Two councils to be demoted

PHILIPPE BUTEAU  Senior Staff Writer

Resolutions will be presented in the coming weeks that will propose the “movement of Panther Rager and the restructuring of [Graduate Student Association],” according to Student Government Council at Modesto Maidique Campus President Anthony Rionda. Rionda said that both bodies will continue to exist but not as governing councils and that their organizational structures would be different.

Panther Rager will be a committee within the Student Government Association and the amount of graduate senators, who will be responsible for the allocation of conference funding, will increase from two to four.

Giovanni Correale, vice president of Panther Rager, said in an interview with Student Media that the councils were analyzed on criteria such as membership, activity and general support basis.

In other words, they were analyzed based on what they are supposed to do according to their constitution, how they are doing it and how effective they are.

“The two councils that ended up at the bottom of the totem pole were GSA and ourselves,” Correale said.

Correale said two of the causes of Panther Rager’s results were their reduced budget and lack of communication with Athletics.

“The things happened that were out of our power,” Correale said.

Correale and Anthony Barbato, president of Panther Rager, said that if the resolution passes, Panther Rager would not exist as a governing council.

What would exist is a committee within SGA that would take RAGE, page 2

SGC-MMC 2010
nominees declared

PHILIPPE BUTEAU  Senior Staff Writer

Two weeks after the Feb. 18 deadline for candidate applications, the Student Government Council at Modesto Maidique Campus Elections Board has released the list of candidates for the 2010 SGC-MMC elections.

The list of 32 candidates who qualified to run, including presidential, vice presidential and senatorial candidates, were notified through an e-mail from the board. In the e-mail, the board told candidates that they are required to attend one of the two candidate meetings, held on March 10 and 11.

The week after Spring Break, March 22, is when the campaigning for elections is set to begin and the Elections Board, a board confirmed by the SGC-MMC senate responsible for the running of all general and special elections at MMC, plans to market elections through print and Internet methods.

Christy Flores, Elections Board commissioner, said the board plans to use flyers and Facebook for marketing. She said they will start as soon as they get in contact with publications.

The Elections Board plans to have a debate between Lower Division senators and Act-Large senators in the Graham Center Pit on March 26. Flores said the board is still searching for a moderator and they have several administrators in mind to take up that position. She said students would be able to ask the candidates questions.

PantherSoft will not be the voting system for this year’s elections, its replacement will be votenet.com. Flores said there will be a trial-run of Votenet for the Black Student Union elections.

SGAElections are March 29 and 30.

Law school launches mentoring program

MEENA RUPANI  Staff Writer

Last October, the College of Law partnered with the Hispanic National Bar Foundation to launch the Project Access mentoring program, according to the law school Web site. Project Access aims at providing moral support, study tips and time management advice throughout the stressful period of bar study.

Communication will take place by e-mail, phone or in-person,” Mason said.

Mason explained why it is significant for the law school to participate in a pipeline initiative such as Project Access.

“The law school is committed to providing access and opportunity to members of this community. As a community of legal scholars, the College of Law recognizes its obligations to the region, state, nation and the international community to
Program expected to gain success

The law school is committed to providing access and opportunity to members of this community.

Michelle Mason, associate dean
College of Law

Panther Rage fights back

“If they get rid of the spirit organization, then what’s next?” Barbato said. Panther Rage is a 13-year-old spirit organization. Its Web site says that it exists to promote and maintain the highest level of school spirit possible at the University. Sholom Neinstein, SGC at Biscayne Bay Campus president, said that for GSA, a committee would be more efficient than a governing council because they would not have to worry about quorum, the minimum number of people necessary to conduct business. He also said that setting up an allocation from which the committee could draw funds would be good because “all they did was come with money requests.”

