Nation’s successes, failures assessed

**OPINION**

The global economic crisis, America’s future as a superpower and the realignment of the developing world were among the topics discussed at the America and the Rising Powers conference.

The speakers, each considered among the foremost experts in their fields, included Dr. Francis Fukuyama, Dr. Robert Kagan, Parag Khanna and Dr. Fareed Zakaria.

Hundreds of students packed into the Graham Center Ballrooms to attend the event, advertised as a “Geopolitical Summit,” on Feb. 24.

The four plenaries consisted of a speech by the keynote speaker followed by comments from a panel consisting of FBI faculty members and a question and answer session.

Each of the speakers offered their own perspectives on America’s current and future role on the international stage.

Fukuyama, a Bernard Schwartz Professor of International Political Economy at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University, was the first speaker.

He claimed that capitalism practiced in the United States only appeals to the middle class while lower classes become attuned to other economic and political ideas.

“If you look at where people vote for Hammmus in Gaza or Mr. Ahmadinejad in Iran or this hemisphere, why Evo Morales or Hugo Chavez, it is because all of these leaders provide a social agenda and programs that appeal directly to poor people,” Fukuyama said.

He also said that if America doesn’t listen to the urges and needs of other nations and continues to lecture nations on what their needs are, it would face problems achieving strategic goals.

Continuing the conversation on power politics, Kagan, senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, discussed the position of the United States after the 2008 election.

SUMMIT, page 2

**POLITICS**

President Modesto A. Machado (right) introduced the first speaker, Dr. Francis Fukuyama, of the “Geopolitical Summit” that took place in the Graham Center Ballrooms on Feb. 24.

**SPOTTLIGHT**

**GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES**

Dining the Taliban.

Diplomacy is necessary in order to address.

**SPORTS**

Women’s basketball team loses their

**QUOTE**

Asst. Sports Director

During the baseball team’s opening weekend, the first two starters combined to strikeout 18 batters in 12 2/3 innings. Corey Polizzano was the only starter to lose a game, but his counterparts’ success only makes him want to win more.

“With me pitching on Sunday, I got Friday guys and Saturday guys that pitch before. If they do good, I have to match them or do better,” Polizzano, the only returning starting pitcher from last season, said.

Polizzano did receive the least run support and four errors behind him did not help his cause either. Even though errors rattle him a bit, he chooses to ignore them as much as possible.

Head coach Turtle Thomas said the team’s pitching is what sets the tone to win games. That might be one of the reasons Thomas said it will most likely be Tom Ebert or Scott Rembisz to face the No. 18 ranked Coastal Carolina University (4-1), a team fresh off a

**BASEBALL**

Law school nationally recognized

The University’s College of Law was formally accepted into the Association of American Law Schools last month at the association’s annual meeting.

The young law school, which opened its doors August of 2002, was awarded membership after instructing for five years and graduating at least three classes – the AALS’s shortest possible time frame for admittance.

In comparison, the University of Florida Levin College of Law and the University of Miami’s Law School were admitted in 11 and 18 years respectively.

“We are very pleased with the AALS’s vote for our law school, which though less than seven years old, has in recent years received recognition nationally for the quality of its students, faculty and programs,” said College of Law Dean Leonard Strickman in a published statement.

The AALS, founded in 1900, is a non-profit association of law schools in the United States. The association seeks to improve the legal profession through legal education and has come to be recognized as one of the highest distinctions a law school can attain.

AALS membership is the culmination of a long application process that concentrates on integral aspects of a law school’s operation.

The aspects range from the school’s curriculum, the quality of its faculty, scholarships it offers, its students and the diversity of the students and faculty members.

The Executive Committee of the AALS included the FIU College of Law into the association after learning about the school’s plans of emphasizing an innovative transnational curriculum and also the school’s commitment to helping students with scholarships and its new facilities.

“I have always been interested in going to law school. Now that FIU’s College of Law has been admitted into the AALS, I will definitely consider it as one of my top choices,” said junior and international relations major Jenny Martinez.

The college was also bestowed an honor when it received full accreditation from the American Bar Association.
CONFERENCE INSPIRES WOMEN TO LEAD

MELVIONNE CHERY
Staff Writer

The Women’s Center will hold its third annual Women Who Lead Conference in March, a day-long conference designed to lead the expansion of women in society.

“This is a chance for our students to get to meet women from around the state and country who are leaders,” said Suzanne Onorato, director of the Women’s Center on the North University Park campus. “This will allow our students to start thinking about their own decisions and their own careers.

