Medical school reaches milestone

CHRISTINA VEIGA
News Director

With preliminary accreditation secured for the FIU College of Medicine, University President Modesto Maidique can sleep much easier.

“I am committed to the medical school. My wife Nancy, she told me that I would be sleeping in the basement for the next six months if this thing didn’t get accredited,” said Maidique in a press conference.

The accreditation earlier this week by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education not only grants Maidique a decent night’s sleep, but also opens the doors for FIU to address South Florida’s medical needs.

The process of accepting the medical school’s first class of 40 students can now commence, with the application process beginning in June 2008, and the first class starting in August 2009. At full capacity, the college will admit 480 students.

The FIU medical school is a long time coming.

Thomas Breslin, now professor of international relations, proposed building a medical school over 10 years ago as a way to develop FIU into a fully-blown research university.

“It was my idea,” said Breslin. “I was obsessed with getting this school started.”

In 1989, Maidique asked Breslin to develop a plan to make FIU a top research university. After analyzing the top schools in the U.S., Maidique realized most had a medical school.

Hence, the long process of creating a medical school at FIU began.

“Aside from solidifying FIU as a top research university, the medical school was conceived as a way to serve students in South Florida who, until now, did not have access to a medical education.”

“You should have, at the very least, access,” Breslin said. “We live in this community, yet we don’t have equitable access to what we pay for in taxes for the up-state medical schools.”

As the only public medical school in South Florida, the new College of Medicine will provide access to aspiring doctors who have family obligations, or could not afford a medical degree previously.

Estimated annual tuition cost for the College of Medicine will come from.

But Stephan Sauls, vice president of governmental relations, arrives at a much different number.

According to Sauls, FIU will ask for incremental requests over the next seven years that will total only $22.5 million.

In the spring of 2007, the Board of Trustees awarded Maidique a larger bonus.

On my request, the BOT unanimously voted to give Maidique a $50,000 bonus for accumulating a yearly interest of 8 percent over the next three years. The bonus would have been deferred to the end of Maidique’s contract which ends in two years.

After 40 minutes of debate, the BOT unanimously voted to give Maidique his bonus upfront.

“I think we can all agree that the University is where it is today because of the president’s good leadership skills,” BOT member Patricia Frost said. “I think every faculty member at FIU is proud to have Mitch as their leader.”

Many on the BOT said if it weren’t for the budget cuts and state of the economy, they would have awarded Maidique a larger bonus.

Compared to what other public university presidents earned in bonus, Maidique ranks in in the bottom 25th percentile.

“If we didn’t have the current budget situation, we would definitely be coming back at a much higher number,” said BOT member Betsy Adkins.

Board members were at first weary to award Maidique the bonus upfront during a time in which the University’s budget is being cut by the Legislature and faculty received no raises-instead receiving a one time $1,000 bonus. Last year, Maidique made a base salary of $462,608 and earned a $80,000 bonus.

After compensation, his gross salary was $561,816. Maidique had the fourth highest salary among public university presidents in Florida. University of Florida president J. Bernard Machen had the highest salary at $726,849.

“It’s difficult to view this from a student whose tuition just went up 5 percent and is just scraping by,” said Faculty Senate Chair Bruce Hauptli.

The BOT cited these specific reasons why Maidique was receiving the bonus.

• Record level of Legislative Funding (+40 percent over previous maximums).
• Increased financial stability of University research through considerable growth in overhead funding to cover operating costs.
• Improved classroom utilization.

State funds, private donations will help fund new school

CHRISTINA VEIGA
News Director

In the face of economic recession, budget cuts and tuition and fee increases, students may wonder where funding for the newly accredited FIU College of Medicine will come from.

FIU has requested $46.5 million in funding over the next five years from the Florida Legislature, in addition to $20 million a year in operating budget costs, according to the College of Medicine Web site.

But Stephan Sauls, vice president of governmental relations, arrives at a much different number.

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Med school to have impact on S. Florida

Donations crucial for new school

Florida Legislature appropriated $5.47 million for the medical school. According to Sauls, there’s plenty of good chance that $9.6 million FIU requested this legislative session will also pass.

“FIU has received strong support from the Governor, who included this request in his budget, and the Speaker to fund the FIU College of Medicine,” Sauls said. “FIU will also rely on private donations to keep the medical school funded—a practice already in use by other medical schools in Florida.

According to the Office of Communications at the University of Miami, over 60 percent of private donations made during their last fundraising campaign went to the University’s medical school.

North Dade Medical Foundation has already donated $5 million to the FIU College of Medicine.

The money, which is eligible for a matching state grant, will go toward merit-based scholarships and graduate fellowships.

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“The money is there. FIU as a medical school will never have issues as far as finances. Our partners wouldn’t let us suffer financially if we have the need,” said Bandel.