Srikanth Korla, president of GSA, said even though having a council is important and “always good,” the new model is better because of the increased senate and conference funding. Rionda said during the senate meeting that graduate students would have more form meeting relationships with those in the practice.” Barbato said in a separate interview that graduate students who understand the success of the mentoring program last semester and explained what the future of the program would be. “All events were well attended and we believe successful. The point was to expose students to as much information about the variety of areas of law and have them form mentoring relationships with those in the practice.” She added that she doesn’t “anticipate the program ever ‘not doing well.’ There are always things to be learned and tweaked but both the Hispanic National Bar Foundation and FIU Law are committed to this program’s ongoing success.”
Commitment ceremony celebrates right to love

KATHERINE PORRAS
Contributing Writer

Under the large glass wall of Panther Square, couples showed their commitment to each other in front of a crowd of students and faculty.

Stonewall 2 BBC, the University’s lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender organization, held a commitment ceremony for both homosexual and heterosexual couples. The event, titled “I Want...I Can’t...I Do!” was held at Panther Square on March 4.

Daniel Anzueto, president of Stonewall 2 BBC, the University’s Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender organization, held a commitment ceremony for both homosexual and heterosexual couples. The event, titled “I Want...I Can’t...I Do!” was held at Panther Square on March 4.

Anzueto, president of Stonewall 2 BBC, said the purpose of the event was to open people’s minds and raise awareness about many laws put in place that do not allow same-sex couples to get married.

“We wanted to increase awareness and education on same-sex marriage and the difficulties they are having statewide as well as on a national level,” Anzueto said.

Couples were allowed to participate regardless of sexual orientation and give each other a commitment of love to be together. At the end of their ceremony, they were given certificates of their commitment. The ceremony was performed by members from the Sunshine Cathedral, a church that is open to the LGBT community.

Several other religious figures were present, including Rabbi Noah Kirty of Congregation Etz Chaim in Wilton Manors, a synagogue also open to the LGBT community, sitting at tables and willing to give more information on the issue of same-sex marriage.

Sarah David-Williams, office manager for Campus Life and Orientation said that she enjoyed the gesture and the symbol the event represented.

“It was great. I loved the participation from the audience and I definitely think they should do it every year,” David-Williams said. “I think that if they do it every year, they’ll have even more participation.”

A total of three couples participated in the commitment ceremony, two same-sex couples and one straight couple.

“(The event) provided a venue in which same-sex couples could express their commitment,” David-Williams said.

Anzueto pointed out that they kept the event as “commitment” and not “marriage” to show their respect to other religious views.

“It increased awareness and people learned a lot. We got a lot of support. A lot of people joined in,” he said.

Anzueto believes the event was a success and would like to try to have the event again either in the Fall semester or next year.

For more information regarding upcoming events from Stonewall 2 BBC, contact the office of Campus Life and Orientation at 954-991-5800 or send an e-mail to stoneWallbbc@gmail.com.

MAUREEN NINO
Asst. News Director

“Global Weirding is Here”

Fernando Figuredoro (School of Journalism and Mass Communication)

Tuesday, March 9, 2010
12:30pm - 1:30pm
GC 150
Lunch and refreshments provided.

With quorum met, the Student Government Council at the Boca Raton Campus went straight into business during their weekly meeting on March 1.

With four pending appropriations presented by SGC-BBC Finance Committee President Zebra Arbabi, SGC-BBC deliberated on which funds should be allocated or denied.

The largest discussion during the meeting surrounded a $2,158.81 request made by seven students to attend an Honors College news literacy conference in Norman, Oklahoma.

According to Arbabi, who is also an SGC-BBC lower division senator, the money would be used toward airfare and the conference registration fee of $30 per person.

“I feel very uncomfortable funding a non-club for a conference,” said Rafael Zapata, assistant director of Campus Life and Orientation and SGC-BBC adviser. “It is not even a club. It is just students who got together and want to go to something for an academic reason.”

According to Arbabi, the group must create an event on campus to fully inform students of what they learned by the month of April.

“We did give them a deadline to have an event at BBC and that way we hold them accountable,” Arbabi said.

However, the council remained unconvinced.

“How do we know they are not partying?” said Nickolay Chikishev, SGC-BBC speaker of the senate and lower division senator.

According to Andrea Cruz, SGC-BBC Honors College senator, the students are involved in both the School of Journalism and Mass Communication and Honors College and were informed about the conference by Professor Fred Blevens.

“Do not look at it as an Honors College thing, but a group of students who want to attend a conference,” Arbabi said.

