Garcia signs extension, given extended role

PHILIPPE BUTEAU
IGOR MELLO
Beacon Staff

The University will no longer have an Athletic Director, instead that position will be transformed into Executive Director of Sports and Entertainment. With his contract set to expire in October, the athletic department’s head honcho has agreed to stay with the University for another five years with an expanded title and a $16,000 raise.

According to school public records, Pete Garcia inked his signature on April 1, signing a five-year extension through 2016, worth between $1.9 and 2.5 million, depending on incentives.

The deal will make him the highest paid athletic director out of the 12 institutions in the Sun Belt Conference. He is also the second highest paid member of the athletic department next to head football coach Mario Cristobal, who is currently making nearly $400,000 this year.

The deal begins at a base salary of $345,264, a nearly $16,000 raise of his previous base salary. Included in his deal, Garcia will receive an annual five percent increase and a retention bonus of $20 percent added to his base salary.

Garcia’s salary is derived from several sources. His salary is coming from the University’s auxiliary funds, like the athletics fee, and contributions from the South Beach Wine and Food Festival, according to University chief financial officer Kenneth Jessel.

He serves as the head honcho has agreed to stay with the University for another five years with an expanded title and a $16,000 raise.

Opened to all University members, President Mark Rosenberg will be hosting a town hall meeting to discuss the implementation of the final version of FIU’s Worlds Ahead Strategic Plan for 2010-2015, which will express the future goals and initiatives for the University.

The president, who is set to address the community’s questions and concerns regarding the plan, will have a meeting at both the Modesto Maidique Campus, on Thursday April 14 at 9 a.m. and at the Biscayne Bay Campus at 2:30 p.m.

I would like to thank so many of you who have worked hard on our 5-year Worlds Ahead Strategic Plan,” said Rosenberg in an email to the University.

Every ten years, FIU’s administration engages in “strategic planning,” a process that involves identifying the desired future for the institution as well as deciding what actions should be made to reach that goal.

These initiatives, which are updated every five years, are designed to fit the needs of the University for the coming decade, focus on key areas of University interests.

The Worlds Ahead Strategic plan has been in the works since fall of 2009, and has since gone through numerous draft revisions, committee discussions and other town hall meetings with the public.

Focusing on the first five years instead of 10, the finalized plan calls for the University to work to “achieve enhanced student learning and academic excellence, enhance the quality, quantity and impact of research and creative initiatives, engage with the community in collaborative problem solving and revitalize and expand the University’s infrastructure and financial base.”

The University’s last strategic plan

GARCIA, page 3

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The University’s last strategic plan

University to host Worlds Ahead strategic plan town hall

The Global Learning Blast, hosted by eight members of the University faculty and part of the Global Learning Initiative, closed a weekend celebration for Diversity Week.

As the University’s first Global Learning Conference, each faculty member demonstrated an innovative and interactive strategy that could be implemented as a model in the global learning curriculum.

The conference was opened to the FIU community and an estimated 30 professors within Global Learning attended to listen to the variety of strategies used in Global Learning classes.

Dan Bentley-Baker, a full time instructor in the English department and supporter of the Global Learning Initiative, was the first to offer his technique through an exercise that demanded the audience to rate famous figures within a scale ranging from negative three to positive three in response to: How much do students know of the figure, what they believe about them and how much they identify with them?

But two of the issues she encountered were how to teach a large course where students were accustomed to attending class only to be lectured and how to do team based learning without undermining team work.

As a solution, Mahler assigned projects that went beyond one class period and started using Wikis; a web based collaborative multimedia form that allows for synchronized engagement on one single project.

She explained that this tool was best for continuous editing and at the end the instructors will be able to attribute each edit to a student through the history tab.

Although her strategy is not specific to Global Learning, Mahler believes that the use of Wikis is applicable in any class.

Marine Biology Professor Ligia Collado-Vides incorporates the realization of our oceanic connection that came from the first photograph of earth taken in 1967 to relay global learning into her classes.

She focused on the idea that although “we have borders, whatever is happening in Japan will affect Florida,” and the fact that one country is developed does not mean they implement better environmental practices.

To develop an environmentally conscious classroom, the crucial question she posed was what our country’s position is parallel to the rest of the world and what it is doing to protect marine life. “Everything we do is global,” said Vides.