Wherever the money comes from, it will be only a fraction of the economic impact that the College of Medicine is expected to have in the state.

FIU projects to almost double its economic impact from $1.7 billion in South Florida, to an expected additional $1 billion impact on the state.


THE COLLEGE OF MEDICINE IS EXPECTED TO HAVE A FURTHER IMPACT ON THE STATE, AS WELL AS CREATE 8,300 NEW JOBS.

TUESDAY • FEBRUARY 12

Pan-African Movie Night: 8 p.m., WUC Ballrooms (BBC)

Mr. & Ms. Pan African Scholarship Pageant: 8 p.m., Graham Center Ballrooms

FRIDAY • FEBRUARY 15

Valentine’s Day Extravaganza: 12 - 2 p.m., In front of the Ballrooms Lawn

SBC- Jamaican Music: 12 - 4 p.m., Panther Square (BBC)

Romantic Film Festival – “A Perfect Match:” 1 p.m., Graham Center 140

Italian Club General Meeting: 5 - 7 p.m., Panaderia Suite

Valentine’s Day: 6:15 p.m., Hospitality Building Dining Room, Bisayne Bay Campus

Hair Show: 8 p.m., WUC Ballroom (BBC)

A Sticky Valentine: 8 p.m., Everglades Hall (1st Floor)

Licenses to Heal: University President Modesto Maidique (left) and Dr. John Rock, founding dean of the FIU College of Medicine, announce the accreditation of the medical school on Feb. 6.

“This is a historic day for the University of Miami. The new school will be the first of its kind in the state, as well as create 8,300 new jobs.”
$1 million set aside for professor recruitment

BOY, page 1

an initiative by the University to improve recruiting of faculty.

According to Provost Ronald Berkman, the University lost more professors than he would like to have seen last year. With the cost of living in South Florida being one of the highest in the nation and a slumping housing market, the FIU Foundation has set aside $1 million over the next two years to help the University recruit professors.

“When hiring new faculty, we’re bumping up what we’re paying for that position by 16 percent to reflect the cost of living,” Berkman said. The program is only a two year temporary fix, for now. Vice President of Academic Affairs Douglas Wartzok said the University will report to the FIU Foundation to see how effective the program is for recruiting new faculty.

SGC-UP propose changes to constitution

BEN F. BADGER JR. Asst. News Director

A new constitution could be written for the Student Government Council at University Park if a resolution presented at last week’s University-wide meeting passes.

The biggest change the new constitution would create is a student senate to replace the current student house of representatives. The senate would include 12 more seats than the current house.

“This is for the betterment of the students,” said Anthony Rionda SGC-UP lectures coordinator, who is credited as being a driving force in amending the constitution. “[Anthony Rionda] is the person who has been leading the charge because of his interest in other universities and how they have modeled their government,” said Jose Toscano, assistant director of the Student Government Association.

Under the new senate, each college will receive one representative per 2,000 students enrolled. In the event a new college is formed, it will be given one representative at the start of the next fiscal year and the constitution will be automatically amended to include the new college.

There will also be a fixed number of senators for Graduate Student Services, lower division students, housing students and general senators. In total, the senate will consist of 30 representatives.

Even though this appointment of members seems more like a house of representatives by U.S. standards, the term “senate” can actually be applied to any governing body, according to Rionda.

Plans are also underway for a marketing campaign to encourage more students to apply for these senate seats.

“We want people involved,” Rionda said. “We want them to understand that this is their money we allocate for their needs.”

Specific details are still undetermined, but Rionda said that he is hopeful that the SGC-UP will be able to fill all of the senate seats.

Toscano said the proposed constitution has been developed very well because of the mix of people involved with its creation.

Rionda spent a great deal of time researching other universities while SGC-UP Speaker of the House Jennifer Ruiz, SGC-UP Chief of Staff Kenneth Gelok and SGC-UP Judicial Chair Bill Buchanan have examined other student governments closely during their time with the SGC-UP.

“I pushed some people to write it out and I refuse to take full credit for it. It was a group effort,” Rionda said.

Besides the additional 12 senate seats, the new constitution will help create a more balanced system within the SGC-UP. Essentially, there will be more checks and balances.

Constitution, page 4

Police Notes

Feb 3: A student returned to his car in the Gold Garage and discovered someone had attempted to break into it. The student admitted that he had an iPod in plain view inside of the vehicle.

Feb 4: Police were called to the University Park Apartments on a report by housing staff that complained of smoke that smelled of marijuana. Housing staff opened the door to the room to check on the welfare of the people inside the room. Police staff that complained of smoke that smelled of marijuana. Housing staff opened the door to the room to check on the welfare of the people inside the room. Police

Feb 5: While on patrol, a police officer observed a small fire in the Ryder Business Center loading zone. He was able to extinguish the fire. A representative from EH&S determined the strong smell of marijuana had originated from the room they entered. Police

Feb 6: University Housing staff secured the unit.

