State Legislature proposes further cuts to higher-ed

The Florida Legislature met on Monday in a special session to cut a total of $2.3 billion from the state's budget.

A two percent reduction for public schools and a four percent for higher education are being considered by the state Senate and House.

This special session, set to last for two weeks, is the third time in the past 10 months that Florida lawmakers make major cuts to the state budget. These cuts are due to drops in tax revenues and the overall state of the national economy.

The House and Senate will be splitting into committees in order to address the situation. Each committee will concentrate on a different issue, including health and human services, education and transportation, among others.

The bad news for Floridians doesn’t stop there: In March, when the regular legislative session takes place, further budget cuts are likely to occur.

With $6 billion less than one year ago, the state’s budget of $66.3 billion is likely to fall short by $3.5 to $4 billion next fiscal year.

Gov. Charlie Crist’s proposal aims at both borrowing and saving money.

“Florida is among 12 states that has implemented or proposed cuts to public colleges and universities.

“Florida has already cut university budgets and community college funding, with further cuts expected,” according to a report published by The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

In the last 10 months, Crist has already ordered $561.5 million in hold-back cuts to education.

For FIU, this meant a six percent or $11.9 million cut to its budget in 2008. Last summer, the University

BUDGET CUTS ... AGAIN

OPINION

Page 8

SPORTS

Page 5

UPCOMING EVENTS

BUDGET CUTS, page 2

Scuba classes provide stress free alternative

DIANA JORDAN

Staff Writer

With the beginning of the Spring semester, some students may find themselves still trying to find classes to enroll in. One option for these students: scuba diving classes, an alternative to rigorous coursework.

“After hearing about these courses, I decided to enroll in PEN 2136 so I can have at least one class in my schedule. I don’t need to stress over!” said sophomore Allison Alonso, an international business and finance major in the Basic Scuba Diving course.

Students who enroll in PEN 2136: Basic Scuba Diving, a two-credit introductory scuba course, will learn the basics about diving physiology, underwater skills, safety, preparation and equipment.

Students must also enroll for its one-credit course, PEN 2132: Scuba Diving Lab, which teaches search and rescue techniques will be the central focus of this course, students will complete a total of 16 dives as opposed to the six completed in its pre-requisite course, PEN 2136.

“I highly recommend this class to everyone. Not only did I become a certified diver but also found a new way to relax on the weekends,” said Billy Gil, a senior in journalism.

CUSTOMER SERVICE INITIATIVE: PART 1 OF 8

Student Media speaks out

CHRISTOPHER LAZAGA

Staff Writer

A customer service proj-
Students’ questions addressed

Q&A, page 1

try to focus on college and FIU-related news because we will probably provide the most in-depth coverage of these types of topics. The Miami Herald and other condu- ctional media outlets may not give as much coverage to the events and topics that we focus on.

Q: When is it legally permissi ve or ethical to use a student’s name in an article?
Jaross: Legally, it’s almost always OK to use a student’s name as a photograph. If you are taking a picture anywhere on campus, as long as you are in a pub- lic setting, you don’t need their permission to take that photograph. But if some- body says, “This is off the record,” then [a reporter has] an ethical obligation to stand by that.

Q: If a student were arrested, would it be per- missionable to publish his/her name and the circumstances of his or her arrest?
Jaross: It depends on whether it’s in the police report. If it’s in the police report, it’s public record. [Public record] is protect- ed by the Sunshine Laws and you can release any- thing that’s in the police report. But keep in mind, cover almost everything as public record. Sunshine Laws also require people or entities to publicly an- nounce meetings. Any entity that is dictat- ing any type of policy [is obligated to allow anybody

It is our responsibility to the FIU community to be the watch- dog for the University and to inform and entertain students...

Charlie Grau
former editor in chief, The Beacon

University recruits seasoned director

JULIA CARDENUTO
News Director

Afer a near a three- month search, Barry Taylor was appointed director of the Office of Undergraduate Admissions.

The Search Committee, chaired by Francisco Valenzuela, director of Finan- cial Aid, concluded the national search in late October, according to Vice President for Enrollment Management Corinne M. Webb.

Taylor comes with over 23 years of experi- ence in marketing, recruit- ment, admissions, finan- cial aid, retention and new student orientation. He has worked at Cornell, University, Rider University, and Tufts University. Before coming to FIU, he concluded his sixth year at Princeton University as the associate dean of the Office of Admissions.