The Conference ended with a small reception to honor the faculty and staff that have been involved or supportive of Global Learning for Global Citizenship.
DEANS, page 8

of the College of Arts and Sciences, is trying to engage one of the University’s largest colleges. The difference between Harris and Hampton is that Harris’ students are not graduating with a specific job, but a liberal degree that leads to a specific job, but a liberal arts degree that can lead them to many other places.

Harris wants his students to engage in their academics. He wants them to know the importance of the University as a research institution and how getting involved with one of their tenured professors who are research active could lead them to great opportunities.

“Students have the ability to study with this research active faculty and even to work with them,” Harris said. “Our students have so many demands on their time that, while there are plenty of opportunities and resources for them, they don’t always take advantage of them.”

Harris is trying to do more outreach to grab students’ attention. He is eager for a new degree audit system that will highlight their degree status when they log on to their FIU account through Pamhost.

They are also working on developing new software that would highlight certain “critical markers” that alert students to problems and urge them to see an advisor. One thing he hopes the new system will allow them to do is check which students they need to reach out to.

Harris wants to see his students from their freshman year to their last year. Although he admits being assistant dean requires administrative work that can take up a lot of his time, he wants students to engage with him, the faculty and advisors.

“I usually try to underscore there are many opportunities,” Harris said. “Just coming to class and doing well and leaving might get you graduated, but you can have a richer experience if you make use of other opportunities.”

Bertha Ali, a senior journalism major graduate, produced this story in the JOU 3303 Advanced News Writing course taught by Dr. Fred Blevens.

Plan to emphasize expanded enrollment for University

TOWN HALL, page 1

was called the ‘2001-2010 Millennium Strategic Plan’ and centered on improving institutional infrastructure, State University System governing systems and graduate and undergraduate education.

“We are really sharpening the focus to reach to a point to where we’re student centered. Student success is centered on retention and graduation rates, but there are other things,” said Elizabeth Bejar, vice-provost of academic affairs and accountability to Student Media. “Our goal is to reach out to the students and understand how the students are so we can provide them with the opportunities they need and are educationally appropriate.”

According to the current strategic plan, the University’s goals are to educate undergraduate students and graduate and professional students and to build a distinguished faculty and staff, excellent student support system, excellent financial base, excellent physical infrastructural and collaborative university/community relationships.

One of the main focuses of the plan that the president has emphasized is the growth of the University by expanding enrollment by 2,000 students per year. The 2001-2010 Millennium Strategic Plan, according to Bejar, would include students off campus, online students, MMC, Biscayne Bay Campus students and Pines Center.

“We have been growing historically on an annual basis, the Strategic Plan just formally sets out the goal. It’s more important that we understand that strategy, and we’re more strategic about it, we can prepare better to facilitate them,” said Bejar, vice-provost of academic affairs and accountability to Student Media. “It’s really more about the strategic piece of it than the actual 2,000.”

Yet much of the faculty has questioned how the University will be able to handle such growth while keeping the student to professor ratio balanced and remaining financially stable.

“We’re in a good position right now because we’ve made some very tough budget choices. We developed a three-year plan and made some of the hard choices while anticipating tight revenue,” said Steven Sauls, director of governmental relations, when asked about the University’s financial position in this year’s state budget. “But it still takes money to put a professor in the classroom, to put new technology in the classroom and to maintain the campus. So we’re in a good position in terms of our fiscal management but we have aspirations to be bigger and better.”

When discussing the growth during one of their meetings, the FIU Faculty Senate was particularly concerned with the poor preparation of so many students coming from the local schools and how the University will be able to handle a greater surge of these students.

“That’s of those who teach introductory courses have found that many of our students are not well-prepared at all with respect to writing skills, even reading skills and certainly math skills,” said Alan Guimernier, Arts & Sciences senator and professor of Economics during the Oct 26 meeting. “And now we’re proposing to admit an additional 2,000 new students each year. The strategic plan has to address how we are going to deal with that question.”

In his email, Rosenberg stated that he looks forward to “a lively exchange about the future about our University.”