Feb 7: A student returned to his car in the Gold Garage and discovered someone had attempted to break into it. The student admitted that he had an iPod in plain view inside of the vehicle.

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Culinary classes prepare for wine, food festival

This is part one of a three-part series leading up the Wine and Food Festival

MARCELO GORENSTEIN  Staff Writer

As the South Beach Wine and Food Festival approaches, about 80 percent of students at the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management will start preparing for their biggest event of the year.

Professor and Chef Michael Moran will lead his culinary management classes – about 125 students in all – to help 24 management classes – about 80 percent of students at the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management – prepare for the festival on Feb. 21–24.

Students will be responsible for the Bubble-Q event, which combines barbecue and champagne on Feb. 22 at the beachcomb at the Delano hotel in Miami Beach.

Bubble-Q will be sponsored by Moet and Chandon Champagne on Feb. 22 at the beachcomb and combines barbecue and champagne.

“The Bubble-Q will be student produced and managed all the way through from beginning to end, making it different from some of the other things that we will be doing,” said Moran, who’s been organizing the event for the past eight years.

“Each chef will produce about 1,000 portions for the 50 plus events of the South Beach Wine and Food festival, most of which are student assisted.”

Several sponsors will be supplying donations for the students, according to Moran.

“We have a few sponsors who are giving amazing donations. The Allen Brothers from Chicago will be donating all the protein, China Grill management is donating all the fruits and vegetables, herbs, dry goods and just about everything else that’s not protein,” Moran said.

Jesse Slachtman, a hospitality management major, will assist Moran at the event.

“This is my second year doing it, it’s a pretty incredible event. It’s always an amazing thing when you get together a few thousand people and everything works out,” said Slachtman, “you always feel accomplished in the end.”

Slachtman, who is in Moran’s advanced food production class and currently works as a bartender at restaurant, commented on how prepared he is for the event.

“I get to apply all the things I’m learning in school for example, putting together different spread sheets,” Slachtman said.

Bianca Rojas, lead coordinator for the training committee, and one of chef Moran’s Teaching Assistants, said part of the money raised will be used for the students and the school of hospitality and tourism management.

“The proceeds go towards student scholarships and to improve the school, anybody who works during the festival gets a scholarship based on the number of hours they put in,” Rojas said.

Rojas, who has worked on the industry for five years as a manager of “Einstein Bro’s Bagel” in Aventura said she is ready to participate in the festival.

“I haven’t really hit any walls and felt that I was not capable of doing something,” Rojas said.

“The Five Qualities of a Contemplative Education”

A lecture by

RICHARD C. BROWN

Associate professor and Chair

Department of Contemplative Education

Naropa University (Boulder, CO)

“Florida International University Center for the Study of Spirituality and College of Education Present

A lecture by RICHARD C. BROWN Associate professor and Chair Department of Contemplative Education Naropa University (Boulder, CO)

“Florida International University has not made any proposals to amend the SGA constitution pertaining to the SGC-BBC. But Cassandra Andrade, SGC-BBC vice president, did show interest in the "[The proposed constitutional changes] are very thorough and I really, really think it is a good change," Andrade said during the Feb. 6 University-wide meeting.

Andrade could not be reached for further comment at the time of publication. However, she alluded during the Feb. 6 meeting that the SGC-BBC may also propose to amend the portion of the SGA constitution pertaining to the SGC-BBC at the next University-wide meeting.

In that case, that proposal would also require a 2/3 vote of approval.

The current SGA constitution can be found on the SGA Web site www.fiu.edu/~sga and the proposed constitutional changes can be obtained in SGC-UP office located in Graham Center room 211.
FORTY students went to a retreat this weekend as strangers and came back as family.

“It has been one of the best experiences by far, with strangers, that I’ve ever had and it definitely opened my eyes up,” said Kellie Maestrey, a freshman international business major and AOL member. Academy of Leaders is a semester-based certificate program of the Center for Leadership and Service. With their motto “Leaders Aren’t Born…They’re Made,” AOL teaches leadership competence, including personal empowerment, organizational development and responsibility, according to the CLS’s program description.

As a member of AOL, I can say that there are no words to describe the heart-felt emotion inspired by the program. Leadership is not just a quality — leadership is life.

Beverly Dalrymple, creator and director of AOL, felt that students needed an education on how to use leadership in the modern world.

“We started in 2000 as a brand new department to really start developing the leadership capabilities of all our students because up until then, students were getting leadership training, but they were getting it only connected to positions that they had,” Dalrymple said. “In the last year and a half, the program has really exploded and we have been able to add a track for athletes and a track for Greeks.”

What a lot of people fail to realize is that there’s an education that goes along with [leadership], and it’s in you, we just help bring it out,” Bares said.

