are media members who were subject to Bonds’ nasty attitude.

For them, this is the only way in which they can get back at him.

Despite having the numbers to prove he’s worthy of being on the All-Star team, pomerous media members feel they morally righteous in their quest to protect the game.

Even before he became involved the steroid controversy, he was regarded was one of the best hitters of his era and still could have been a first ballot hall of famer.

Prior to his breakout year in 2000, Bonds had already won two National League MVP awards and hit 445 home runs.

The numbers don’t lie so let the man play.

What most people don’t realize is that we get the chance to watch one of the greatest baseball players of all time.

Till the end of time, people will be talking about him with the likes of Mickey Mantle, Ted Williams, Jackie Robinson and Yogi Berra.

And you’ll be able to say that you saw him in person.

Every time I hear someone say they got a chance to see one of the greatest players in baseball in their lifetime opportunity.

So when he finally reaches 755, what’s going to happen?

Are fans going to cheer, boo, heckle, cry?

All I know is that I’ve made up my mind and I’m
A WORTHY ALL-STAR?

Bonds earned All-Star bid; biased media attacks him

So do you love to hate him or hate to love him? Make up your minds already!

After voting San Francisco Giants outfielder Barry Bonds into the All-Star game, there has been debate among fans and those in the media whether the future ball of famer deserves to participate in the Midsummer Classic.

Isn’t that sort of like buying your little sister a present and then taking it back for yourself? It makes no sense as well. Bonds has been critiqued again, the manner in which he has been banned from baseball.

San Diego Chargers linebacker Shawn Merriman tested positive for steroids and it barely made the front page of any newspaper across the country.

Now if it were Bonds, it would be media circus. His name would dominate headlines across the country slamming him as cheater and accusing him of embarrassing the game of baseball.

Quite the double edge sword.

The All-Star game is all about watching the best players compete at once.

Fans want to see the best pitchers strikeout the best batters in the game, it’s a rare occurrence, and one that should be savored. With that said, Bonds is considered one the games best players this year.

What’s makes this debate

All-Star game can regain integrity by banning Bonds

BARRY BONDS will be Major League Baseball’s all-time home run hitter by August. However, he does not deserve to attend in the 2007 MLB All-Star game.

The purpose of the All-Star game is to not only to determine home-field advantage in the World Series, but to exhibit some of the best current players in the world.

Fans are allowed to vote for their favorite players, but their love for their players sometimes leads to faulty selections.

Every year there are several deserving players who are not chosen; conversely, select lack luster seasons are overshadowed by reputation and name recognition.

A perfect example of a player being voted in due to the name stitched on the back of his uniform rather than his accomplishments of the given season is Barry Bonds.

His obscure and controversial odyssey to become the official home run king in MLB bought him a ticket to San Francisco to start in the All-Star game.

Fans love to see home run races, even one intertwined with steroid use. Fans also love storylines as he might play his final All-Star game in San Francisco where he has played for the last 15 years. So many blind voters hoping to watch the drama unfold rather than electing the most deserving players.

Bonds is worthy of an All-Star selection by the virtue of his statistic alone. His 2007 season is formidable as he is batting .363 with 17 home runs and 42 RBI. In addition, he has walked more than any other player.

Q: Do you believe that in three or four years, FIU’s football team will have enough support to fill 45,000 seats?

The first phase is very important and it will take approximately a little bit under 20,000 total fans that we can accommodate in there. The other part, that is really, really critical to this university is the Student Support Center. That’s where everything is going to be housed from enrollment to financial aid to admissions.

We have different phases built into the schedule. We’re confident as we improve the product and the team and that means wins. We have over 110,000 alumni in South Florida. We have close to 40,000 students. We need to get our own people to come to our own events.

We’re supposed to open the first phase Sept. of 2008 against the University of South Florida. The ultimate goal is to have a 45,000 seat stadium, but we have to have the demand for it. You have to walk before you can run.

Q: Where is the funding for the $58 million dollar stadium coming from?

Our portion of it, which is the first 35+ million, was bonds that were sold. What that means technically is that we’re going to have a mortgage to pay. In order to pay that mortgage we’re using student fees, sponsorships, sweets and club seats and season ticket sales. The bonds are all from the state and bonding agency.

Q: Have you heard anything about making UM vs. FIU an annual thing?

This contract was done by the Associate Athletic Director at UM, which happened to be myself at the time, and it was a two-year contract. It actually ends this year. Anything beyond that will have to be discussed in the future. And they’ll have to want to do that. We’re willing to play anybody anywhere, anywhere. It’s never going to be an issue from us.

Former Gator Atkins found dead in aunt’s garage

AD Garcia discusses FIU’s plans

CHARLIE GRAU & JOSE MAYA
Beacon Staff

Athletic Director Pete Garcia has made several changes during his tenure at FIU. He sat down with WRGP Radiate FM to answer a few questions regarding the new stadium and the future of FIU athletics.

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Before Atkins was arrested in June, when Daytona Beach police said they found him with cocaine, crack cocaine.

He also was arrested in June when Daytona Beach police said they found him with cocaine, drug paraphernalia and a concealed weapon. He was charged in May with felony aggravated battery.

Last year, Atkins was charged twice with domestic battery on the mother of his child. He entered a deferred prosecution

AP WIRE SERVICES

Former Florida and Bethune-Cookman football player Avery Atkins was found dead in his car in the garage of his aunt’s home Thursday in what police called a suspicious death.

The 20-year-old player could not be revived by paramedics, Port Orange police Sgt. Wayne Dorman said.

Authorities would not release further details, and Dorman did not elaborate on why police consider this suspicious. An autopsy will be performed.

Avery Atkins was a freshman on the 2005 Gators and was projected to start on the 2006 squad, the eventual national champion.

He was released from his scholarship last summer by Florida coach Urban Meyer because of a domestic battery charge against him.

He joined Bethune-Cookman as a transfer and played in three games in 2006 before being released from his scholarship.

“We are saddened to hear the news regarding Avery,” Florida coach Urban Meyer said in a statement. “We share our grief with the Atkins’ family and those close to them.”

Atkins attempted to rejoin the Gators this spring, re-enrolling at Florida while paying his own way.

Meyer said at the time that wasn’t enough to allow his return.

Atkins was arrested Monday and charged with possession of cocaine.

He sat down with WRGP Radiate FM to answer a few questions regarding the new stadium and the future of FIU athletics.

Q: Do you believe that in three or four years, FIU’s football team will have enough support to fill 45,000 seats?

The first phase is very important and it will take approximately a little bit under 20,000 total fans that we can accommodate in there. The other part, that is really, really critical to this university is the Student Support Center. That’s where everything is going to be housed from enrollment to financial aid to admissions.

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