Reene Peterson was acting as interim director, managing the Office of Undergraduate Admissions since July 2008, after Carmen Brown left her posi- tion as director. Brown went to New Mexico University and is working as the vice president of enrollment management.

Taylor officially started at the University on Jan. 5 and Peterson will serve as senior associate of the Office of Undergraduate Admissions.

BUDGET CUTS, page 1

cut a total of 25 administrative programs due to these budget cuts.

“I had a class dropped last semester and it’s a required class for my major. Hopefully, I’ll still graduate on time,” said Michael Bramblett, a computer science major. Tuition was also increased by at least six percent and nearly 200 workers were laid off.

“I’m paying $1,000 more this semester compared to last semester, and now I’m in debt $40,000 because of that,” said Veronica Torres, an international business major.

About half of Flori- da’s revenue from general taxes are directed to education.

Part of Crist’s plan is to cut nearly $100 million from education spending; half from state universities and half from K- 12 centers, work force training and community college.

“I have fewer options today. You have to take the punches and move on,” I suppose,” said political science major Jesus Valen- tino. “There are a lot less scholarship opportunities because of lack of money. My options, variety, and selections have dried up.”

Dec. 16

Dec. 17

More cuts are on the way

A theft report was made by Mary Ayers after her FIU decal was stolen from her vehicle while parked on campus.

Dec. 31

Field Force

Graciela Aguilera

PAM MOLINA

Sandy Bello

Jessica Caggiarino

Maisy Chen

Tanya Edwards

Kendra Latimer

Stefan Salinas

BEST BUY

University of Miami Police Department 8292 was called to Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Aerial 829 to aid Toi Bennet after Bennet became ill in a University parking garage.

She was found lying in the back seat of her car and was transported to Kendall Regional Hospital.

POLICE NOTES

Dec. 16

Dec. 17

A theft report was made by Mary Ayers after her FIU decal was stolen from her vehicle while parked on campus.

Dec. 31

FIU construction worker Ramirez Florencio was transported to Jackson Memorial Hospital after falling approximately 30 feet to the ground, after trying to take apart a scaffold. Florencio suffered from injuries to his left elbow, along with facial lacerations.
SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION

Travel programs let students take their reporting abroad

ADA M. ÁLVAREZ
Contributing Writer

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication announced three new study abroad programs in Germany, Spain, Africa and Argentina for Summer 2009. Students can now earn up to six college credits while touring Europe, Africa or Argentina.

The programs – which are open to all public relations, advertising and journalism majors – all begin at FIU, where students receive multimedia training for a week.

Attendees undergo a crash course in Photoshop, Final Cut Pro, editing, writing skills and basic principles of public affairs, according to Fernando Figueredo, coordinator of the study abroad programs and SJMC professor.

"Germany and Spain were pilot projects last year and they were so successful, people from other universities wanted to learn more about them to see if they could come along too," Figueredo said.

Classes in Berlin, Germany and Seville, Spain will be offered during Summer A and will focus on public relations and advertising.

The cost of the Berlin program is $3,700, excluding tuition.

Students who attend the Marketing Communications summer program will not only earn college credit, but will also receive a certificate from the Institut fur Marketing und Kommunikation, a recognized institution for marketing and communication in Berlin.

"I don’t want to miss out on the opportunity. I like either Spain or Germany, I just need to decide which one and start saving money," said junior Linda Martinez, an advertising major.

The program in Seville will focus on public affairs and journalism, and costs $3,750, not including tuition.

This fee includes estimated airfare, room accommodations for 22 nights, breakfast, medical insurance, a one-day visit to Madrid’s Prado museum and to different advertising and public relations agencies, one-day visits to historical Cordoba and Granada, and history and dance lessons at the Flamenco museum.

The program will work in conjunction with the University of Seville, which is the No. 1 ranked school of journalism and mass communications in Spain, and one of the top three in Europe.

"The programs in Africa and Argentina are pilot programs, but they sure will be very interesting," said Mario Diamant, SJMC professor of drama and journalism.

The complete programming, scheduling of classes, tourism activities and cost of the new pilot programs in Capetown, South Africa, and Buenos Aires, Argentina have not been determined, according to Figueredo.

Allan Richards, SJMC interim dean of journalism professor, is coordinating the program in South Africa. Richards also took students to Africa last year to create an AIDS documentary.