“It’s an experience that has changed my life.”

“We instill in everybody the five practices of what exemplary leaders do on a day to day basis. “We instill in everybody the five practices of what exemplary leaders do on a day to day basis and we empower you with that and we not only teach you, but you all go through different processes like the challenge course, and you exit that retreat almost ready to take on life; its like a reset point,” Garcia said. The five “leadership challenge” practices, as outlined in the AOL student information packet, include: model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart.

Bruno Phanord Jr., a freshman majoring in health science, said that what made the experience more special was the camaraderie instilled in members.

“The retreat felt great to be a part of because there were so many valuable assets and traits of [a] leader that were presented and utilized in the activities we did,” Phanord said.

To join Academy of Leaders, the next retreat session will start in the Fall of 2009. Applications are available online.

“This is an education that goes along with [leadership], and it’s in you, we just help bring it out,” Bares said.

“It’s an experience that has changed my life.”
Coulter's endorsement may do more harm than good

MATTHEW RUCKMAN
Contributing Writer

One to be precise, Ann Coulter, recently voiced her intent to vote for Hillary Clinton over John McCain.

Coulter, a vociferous conservative who is primarily known for being unpopular, wrote a new book: “If Democrats Had Any Brains, They’d Be Republicans,” which contains many of her most memorable quotes like “the President should be armed but should not vote...women have no capacity to understand how money is earned.” She also referred to the 2004 Democratic Presidential Convention as the “Spawn of Satan convention.”

And believe me, that’s just the tip of the iceberg. For those reasons Coulter’s support for Hillary Clinton comes as such a surprise because not only is Coulter a misogynistic hypocrite, but she’s hypocritical about her contradiction. A feat in itself.

While on “Hannity and Colmes,” Coulter said: “If you are looking at substance rather than if there is an R or a D after his name, manifestly, if he’s her candidate, then Hillary is going to be our girl, because she’s more conservative than he is.”

Looking at this, there could be two purposes that Coulter has in mind, both devious.

One – She wants to fling poop on Hillary’s campaign by voicing her support for it, such as Coulter’s good name. Some of you may be wondering how one media personality blessing a candidate could be construed as anything but positive…you don’t know Coulter.

She weaves tangled webs like a spider named Deception. This blessing is a curse in disguise. Not much could be more detrimental to the Clinton constituency than a Coulter back pat.

Why? Coulter doesn’t mesh well with Clinton’s key demographic of older feminist women, maybe because of her qualms with the 19th Amendment—the right of women to vote.

To truly understand the lunacy, a metaphor is in order. Clinton is Bugs Bunny, her voter base is…Clyde Rabbit. Nice and sweet huh?

Well Coulter is Elmer Fudd wielding the shotgun looking to put a hurt on any “wabbits”. Not someone you’d invite to dinner or accept an endorsement from.

Two – She wants to steer Republicans away from McCain’s campaign and to Hillary’s, initially with a somewhat small turnout. This could be construed as not vote...women have no capacity to understand how money is earned."

"I think women should be armed but should not vote...women have no capacity to understand how money is earned."
Students wanting to play tug of war with a condom or Pin the Condom on a Penis will have an opportunity to do so as the second annual Sex Carnival kicks off with a full week of sexual health events Feb. 11-15.

University Health Services along with the Student Health Advocates for Peer Education (SHAPE) will be hosting educational events throughout the week with the theme “Sex does not equal love.” Although the carnival does not include jugglers or clowns on unicycles, it will have plenty of games, popcorn, cotton candy, prizes and condoms for students. On Monday, the events will start in the Graham Center pit from 12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m.

The purpose of the carnival is to educate students about safer sex in a fun and social environment. Besides this, attendees will try to take away the taboo of sex and become aware of the different diseases that can easily infect someone’s body if the appropriate precautions are not taken.

“It is important for our peers to know what is out there because not everyone is aware of what kind of diseases they can get without having protected sex,” said Bianca Ventura, president of SHAPE.

This is the first year SHAPE is helping program the events for the week, as well as coming up with the ideas for the carnival games. The ideas developed include a twist to typical games such as Pin the Tail on the Donkey. Other games include Ring Around the Johnny, where two students will race each other to throw a ring around a fake penis. Afterward, they will have to run and put a condom on the fake penis.

Every student who plays a game will receive a ticket where they will be able to exchange them for a teddy bear, a teddy bear with roses or an inflatable teddy bear. On Feb. 12 from 12 p.m. to 2 p.m. there will be free giveaways throughout University Park. Students will be asked to answer a question and if answered correctly, they can receive a free T-shirt, condoms or lubricants.

A Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) lunch will be held at GC 305 at 12 p.m. on Feb. 13 and will consist of a discussion with one of the University’s nurse practitioners. Although the lunch will focus on HPV, students will be able to ask questions related to sex, cervical cancer or any disease/virus.

