The message caught sophomore Kirollos Habib by surprise. Born in Shobra, Egypt, he and his parents had lived in the United States since 2001. But on Jan. 22, Habib opened his inbox to find a message sent through Facebook, inviting him to a protest in Tahrir Square, Cairo.

Habib, a member of Egypt’s Coptic Christian minority, had heard about the uprising in Egypt through his church. But with the call to action in his inbox, Habib became one of thousands of young Egyptians, some living a continent or an ocean away from Egypt, invited to participate in the mass movement that would in 18 days demolish the regime of a despot who had ruled for 30 years.

Habib was surprised by the message, but the uprising did not surprise him. Egypt had needed a revolution, he said, and it was about time it got one.

And Egypt’s history had given Habib reason to hope that the protestors in Tahrir Square would be successful. “In 1918,” Habib said, “there was another revolution, and that was successful.”

In 1919, Egyptian nationalist leader Saad Zaghloul petitioned the colonial British to recognize Egypt’s independence. The colonial administration jailed him and his compatriots, igniting massive strikes across the country. Men and women, merchants and students, Christians and Muslims poured into the streets and the British government caved. Egypt won its independence from Great Britain in 1922.

Habib felt that a nation whose people had so boldly rebelled against the oppression of British colonialism should have the strength to end an autocracy led by one of its own sons. The precedent was clear.

But Mubarak’s government, virtually unchallenged for 30 years, was not a foreign colonial power; if there were to be a revolution in Egypt, something needed to dramatically upset the regional status quo.

And that, said Habib, was exactly what nearby Tunisia did. “The protestors were definitely motivated by Tunisia,” Habib said, “It was the last straw.” But there was a sense of agitated tension in Egypt, he said, and in the wider Middle East before the revolt in Tunisia that ended the regime of Zine El Abidine Ben Ali.

Professor Charles MacDonald, a Middle East, said, Saturday, March 26, 2011, is the first time on March 25 to defend its southern communities from attacks by Gaddafi militaries.

Week dedicated to Graduate Students

The Aesthetics and Values exhibit opened on March 24 at the Patricia and Philip Frost Art Museum. Every year students from the FIU community.

THE BEACON

A Forum for Free Student Expression at Florida International University


Engineers to fundraise for good cause

Enjoying a meal with friends at a local Chili’s can be an easy way for students to contribute to a humanitarian cause. Engineers Without Borders, a national organization that aids the underprivileged around the world, will be hosting a fundraiser at a select Chili’s on March 29 from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Any customer that visits the restaurant that day can benefit EWB because a portion of each patron’s paycheck will go to the organization. EWB is a non-profit humanitarian organization that partners with developing communities worldwide through engineering projects that involve and train engineering students. The organization completes public engineering work assignments that focus on sustainable water sanitation.

“The organization loves to work with water. For example, if communities are not receiving clean water or if they do not have a good and reliable water system then that is when EWB steps in,” said Andrew Hipolito, member of both the hydrology and fundraising team at EWB. Members from EWB are currently reconstructing part of Costa Rica’s water supply— the reason for the Chili’s fundraiser.

TED S. LIN/THE BEACON

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Charges against speaker dropped

JAMES L. ROSICA
AP Staff

Prosecutors dropped corruption charges against former Florida House Speaker Ray Sansom on Friday after the judge in his trial rejected a key witness.

Circuit Judge Terry Lewis ruled that prosecutors had not shown enough evidence that a conspiracy existed in response to a motion to introduce testimony by Bob Richburg, a former college president who had been charged in the case before agreeing to testify against Sansom. Without Richburg’s testimony, prosecutor Willie Meggs said he could not continue.

He dropped the charges against Sansom and co-defendant Jay Odom agreed to pay restitution. Sansom had been charged with scheming to get a $6 million state budget appropriation in 2007 to build a hangar at the Destin airport for Odom, a local businessman and mayor of Destin.

Defense lawyers said the money was for a much-needed and hurricane-proof emergency operations center for the city of Destin.

Charges were also dropped against Odom. Sansom, 48, and Odom, 54, had been charged with grand theft and conspiracy to commit grand theft in connection with the appropriation.

The project was funded in 2007 but never built, and the state got its money back.

Meggs’ theory of the case was that Sansom wanted Northwest Florida State College to build the project and include some classrooms to call

SANSOM, page 3

All proceeds to fund Costa Rica trip

FUNDRAISER, page 1

raiser money will aid the construction of new storage tanks.

During the summer, EWB will return to Costa Rica to build the 100 cubic-meter tanks.