There was a time, according to Zapata, that conferences were not funded by SGA and he recommends that a system be established to help fund the appropriation process for future situations.

“A lot of people ask money for conferences and we want to accommodate that, but we want to be consistent with everyone,” Zapata said. “Everybody wants their conference but nobody had money, so they come to [SGA] and basically when you give money to one, you give money to all of them. In the future, there should be a number in mind.”

After further discussion, the senate agreed to table the motion for the March 3 SGA meeting where it was once again tabled for March 8.

With some debate, the council unanimously approved funding for an Intervarsity Fellowship Group Chapter camp retreat.

According to the club, the retreat, taking place in Georgia from May 4-9, will be a learning experience for 15 out of its 30 members.

“The people who are attending will be leaders of the club the next year. If no one attends they will not have leaders next year,” Arbabi said.

The Office of the Vice Provost, Fellowship Club and the Student Organizations Council will also fund the event, according to Arbabi.

The council, however, only approved $1,330 from the requested $2,000.

“Is it reasonable?” Chikishev said.

Additional funds were also requested toward the excellence lectures offered by the Honors College for $870.36 and the Barbecue at the Bay event. Both requests were unanimously approved.
In a senate meeting on March 1, 2010, the 2010 Senate Rules Act was passed by a 17-0 vote, in efforts of establishing new and re-appropriating rules and procedures. SRA seeks to maintain order and consistency in meetings and SGA affairs, but it is uncertain as to whether the piece of legislation will achieve its goal.

SRA doesn’t resolve the issue of immaturity at senate meetings. The senator debated an appropriation for the Football Rugby Club, requesting $1,700 to purchase new jerseys for the team’s members. The representative informed the senate that there were more members than jerseys for use, which presented a health risk to members.

Members of the senate laughed at the representative’s assertion. Student senators should grant the club’s request, but had to deny the appropriation altogether because the organization had previously been suspended by the Athletic Center. While many of the student senators may not have wanted to laugh, the fact that they did displayed their level of immaturity. There is a level of responsibility that comes with being an elected student official, and student senators should refrain from such immature behavior when handling the business of the student body.

Section 1.01(f) of SRA notes that senate pages “...will be responsible for assisting the clerk of council in the recording and distributing of minutes, legislation and other official documents during meetings.”

Often times, it is difficult for student senators, much less public attendees, to obtain copies of agendas, resolutions, appropriations or council bills. It is fortunate that SRA affirms this, and we can rest assured that it will no longer be an issue.

Section 1.01(f) states that “the rules of procedure of the Senate may be suspended temporarily by a two-thirds vote of the Senate body.”

As previously mentioned, student sena- tors should conduct the work of the student body in an effective and professional manner. The particular problem with this section is not that it provides for the temporary suspension of the rules of procedure, but that it doesn’t recommend when in particular the rules can be suspended. Clarification is necessary, as it is certain that not every instance might be reasonable as a moment at which the rules of procedure may be set aside.

Section 4.03 (a) is rather unsettling in its assertion that “members of the senate shall not wear any apparel that demonstrates any external affiliation, including any Greek asso- ciation...” In fairness to the SGC, the reasoning behind this section is logical; when coming to conduct the business of the organization, not physically “demonstrating” badges aside. The problem with this, however, is that, succinctly put, Greek life is campus life. Whether it’s for Relay for Life, Dance Marathon, Academy of Leaders, or any other student-centered activity on campus, Greek life at FIU is a large portion of the University’s identity.

While members of Greek organizations comprise of less than 10 percent of the student population, they are the ones who contribute the most to the University. Addi- tionally, for members of most Greek organiza- tions, brotherhood or sisterhood becomes a considerable portion of their identity as individuals, such an identity isn’t some- thing that one can simply “put aside,” and demanding that members of Greek organi- zations not physically “demonstrate” affiliations during senate meetings won’t stop them from doing so via other means.

Overall, SRA is an effective piece of legislation with minor shortcomings, which will hopefully, in due time, face necessary revisions.
Romero Britto proved to have as vibrant a personality as his paintings when he brought his theories on “The Art of Happiness” to the College of Business on March 4.