Though specific dates have not yet been determined, classes in Germany and Spain are scheduled for the Summer A semester.

To enroll in any of the programs, students must place a $100 deposit, payable to the University, and a $175 check must also be made to the Office of International Studies to cover the cost of the medical insurance package.

Students also need to submit a non-refundable deposit of $1,800 to the University by Feb. 10.

The remaining fee must be paid 60 days prior to departure and reservations will be made on a first-come, first-serve basis.

"[While earning] my bachelor’s degree, I didn’t travel so that I could graduate fast and didn’t do anything abroad. This time, I won’t miss out on this great opportunity and experience," said Lorraine Caceres, who is a first-year journalism major.

For more information, contact Figueredo at fernando.figueredo@fiu.edu.

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WITH OPEN ARMS

As an alternative to team-building activities, TRAC (The Activity and Recreation Center) offers an offsite activity option. Participants can choose a group’s location and activities for the day, with options ranging from kayaking trips to snorkeling trips. TRAC coordinates the activities and participants provide their own transportation, equipment and lunch.

Many groups have chosen to go kayaking on the Biscayne Bay. "We have the opportunity to experience the beauty of the bay up close," said one group leader.

In addition to kayaking, participants also have the option of adding a kayak to their team-building trip. "This activity provides a fun and unique way to explore the bay," said another group leader.

TRAC also offers activities such as hiking, volleyball, frisbee and more. "These activities provide a great opportunity for participants to bond and build team spirit," said a TRAC representative.

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Course teaches problem-solving skills, work ethics

PARADISE AFSHAR
BBC Life! Editor

Spending a day outside may sound like leisure to most people, but with the Team Ropes Adventure Challenge, a day outside is about building confidence and enhancing skills.

The TRAC course is a series of activities designed to improve the performance of individuals, teams, corporate groups and organizations in areas such as work ethics, listening skills and any other work-related areas.

The program, which is managed and operated by the Wolfe University Center, began about 10 years ago at the Biscayne Bay Campus, according to Zachary Trautenberg, IT and marketing specialist for the Wolfe University Center. It has attracted corporations such as Microsoft, on-campus clubs and organizations, and even groups of friends.

"Usually, it’s groups who need to build leadership skills and teamwork who participate, such as fraternities, sororities, student organizations, Student Government Association and First Year Experience classes," Trautenberg said.

The main goal of the program is to help team members work better together, according to Trautenberg, who experienced the benefits of participating in TRAC.

"I did this competition where we had to pass a ball from team member to team member without dropping it, in under 10 seconds," Trautenberg said.

One of the areas that these team-building activities focus on are listening skills. After Trautenberg attended an activity day when he was a member of SGA, he noticed an improvement in the listening skills of his teammates.

Other activities like scavenger hunts and kayaking are custom designed for the groups’ skill levels. Participants can choose between a half day or a full day of activities. Those interested also have the option of adding a kayak course to their challenge.

“We have groups out there typically four days a week and teams must be 12 people or more,” Trautenberg said.

Water is provided for the day of activities, but participants need to bring their own lunch.

The program takes place at the TRAC site, which is just south of the Kovens Conference Center and is open to everyone in the community. Students even get a discount.

For students, the TRAC costs $30 for half a day and $45 for a full day per person. Kayaking costs an additional $35.

For more information, contact John Morris, TRAC manager, at (305) 919-5516.
Students lose touch with reality through Internet, electronic lives

IRIS A. FEBRES
Asst. Opinion Editor

Most of us are probably immersed in the world of the Internet. As a student at FIU, you’ve probably used the World Wide Web in order to do research for a paper or even complete a class. The Internet has also granted us the opportunity to stay connected with friends and family via e-mail and instant messaging services. And with social networking sites including MySpace and Facebook—which, combined, have over 250 million users—it’s easy to seamlessly enter the lives of your friends through sharing photos, more messages and even applications and games.

But I wonder if it is possible to be “too connected” to the Internet. I’m not talking about having an addiction; I mean having too many “e-nooks” scattered across the Web.

I myself have many online accounts that serve as facets of a possible online persona, an “e-me”: because of course I have a Facebook and MySpace, although I use the former much more often (read: every day), but I also hold accounts on through the Graham Center: I could simply keep only one blog, and Facebook can host, to my knowledge, unlimited photos—so what’s the point of having so many online profiles?

I can understand if there’s a couple of possibly stubborn friends who are at one online place and not another, so you’d like to keep tabs on as many people as possible.