This plan will take place in the Graham Center Ballrooms at MMC and Hospitality Management 135 at BBC. For more information on the Worlds Ahead Strategic Plan, visit stratplan.fiu.edu.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

The University Fee Committee will be holding public hearings on

Tuesday, April 12, 2011 BBC

WUC 157 at 33:30am

Wednesday, April 13, 2011 MMC

East Ballroom at 12pm

The objective of these meetings will be to give interested individuals an opportunity to hear arguments pertaining to the proposed increase to the Athletic Fee. The amended fee will become effective in the Fall 2011 term.

Students and other interested individuals are invited to attend these meetings.
ULM shuts down Golden Panther offense in series finale

MALCOLM SHIELDS
Staff Writer

In a game where both starting pitchers were at their best, the fifth inning proved to be the deciding factor as the Golden Panthers lost the final game of a three-game series 1-0 on April 10 to Louisiana-Monroe. Jen Gniadek pitched six innings of four-hit ball for the loss for the Golden Panthers.

Through the first two innings, both teams struggled to generate any consistent offense at the plate against Gniadek and ULM starting pitcher Stephanie Rounton, who made quick work of both lineups. In the bottom of the third inning, the Warhawks had an opportunity to score the games first run. Samanatha Rojas reached base on a single and Miyuki Navarrete followed with a walk. Jessica Olguin then came up with a two-out single that loaded the bases for Roxane Cassel, who grounded out to third base to end the inning.

The Golden Panthers best opportunity to score came in the top of the fourth inning. Both Peller began the inning with a single, but on her attempt to steal second base she was thrown out. After an Ashley McClain single, Brie Rojas reached base on a fielders choice which retired McClain at second.

A two-out walk put runners at first and second for Rachael Slawik, but she was unable to drive in a run in a Rounton forced her to pop out to center to end the inning.

In the bottom of the fifth inning, the Warhawks (22-17, 9-6 SBC) broke up the scoreless tie. Navarrete reached base on a one out walk and put herself in scoring position on a steal of second base.

GARCIA, page 1

“I am very happy and honored that the FIU Administration has the confidence in me to continue to build what we started almost five years ago. This is not about me but a reflection of all the hard work and dedication of the entire FIU Athletic Department,” Garcia said in a statement sent to Student Media.

Garcia will also be eligible to earn a string of performance based bonuses for football, men’s and women’s basketball and baseball.

Although there are at least 14 performance based bonuses, ranging from as low as three percent to as high as ten percent, their totals cannot exceed 15 percent.

Performance bonuses include a three percent bonus if the football, baseball and basketball teams each win a conference championship. A three percent bonus will also be tacked on if the football team reaches a non-BCS bowl game, five percent if they reach a BCS bowl game and ten percent if they win a National Championship.

As part of the performance bonus, Garcia can receive more incentives depending on the attendance for baseball, basketball and football in the upcoming season.

Garcia can receive up to a ten percent of performance based bonus if the football team can reach more than 16,000 fans per game in attendance.

According to the school’s attendance record, FIU has averaged 16,545 fans during five home games last season.

Based on the success of the football and baseball teams last season, if this contract had been in place last year, Garcia would have met the maximum total of performance based bonuses.

Alongside the retention bonus and the five percent annual increase, Garcia will also receive a $6,800 recruiting allowance as well as an $11,200 automobile allowance.

The new extension will also allow Garcia to receive up to fifty percent of the finanicals,” Qureshi said.

The relationship between the Athletic Department and the annual festival is nothing new to the university.

According to Mohammad Qureshi, assistant dean of HTM, the Athletic department has been involved with the financial aspect of the festival since 2006.

“HTM handles the students and the work they do at and for the festival while Athletics handles all of the financials,” Qureshi said.

The school is so busy with academics it does not have the capabilities to also run the financial side of the festival, according to Qureshi.

Garcia is also responsible for booking other events at any Athletic facilities, such as CONCACAF Gold Cup soccer matches on June 10 at FIU Stadium and Mixed Fighting Alliance bouts on April 16 at the U.S. Century Bank Arena.

Jorge Valenz and Chris Towers contributed to this report.
The Golden Panthers traveled to Alabama to face conference leaders Troy, in a three game series over the weekend. The Golden Panthers would look to grab some wins as they head into the midpoint of the regular season.

**TROY DEFEATS FIU 4-0**

FIU (19-14, SBC 4-6) would go scoreless in a 4-0 shut out loss to the Trojans at Riddle-Pace Field on Friday, April 8. The Troy pitching staff would only allow five hits against FIU.