Described as a modern day pop culture icon who contemplates masterpieces that evoke a spirit of hope and convey a sense of warmth, Britto is a charismatic man who is pretty young for having such global success.

He was introduced by Brian Shriner, dean of the College of Architecture and the Arts, and University President Mark Rosenberg, who both tied Britto’s work to that of FIU’s.

Shriner connected Britto’s work to that of CARTA’s staff, whose “creative spirit cultivates the imagination and intellect of [FIU students].”

Romero Britto is known around the world for his vibrance color of culture and shape and the lecture provided an opportunity to discuss his career highlights.

Britto talked about being commissioned to create the largest art installation in the history of Hyde Park in London back in 2007 to commemorate the return of Tutankhamun to London after 35 years.

“The most simple fact is you have to follow your heart and that way you’ll always be right,” the artist said.

Britto recounted about his childhood in Brazil and how he felt reborn when he moved to Miami. After growing up poor in Brazil and finding happiness in Miami, he decided to take advantage and be happy and grateful for his success every day, translating that ideology to his art.

“My mission is to be able to wake up every morning and be able to know what’s going on out there. Sometimes, I feel concerned people may not get the right message but I think they are because otherwise I wouldn’t be as successful as I am today. I know what’s happening out there but I don’t want to repeat that in my work,” he said.

With the evolution of the Internet, Britto says we are bombarded with negative images and he doesn’t want his art to bring fear to anyone. He joked, “I don’t pay money to watch a movie and get scared and have nightmares.”

Britto is known around the world for his vibrant use of color and shape and the lecture provided an opportunity to discuss his career highlights.

Britto talked about being commissioned to create the largest art installation in the history of Hyde Park in London back in 2007 to commemorate the return of Tutankhamun to London after 35 years.

“In the early stage of this project, I was asked in a suggestion where I wanted to see the pyramid and I went kind of a little bit crazy and said, ‘Why don’t we do it in front of the Buckingham Palace, or maybe in front of Parliament or maybe Hyde Park?’ So, Hyde Park really worked and it’s been an incredible experience for me,” Britto said.

“After one pyramid came another pyramid,” he said of his inclusion in the Louvre Museum. His original painting, “Journey,” tells the story of a child going through the journey of learning and as of 2008, is still on display.

One of his favorite moments was the opening ceremony at Super Bowl XLI in 2007. The event was a grand ceremony that showcased his art in a way he never thought was possible. He found the experience so incredible because it was an art installation seen by so many people simultaneously. He joked that in the end he was glad his piece was in the beginning because by half-time everyone would be drunk and not paying any attention.

Britto claims the reason behind his success is that “[he] paints something that not only [he] wants, but the whole world wants – happiness.”

Famed artist describes the theory behind his art, conveys message of joy.

Controversial exhibit reminds Miami of its criminal past

Miami is a city with history, not all of it good. The city has progressed since being the “criminal paradise” it was often portrayed as during the 1970s and ’80s, when mobsters, murderers and cocaine smugglers ran the street, but the notorious reputation for being a scandalous city has not been forgotten. On Feb. 19, the Historical Museum of Southern Florida, located in downtown Miami, unveiled a new (and controversial) exhibit named Crime in Miami. This exhibit, which will be up for six months, features photographs and memorabilia of notorious criminals and some well-known unsolved crimes throughout Miami’s history.

In an interview with The Miami Herald, Miami-Dade Circuit Judge Scott J. Silverman, one of the founders of the 11th Judicial Circuit Historical Society said, “What the exhibit will try to do is capture Miami’s crime history during the last century to today and see how it’s impacted the people of this community in the past, and in the future.”

Not all Miami residents are keen on the idea behind this exhibit. It commemorates a darker time in Miami’s history and, for some, re-opened old wounds, like the notion that some police officers were complicit in the rampant cocaine smuggling. After The Miami Herald released a preview of the opening of the exhibit, some community members lashed out at its “abundance.”

Despite the controversy, the opening day of the exhibit experienced a great turnout. Some community members feel that this time was a huge part of local history, and to forget it would be a mistake.