The week of events will come to a close on February 14 with sexologist Dr. Marilyn Volker in GC 243. Volker will be bringing prizes for students along with answering student’s questions about relationships, sex or concerns students may have.

Senior Health Educator from the Wellness Center Casandra Roache hopes the carnival attracts students to come out and learn about being sexually active the safe way.

“I want the students to be involved and for them to actually come and get excited about the games, and try something and learn something new,” Roache said.

For more information on events, call the Wellness Center at (305) 348-2401.

It’s a carnivale carnival! Events encourage sexual health

KASSANDRA POOL Staff Writer

Two years ago, the Carnival Center for Performing Arts initiated a contest asking artists from the South Florida area to submit original plays for possible production.

Professor Michael Yawney of the FIU Theatre Department turned in the then-freshman play, “1,000 Homosexuals,” and was surprised when Carnival accepted with enthusiasm.

“I never thought they’d go for this piece,” Yawney said, “now I have to actually finish it.”

A five actor musical described as a documentary/fantasy/comedy, “1,000 Homosexuals” will be debuting at the Carnival Center later this year.

The play focuses on Anita Bryant and her 1977 crusade against gay civil and activism in Miami-Dade. Yawney expressed he had taken a keen interest in Bryant because he simply saw her as someone trying to do what she thought was right and morally justifiable.

“Ms. Bryant would teach people what she believed in and it ruined her life,” he said.

Yawney also stated the play was written in a way to depict both sides of the story in the story and the “gay militant” side as fairly as possible without giving too much preference to one side or another.

“I try to present what was said without too much of a comment on it so that those who agree with Bryant will not be [presented unfairly],” he said.

The former singer, performer and TV icon, now known for her campaign against homosexuality, will be played by local actress Merry Jo Cortada – an actress Yawney believes is perfect for the role due to her unique and varied talents.

“It would be easy to write [Bryant] off,” said Cortada, “but what Yawney finds interesting about me is that I don’t see her as a villain [either].”

To prepare for the role of Bryant, Cortada spent a considerable amount of time dedicating herself to the task of research, finding out all that she could about Bryant and her campaign.

Cortada said the two DVDs she collected from the Wolfsonian Museum that contained old news reels of Bryant from that time period.

She read “At Any Cost,” a book co-written by Bryant and her ex-husband Bob Green, that helped her get into the voice of the other character.

Cortada also stated she lived in Miami during this controversial time period, letting her draw inspiration from her own personal experience which she believes helps her greatly with the task of tackling such a demanding role.

“This era was the beginning of gay pride,” she said. “A lot of people are going to say ‘Who is this woman?’ and ‘Did people really think that way?’”

Yawney’s attempt to portray both sides of the story as true-to-life as possible goes beyond the casting of Cortada.

Yawney obtained stacks of government documents and newspapers relating to Bryant’s campaign from a New York City public library.

He also collected information from “underground gay manifestos” from the Gay Community Center in Fort Lauderdale. Yawney said much of the play’s dialogue comes directly from these government documents.

This unique reliance on primary sources likely made for many boring evenings, something that is not lost on the playwright himself: “It was probably the most nerve-wracking to write a play,” he said.

Bill Spring, another actor involved in the production will be Anita’s accompanist, said that “1,000 Homosexuals” is already a “hot ticket and selling very well,” but he did not deny that the play might spark some controversy.

“I try to present what was said without too much of a comment on it so that those who agree with Bryant will be [pre-sentently fairly]”

Michael Yawney, Professor

“Anytime you have a gay subject matter, it’s subversive.”

Yawney also believes the play might be more than a bit contentious considering the subject matter and the nature and public perception of the main character and the other people involved.

“It is a little controversial,” Yawney said. “But it should be.”

After reading the script, Cortada agreed with both Yawney and Spring.

“I told [Yawney], ‘the only thing I’ll ask for is body guards,’” she said.

This play is set to debut April 10, but Yawney said there had been a restructuring in management at the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts that could possibly delay production until October of this year.

Tickets are not available at this time, but call the box office at 305-949-6722 for more information on the play.
TECHNOLOGY

MacBook Air

A lightweight laptop with a heavyweight price

At 0.76 inches thin, Apple’s new MacBook Air is a three pound notebook that’s backpack friendly and expensive. Emphasis on the expensive.

With a $1799 starting price, the base Air model is equipped with an 80 gigabyte hard disk drive, a 1.6 gigahertz Intel Core 2 Duo processor and two gigabytes of random access memory. Upgrade options include a $500 processor boost to 1.8 GHz and a $999 switch from a hard drive to a 64 GB solid state drive. Compared to the MacBook though, the Air has nothing. For $800 less, the base MacBook model has a 2.0 GHz Core 2 Duo processor. For $400 more, a model with a 2.2 GHz processor, 2 GB RAM and 160 GB hard disk drive is available - and that’s still $200 less than the anemic Air.