“The first time, we went to Costa Rica and scooted the area, surveyed everything to see in what kind of situation they were at. On our second trip, we rebuilt their sprinkler system. We sealed them from the back so that the residents could get clean drinking water,” said Hipolito.

The organization is hoping that the Chili’s fundraiser attracts many donations to go towards the almost $25,000 total amount. Any customers interested in giving money to EWB must inform the restaurant’s staff that their check should go to the fundraiser.

“When people have dinner at Chili’s and they tell the manager that they’re there on behalf of FIU’s EWB, ten percent of the checks is given to us,” said Hipolito.

“The people at Costa Rica use a lot of water and unfortunately, they do not receive a large supply of water. The storage tanks will supply the residents with water during the dry seasons,” said Hipolito. The idea for the fundraiser came from other fundraising organizations. United Way, for example, selected different restaurants for interested donors to have a good meal while contributing to the organization. There will be a meeting with information on the project prior to the fundraiser open to anyone interested. It will take place the same day of the fundraiser at 5:00 p.m. in the Civil Engineering department’s meeting room of the Engineering building.

Hipolito explained that students could also donate in different ways. Interested donors can go to ewb-usa.org, and follow the instructions for donations or mail a check to the engineering campus under the name of “Engineers Without Borders – FIU.”

Chili’s, located on 87 NW. 13 Terrace, will welcome any students who are interested in attending the fundraiser.

All proceeds to fund Costa Rica trip
Middle East expert finds parallels across uprisings

**EGYPT, page 1**

East expert who has written extensively on uprisings and armed conflicts in the region, drew a parallel between circumstances in Egypt and those in Iran before the 1979 Islamic Revolution that swept the shah from power.

Both uprisings, MacDonald said, were preceded by “a revolution of rising expectations ... that created a feeling of being cheated, of being wronged – which is a very powerful source of unrest.”

In pre-revolutionary Iran, many were angered by the shah’s public extravagance while much of the country languished in poverty. In the Arab world today, families with TVs and computers consume pixilated images of wealth, luxury, political freedom, that is generally denied to them.

Financial crisis hit the region, the middle class slid towards poverty and the poor towards desperation. The people watched on TV as the wealth of their nations were poured into the designer homes, cars and personal wardrobes of rulers who called themselves guardians of the people’s interests.

Finally, something snapped.

In Tunisia, the authoritarians confiscated the pushcart of a young man who supported his family selling fruit and vegetables off his wooden cart by the roadside. Publicly humiliated by the police, 26-year-old Mohamed Bouazizi walked down the street in front of the local municipality building, poured fuel over his body and set himself on fire.

In this act of anger and despair, Bouazizi gave voice to the ire of many across the region frustrated by poverty and government corruption.

His message resonated in Egypt.

“There wasn’t enough money, not enough jobs,” Habib said. “[Hosni Mubarak] was stealing all the money for himself – there was just an explosion of emotion. All of a sudden, everyone wanted to overthrow the regime – because they were fed up.”

But for Habib, the revolution really began earlier in Alexandria. “On New Year’s Day,” Habib said, “there was a suicide bombing, in front of a church.”

Extremists had bombed the Two Saints Church in Alexandria during a mass. 21 people died.

And Habib said there was widespread anger at the Mubarak government as a result of the attack.

Radical groups, he said, had been threatening Egypt’s Christians for months before the bombing, and “... the government knew about it, and didn’t do anything. Basically, this event sparked major controversy. Before the protests all over the country, there were protests about this event – about the lack of ability to secure the Christian areas in Egypt.”

Protests in the Christian communities started immediately. AP reports from the time recount angry protesters chanting, “Mubarak, the Copts’ blood is flowing!” and attacking policemen. The police responded with clubs and tear gas.

There was a seething anger at a security force which had abused the populace under the pretext of security and then failed to provide it when it was needed most.

“The government said the bombing was committed by foreigners,” Habib said, “but meanwhile, the country’s police were terrorizing their own people.”

MacDonald pointed to Egypt’s long-standing emergency laws as a source of great anger at the regime.

“The emergency laws which existed in Egypt,” he said, “had just gone on way too long,” and the wide powers they granted the Egyptian government were often abused.

The laws, enacted after the assassination of former Egyptian President Anwar Sadat in 1981, had been in power as long as Hosni Mubarak – and were just as deeply resented. The Coptic Christians’ anger at the government security forces after the bombing fed into a wider discontent with the conduct of the Mubarak government.

“It’s not just an issue that the government completely ignores or neglects Christians,” said Habib. “It’s the whole people – everyone is affected because the government is so corrupt. It’s the youth that were suffering most from the bad conditions – the corruption, the unemployment.”