Many criminal justice majors attended the opening of the exhibit and did not consider it to be praising criminal activity in any way. Instead, it served to remind South Florida of our own history and the impact it had on our community and the ways we as a community can move forward.

“It’s beneficial to have this exhibit in the museum because it represents a crucial era that molded Miami’s culture and image,” said Kevin Rojas, a junior and criminal justice major. “This exhibit showcases the foundation and development of Miami.”

The crimes showcased range from Prohibition era mobsters and gangsters, like Al Capone, to drug wars, to unsolved kidnappings and murders, such as that of Judith Ann Roberts. Long-time Miami residents may remember the 1954 case. Roberts was a 6-year-old who was kidnapped from her living room bed. She was found on a deserted road in Coconut Grove and her body was found strangled, beaten and sexually assaulted. Her crime was never solved. The lead detective in Roberts’ case, Irving Whitman, who lives in Miami and is now 88 years old, told The Miami Herald, “I’ve never forgotten this case.” He says he still has hope that one day her murder will be solved.

Whether or not Roberts’ crime is solved, Crime in Miami, which will be running until August, ensures that South Flor- ida’s past will not be forgotten.
**Spielberg thriller examines morality behind revenge**

There’s a moment that occurs late in Steven Spielberg’s Munich where the protagonist, Avner, played by Eric Bana, is simply trying to make love to his wife. Starting off calmly, the scene builds as images from the tragedy of the 1972 Olympics play through his mind—a tragedy which has directly affected his life.

Scenes of Israeli hostages on an airport tarmac held at gun point, a vicious fire fight, explosions move forward as Avner is in a pool of sweat in a moment when he should be feeling ecstasy. He’s gone savage and cannot concentrate. He’s a man who is haunted.

Avner was not there at Munich to witness the Palestinian organization known as Black September take 11 Israeli athletes hostage. Nor did he see the blood shed that ensued. He had no personal ties to members of the teams or the events except that he is a Jew and that he would be asked by his nation to help avenge their deaths.

The film presents itself as an episodic thriller across Europe: Paris, Rome, London. In lesser hands, this could simply have been a well-crafted thriller. Certainly, there are intrigue and that he would be asked by his nation to help avenge their deaths. Spielberg soon gives way from making a typical political thriller and poses fundamental questions, not only about Israel’s relations with Palestine. In one nightmarish incident, Avner and his team are set in a safe-house in Athens that is also being frequented by members of the Palestinian Liberation Organization.

Convincing the PLO members that they are communist agents, they co-habitate and converse. The PLO members hold the same claim for the same land and with the same insistence: However long it takes, whatever it is, the homeland. This is the same sentiment displayed by the Israelis as they pursue their reprisals.

Then the natural question comes: Where does it all end? How do you pursue your country’s interests without compromising them? These are all points that have been raised countless times. Spielberg’s victory is in doing it in one succinct package. It’s not just a tart thriller; it’s an honest and unrelenting look at the policies of nations.

And then there are the pawns like Avner, sitting in a cold sweat and unable to live a normal life. They’re the greatest victims of all. They suffer with the sins of their nations carried out in their own hands.

The more death that follows, the more that the simple revenge concept crumbles: Avner’s paranoia grows as he fears for the lives of his wife and young daughter whom he’s been unable to see. What is the use of revenge? The purpose of the task is questioned as new replacements are made for those who have been killed.

After the first assassination, Steve (Daniel Craig) remarks with triumph: “Don’t fuck with the Jews.”

Later on, Robert, his conscience heavy, questions it all: “We’re Jewish. We are supposed to be righteous. That’s a beautiful thing. And we’re losing it, that’s everything. That’s my soul.”

Spielberg gives ways to making a typical political thriller and poses fundamental questions, not only about Israel’s relations with Palestine. In one nightmarish incident, Avner and his team are set in a safe-house in Athens that is also being frequented by members of the Palestinian Liberation Organization.
Golden Panthers suffer first loss; win two more

Thomas experiment will take time

RISK, page 8
Around has already paid off, at least in the form of recruiting, which is most important.