There will be three breakout sessions at the Women Who Lead Conference. During the first session, students from several colleges have sponsored panels where women from that career field will be discussing academic and professional advice.

At the conference, students will be able to have lunch with these women and take part in several interactive sessions during the day. Some of the sessions at the conference are “The Evolution of a Woman,” “Women Who Have Successful Businesses” and “Negotiating with the Big Boys.”

During the three breakout sessions, Pencerst sister Cindy Lerner will be holding her own panel about creating change and how women have affected society.

Even though the conference is targeted for the female students, students are also welcome to come in and learn,” Onorato said.

At the end of the conference, there will be networking between students who can network with agencies and corporate partners.

Zoeann Finzi-Smith, a graduate assistant working at the Women’s Center, believes that this conference is great for networking.

“It gives the FIU female students a chance to network with people from their academic schools and women who work in that career field,” Finzi-Smith said.

The keynote speaker for UP’s Lindsey Hyde, executive director of Sphinx Women, Strong Girls, a non-profit organization in Massachusetts, which helps at-risk, third, fourth and fifth grade develop positive self-esteem.

“When we first started,” Lindsey Hyde said, “we would go to the campuses and meet women, but now we have 20 groups who we meet with regularly.”

The conference is on March 6 and will be open to all students.

“The Women Who Lead Conference is sponsored by the Student Government and is free for all students to attend,” Onorato said.

www.fiu.edu/fwwl
Bill to grant retirees investment control

BARBARA QUIJANO
Asst. News Director

With the possibility of nuclear weapons in Iran and genocide in Darfur, U.S. citizens can help prevent devastation by familiarizing themselves with state legislation and by following their money.

"Using economic power now to stand up to Iran and using economic power today to try to bring an end to the genocide in Darfur are absolutely consistent with your political beliefs, whatever they are," said Florida State Senator Ted Deutch. "The legislation we're working on will give people who have some individual say over where their retirement dollars go the option to invest their retirement dollars in funds that don't invest in Sudan or Iran."

Deutch spoke about this proposed legislation -- as well as the Protecting Florida's Investments Act, passed in June 8, 2007 -- at the Biscayne Bay Campus on Feb. 24 in the Wolfe University Center's conference room. The lecture was sponsored by the Middle East Society, part of the Department of International Relations and Geography at BBC, whose mission is to "foster a long-term partnership with the local community through lively debate and discussion about matters concerning the Middle East." The co-sponsors for this lecture were the Judaic Studies Program and the Florida Security Council, LLC, a state-based organization comprised of Floridians that help the general public prepare and respond to these "clear and present dangers," according to their Web site.

"Our goal is to help FUIE become a center of debate and learning, especially at BBC, on topics of the Middle East," said Shira Dinur, Middle East Society director.

Deutch, chosen for his active role in encouraging the Middle East to divest from Iran, sponsored the FUIE, "making Florida the first state to divest its pension funds from any company doing business with the government of Sudan or the energy sector of Iran," according to a press release on the Florida Senate Web site.

"What we realized is that there were about $140 billion in the Florida retirement system. Whatever they are," said Florida State Professor Neil Reisner, hearing the story about how Lowery was not served shows how far the nation has come in terms of race relations.

"He was not even allowed to be served by someone who thought he should be, but now no one would think twice about serving someone who is black," Reisner said.

Lowery also said in his speech that those who create change in terms of civil rights, including Dr. Martin Luther King, were crazy, but the "good kind of crazy."

"The same God who walked with Harriet Tubman down the underground railroad is the same God who stood with Martin Luther King in Birmingham, and the same God will stand with you today if you embrace good crazy," Lowery said.

Lowery also said that he never thought he would see a black president. And while he thinks President Barack Obama's election shows progress, he still believes there is a lot that needs to be done, and a key point of that is education and loving one another.

"Aretusa [Franklin] put it best: re-es-p-e-c-t. That's what we must learn to have for each other," Lowery said. "What difference does it make the colors of our skin? What difference does it make the texture of our hair? If you take away this complication, we'd be a little better."

Kassandra Paul, BBC Student Government Council vice-president, agrees. And like Lowery, she awaits a day where there is no racism.

"One day, we will be judged by our character and not our color," Paul said.

Lowery's vision for the future of the country is one where "brown can stick around, when yellow will be mellow, when the red man can get ahead man and when white will embrace what is right."