And I’m sure curiosity can be a factor, too; I remember when I first signed up for a Twitter account, having no idea what it was about.

Now I can’t stop “tweeting” to save my life.

Let’s not forget that many of these e-nooks are made even more accessible with the use of cell phones. My Sidekick allows me to “tweet” via a mobile-friendly Web page and even send text messages of my whereabouts and random thoughts to a number, which automatically post online. And then there’s Facebook Mobile, where I can “poke” my friends with the push of a button, without a computer or laptop—as if I needed the additional convenience.

With my cell phone, I am doubly connected to this e-universe, set in a place that has been described in the past as “a series of tubes.”

We have to remember that there’s a world outside the computer screen, the pokes and the tweets.

Every once in a while we should take a breath and remember that “no,” the Internet isn’t everything—in the grand scheme of things, what you do online is probably insignificant.

I don’t mean to say the Internet isn’t important; it has certainly allowed me to do and learn many great things, including how to write—but I think disconnects from the e-life are necessary, for they will only force us to realize how lucky we are to have the privilege of the Web in the first place.

When we take photos of events and travel to post on MySpace, do we step back and relish the memory?

Twitter (think a Web site for just Facebook statuses), Flickr (a photo-sharing community) and I host numerous blogs (which, for my purposes, are more like e-journals).

On top of this, I have a total of at least five different e-mail accounts that I check at least once a day, which includes my University e-mail and—other Web sites that I frequent, including newspaper and news sites (MiamiHerald.com, NYTimes.com, CNN.com and others).

I know it probably isn’t necessary to have more than one e-account of anything—I could always pick up a free issue of The New York Times while strolling

New York’s proposed soft drink tax fights obesity, ignores bars

MATTHEW RUCKMAN
Staff Writer

Last month, in an effort to balance New York’s hemorrhaging state budget, Gov. David Paterson proposed an “obesity tax”—which has also been considered by other states—on all non-diet soft drinks.

Two aims were in mind with the proposal: to curb the epidemic of childhood obesity and to rake in an estimated $484 million.

There is, however, a side effect from this tax that has been ignored. One quite nefarious that will hit millions of New Yorkers—and whoever else adopts this tax—right where it hurts: the bar scene.

The proposed tax hike will unfairly target those who dislike but-flavored shots of Jager and instead prefer some semblance of taste with their alcohol. Gone will be the days of mixed drinks, of the Mexicola, the Beam Black Bulldog, the Banging On The Hardwood Floor and everybody’s old pal Rum and Coke.

Instead, they will have to be diet (yuck!), or more expensive than they already were.

The liquor industry, and by extension the very social fabric we live in, will be destroyed by such a tax. Instead of celebrating with a round of B-52s for everybody, Bachelor/Bachelorette parties will have nothing to do, limited to plain ol’ boozing beer, or shots of tequila. Cheap soda is integral to how people interact.

So, I hope New York legislators rethink their positions on this tax proposal, because childhood obesity may be a problem—but anarchy can be one as well, and a trip to the gym can’t solve that.

The timing of this tax proposal is also typically suspicious. It’s been known for a long time that soda (or “pop,” if from the North) contributes to obesity. Why put this disincentive into effect now?

My theory is that only now is a tax such as this politically viable. Gov. Paterson was only recently made governor after the call girl scandal that surrounded, and evicted, Eliot Spitzer.

Paterson probably won’t survive the next election and sees this as a last ditch effort to add even more taxation to the most heavily taxed state in the U.S.

Maybe it takes a man brought into office by a prostitution scandal to really screw the citizenry. I just hope no more states follow suit.

Send your responses to opinion@fiusm.com or post them on fiusm.com/opinion.

SEND US YOUR LETTERS

Letters to the Editor can be sent to opinion@fiusm.com. Letters must adhere to a maximum of 300 words and 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.
COLUMN: CABRALITICS

The lies behind the truth surrounding ‘Rod Something’

The year 2008 was long and eventful one in the world of politics: trials were blurred and barriers were broken.

Perhaps no man better fits the spirit of this epic time than a man from Illinois, a man whose audacity and innovative leadership style have set a new standard for American governance: Rod Blagojevich.

Whereas sensationalistic publications and sensitive individuals cast aspersions upon this towering figure as ‘corrupt’ or ‘disgraceful’ or ‘scumbaggitus’, it is worthwhile to look closer at this soon-to-be ex-governor.