Ultimately, it will be the quality of players on the floor that will bring FIU into conference contention every season with Western Kentucky and Middle Tennessee. That’s what Thomas has proven he can do, on his reputation as one of the NBA’s best players ever.

If it were on his reputation as an NBA coach, he wouldn’t be having the same success. That is why with this atrocious season in the books, Thomas will now have to avoid another season like this to avoid losing any of that mystique as a legendary player that has been a powerful pull in recruiting.

Thomas has also made some ripples in recruiting for 2011, but other head-lines have trampled any news on that front. In January, Thomas stated he was happy at FIU but did not directly deny that the Los Angeles Clippers called him during the season to discuss a position in their front office, after rampant speculation. It is rumors like these that FIU will have to get accustomed to as Thomas has more success with the Golden Panthers. The Clip- pers are at the bottom of the NBA, but if a more respectable offer comes, it could be too difficult for Thomas to pass up.

The minor risks of hiring Thomas are the negative media coverage that comes with hiring someone who has been a failure in NBA front offices and was recently accused of sexual harassment. Some of that will continue to be exaggerated through some uninformed outlets.

But all of that is cured with winning.

It is all part of Garcia’s biggest risk since he was hired into his posi- tion, the first chapter of which ended on a sour note Saturday.

Roberts, Kee absent for violations

MEN’S, page 8

were missing in the lineup, Gary, who usually plays point-guard, moved over to forward and even center for parts of the game. After the game, he commented that the adjustment the team had to make without key players in the lineup wasn’t a big deal to him. “It wasn’t a big adjustment,” Gary said. “What coach wanted us to do with [Denver’s] size is if they missed a shot just get out and run. That’s what we tried to do tonight.”

With the loss, the Golden Panthers finished the season with seven straight losses and a 7-25 record.

“This group of young men, their job was to do the dirty work and they did the dirty work,” Thomas said. “They got a lot of mud on their shoes and a lot of blood under their fingernails.”

Late shots put FIU away for good; Bosilj scores 13

FREE THROWS by FIU senior Marquita Adley, with just over nine minutes remaining, cut the UNT lead down to one. However, against the Golden Panthers’ sluggish defense showed no answer for shots beyond the arc. Kellum knocked down a three with 8:05 remaining to make the score 44-40 in favor of the Mean Green.

FIU came no closer than five points in the rest of the way while UNT was able to go up by as much as 12 points as they closed out the game on a 20-11 run.

Monika Bosilj ended her FIU career with a 6-0 lead going into the bottom of the fourth, where Polizzano ran into trouble on the mound. A string of singles enabled the Mustangs to cut the lead in half but nothing more, as Polizzano avoided any further damage. Poliz- zano earned the win for the Panthers and improved his record to 2-0.

With a four-run lead in the ninth, the Panthers tucked on three more insurance runs thanks in part to a two-run single by Junior Arrojo, who broke out a massive slump with a 3-for-5 performance and four RBIs, to make it 10-3.

The Panthers would soon find out how valuable those late-inning runs would be, as a series of errors and walks allowed the Mustangs to slice into the FIU lead with five runs.

But Bryam Garcia came in and silenced the Mustang rally with two strikeouts to seal the victory, earning his second save of the season.

UC-RIVERSIDE 4, FIU 3

The Golden Panthers have been able to work some late inning magic to keep their perfect record intact.

But that magic came up short as the UC-Riverside denied FIU of another come- back victory, their first loss of the season on Mar. 5.

Pablo Bermudez hit a two-run homerun in the bottom of the ninth to make it a 4-3 game, but it was too little too late for FIU.

FIU 5, UTAH VALLEY 4

FIU got their weekend started off the right way with a victory in the first game of the Coca-Cola Classic in Surprise, Arizona against Utah Valley on Mar. 4.

The two teams were locked in a 2-2 tie for most of the game, until FIU burst out with a three-run eighth inning to give the team the lead for good.

A late Utah Valley rally came up short as the Panthers held on for the win.

Wittels went 3-for-4 on the evening to extend his hitting streak to a team-high seven games.
Depleted team loses to Denver

STEPHANIE GABRIEL
Asst. Sports Director

The No. 6 seeded FIU women’s basketball team started the 2010 Sun Belt Conference Tournament with a game that turned out to be exactly what some Golden Panthers had predicted.