"If you decimate me because I am black or brown or yellow or white, you have to take that up with God," Lowery said. "Because he made me black and there is nothing I can or want to do about it. And if God made me good crazy, all I have to say is 'hallelujah!'"
In response to the Feb. 20 column “U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico eagerly demand statehood,” as a fellow Puerto Rican I feel it is my obligation to clarify certain aspects regarding its absurdly optimistic tone. The article erroneously claims that statehood is a realizable possibility for the island and that the majority of Puerto Ricans have conclusively decided to support it. The people of Puerto Rico have no effective self-determination procedure. The island’s territorial status rests solely on the powers of Congress. One of the key reasons for the United States not to incorporate Puerto Rico are economic reasons. Puerto Rico is currently poorer than the poorest state, Mississippi, yet receives less federal funds. If Puerto Rico were incorporated into the Union, this would mean it would be entitled to much larger sums of federal funds, essentially increasing federal spending and straining the public purse.

At this time of economic uncertainty, where the looming specter of depression eyes the U.S. economy and huge government economic bailout plans are pushed through Congress, it would be irrational to incorporate Puerto Rico into the U.S. economy. The U.S. would change the political dynamics of the executive and legislative branches. Puerto Rico would mean giving up its merchant culture and the benefits it bestows to the U.S. economy. Some other key reasons for the United States not to incorporate Puerto Rico into the Union are the political implications this act would have. Incorporating Puerto Rico into the U.S. would change the political dynamics of the executive and legislative branches. Puerto Rico would mean integrating it into the Electoral College, essentially giving it power when electing the president. The people of Puerto Rico find themselves in a colonial dilemma of having to choose either to permanently give up their dreams and hopes of independence and true sovereignty by attempting to incorporate itself into the Union, or to shed the chains of colonialism and lunge itself into the uncertain realm of independence. The Puerto Rican people are unwilling to compromise on the status issue. But the unfortunate aspect which must be noted is that we have no true self-determination mechanism which would allow us to define our future. Our political and economic future, regardless of what we decide, is at the mercy of the U.S. Congress.

In San Juan, a crowd demonstrated support for statehood for Puerto Rico on March 23, 1996, but this “crisis is eminent.” Nothing has changed in the political trends in Puerto Rico, simply the people’s perception of such trends.

Statehood for Puerto Rico more complicated than it seems

THE SOAPBOX:
An Op-Ed Column

Statehood: In San Juan, a crowd demonstrated support for statehood for Puerto Rico on March 23, 1996 during deliberations on legislation sponsored by Sen. Dan Young, which dealt with Puerto Rico’s status.

THE BEACON
Friday, February 7, 2009
www.fiu.edu
FIU, UM collaborating in John Milton symposium

NATTY LEVY
Contributing Writer

FIU and the University of Miami are getting together to celebrate the 400th birthday of John Milton, 17th century poet. The universities will host a symposium this weekend commemorating the life and work of the Paradise Lost author.

Here at FIU, Andrew Strycharski, assistant professor at the English department, has been working in tandem with Jeffrey Shoulson, associate professor at UM’s English department, to put together Miami’s first Milton Symposium.

“We’re using the story of Samson Agonistes as a springboard to address larger issues that are very pertinent today.” Strycharski said.

The symposium is based on Milton’s dramma, Samson Agonistes, which spinss the biblical stories of Samson and the book of Judges to deal with issues of violence, faith, religion and politics.

It will consist of panels of Milton scholars from across the country as well as graduate students from both FIU and UM who will be discussing the dramatic poem in reference to issues of religion and violence.

“I think [Milton] is pertinent in all different levels of our lives: as individuals, societies and even broader social contexts. As a body, I think his stuff has always been extremely relevant and I think that’s one of the things that really drives people to him,” Strycharski said.

“I don’t think it’s ever not been relevant.”

Some of the panel members include Stanley Fish, dean of law at FIU; Feisal Mohamed, assistant professor of English at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; John Rumrich, professor of English at the University of Texas in Austin; Regina Schwartz, professor of literature, religion and law at Northwestern University and Susanne Woods, a visiting scholar at the University of Miami.

In addition to the panels there will be a rare stage production of Samson Agonistes from 3 to 5 p.m. on campus at DM 150 on Feb. 27. This particular production is being put on by FIU theatre students and was directed by Phillip Church of the Theatre Department.

“When you look at something like Samson Agonistes it is beautiful, it is sexy, especially this production. It is moving and entertaining all at the same time,” Strycharski said. “It’s really an enjoyable play and it’s going to be a really great production.”

One of the interesting aspects about this celebration of Milton’s work is FIU’s partnership with UM.

“Working collaboratively is something that’s long overdue between the University of Miami and Florida International University. We hope this is the first of many operations,” Shoulson said.

Given that both Miami-based schools share a rich and diverse city and each has its own broad and unique assets to bring to the table, a collaboration like the symposium had never been done before.