For the FIU pitching staff, Phil Haig earned the loss, pitching 5.1 innings of work.

Haig allowed two runs off six hits while striking out four Trojans.

Haig would earn the loss for FIU, giving up the three runs. Lefty R.J. Fondon to allow the Trojan’s Adam Bryant to reach first base of a bunt, giving the Trojans a 3-1 cushion.

Fondon would leave the game for the Golden Panthers after giving up the three runs. Left-handed pitcher Mason McVay would earn the loss for FIU, allowing four earned runs in only one inning after relieving Fondon.

In the bottom of the seventh, FIU pitcher Mason McVay threw a low curveball to which Logan Pierce hit a grand slam to put Troy up 7-5. The Trojans would score two more runs to go on to beat FIU 9-5.

**FIU TAKES FINAL GAME OF SERIES FROM TROY, 12-4**

The Golden Panthers would get a consolation win when they beat Troy 12-4 on Sunday, April 10. FIU (20-15, SBC 5-7) would improve their record against Troy, this weekend series.

FIU would go scoreless in a 4-0 shut out over the weekend. The Golden Panthers would look to grab some runs over the weekend. The Golden Panthers would look to grab some runs over the weekend.

The Golden Panthers would take an early 1-0 lead off a sacrifice fly from Garrett Wietels that brought home T.J. Shantz.

The Trojans would go up by two runs later on, after an error by R.J. Fondon to allow the Trojan’s Adam Bryant to reach first base of a bunt, giving the Trojans a 3-1 cushion.

**FITCH HITS CEILING FROM TROY, 12-4**

The Golden Panthers would get a consolation win when they beat Troy 12-4 on Sunday, April 10. FIU (20-15, SBC 5-7) would improve their record against Troy (25-6, SBC 12-2) all time to 1-1.

Rudy Flores and Pablo Bermudez would lead the Golden Panthers, combining for 6-11 from the plate with six RBI and three runs. Bermudez would continue to improve for FIU as a leadoff hitter.

**Belt pitcher of the week honors,** picking up his fourth win of the season, pitching seven innings and allowing four runs off eight hits and striking out five Trojans.

Bermudez would continue to improve for FIU as a leadoff hitter.

The Golden Panthers would look to grab some runs over the weekend. The Golden Panthers would look to grab some runs over the weekend.

The Golden Panthers would look to grab some wins as they head into the midpoint of the regular season.

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Visit our web site for more on this story and other web-exclusive content on FIU softball.
In 2008, Leonard Lauder, the chairman of Estee Lauder Companies, proposed a theory in the New York Times about lipstick being a gauge for the economy.

“When it’s shaky, sales increase as women boost their mood with inexpensive lipstick purchases instead of $500 slingbacks,” said the makeup master.

Recently a new shift has been noticed among girls across the university campus: the nail polish trend.

A new bottle of nail polish, with prices ranging from one to ten dollars (designer brands excluded), is an easy and inexpensive way to add the season’s trendiest colors to your wardrobe. Or just to brighten your mood.

When coupled with lighter colored, summertime-appropriate fabrics, brightly painted nails can touch up your look.

Earlier this year, Pantone (the self proclaimed “color authority” company that researches and develops colors, whatever that means) declared that “Honeysuckle” is the color of the year. The “dynamic, reddish pink” is inescapable this season, from jewelry to jeans. Naturally, pink nails are all the rage.

“If I’m wearing a black dress to go out dancing, hot pink nails will usually stand out and give the outfit a zing,” says Nilufar Khan, a junior studying biology.

But it doesn’t stop there: an even newer trend noticed across campus is nail art. Students have been sporting multicolored French manicures, half-moon manicures and newly available nail decals.

With a little bit of patience and practice, most of these creative alternatives to a standard manicure can be done at home for very little cost compared to salon prices.

“I don’t usually have my nails done [at a salon] because it tends to be expensive. I definitely prefer to do it home because it’s cheaper,” says Khan.

Sally Hansen, the ubiquitous drugstore brand that I associate with kooky colors from my childhood, has made a line of nail decals with intricate prints that can be applied at home. An edgy lace pattern (pictured) can add the missing accessory to any outfit.

“This [season] I’ll probably wear bright solid colors like bright teal, pink and red. Anything spring-ish and flowery!” says Khan.