You see, in many ways, Blagojevich is an inspirational figure with the all the qualities of a leader. Blagojevich, who is currently accused of epic acts of corruption, is nothing if not a go-getter.

He is a person with numerous political handicaps: a nearly unpronounceable name, a hideous toupee (made of genuine raccoon) and a purported lack of intelligence.

Despite this, he rose to the highest office in Illinois and was even re-elected. Yet perhaps even more remarkable than Blagojevich’s indomitable spirit is his keen business savvy.

For years, critics have said Washington and the halls of government in general needed function more like the private sector, it needed more of an entrepreneurial spirit.

Well that spirit is alive and well in the governor from Illinois.

Like mobsters who saw a desert in Nevada and imagined 1,000 casinos, or the explorers who discovered the New World and imagined profitable colonies, completely clear of their original and rightful inhabitants, it takes a visionary to see possibility in the most unlikely places.

More public servants might see a vacant senate seat as just another government position to be filled by the most worthy candidate.

Blagojevich saw opportunity.

A seat in the U.S. Congress, he said according to FBI tapes, is ‘a fe--ing valuable thing, you just don’t...

...give it away for nothing.’

Blagojevich is a person who will let nothing stand in the way of his dreams … not even federal laws or generally accepted standards of moral behavior.

Blagojevich is a person who will let nothing stand in the way of his dreams.

Not his name, not his mental shortcomings, not even federal laws or generally accepted standards of moral behavior.

It is that kind of attitude that has driven thousands of profitable business ventures in America. Barack Obama may get more press with his intelligent speeches and oratory skills, but perhaps no person is more capable of truly connecting with the people with his words on an emotional level than Rod Blagojevich.

The great artists of our time, from Martin Scorsese to Quentin Tarantino, Blagojevich understands the power of the repeated use of expletives.

When told he should appoint the President-elect’s choice for senator for free, Blagojevich let loose with the kind of poetry usually associated with sailors or members of the Wu-Tang Clan: “Give this motherf-----r [Obama] his senator? F-- him. For nothing? F-- him.”

(The Hill, Dec. 9, 2008). If only President-elect Obama used such emotionally charged language.

In the end, Blagojevich may be removed from office, but he has left an indelible mark on American politics.

Other politicians may have aspired to profit unawaresly from public office, but none have ever done it with such style, grace, or with such daring eloquence.

In the years to come, certainly others will follow in his footsteps, attempting to replicate his unfappable determination and his shameless corruption.

All who do so will be dedicating a silent tribute to Rod Blagojevich, and all we citizens are left to do is utter Blagojevich’s timeless declaration that sums up many an elected official’s career: “F-- him!”
Health conscious choices pave way to a better you

“Ugh, I hate eating healthy foods.”

That’s what my boyfriend said Sunday morning when I called him.

You see, my boyfriend, Charlie Grau, and I have decided to become health-conscious this year.

We have started watching food portions, becoming more aware of the foods we eat and even discussed signing up for a runner’s marathon at some point.

In pursuit of bettering ourselves, Charlie now naggs me—well, it sounds like nagging as he warns me about too much sugar—when I announce a trip to the drugstore to get a chocolate fix.

I will encourage—yes, encourage, although it may sound like nagging to him—healthier, leaner options especially when we dine out.

But neither my wallet nor my sense of wellbeing is allowing me to do it.

And for some reason, it feels quite... right.

Once and for all I have decided to make a lifestyle change and become a healthier being.

And I hope those of you who have felt that way are making that decision to a healthier you. I propose that we do this together. Join me today and every other Wednesday as I bring you health, wellness and fitness information today and every other Wednesday as I bring you health, wellness and fitness information.

And if you'd like to share some tips or benefits we are quite fond of, we would love to share it with us. Let's help each other.

And to motivate myself to stay on track, I decided to share my journey with you without hesitation.

The sad truth is that since I started dating Charlie, he and my jeans are screaming, “I can’t cover all my sides. Overweight. The sound of that word makes me feel like my love handles are bulging from my sides.

Oh wait, they are bulging from my sides and my jeans are screaming, “I can’t cover all this, lose it or lose me!”

A few weeks ago I had the mind to drown my sadness in a pint of Ben & Jerry’s. Oh, and if you know of a potion that would make someone fully enjoy broccoli and mangoes, let me know. I will be grateful. And Charlie will thank you, too.