“We think that it’s important that this celebration of Milton’s work is in FIU’s partnership with UM.”

“We’re using the story of Samson Agonistes to put together Miami’s first Milton Symposium. We’re using the story of Samson Agonistes as a springboard to address larger issues that are very pertinent today,” Strycharski said. “It’s really an enjoyable play and it’s going to be a really great production.”

Information

GAMES GALORE

Karma comes back for ‘photo-noob’

Back in high school, I played Counter-Strike, an online first-person shooter, in the Cyberathlete Amateur League, an online videogame league.

I remember how my teammates and I would sometimes play against lesser-skilled players and make fun of them; calling them “noobs,” or “newbies,” and teased them by killing them with unconventional game weaponry.

When Halo 2 became part of the Cyberathlete Amateur League, I was guilty of committing similar gamer crimes. I’d teabag my slain opponents and laugh when they’d pick up guns that weren’t among the approved “skill” weapons.

But I grew up. I realized how pompous and arrogant I was and, although I still consider myself a competitive gamer, I’m more respectful toward my opponents — whether they’re lesser skilled or greater.

But karma is unforegoing, and it came around to bite me in the bottom last week when I bought Street Fighter V for my PlayStation 3.

I’ve never been very interested in fighting games, but I remember loving Street Fighter II: Turbo on my Sega Genesis back in the day, so I thought I’d give the new iteration a shot — for old time’s sake.

I jumped online for some unranked matches to get some practice. Ken was my character of choice.

I now have holes in my body in places I should not have them.

I stared at my controller in disbelief, fingers cramping while trying to keep up.

Time and again “You Lose!” appeared across my screen as my opponent stood over Ken’s beaten body. Sometimes, I’d go back into the game lobby and get made fun of by the player who just destroyed me.

“You have ever played Street Fighter before?” asked one of my opponents.

“You’re such a noob!”

Well, of course, but what’s this “photo” business? My previous years as a decent Counter-Strike and Halo player, when I’d make fun of my adversaries and use terms only “elite” players knew, immediately flashed before my eyes.

I went online and did some research. Apparently, a “photo” is a character in Street Fighter who shoots fireballs and/or throws dragon punches. Photos are normally used by newbie players because they are easier to learn and are among the more recognized characters, according to some Street Fighter forums I visited.

So yes, I am now a newbie, unskilled, photo-using Street Fighter player. I feel just as low as I probably made some of my Counter-Strike and Halo opponents feel.

So I’m publicly apologizing.

If you’ve ever played Counter-Strike or Halo online or at a LAN center in the Miami area, I’m sorry if you ever came in touch with a player named “battle” who made you want to drown yourself in a bottle of water.

I’m sorry if my Master Chief avatar teabagged your dead body, I’m sorry I told you you sucked or told you to find a new hobby.

That being said, does anybody out there want to offer me some Street Fighter lessons?
Summer blockbusters spring into action

The idea of March are approaching as we roll into the third month of the year with glimpses of summer blockbusters in the spring. Films that will be highlight include movies about outlawed superheroes, aliens on the run and spies working together. This should be an interesting month.

MARCH 6
WATCHMEN

The first big movie of the year has finally arrived with Zack Snyder’s (300) adaptation of one of Time magazine’s 100 best novels ever, Watchmen.

In an alternate universe, it is 1985 and superheroes have been outlawed for a decade. When a former superhero (Jeffrey Dean Morgan) who worked for the government is murdered, a masked vigilante (Jackie Earle Hayley) investigates his former colleagues’ death. As he tries to reconnect with his former crime-fighting legion, he starts to uncover a plot to kill his former crime-fighting legion, to pull the ultimate con job on their bosses, they start to fall in love with each other all over again.

MARCH 13
RACE TO WITCH MOUNTAIN

Dwayne Johnson (The Game Plan) and director Andy Fickman (She’s The Man) reunite once again for the remake of the 1975 Disney film, Escape from Witch Mountain.

In Race to Witch Mountain, a Las Vegas cab driver (Johnson) is thrust into an unexpected adventure when two teens with extraordinary powers get into his cab.

They discover that in order to save the world, they must go to Witch Mountain, which is the equivalent of Area 51. With the group on their way to Witch Mountain, they find themselves being chased by mobsters, government officials and aliens.

MARCH 20
DUPICITY

Closer co-stars, Oscar-nominee Clive Owen and Oscar-winner Julia Roberts, reunit again with the second film from Oscar-nominated director Tony Gilroy (Michael Clayton), Duplicity.