Whether or not this theory is sound within the laws of economics, buying new nail polish remains an affordable alternative to this season’s it-bag or a new pair of shoes, and still ties an outfit together.
THE ART OF GIVING

Art department thinks up project to help others

BY VANESSA PAREDES
Staff Writer

Each year, students and faculty at the University dedicate a week to celebrate a plethora of cultures.

Formally known as “Diversity Week,” this tradition is meant to stir student creativity and create a special atmosphere on campus that acknowledges the theme, “Where Worlds Unite.”

This year, one of the main events, The Art of Giving (TAG), is brought to the university by the art department.

The TAG project proposes that students not only honor other cultures but also create an impact for the greater good. TAG aims to help unfortunate children in Haiti.

The mind behind the project is Professor Jacek J. Kolansinski.

He proposed the art department do something with a useful end to it. He told his Art Thess class to re-think what art is.

“[Art] can work on a larger scale. Students are not only learning how to handle particular materials, but they’re becoming thinkers and opening up to different ideas,” said Kolansinski.

The class brainstormed and decided to create something with a greater value than anything they had created before.

“We wanted to be a part of diversity week,” said fourth-year art student Wen-Ju Chien. “Instead of doing posters, we wanted to do something that would actually help people.”

Art major, Eric Gonzalez led the group since he already had experience designing shoes.

“I’ve been painting shoes for a while,” said Gonzalez. “When they told me they wanted to do the project, I gave them a pair of shoes to photograph, and then I did the initial pair of shoes to take around and show as an example.”

The TAG team’s first event was hosted during Diversity Week after the class had been working on the project for nearly three quarters of the semester.

The team set up tables in the Graham Center’s Art Gallery where everyone was encouraged to participate by designing a pair of shoes themselves and donating if possible. Any shoe can be used for this project, but the students found the pristine shoes for Converse sneakers since they were the easiest to draw on.

Shoes and fraternities have shown immense interest in the TAG project as well.

“A bunch of my brothers and myself came to help out our community today,” said junior Pi Kappa Alpha member, Nicholas Chienchio.

He went on to say the fraternity might even host an event for TAG at their house and plan to continue being involved as much as possible.

There have been many new and used sneakers donated by students and Converse recently jumped on board and donated 500 brand new sneakers for the cause.

In addition, Utrecht has donated art supplies as well as giving the organization major discounts to help out with the creation of the shoes.

Aside from the event held on the last day of diversity week, the TAG team plans to continue spreading the word with the hope that even more students will get involved and there will be a higher amount of decorated sneakers for the impoverished children in Haiti.

“We’re going to be working a lot with the Frost Art Museum, they have been fabulous in helping us,” said College of Architecture and the Arts Grant Specialist, Kelly Brady-Rumble.

With many events to come, the shoes will be displayed at the Frost for the Culture Fest before the final products are sent to Haiti.

“We’ll see how many shoes are delivered to Haiti, the art project is completed,” said Kolansinski.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Perricone’s offers fresh, tasty pasta, quaint locale

Pasta is the ultimate classic, fool-proof, if you don’t-like-it-you-have-no-soul comfort food that even the most elementary cook can whip up in no time. This humble food takes center stage at Perricones’s Marketplace and Cafe, 15 SE 10th St, Miami, a quaint establishment in Brickell.

Upon entering Perricone’s, the “marketplace” part of the equation is apparent. Displays of Italian specialty meats, cheeses, breads and desserts abound and tempt hungry customers while a wall of wines tempt connoisseurs. Of course, the marketplace has plenty of baskets filled with fresh Parmesan cheese. Each time I went there, I couldn’t resist picking up one of those coveted wedges and getting a whiff of that earthy, nutty, slightly sweet aroma that I’ve come to love. If one wanted to compile a DIY Italian-style picnic, then the marketplace would have all of the necessary fixings.

For those who would rather have a full dine-in experience, the café is definitely for them. The space is split into two rooms: one a warm, intimate indoor space with plush banquettes and soft lighting, the other a breezy, yet covered, outdoor oasis complete with a fountain. Between the two areas, outdoor is the way to go. With fast, friendly service and light live music, even a bustling baby shower in their event space didn’t disturb the overall tranquil vibe. Furthermore, Perricones’s dishes the traditional bread basket with unlimited servings of fresh bruschetta, a welcome break from butter in favor of diced tomatoes seasoned with fresh cilantro, basil, garlic and the ubiquitous olive oil.