Though Habib had supported the uprising and watched it progress with faith that the protesters in Tahrir Square would succeed, he was unprepared for the moment that Hosni Mubarak left the country. “I couldn’t believe it at first,” Habib said. “Then I started being concerned about what’s going to happen after.”

**For this story in its entirety, check out flsun.com**

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**ASSOCIATED PRESS**

**Fla. House Speaker to pay $103,000 in restitutions**

**SANSON, page 2**

it an “educational facility,” which would qualify it for state money for educational buildings.

Charges were also dropped against Odom. He declined comment outside the courtroom.

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**FINAL TOUCH**

Sophomore Adam Israel, an architecture student, adds final touches to a midterm model for his Design 4 class.
Western Kentucky got the juicesinnings and pick up five strikeouts into a groove and would last six home the first run of the game. 

Hit an infield single that brought to advance. Logan Robbins then the ball, allowing both runners pick off of Carter at first, but first Carter both singled. Then catcher Turtle Thomas said. “That’s probably about as good as he can pitch right there.”

In the first, Ivan Hartle and Kes Carter both singled. Then catcher Jose Behar attempted to make a pick off of Carter at first, but first baseman Rudy Flores dropped the ball, allowing both runners to advance. Logan Robbins then hit an infield single that brought home the first run of the game.

After, that, Fondon settled into a groove and would last six innings and pick up five strikeouts with only one walk, Ryan Hack of Western Kentucky got the juices flowing with a solo home run to lead off the fifth and extend the lead to 2-0 for the Hilltoppers. But Fondon would bounce right back to pick up two of his five strikeouts on the night.

After a hit by pitch and walk issued by Rye Davis, Patton doubled down the right field line to bring home a run to make it 6-2. Flores then hit a double down the right field line to bring home two more.

However, it was just too little too late, as the Hilltoppers then got Mike Martinez to line out to end the game. “You got to score some runs to win,” Coach Thomas said. “That’s the bottom line.”

WKU 3, FIU 2

It was a tough battle for the Golden Panthers, but in the end the Western Kentucky Hilltoppers proved to be too much, defeating FIU 3-2 in the first game of a three-game home series.

Defense played a key role throughout the game as FIU committed four errors while Western Kentucky had none. Although only one defensive mistake ended up leading to a run, it ended up being the difference.

“We need to shore up the defense a little bit,” coach Turtle Thomas said. “We had some miscues there in the field that we need to make to win that kind of baseball game.” The scoring got going when Kes Carter led off the second inning for the Hilltoppers with a solo home run, but then Haig rebounded to strike out the side.

The Golden Panthers (14-10, 1-3 SBC) responded right away with two runs of their own in the bottom half of the second. Following lead off singles by Tyler James Shantz and Jabari

Strong performances at road invitational show promise

This season has been about getting better every week for the men’s and women’s track and field team. Following their great performance last week at the Feldberg Invitational, they improved as a team and as individuals at the UCF invitational on March 25 and 26 to show they have what it takes to compete with the bigger schools in the nation.

This season, coach Eric Campbell has heard what he has known all along: that FIU is making a name for themselves on the track and field circuit.

“I’d say the second or third meet in was when I would start to hear the mumbling and grumblings of a lot of the local coaches,” said Campbell. “That feels good because it lets you know as a coaching staff that you’re headed down the right path.”

On the first day of competition, both Sebastian Castillo and Daniela Espino came in first in the steeplechase. Castillo ran a time of 9:33.34 on the men’s side, and Espino got a time of 11:11.27 for the women’s. Also, Marissa McElvene placed second in the women’s long jump with a jump of 6.14m.

“The kids perform against the bigger schools, but can actually compete with the bigger schools because now they understand how a team is based on how they perform against much bigger schools,” Campbell explained.

On Saturday, FIU’s individual events continued to place well. Tyson Kemp came in first in the men’s shot put for the field event. On the running side, The Golden Panthers took both second and third
Spoelstra getting his message accross to team

TIM REYNOLDS
AP Sports Writer


Those are Miami Heat coach Erik Spoelstra’s real starting five.

Not players, but buzzwords the foundation of the message he’s been trying to instill within the Heat for the past six months, and they’ll stay in his vocabulary rotation all the way through the season’s final buzzer. It’s a deliberate balancing act for coaches, trying to stay on message with a team while not appearing to be saying the same thing day after day after day.

Ask the Heat, and they say Spoelstra is finding a way to avoid that problem.