But I’m not blaming it on our relationship. Rather, I blame it on my decision to eat the foods I know I’m not supposed to eat, and the lack of physical activity—another conscious decision I made.

But a few weeks ago, I made a different choice.

I decided that come the new year, I would lose the extra weight and get in shape.

I concluded that one way to become aware of my health and my progress would be to better educate myself and write about it.

And to motivate myself to stay on track, I decided to share my journey with you without hesitation.

Perhaps some of you have felt the heavy weight of an unhealthy life when you find yourself out of breath after climbing only one flight of stairs. Or the disappointment when you go to the department store and discover that the size 5 you used to wear no longer fits.

I know I have, and I no longer wish to feel that way.

Oh, and if you know of a potion that would make someone fully enjoy broccoli and mangoes, let me know. I will be grateful. And Charlie will thank you, too.

Hello readers! Honest Abe running every Wednesday, so make sure you keep an eye out for it.

DIVERSIONS

DIG IN: Asian Student Union officers serve food for members at “Christmas Jam” on Dec. 15.

PEN 2137

Mondays, 6:25 - 9:05 p.m.

Instructor: Robert Weisman

Students enrolled in these courses also may be accepted to fulfill graduation requirements.
Hilltopper athleticism will create issues for team

WOMEN’S, page 8

69-7 points per game.

The Hilltoppers have allowed seven
20-point scorers in their 13 games this year and have allowed 11 of their 13 oppo-

nents at least three double-digit scorers, and that’s something Bosilj looks to capi-
talize on.

The match-up will call for an effi-
cient performance from Monika Bosilj;
if Elisa Carey can be efficient, shooting
51 percent from the field and Gonzalez
can be effectively aggressive, then Bosilj
should have some space on the perimeter
to operate.

If the Golden Panthers cannot
handle the press, though, it may be a
difficult evening for FIU, because the athleticism
of Dominique Duck and Amika Brown
could end up taking over the game on the
defensive end and sparking multiple fast
break runs off FIU turnovers.

Russell to have X-rays; Galindo finding groove

MEN’S, page 8

“We always play them tough. We just
have to play smarter and not turn the ball
over,” said forward Alex Galindo. “We
have to make our shots, because every time
we play them we don’t knock down our
shots.”

The Golden Panthers are hoping guard
Tremayne Russell will be available to play
against WKU.

HOPEFUL

“I have an X-ray on Wednesday and the
game is Thursday, so I will know by then,”
Russell said of his status. “I’ve been drib-
bling with my left hand, left hand layups,
getting my left hand ready.”

Russell has been out of action since a
Dec. 6 matchup with Buffalo, recovering
from a broken bone in his right hand.

The sophomore is fifth on the team in
scoring, at 9.2 points per game.

RHYTHM

Galindo, who has averaged 17 points per
game since returning from an ankle injury,
says he will be back to tip-top shape soon.

“Feels good. I still have to get back in
shape, but a few more games and I will be
100 percent,” he said. “I still need rhythm.
My shot is falling but other parts of my
game haven’t got back yet because I’ve
been out so long.”

Men’s team misses free throws; Bosilj scores 22 in close loss

REPLAY, page 8

Panthers coughed up the ball 13 times.
TROY, 69; FIU 58 (W)

Despite putting together one of their best
efforts over the last three games, the Golden
Panthers (3-11, 1-2 Sun Belt) could not stop
the Trojans (6-7, 1-2).

The win gave the Trojans their first confer-
cence game and put the Golden Panthers under
.500 against the conference.

Entering the second half, the Golden
Panthers held a tight 33-32 lead.
Yet a 30 percent second-half performance
let the Trojans creep their way back into the
game to eventually win by a double-digit
margin.

For the game, the Trojans shot an efficient
54 percent compared to the Golden Panthers’
37 percent.

The Golden Panthers’ free-throw shooting
and turnover problems have been the two
consistent factors leading to losses.
They shot 8-of-15 from the free-throw line
while allowing 19 turnovers.

Nineteen turnovers were a huge improve-
ment from the team’s previous game vs. East
Carolina, though, when they turned the ball
over 31 times.

Junior guard Monika Bosilj led the team
with 22 points, but shot just 4-of-16 from 3-
point range.
Sophomore guard Michelle Gonzalez
contributed with 12 points and six assists.
In just 22 minutes of play, Trojan freshman
guard Kirsten Smith managed to lead her team
with 18 points on 8-of-12 shooting.
Smith is averaging just six points per game
this season.