Our waiter highly recommended the baked brie as an appetizer, but even his rave reviews didn’t do it justice. The mid-sized wheel came wrapped in golden puff pastry and, upon cutting into it, the creamy melted goodness was a sight for sore eyes. Paired with a variety of fruit, heart-shaped crackers and an incredibly sweet honey-marmalade glaze, it is what I would imagine is served in heaven. I could have made a meal out of this and the bruschetta alone.

As I said, pasta is the star attraction at Perricones. Two highly recommended pasta dishes are their whole wheat penne with salmon and their ravioli. The whole wheat penne was cooked to perfection—no crunch, but didn’t turn into mush either—while the salmon pieces, pine nuts and broccoli florets gave an overall freshness to the dish. Furthermore, the coral-pink sauce added a tangy kick to the dish. Meanwhile, their ravioli is stuffed with generous amounts of spinach and creamy ricotta, also with coral-pink sauce and perfect for the resident vegetarian.

Another dish worth noting is their cacio e pepe, a traditional Italian soup. The citrus broth was home to generous amounts of tuna, salmon, shrimp, mussels and scallops with plenty of linguine to sate your appetite. The bowl was bigger than my head. If you order this dish, I suggest you either share it or come with a big appetite and a lot of time to kill.

Perricone’s could be a bit of a splurge, with pasta entrees costing between $14 and $20, but other meals costing more than $30. However, every Thursday Perricones’s hosts a pasta night where pasta dishes cost a mere $10, making everyone able to enjoy their food without breaking the bank. No matter the price, Perricone’s is definitely worth a try.

Food for Thought is a bi-weekly column. Look for it every other Wednesday. Readers are not compensated for favorable reviews.
Lowering drinking age promotes mature habits

GIOVANNI GONZALEZ Staff Writer

Although the argument in favor of lowering the legal drinking age in the United States has been around for years, it should not be overlooked. Lowering the drinking age is very important to the safety of college students around the country.

Reducing the drinking age from 21 to 18 exposes college students to alcohol earlier and removes the need to obtain it illegally and hide it. Getting students used to the idea of alcohol earlier prevents binge drinking and overindulgence, especially in the first few years of college, where many students are on their own and not under the watchful eye of their parents.

The intention behind lowering the legal drinking age is to make college students more responsible in their alcohol use by truly making them adults in the eyes of the law. In this country, 18 seems to be the age when a person becomes an adult. Those who turn 18 have new possibilities such as enlisting in the military and being able to sign legal documents for themselves, but strangely, the law says they are not mature enough to have a drink.

The current drinking age promotes crimes such as using fake identification cards and underage drinking in college campuses, whose consequences can turn out to be worse than just a little partying. College students are going to drink no matter what, and drinking age laws affect college students more than any other demographic, so it makes sense to give all college-age students the lawful responsibilities that come with drinking.

The current drinking age also splits students into those who can legally drink and those who cannot. This can prove to be difficult for college campuses who set up events and sell alcohol on campus because 21 or not, underage students will probably get their hands on a few drinks anyway.

As a positive note, we as students can take this opportunity to be more resourceful with our funds. We can also look towards those students at the University who are already finding alternative ways to still have fun, get around town and have that “college experience.” Perhaps our University will soon see the stress these outside forces cause and in turn will think of some novel ideas to help relieve our students, be it through other modes of public transportation, additional bus times and extended bus routes, or by even just encouraging the school-wide carpooling campaign.

Those who turn 18 have new possibilities such as enlisting in the military and being able to sign legal documents for themselves, but strangely, the law says they are not mature enough to have a drink.

Whether the drinking age is changed or not, college campuses will continue to be known for the drinking that goes on in them. Reducing the drinking age to 18 will simply put everything out in the open and maybe make people more responsible alcohol use among college students.

Treat college students like children in the eyes of the law and they will probably act like children, but give them the responsibility that comes with being an adult, and they may actually act like adults.

Gas prices affecting college class attendance, recreation

KATRINA BRUNO Contributing Writer

The see-saw phenomenon of gas prices has college students stressed and pinching pennies. Many students, whether commuting or not, on a daily basis are spending hundreds of dollars on gas, in addition on their tuition, just to get an education.