“He kind of changes it up,” Heat forward LeBron James said. “You don’t want to try to say the same thing over and over and over. That’s when it kind of drowns out guys. Spo kind of keeps it fresh. He’s young and hip enough to know what’s fresh, so he gets his point across, but he changes it up a lot for us.”

Clearly, the Heat are listening to pretty much whatever it is Spoelstra is saying.

Friday night’s 11-9 win over Philadelphia got Miami to the 50-victory mark for the season, the Heat are five games within a playoff spot in the Eastern Conference and have won seven of its last eight.

Spoelstra is saying the same thing day after day after day after day after day after day after day after day.

A year ago, it was “purity,” usually in reference to giving effort. This season for the Heat started with “sacrifice,” especially after James, Wade, Bosh, Udons Haslem, Mike Miller and others all agreed to take less money than they could have gotten elsewhere to fit into Miami’s salary structure. For a while, Spoelstra took to calling the Heat a “Band of Brothers,” which even was the theme for his Christmas gifts to players and a phrase he used again Saturday. With the playoffs looming, Spoelstra can work “consistency” into nearly any sentence these days as well.

“Uh, umm, who said it was fresh? Coaches are repetitive,” Wade said, breaking into a sly grin. “That’s what they do. They say it enough to where it sticks. If it don’t stick the first, second or third time, he’s going to keep saying it until it sticks. So when he comes with something, when he wants us to focus on something, whether we’re losing or winning, that’s what we’re focused on.”

James has played for a variety of coaches with a variety of styles, from Paul Silas to Mike Brown in Cleveland, Larry Brown and Mike Krzyzewski with the U.S. Olympic teams, and now Spoelstra in Miami.

The methodology tends to change from guy to guy, but the points typically remain the same, said the NBA’s two-time reigning MVP. And whatever it is that Spoelstra’s selling to the Heat, James says he’s buying.

“We’re growing together with him every day,” James said.

Just about any coach in any sport will wrestle with this question: How do you stay on point without becoming a bore? It’s certainly not exclusive to Spoelstra, but not by a long shot.

Spoelstra simply doesn’t worry about it. It’s his process.

“We still have room for improvement,” Spoelstra said. “We are unique, we feel, to other teams. We still don’t know necessarily what our ceiling is and we’ve got to keep on striving for that. Part of that is consistency. Part of that is getting more players involved, aggressive and confident.”

He’s expressed all those sentiments before at times this season. They seem to be working.

In the seventh, Haig’s night came to halt after giving up a two hits and then hitting the next batter. He finished the game with seven strikeouts. Mason McCoy then came on to shut the Hilltoppers down without giving up a run.

Following a Henry walk to open the bottom of the seventh, Behar ripped a shot down the left field line that was difficult to determine whether the fielder caught or not. In the confusion, Henry rounded third, but then it was found the he actually didn’t catch it and Henry ended up in a pickle between third base and home.

“We were running, and we held [Henry] up at third,” Thomas said. “And he kind of kept running. It’s just a miscue that’s all there is to it.”

Though the Golden Panthers showed some sparks of a come-back, they could never put all the pieces together to score the tying run.

“When you don’t sniff a run for seven innings it’s pretty hard to win,” Thomas said.

Campbell pleased with team progress this season

in the men’s 100 meter dash with Kristian Campbell finishing second and Alexander Paul winding up in third, respectively. Carla Mills placed third in the 100 meter hurdles with a 13:71 time and Marissia McElveen grabbed second place in the 100 meter dash at 11.79.

Both were also part of the second place team that included Lakesha Kelley and T’Keyah Demou in the women’s 4x100 meter relay with a time of 45.10.

Finally, the team of Jeremy Fischer, Michael Bejarno, Jermaine Felix and Pedro Bigorra finished third in the 4x400 meter relay with a time of 3:14.46. This was the second event that Bejarno placed in, as he also came in first place in the 400 meter hurdles with a time of 53.82.

This was a non-scoring invitational, and scoring will not be kept until conference meets and the national championships.

The team’s next meet will take place in Gainesville on April 1 at the Pepsi Florida Relays. They have five meets in total until they go to the Sun Belt Outdoor Championships and NCAA Outdoor Championships.

The team will be back in Orlando one more time on May 5 for UCF Twilight.
Golden Panthers split road doubleheader at North Texas

MALCOLM SHIELDS
Staff Writer

FIU (16-15; 4-1 SBC) lost both games in a double-header against No. 15 Baylor (27-4; 1-0) on March 24, but also split the first two games of a three game series against North Texas (14-16; 2-6 SBC) on March 26. The win snapped a three-game losing streak for the Golden Panthers.