The $1799 price tag isn’t for processing specifications, it’s for form. Sitting next to a MacBook, the Air may inspire those with more fervent bouts of technostasi (and heavier backpacks) to consider life without a kidney.

Though before you start researching organ compromises that media-philes won’t like.

There are only three input ports available; one each for headphones, USB port and an external drive. That means Apple is there for the hardcore battery drainers who need more than the anemic Air's body. Naturally, Apple’s MacBook Air is meant for serious business.

With all the limitations imposed by the few ports, the work can get done without the looming temptation to watch a movie or play games (although with internet access will beg to differ). Yet Apple makes it hard for a student budget to look the Air’s way because of the already high starting price that grows exponentially when upgrades and options come into play.

Overall, those who need mobility (three pounds of notebook) – at any cost – will warm up to the Air while those who need space and muscle will look elsewhere.

These compromises mean that mediapohiles have to find new ways to tow their data on hand. One current data solution is to repurpose media players such as iPods, Zune’s and Creative Zen’s as external hard drives.

The story is watched ever intently and commented on by the local old ladies and cholas, who fill the role of the classical Greek chorus. They complain about the decline of the neighborhood, the unfeminine qualities of Electricidad, and the absence of a male character.

At first, the chorus of old cholas seems a bit annoying, yet after a while they become one of the most memorable parts of the show, as their humor and social commentary provide need balance to the show.

Many of the lines are delivered in spanglish, which can get annoying, especially for those who are currently getting a lower B average in their Spanish class.

The play’s biggest flaw is that many of the cultural references relating to life in East Los Angeles don’t always resonate with a Miami audience. It is hard to judge the realism and authenticity of the play.

STAGE

Electricidad

Great acts helping propel FIU show to excellence

CHRIS CABRAL
Asst. Life Editor

FIU’s production of “Electricidad” is a surprisingly enthralling, incredibly bizarre adaptation of the Greek play Electra, carried by strong performances, a captivating story, and a well written if flawed script.

What makes the play remarkable is the fact that the show could very well have been awful. With characters that refer to things like “the way of the cholo” (not to be confused with the way of the ninja), it is at first quite easy to dismiss the play off hand as an ill conceived attempt to modernize a classic story.

It is through the intense commitment of the actors that an audience member is able to forget certain aspects of the script that would make the play seem cheesy in the hands of a lesser cast.

At the end of the day, it is a uniquely entertaining show more than worth the price of admission.

The story, for fans of ancient Greek theatre, is familiar. Set in east Los Angeles, the play centers around a hellish netherworld of criminal mayhem where fires rage, bodies rot in the street and the police leave residents to their own devices, for better and mostly worse.

Electricidad is played by Melissa Hubickisch. She is content with desire for vengeance when she discovers that her mother has killed her father.

Her father was the leader of a powerful Mexican gang that rules the part of the barrio, the Eastside Locos. In her grief, she chains herself to the body of her father and lies in the front yard. She rants about the evils of her mother and how she’s determined to avenge her father’s death at all hours of the day.

Her brother Orestes is said to have been killed by her mother, which only further fuels the ire of young Electricidad.

Electricidad clashes with her Grandmother, her sister who has left a life of crime, and the drive of Christ, and just about anyone else who comes within a chain’s length of her father’s rotting corpse.

Her madness consumes her as her limitless desire for revenge tears her world asunder.

The story is watched ever intently and commented on by the local old ladies and cholas, who fill the role of the classical Greek chorus. They complain about the decline of the neighborhood, the unfeminine qualities of Electricidad, and the absence of a male character.

At first, the chorus of old cholas seems a bit annoying, yet after a while they become one of the most memorable parts of the show, as their humor and social commentary provide need balance to the show.

The play’s biggest flaw is that many of the cultural references relating to life in East Los Angeles don’t always resonate with a Miami audience. It is hard to judge the realism and authenticity of the play.

Writers’ strike forces late-night hosts to improve

Without the safety net of their writing staffs to help them craft their jokes and construct their premises, many late night talk show hosts have been forced to wing it as the writer’s strike has entered its fourth month.

From “Late Night with Conan O’Brien” to “The Colbert Report” with Stephen Colbert, the late night hosts have been forced to rely more on their wits and charm than jokes, and the results have ranged from the brilliant (“The Colbert-Conan-Jon Stewart ‘feud’) to the awful (everything Jay Leno has done, which, has actually, not a big change from normal pre-writers’ strike Leno).

By far the biggest beneficiary of the writer’s strike has been O’Brien, a former comedy writer himself whose over-the-top persona has allowed him to run wild during the strike.