As if we were not already paying fees for University services we do not benefit from and are now having to pay close to $4 dollars per gallon to even make it here. I believe that these rising gas prices will significantly affect the college experience. The stress of the economy has encouraged me and other students to keep out of the classroom and stick with online courses. The $199 extra cost for an online course seems like chump-change next to the hundreds upon hundreds of dollars I would spend in gas driving to and from school. It is unfortunately because many students who find themselves more engaged in a classroom environment might no longer have that option.

Allan Pasos, junior, psychology, explains: “Rising gas prices have definitely affected my daily driving route. I live by [the University of Miami], work in Kendall and take classes at [the University], I drive at least 40 miles a day. Also, I drive an SUV that takes me $50 just to fill half the tank.” That is a sad reality for those students enrolled in commuter schools. The University is located in a beautiful city, a metropolitan oasis with so many exciting places to go, there are so many fun things to do. Our students live in the city that never sleeps, but we will be hitting our beds earlier because we are not in the position to sacrifice what’s in our wallets.

Monique Rodriguez, junior, journalism, has been forced to cut spending money on things she wants and enjoys in order to afford getting around town. “Before, miscellaneous funds that I would have to occasionally splurge on a pair of shoes or dinner with friends, I now have allocated towards gas money.”

Personally, I’ve always loved to travel and I do try to take a road trip every few months. However, with the sizable increase in gas prices, my traveling days seem to be numbered, at least while gas is $4 a gallon. Many may argue that it is beneficial for students to be placed in a position where they learn the ropes of budgeting. Others think that this change is beneficial to the environment.

While I do agree, I also believe that the opportunity to travel, learn and experience new things is something that cannot be beat, especially during your college years. It is really disappointing to see so many students struggling to hold on to their hard-earned money. On a positive note, we can students can take this opportunity to be more resourceful with our funds. We can look towards those students at the University who are already finding alternative ways to still have fun, get around town and have that “college experience.”

Confession app a modern take on religious practice

KELLY MALAMBRI Staff Writer

With the advent of the application “Confession: A Roman Catho- lic App” for the iPhone has come many claims that the sacrament of reconciliation has lost its sacredness. Despite many uneducated perceptions about it, the app does not inval- idate its sacredness, but respect- fully enhances modern day religious experiences.

Although it does not claim to absolve users of their sins or imitate the sacrament of reconciliation, the app has inspired strong opinions. New York Times writer Maureen Dowd said, “Nothing is sacred anymore, even the sacred. And even that most secret ritual of the Roman Catholic faith, the veiled black confession box.” Misguided opinions such as these will only harm the positive impacts the new Confession app can and will add to the Web. The app takes users through the 10 Commandments and asks ques- tions based off of age that might apply in order to help prepare for confession by making a list of sins and helping the user think of ones they may not have before. It is meant to act as a guide, not the priest, and enables participants to get more out of the sacrament. Sorry, Ms. Dowd, but all is still holy in “the veiled black confession box.”

Doing nothing to take away from the sanctity of this practice, the app rather positively engages Catholics who may claim to be too busy with things like work and other day-to- day activities to practice their reli- gion consistently as well as those who have simply lost interest in the very traditional religion’s less than modern aspects.

By appealing to Catholics through a medium used by many, the app is a positive modern approach to reli- gion, which in many cases may be needed in order to inspire others to take part in such religious practices and return to more traditional ones.

According to BBC News, the Pope has encouraged Catholics to embrace the electronic realm, and this was apparently the inspiration behind the creation of the app. The Pope also warned that electronic communication is by no means a substitute for face-to-face interac- tion, therefore not approving of the app as a device for reconciliation itself.

The Catholic Church does not intend to compromise the sanctity of its sacrament, but rather wishes to continue its experience for its partic- ipants through electronic communi- cation like the app. Without intruding on sacred religious territory, the app draws Catholics in and through its subject matter it serves as a posi- tive addition to the many negative features of the electronic world.

Rather than put down the app, people of all faiths should embrace and acknowledge the good that can be done by promoting religion and positivity in general by way of respectful communication such as the iPhone app.

The opinions presented within this page do not represent the views of The Beacon Editorial Board. These views are separate from editorials and reflect individual perspectives of contributing writers and/or members of the University community.