NORTH TEXAS 3, FIU 2

FIU took the lead in the fourth inning when Kayla Burri delivered a one-out RBI single before they ran themselves out of the inning when Rojas was retired while attempting to advance to third on the hit. Burri was tagged out trying to advance to second on the same play.

The Mean Green loaded the bases in the bottom of the fourth inning on a pair of errors by the Golden Panthers. Lesley Hirsch plated a run on a pair of errors by the Golden Panthers. Hirsch was out at third on the same play.

In the sixth inning, the Mean Green added another run on a RBI single by Renae Bromley. Green added another run on a RBI hit by Beth Peller and Ashley McClain. The Golden Panthers last RBI single by Dani Leal and would score again in the sixth inning.

The Mean Green scored three runs in the sixth inning off of three FIU errors and a Courtney Bradshaw RBI single.

“We played some of our worst defense,” Torina said of Burri. “I think she was seeing [the ball] really well.”

The Mean Green loaded the bases in the bottom of the fourth inning on a pair of errors by the Golden Panthers. Lesley Hirsch plated a run on a pair of errors by the Golden Panthers. Hirsch was out at third on the same play.

In the fourth, FIU scored five runs on consecutive singles by Jessy Alfonsio, Peller and McClain. Another run scored on a bases loaded walk to Rojas and a sac fly by Burri scored the fifth run of the inning.

Dawson pitched a complete game for FIU as she recorded her sixth win while striking out seven.

The Bears scored first on an error in the second inning. They added another run in the third inning off of three FIU errors and a Courtney Bradley run.

FIU errors and a Courtney Bradley run.

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Dawson pitched a complete game for FIU as she recorded her sixth win while striking out seven.

The Golden Panthers were unable to scratch out any runs against Bears starting pitcher Liz Paul as she pitched a complete game, giving up just four hits.

“She pitched a good game against us,” coach Beth Torina said. “We just couldn’t figure [Paul] out.”

The Bears scored first on an RBI single by Dani Leal and would score again in the sixth inning.
IT REALLY PAYS TO TRY SOMETHING NEW AT FRIDAY’S

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LEARNING ART

Student exhibit now at the Frost

ESRA ERDOGAN
Photo Editor

The reception for the official opening of the Aesthetics and Values exhibit was Mar. 23 at the Philip and Patricia Frost Art Museum.

This year’s exhibit included works by well-established artists Jacin Giordano, Karen Rifas, Daniel Arsham, Cristina Lei Rodrigues and more.

The show, which was curated by students in John Bailly’s Aesthetics and Values class, allows local artists more exposure and teaches students art appreciation.

“Being a business major, I don’t usually get a chance to do anything artistic at all. I had the opportunity to do something most can’t do unless they’re pursuing a masters degree in fine arts,” says junior Allen Feliz, who is studying management and information systems.

1. MFA student Ivania Guerrero’s work.

2. Artist Cristina Lei Rodrigues’ inspiration for her sculpture was nature. Her works resemble organic scenes.

3. Aesthetics and Values student Kharla Salazar (right) explains Jacin Giordano’s piece to senior Kristofer Ruiz (left), a philosophy major, and senior Lisandra Cassola, also a philosophy major.

4. Junior Katie McCarty (left), a social work major, and junior Tingjun Chen, an education major, look at artist Jen Stark’s “Sunken Sediment, 2010.” Stark attempts to explore the intricacies of nature “with an explosion of color and form through the use of papercutting.”

5. Josh Neel’s piece uses a weight scale and gold bricks to bring the phrase, “worth your weight in gold” to life.
Rostislav 'Steve' Vaynshtok, a sophomore public relations major, draws influence and inspiration from a lot of bands many people probably never heard of before. Zonbi, Rataar, Mogwai and Explosions in the Sky are just some on that extensive list.

In an industry often marked by mass-market appeal and reproducing carbon copies of the mundane, auto-tuned style, a breath-of-fresh-air appeal can be just the ticket to getting noticed. Fight Like Animals was formed in the summer of 2009; however, the original line up parted ways only a few months later. Vaynshtok explored the solo realm for a while before reuniting with Britt Flaherty, the band's then-producer, in March 2010.

'After the other founding member left, I had cancelled all my remaining shows and gone through a few auditions for potential new band members, but no one fit. Then one day some buds invited me to do a show at Churchill's [Pub] through a few connections in the industry. I was invited to do a show at Churchill's [Pub] through a few auditions for potential new band producer, in March 2010.

'shtok explored the solo realm for a while before exactly what he wants to do with the song.'}

S.V: What's the story behind the name "Fight Like Animals"?