“We’re going out there sluggish and (North Texas) was the team because we beat them twice,” FIU forward Elisa Carey said after a practice on Mar. 3. “We might think this will be cake, and we’ve done this before, but they come and might be hungry for a win.”

The No. 10 seeded Mean Green wasn’t just hungry; they were starving.

After losing to FIU twice during the regular season, they were finally able to disappoint the Golden Panthers, 61-51, at the Summit Arena in Hot Springs, Arkansas on Mar. 6.

“FIU looked daunting, they beat us by 18 just a couple of weeks ago,” UNT head coach Shanece Stephens said. “We started working on the game plan; started believing and the girls were able to watch an extensive amount of film. I am really proud of how they absorbed the game plan.”

FIU had a 10-point lead with 3:37 remaining in the first half before UNT guard Caitlin Hawkins went on a run of her own.

“Any other normal team would have been beaten up with their head down, but our girls were able to overcome that,” Stephens said.

Hawkins knocked down three shots from beyond the arc within three minutes, including one at the sound of the buzzer to bring the Mean Green within five points as the teams headed into the locker room for halftime.

“I think it definitely gave us a big intensity boost, we all needed something to get us pumped up,” Hawkins said. “Ending on that note, it definitely carried over to the second half so I think it was a big shot.”

While UNT continued its efficient three-point shooting in the second half with a 46.2 percent (6-of-13) effort for the game, effective perimeter defense by the Mean Green forced the Golden Panthers to shoot just 8.7 percent (2-of-23) from beyond the arc.

North Texas came out of the halftime break with momentum and a 9-1 run, which enabled them to take the lead after pair free throws by Denetra Kellum with just under 18 minutes left on the clock.

FIU was able to respond as in-state freshman Fonda Musa knocked a jumper in to put her team up by one-point, however, Freshman of the doldrums soon, as long as there are a few solid recruits ever had. Along with Ferguson, there are a few solid recruits who could help bring FIU out of the doldrums soon, as long as Ferguson can anchor it.

When Isiah Thomas was hired to coach the FIU men’s basketball team amid a tsunami of media scrutiny last spring, he said he wanted this year’s Golden Panthers to have enough momentum toward the end to finish on a high note and bring a positive wave of attention the school’s way.

In the Sun Belt Conference Tournament, that plan failed as FIU lost to Denver in the first round, finishing Thomas’ first season with a 7-25 record.

“They were true to form in terms of how we said we would be undersized and undermanned but we would fight extremely hard and we would be tough, scrappy team.”

Undersized and underscrapped was even tougher on this night because FIU was without three key players as they were eliminated in a 71-64 decision on Mar. 6 at the Summit Arena in Hot Springs, Arkansas.

Forward Marvin Roberts and guard Martavis Kee did not participate in the game after violating team rules, according to Thomas. Meanwhile, the team’s leading rebounder, J.C. Otero, was also absent after suffering a knee injury in the team’s final home game on Feb 27.

Thomas, however, was pleased with the team’s overall effort this season and the way his small lineup handled Denver.

“I’m proud of the foundation that this team has laid,” he said. “They did a good job of establishing an identity that we want to play with in the future. They never quit.”

The Golden Panthers battled with the Pioneers through four ties and 12 lead changes, but when sophomore guard Brian Stafford hit a three-pointer with 12:51 remaining FIU never regained the lead.

“I was expecting a game like that,” Denver head coach Joe Scott said. “It’s March; that’s the way it is. Florida International played well tonight. They had a good game plan and I thought we handled it pretty well.”

FIU cut the Denver lead to one-point at the 6:18 mark after free throws by Tremaynne Russell, but the Pioneers immediately stretched the lead with a pair of free throws by Stafford and a Justin Coughlin slam-dunk.

Coughlin, who scored a career-high 17 points, including 11 in the second half, fouled on the dunk and converted the free-throw to make the score 55-49 with 4:34 remaining.

Phil Gary, Jr. scored a game-high 23 points for the Golden Panthers. Due to the players who