A CIA officer (Roberts) and an MI6 agent (Owen), who had a love affair years ago, left the world of government intelligence to work for two multinational corporations. Both of their missions consist on securing the formula that will bring a fortune to the company that patents it first.

The rival heads of the two companies (Oscar-nominees Tom Wilkinson and Paul Giamatti) use every dirty trick in their books to retrieve the formula. As the two former spies team up to pull the ultimate con job on their bosses, they start to fall in love with each other all over again.

MARCH 27
ADVENTURELAND

Director Greg Mottola’s (Superbad) third film is based on the director’s experience working at an amusement park in Long Island, New York called Adventureland. In the film, it is the summer of 1987 and a college graduate (Jesse Eisenberg) has to work at the amusement park when his parents cannot pay for his trip to Europe.

What would seem like his worst summer ever turns pleasant when he discovers love with a co-worker (Kristen Stewart) and learns how to prepare for the real world.

The Cinematic is a weekly column about all things movies. Look for it every Friday.
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SENIOR LEADERS

Co-captains showing underclassmen the ropes

CHARLIE GRAU
Senior Staff Writer

Ryan Mollica and Steven Stropp may feel like senior citizen this year. With 20 new faces joining the team, 13 of which are freshmen, the two and only seniors will be leaned upon heavily for leadership and experience.

“They both have been in college baseball for a long time. They know the endurance count that the season is,” said head coach Turtle Thomas.

The seniors believe the best leadership they can provide underclassmen is leading by example and setting the tone for the season.

“They are great team leaders. When we voted for team captains, they got all the votes,” Thomas said.

Mollica and Stropp will be teaching underclassmen how to adjust to college baseball and how to fine tune their games.

“When baseball, there are so many little things that there’s always some way you can fine tune your technique. There’s always something you can try to help them out with that you see but they don’t because you’ve been around longer than them,” Stropp said.

As the Golden Panthers’ starting catcher, Stropp will be responsible for handling a young talented pitching staff and grooming freshmen catchers Doug Joyce and Sean Reilly.

“Being the only two seniors, we have the most experience on the team, and I look at it as we’re the more teachers than anything else,” Stropp said. “The coaches can do their amount of teaching but there is always that part that is left over that we have to do, and we have to teach these guys, especially since there are so many freshmen this year.”

Although he finished the season with a .289 batting average, .370 on-base percentage, three home runs and 25 RBI, Stropp is more concerned with the 7.12 earned run average the pitching staff had last season.

“For me, hitting is secondary. I love to hit but my job is to catch. If you have a bad catcher, you have a bad team,” Stropp said. “All my focus is going to be put on catching the ball and making our pitchers look as good as possible. If I get some hits, good for me.”

Like Stropp, Mollica has been putting in extra time with the infielders to help improve the team’s .957 fielding percentage and 1.7 errors per game from last season.

Coming from Central Florida Community College, Mollica didn’t get much mentoring and is going to make sure underclassmen are given the guidance he never received.

“There wasn’t much teaching and showing of the ropes,” Mollica said. “I’m just showing these guys how to work hard and technique.”

LEARNING TO LEAD

Growing up, Mollica always looked up to his brother Derick who was two years older. The two brothers turned plenty of double plays together, playing two years of high school baseball at Wellington High School where Derick served as team captain.

Mollica credits his older brother for giving him advice and teaching him how to lead.

“I just told him he’s got to be tough... if he wants the team to follow him, he’s got to lead by example,” Derick said.

Last season, Mollica quietly led the team in batting average (.413), on-base percentage (.483) and doubles (23). But this season, he will be expected to repeat his offensive output along with setting an example for the younger infielders — and his brother has noticed the difference.

“You can just tell. From last year and his days of JUCO ball and high school ball, he was never the peppy kid around. He’s got a different swagger about him. His attitude is a lot different and he’s got a lot of confidence heading into this year,” Derick said.

But he wasn’t always that way.

“He’s always been the quiet brother out of the two. That’s what my parents said. He was the shy one,” Derick said.

Stropp also credited his family for teaching him how to lead, but coming from a family of six siblings, he’s had plenty of opportunities to learn from his older siblings and teach his younger ones.

“Having three younger siblings, I think it just translates over to the (baseball) field. It comes easily and if you need help I’m more than willing to help you,” Stropp said.

One time, Stropp taught his younger brother Joey how to catch a baseball in their backyard in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.

“I would just get up there and throw the ball as hard as I could to him. Eventually he picked it up because you either get hit with it or you learn to catch the ball,” Stropp said.

They’re both hoping the team will be able to pick up their lessons as well.

Sergio Bonilla contributed to this report.