S.V: There's this epic painting of two men fighting with animal heads instead of their own. It totally got me. Then we eventually found out the acronym for FMLA is also the abbreviation for Florida. So, I guess we're a 305-till-we-die band, even though we have no intention of being one. I think there's not a category you could put us in. S.V: I hate talking labels on things. We're definitely not hipsters. If I had to categorize us, I'd just call it good music.}

FASHION FINDS

I love to read fashion blogs and sites to catch up on what's in style, to get inspiration and to kill time. I'm really good at the last one, by the way.

There are plenty of fashion blogs that embody everything stylish. My problem with a lot of blogs, though, is that their reliance on fashion magazines and zany styling. Call me boring, but simple style ideas that are easily incorporated into your daily life are a lot more appreciated by the typical girl. Plus, being a blogger is pretty much the best job ever because a lot of bloggers get tons and tons of stuff thrown at them for free. My top pick for blogs that incorporate top fashion advice with simplicity is the blog Cupcakes and Cashmere.

The reason I like Cupcakes and Cashmere so much is because of the personal feel the blog has. The blogger, Emily Schuman, posts daily on all the topics that inspire her. Whether it's outfit ideas, baking and cooking recipes or interior design, Schuman's lifestyle is simple, chic and accessible. Schuman is the ultimate "girl/"when it comes to fashion and she doesn't sacri-

S.V: What can you tell me about your band in terms of releases, signings, endorsements, etc.?

S.V: We've got an EP for sale on Bandcamp. com right now. It's our first EP. We've also got physical copies that we're only selling at shows, but if someone bothers me while I'm in the bathroom, I'll probably sell you one. Just check me at an awkward time if you want one outside of a show. The EP is set to officially release on May 21 of this year on iTunes, Amazon, Rhapsody [etc.]}

T.B: What has been your most memorable experience?

T.B: Playing Anti Pop 2009. It was just super dope all around. We got to put up a van, head to Orlando, and mingle with famous people. We got these wristbands that every band got, and nothing was off limits to us. It felt really Holly-

Wood and I loved it. I'll always remember how we were on the lowest spectrum of that festival but still sharing a bill with [bands] Minus the Bear, The Antlers, Grieves, Yacht and I Fight Dragons. It was the event that cemented my 'I'm going to be doing this forever' attitude."

Up until very recently, Fight Like Animals had been signed to Grannie Annie Records. However, conflicts arose over a lack of initiative on the label's part, and the band decided to part ways with them. Though untimely and bitter, the departure has not affected the band's other connections in the industry. Gibson Guitars, Orange Amplifiers, Visual Sound, a guitar pedal company, Wolfstone Custom Pickups and Blackbird Pedalboards currently endorse Fight Like Animals. Cover art for Fight Like Animal's debut album, "In the Company of Monsters."
Money management course is essential

Understanding the concept of saving and applying this principle to one’s lifestyle is a common struggle, especially among college students. Creating a financial plan is not the most desirable practice for most incoming freshmen and students, but it is the most considered. To help students understand the necessity of financial planning and develop a saving habit, I think a course specializing in managing personal finances should be part of the University Core Curriculum.

According to the University, the UCC provides the “broad, well-defined curricu- lum that enables graduates to think criti- cally, analytically, and creatively.” To me, money management is a concept that students should be required to think about during their time at the University. In order to ensure that students are not ignoring the importance of money management, a course need to be incorporated into the UCC.

With today’s tough economy, students need to be better educated about the bene- fits of saving versus constant spending.

Courses should be mandatory to encourage and teach students about the different possible ways of saving.

In general, the benefits of saving for the future is not a concept that most Americans are well informed about. According to a 2010 survey conducted by Harris Interac- tive of the National Foundation for Credit & Counseling, “34 percent of Americans (77 million people) gave themselves a grade of C, D or F on their knowledge of personal finance.” Due to these disappointing and quite embarrassing statistics, we need to start spreading this knowledge at an early age to help the society as a whole.

Ben Baker, who teaches an annual personal finance workshop at Davidson College, said, “I will never understand why our education system puts so little value on practical things...an understanding of finance and personal responsibility has a direct impact on the quality of life every person targets.”

Baker’s statement solidifies my belief that universities need to take a more active role in educating our pupils and mandate personal financial courses, starting at the University. Understanding the importance and relevance of personal finances is not innate and needs to be taught.

Researchers at the University of Wisconsin concluded that “Barley one-third of them [students] had taken a college course that included personal finance content.” Basically, most college students graduate without ever taking a course about finance. This reality should be a concern for FIU.