HONOR STUDENTS: Phi Sigma Theta National Honor Society is seeking motivated
students to establish a campus chapter. Contact: Director@PhiSigmaTheta.org

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students to establish a campus chapter. Contact: Director@PhiSigmaTheta.org
**SPORTS**

**PREVIEW: MEN’S BASKETBALL**

**FACING THE CHAMPS**

*JONATHAN RAMOS
Asst. Sports Director*

The Western Kentucky Hilltoppers have relied on Courtney Lee en route to conference championships the last two seasons, so his departure to the NBA has alleviated some pressure on WKU opponents. To begin the season, the Hilltoppers have continued their winning ways, this time behind the scoring of A.J. Slaughter.

Like they have most of the decade, the Hilltoppers have had trouble scoring outside the paint, and their perimeter is their strength. The Hilltoppers have four double-digit scorers, with Steffphon Pettigrew (11.8) and Sergio Kenisch (10.4) joining Slaughter and Mendez-Valdez.

The Hilltoppers have come to South Florida in recent history and have won four of the last five matchups and every contest in FIU’s home gym since the 2005-06 season. They also have [Orlando] Mendez-Valdez. Their perimeter is their strength.

**BASKETBALL**

**Golden Panthers swept**

*SERGIO BONILLA
Asst. Sports Director*

The Golden Panthers’ men’s and women’s basketball teams began their first of 16 Sun Belt Conference games with losses on Jan. 3. While on the road, Troy University swept the Golden Panthers teams at Trojan Arena.

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**PREVIEW: WOMEN’S BASKETBALL**

**Golden Panthers look to halt three-game skid vs. WKU**

*ANDREW JULIAN
Sports Director*

To begin the season, the Golden Panthers knew junior guard Monika Bosilj would be counted on for the heavy lifting on the offensive end, and her 17.8 points per game – which rank second in the Sun Belt Conference – are indicative of her offensive output this season.

The Golden Panthers, however, have had trouble shooting outside of Bosilj, who has faced double teams all season.

FIU, on the season, is shooting just 37 percent from the floor and averages just 55 points per game, which ranks at the bottom of the Sun Belt.

Michelle Gonzalez has had to shoulder much of the scoring load and she has done so, as of late, upping her scoring average to 9.4 points per contest, with double digits in four of her last six games.

The turnovers are still a major issue for the team, which is a hold over from a season ago. At nearly 23 turnovers per game, FIU ranks last in the Sun Belt and this leads to fast break points for FIU opponents. These have been the rallies that have buried the Golden Panthers over the course of the season.

There is some good news – and it starts on FIU’s defensive end, where they allow just 41 percent from the floor.

FIU also ranks second as a team in blocked shots per game in the league and the interior defense has been excellent. Led by the tandem of Elisa Carey (1.6 bpg) and Jasmine Jenkins (1.4 bpg), FIU will attempt to neutralize the Western Kentucky attack, starting on the defensive end.

The Hilltoppers (7-6, 1-2 SBC) have had a tough start, playing five of the first 13 games against teams that played in the NCAA tournament last season.

Kenzie Rich leads the way for WKU, averaging over 14 points per game. She has attempted 102 of Western Kentucky’s total 159 3-pointers.

Amrika Brown (14.6) and Amy McNear (10.7) are also averaging double figures.

WKU finds most of its issues on the defensive end, allowing 40 minutes of play, but the Trojans (6-9, 2-1) outlasted the visiting team in the final minutes.

With a minute left in the game, the Golden Panthers reached within three points. However, a jumper from junior guard Brandon Hazzard sealed the victory for the Trojans.

In his second game back, senior forward Alex Galindo led his team with 14 points on 5-of-12 shooting. Recording his sixth double-double of the season was freshman forward/center Freddy Asprilla, who scored 13 points and grabbed a game-high 15 rebounds.

Both teams displayed a balanced attack and had four players reach double-digit scoring.

The biggest discrepancy between the two teams was the free-throw percentage.

Throughout the season, the Golden Panthers have had trouble shooting free throws and it hurt them as they shot just 5-of-15 from the charity stripe.

The Trojans made the most of their trips to the line by shooting 18-of-19, which set a school record for free-throw percentage in a game. They also turned the ball over just seven times for the game while the Golden}

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