Instead of trying to replicate the formula the show has followed over the last few years, O’Brien’s self deprecating humor has allowed him to embrace his lack of sketches and just kind of let the show run itself, doing everything from interviewing members of his own staff to hosting a race to predict the winner of the Super Bowl featuring turtles strapped to rocket powered remote control cars.

On the other hand, O’Brien’s NBC predecessor Jay Leno’s show has faltered. While Leno has never been my favorite of the late night hosts, I’ve found his work during the strike to be pretty terrible. Often relying on gags such as the...
For me, the greatest accomplishment in gaming is creating a simple game that can successfully blend classic elements from multiple gaming genres in a way that is fresh and innovative.

“Shift,” a puzzle/platforming gem developed by Armor Games, does exactly that.

In “Shift” the object of the game is to reach a door to progress to the next level. Sounds simple enough, but in this puzzle/platformer, the route to the finish is not always obvious from the start.

The basics are all there: you run, jump and avoid obstacles to grab all the keys in a given area and then make it to the door.

The twist is in the shift - literally. At times, the only way to reach a certain area of the level is to press the shift key to invert the entire level along with the character.

The game starts with a brief tutorial to get you used to the controls and introduce you to the concept of shifting.

Once you begin the actual game, the levels will gradually become more difficult as the puzzles become less obvious.

Everything leads up to a frantic final level where you will race against time in an effort to narrowly escape death.

“Shift” is a truly unique gaming experience.

With a black and white graphic style reminiscent of M.C. Escher’s surrealistic works and surprisingly appropriate background music that might have you thinking of a certain pink panther, this game brings quirk and charm to a whole new level; right up to the hilarious ending and even beyond, this game will have you hooked.

The sense of accomplishment that comes in the end is akin to that of solving a Rubik’s cube or finally finishing that Sunday crossword puzzle.

With so much to love, my only complaint is how short it is.

“Shift” is just a few levels long with all the potential in the world to be a full-length game.

The game is featured on the Newgrounds flash site at www.newgrounds.com. Look for the game at the top of the page.

Innovative game provides uniquely fun experience

Gangsters meet greek tragedy in “Electricidad”
Sloppy turnovers bring team 10 games under .500 mark

JOSEPH RAMOS
Staff Writer

After cutting an 18-point lead to 10 in a matter of minutes off a pair of Alex Galindo free throws with 12:23 left to play in the game, the Golden Panthers were just beginning to show promise of a possible comeback.

On the very next play, a re-energized Galindo streaked up the court looking for a fastbreak opportunity.

A loose-handed Tremayne Russell looked up to feed the forward before balking a ball off of his foot and out of bounds for one on his five turnovers on the game.

Galindo, in disbelief, rolled his eyes at another missed opportunity.

For FIU (6-16, 3-9 Sun-Belt), sloppy play, an array of turnovers and missed opportunities turned a basketball game into a circus act in a 72-62 loss to Louisiana-Lafayette (10-12, 6-5) on Feb. 6 at Pharmed Arena.

“Tremayne is a double-digit scorer for us all year,” coach Sergio Rouco said. “We had been playing very, very hard, even those games on the road, but tonight we just didn’t bring it.

“I don’t know if we worked them too hard at practice the last couple of days, but we looked sluggish and tired tonight.”

FIU now stands alone in last place of the Sun-Belt Conference East Division. A frustrated Rouco wanted a better effort, especially at home, where the Golden Panthers were 6-6 on the season coming into the game.

“Just because you’re home doesn’t guarantee you a win,” he said. “You have to come out and bring it on the court, and we didn’t.

The Golden Panthers began the game flat as they showed why they are second to last in the conference in scoring.

FIU scored just four points until a Erick Nsangou 3-pointer to erase FIU’s lead despite a late 7-0 run.

“A mountain of a man who looks like a mountain, but runs like a gazelle,” Rouco said. “We could have cut the lead down to a more manageable situation earlier.

A former Norland high standout, he won a state title his senior year in 2006, but he admitted the college game is another league, different from his high school days.

“This is not Norland,” he said.

Rout begins during second half

Women’s, page 12

offense, the Ragin’ Cajuns looked to a full court press.

At first the press seemed to be working as FIU committed a couple of turnovers; however, after a few minutes, the Golden Panthers managed to break the press and score six consecutive field goals.

The Ragin’ Cajuns would not be able to erase FIU’s lead despite a late 7-0 run as they won by a final score of 75-60.

McDaniel and senior forward Courtney Ratliff scored a team-high 17 points for the Ragin’ Cajuns. Ferguson led FIU in points, rebounds, steals and even blocks.

Ciglar had a game-high 9 assists.

Following the game Jenkins gave her opinion on why the team seems to be having its best performances of the season at this time.

“We’re going to improve and keep practicing and working hard,” Taylor said.

“Taylor can relate to Hilton’s intent to play for FIU before the college game is another league, different from his high school days.