Marilyn Landrum, a student assistance associate with the Missouri Department of Higher Education, said universal goals should “require personal finance courses.” Also, Michelle Singleton, a staff writer for the Washington Post said, “College students shouldn’t be handed a degree without having taken personal finance classes.”

All of these examples exhibit the importance of implementing a mandated course on personal finances and the values of saving for all University students.

After graduation, our students should understand the basic fundamentals of personal finance. It is the Universi- ty’s responsibility to provide the tools and education for its students on this basic knowledge.

Econ with Neda is an economics op-ed column. Look for it every other Monday.
A mangrove restoration project at Biscayne Bay Campus has successfully collected and planted 1,200 mangroves throughout Oleta Park and BBC.

The project, which the Miami-Dade County Department of Environmental Resource Management sponsored, started in 2009 with the help of the Alonzo and Tracy Mourning High School and intends to use education and preservation to help fill in some of the gaps in the protected areas on campus and at the park.

“The entire campus used to be a mangrove forest,” said Jennifer Grimm, environmental coordinator at BBC. “We are trying to restore what we can to the areas available.”

Rapid urbanization over the past 100 years has depleted the resources of Florida’s coastlines, and the delicate relationship within the ecosystem has caused the need for government intervention. Mangroves became a federally protected species in 1996, and laws regulate against trimming and altering existing plants.

Red mangroves, one of the three species of mangrove including black and white, has been the focus of the efforts because of their tremendous impact on the ocean and wetland ecosystems. They provide protection and habitats for many small creatures, as well as a sturdivid shelf and shoreline protection from elements such as wind and floods.

“These wetland communities, which are essential to the general health of the estuarine ecosystem, where replaced by eroding, unconsolidated shorelines,” said Gary Milano, Coastal Habitat Restoration Program Coordinator of DERMS, who spearheads the efforts on campus. “These proposed restorations could benefit species from manatees to bald eagles.”

DERM has also begun the process of removing invasive species from campus, including the Australian Pine and Brazilian Pepper, which grow rapidly and take over and kill native species, as well as take up space that could be used for more beneficial species. The efforts will coincide with the planting of the new mangroves and will be of no cost to the county, rather, saving it nearly $40,000 in the project as a result of a plea agreement through the State Attorney Office.

The project plans to restore approximately 12 acres of habitat within the University, pending university approval of seven more acres, and comes with a price tag of $1.2 million dollars. “The project is phased to allow for progress, then application for more funds,” said Milano.

Miami-Dade has contributed $700,000 to the efforts initially. “The University has not contributed any money, but hosts the program.”

Students from the University and ATM high school, as well as an environmental summer camp, collected the initial 1,200 propagules, or mangrove seedlings, and nurtured them to maturity in plastic cups filled with salt water until they were capable of being planted in soil in a greenhouse on campus. When their roots were strong enough they were then replanted in the protected areas.

The new round of propagules, slated to be ready for planting in September 2011, is numbered at about 2,500 seedlings. “We [at FIU] haven’t tracked [the seeds] specifically, but what we’ve seen through county data, they have had about a 90 to 97 percent success rate,” said Grimm. “Hopefully we will continue to see this kind of progress.”

Student interest has been brewing, and Grimm eventually hopes to start a mangrove adoption program.

“A lot of the time students come in for service learning, and then they want to come back on their own to see it through,” said Grimm of the propagules they gather. The adoption program will allow students and faculty to nurture a seedling at home to maturity, and participate in its planting.

With the 2,500 plants becoming ready in fall, the need for planting at the University will be close to fulfilled.

“But we are manipulating different situations that improve growth and survival rates,” Grimm said. “Hopefully this will be a long term ongoing project.”

The mechanism was installed in 2006, the same year the building was built; however, we are still missing some essential instruments before being able to completely supply the water needed for our purposes.”

Adolfo Fernandez, building manager, Marine Science Building

With the incentive of one day being able to offer purified water to the faculties and students, the Marine Science Department located at the Biscayne Bay Campus is working in the development of a desalination structure whose objective is to purify the water coming from the bay for the use in student’s projects and the faculty’s research.

“The desalination was installed in 2006, the same year the building was built, with intention of exploration and conservation of marine sources.”

The actual production of the salt water system is already completed and some professors are currently able to use it for their research.

Although the instrument has been in operation for some missions, the ultra-violet sterilization system is not fully installed yet and the uses for more deep investigation are limited.

“The infrastructure to purify the water was installed the same year the building was built; however, we are still missing some essential instruments before being able to completely supply the water needed for our purposes,” said Adolfo Fernandez, the marine science building manager and also the most informed person about the construction and process of the desalination machine.

It has been five years since the desalination machine was first set into the building’s construction, and during that time the marine science faculty have been trying to get all the essential pieces needed in order to make it work at the desired level.

Throughout 2010, they worked on its construction, and most of the essential work done was made during the last months of the year.

“Part of the system was finally purchased in 2009 and assembled throughout 2010,” said Fernandez. “I believe most of the work to install it was accomplished during October 2010.”

According to Fernandez, the desalination machine will represent a wide source of research, which will continue the progress of certain missions.

One of their projects consists in the Coral Holding System, which studies the diversity of coral species, and is conducted by one of the faculty members Dr. Rebecca Vega Thurber.

There is also the maintenance of water species, by bringing them into tanks or the aquarium located on the first floor where the staff can look after the specimens, observing them from the embryonic to maturity phase.

This will help our faculty that work with the coral reef system as they collect live coral to [study, maintain and preserve other water specimens] by bringing salt water into the tanks,” said Fernandez.

The entire accomplishment of the desalination system will assist the faculty members and the students in extensive ways.

It will allow the expansion of research fields for investigative matters, it will increase the possibilities to detect contaminated water coming though the bay, and facilitate the studies of marine species.

The process of putting this purifying machinery to work is something the students of the Marine Science Department are not still deeply aware of.

This process excludes the students from the faculty members or with me, since it is the faculty members themselves and the students in extensive ways.

The process of putting this purifying machinery to work is something the students of the Marine Science Department are still not deeply aware of.

This process excludes the students and focuses on those who are in charge of building the structure and the devices needed to finish it. This does not mean the students are not able to develop their investigative projects; the use of this source is totally open to fair use depending on the type of research.

“The students have all the access to operate it under certain parameters of investigation for the correct development of their projects and research,” Fernandez said. “It’s only a matter of discussing this with the faculty members or with me, since I am the building manager.”
Oluwatamilore promptly became “really, really lonely” during his first week of school, they should feel welcome. “Something peer advisors should do,” Oluwatamilore said. “I imagine it like each international student is given a buddy that helps them go through the year.”

Oluwatamilore says the issue is something peer advisors should do. “I imagine it like each international student is given a buddy that helps them go through the year.”

Oluwatamilore also calls for surveys to be given to students for helpful ideas.

As a member of SGC-BBC, he has already helped many cabinet members accomplish projects, and his commitment shows great promise as a member of SGC-BBC. “It is also great to have people who share the burning passion for something, and he has clearly shown that to me,” Haspel said in an email to Student Media.

Nancy Hernandez, director of International Student and Scholar Services at BBC, said BBC is currently responsible for 400 S1, or student visas. Oluwatamilore said the issue is domestic and international students should feel welcome at the University initially, not just over time.

“I think there are events we can use to bring international students together,” Oluwatamilore said. “The first week of school, they should come together. There should be more dinners.”

But Oluwatamilore wants the dinners to be mandatory and scheduled around the first week of the semester, in order for each senator or student to be paired with an international student to mentor.

“Something peer advisors should do,” Oluwatamilore said. “I imagine it like each international student is given a buddy that helps them go through the year.”

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Haspel, who has recently taken the speaker pro tempore position, agrees there should be more events that allow mingling for freshly arrived students.

“In terms of events, I think we can do,” Oluwatamilore said. “And I will support him if he creates activities which involve the entire student body, since it will make international students feel more like regular students, as opposed to being defined by the term ‘international.’”

An international student himself from Argentina, Haspel stressed the importance of SGC-BBC’s role in organizing events to make all students feel welcome.

“They are first and foremost students, and as such SGC is mandated to represent and create opportunities for students, which means as long as they are planned properly, they will surely be successful,” Haspel said.

Another minor concern Oluwatamilore has that he will possibly take up as senator is with the College of Arts and Sciences, as he is a biology major that plans to get a masters in psychology to become a therapist.

Oluwatamilore believes some of the classes CAS requires in order to graduate aren’t actually relevant to certain majors.

“I like everything about the college, except some of the mandatory courses are really unnecessary,” he said, giving an example. “Calculus 2 might not be necessary; statistics is better for pre-med.”

Though only 19-years old, Oluwatamilore is a junior because students graduate early in Nigeria, around the age of 16, he said.

Oluwatamilore joined SGA to approach the issues he sees with a proactive attitude. It was after he saw members of SGA who didn’t accomplish their goals that he decided to join.

“I said: I’ll just try myself.”