“This is not Norland,” he said.

Recruiting class addresses defensive side of the ball

was named MVP of the state title game. These are some notable names fans should keep an eye on headed into spring practice for the fourth ranked recruiting class in the Sun-Belt Conference, according to rivals.com: Linebacker AJ Grant, standing 6-0 and weighing 220 pounds (Sandalwood, Jacksonville, FL) comes in with a 4.45 40-yard dash to go along with his big frame. He is also a three-start recruit.

Offensive lineman Cedric Mack from El Camino Junior College in Torrance, Calif., listed at 6-4, 335 pounds is originally from Miami and played for Palmetto High School.

“A mountain of a man who looks like a ballerina when pulling on toss sweeps,” Cristobal said.

He also is a three star prospect, according to rivals.com.

Marcelus Manear, listed at 5-11, 180 pounds from Milford Academy in New York is a mid-year signee who tallied 55 tackles and eight sacks last year, leading Milford to the 2007 Prep School National Championship.

The 2007 recruiting class is the best recruiting class in the program’s history, based on the rating system listed on rivals.com. Coach Cristobal’s second recruiting class will report to camp for the 2008 season with hopes of bringing prestige to the football team.

CLASSIFIEDS

JOBS

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RENT

2 bedroom 2 and half bathrooms 2 car garage townhouse. Across from Miami Dade south, fully remodeled. Available now, indoor patio, great for parties. $1595 rent great for 2 students. Email for pics jmatas03@aol.com or call 305-979-8325.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PLACE A VALENTINES GRAM!

Want to impress a special somebody with a Valentine’s gram? Then place one with us! Your gram will run in the Valentine’s Day Issue of The Beacon. For only $10, you can write a 25-word gram.

WANT TO IMPRESS A SPECIAL SOMEBODY WITH A VALENTINE’S GRAM?

THEN PLACE ONE WITH US!

IN THE VALENTINE’S DAY ISSUE OF THE BEACON.

FOR ONLY $10, YOU CAN WRITE A 25-WORD GRAM.

CONTACT US AT 305-348-6993, EMAIL BEACON@FIU.EDU, OR VISIT GC 210.
CARAMEL MADE COOL.
New Caramel Iced Coffee.
The general consensus – from everyone, including the public, the media, team officials and the players involved – is that the Shaquille O’Neal trade was a positive one.

The trade to the Suns – much like when O’Neal was traded from the Los Angeles Lakers to the Heat in 1996, when he was traded from the Los Angeles Lakers to the Heat in 2004, and when he was traded from the Los Angeles Lakers to the Dallas Mavericks in 2007 – will reinvigorate and motivate the Golden Panthers, new blood is certainly needed and will be called upon to contribute, possibly from the opening snap of next season.

The staff was able to sign players with good track records, including Florida's high school leaders in interceptions and sacks – corner back Derrick Clark (6-1, 185 pounds) from Apopka High School, who had 13 picks, and defensive end Kamriel Willis (6-0, 215 pounds) from Booker T. Washington, who had 28 sacks.

For two seasons with the Heat, he seemed greater after his title with the Heat, but the injuries didn’t help either. Also, the Heat was so used to doing just enough to get into the playoffs that they forgot how to win games.

Andrew Julian
Staff Writer

Football program receives 24 national letters of intent

The general consensus – from everyone, including the public, the media, team officials and the players involved – is that the Shaquille O’Neal trade is a positive one.

The trade works out for the Phoenix Suns because they get rid of Shawn Marion, who has been asking for a trade for a while now, and get the dominant defensive presence in the middle they’ve been severely lacking. They also get rid of the ever-disappointing Marcus Banks.

Even though the Miami Heat let go of the man who promised a championship and delivered, it was the right time to part ways as Shaq becoming unmotivated and complacent.

Even though the Miami Heat let go of the man who promised a championship and delivered, it was the right time to part ways as Shaq becoming unmotivated and complacent.

The day of great anticipation is introduced.

The most efficient offensive game resulted in the team’s third consecutive victory.

The Golden Panthers’ 75-60 win against the University of Louisiana Lafayette Ragin’ Cajuns (5-17, 1-9) on Feb. 6 at Pharmed Arena marked the team’s best second half performance of the season.

Senior guard LaQuetta Ferguson led FIU with 19 points and a career-high 14 rebounds.

The FIU coaching staff chose to address every position on the field and did so quite well, nabbing its first Top-100 recruiting class in school history.

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Also choosing FIU were two other standout defensive players from Booker T. Washington, who won the Class-4A State Championship in 2007.

Defensive end Jonathan Jackson (6-1, 235 pounds), who registered 19 sacks last season despite missing three games with a shoulder injury, and 6-2, 225-pound Watson Fraser, who had 110 tackles last season and was 24-25 in field goals.

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