SEND US YOUR LETTERS

Have something on your mind? Send your thoughts in (500 words maximum) to opinion@fi usm.com or drop by our offices at either GC 210 or WUC 124. The Beacon reserves the right to edit letters for size, grammar, and clarity. With your letter, be sure to include your name, major and year.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Editorials are the unified voice of the editorial board, which is composed of the editor in chief, management, and the editors of each of the five sections. The Beacon welcomes any letters regarding or in response to its editorials, send them to opinion@fi usm.com
Students take steps to directly engage students

University deans take steps to directly engage students

**DEBORAH SOUVERAIN**
Staff Writer

Foil pit, paint war and a glow party are all coming in time to end the spring semester with a bang. FIU Live, a week-long extravaganza the Student Programming Council at Biscayne Bay Campus is hosting, kicked off on April 11 with stuff-a-bear event allowing students to build their own teddy bear all-the-while enjoying an open candy bar. Later that evening, SPC-BBC hosted a comedy show featuring comedians Jim Tavare and Ronnie Jordan.

The following day magician Peter Boie performed magic for non-believers in the Wolfe University Center Theatre.

Students who attend at least three of the major events during FIU Live will receive an SPC prize pass and give them the opportunity to enter into a raffle. The winner receives a package worth up to $150.

The events during FIU Live are for University students only. Entrée is free for all events with a ticket. Tickets are available at the Campus Life office in room 141 of WUC.

The weeklong affair continues on Wednesday, April 13, with FIU Live Panther Poloza, a day of food, music, foam and paint. Students are advised to not wear their Sunday’s best to this event, as paint may stain clothing.

The foil pit, music and paint party begins at 3 p.m. and will take place on the field area behind the BBC pool.

Thursday, April 14, is shirt time! The event takes place between 12 p.m. to 3 p.m. in Panther Square. T-shirts and supplies will be provided for students’ creative needs. Following the t-shirt decorating event is a showing of the science-fiction blockbuster “Tron.” The movie will be shown at 3 p.m. and again at 7 p.m.

Wrapping up the week is the FIU Live glow party. The biggest event of the week, the glow party will feature DJ Zog, radio personality and house DJ on Power 96 FM. For 12 years, DJ Zog has hosted the “5 o’clock Traffic Jam” on Power 96. SPC-BBC hopes to get large attendance at these events to help with their overall funding for next year.

We are working on increasing attendance to our events so we can show [SPC-BBC] we can get people to our events and get a larger budget for next year,” said Tanha Dil, SPC-BBC president and communications major.

Although SPC-BBC was able to get through all the planning, Dil said the council had some competition.

“It isn’t easy … because we have organizations putting on events, like [Bay Vista Housing],” Dil said. “I’m not saying they shouldn’t do it, but they should collaborate with us, after all, we are the Student Programming Council.”

DJ Cato K., who is also hosting the glow party, has been a fixture in South Florida radio since 2003. He began spinning on 93.1 and now DJ Cato K. can be heard every Friday, April 15, at 12 p.m. Traﬃ c Jam.”

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“IT isn’t easy … because we have organizations putting on events, like [Bay Vista Housing],” Dil said. “I’m not saying they shouldn’t do it, but they should collaborate with us, after all, we are the Student Programming Council.”

“We decided to do it different this time because we didn’t have a large enough budget to start off with,” Dil said. “Staging, fencing and set-up would have been $25,000 alone.

Despite being a commuter University, SPC-BBC wants to give the campus feel like a traditional university.

“Our goal is to give this campus more of a college feel,” said Sean Russell, a nursing student and member of the Student Organizations Council.

**STUDENT PROGRAMMING COUNCIL**

Spring fling continues with glow party, popular DJs

DEAN'S PAGE 2

University deans take steps to directly engage students

**BERTHA ALIS**
Contributing Writer

Walking into any dean’s oﬃ ce can be intimidating.

For some students, it brings back memories of days in elementary school when their name was called through the loud speaker and they walked nervously into the main oﬃ ce to speak to the principal.

Several deans at the University are making it a point of turning such fear into more student engagement.

“We are anxious to have input,” said Mike Hampton, dean of the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management. “The more input I have from students, staff, team members and from other outside parties the better I can be at decision making because now I have perspective.”

The University is considered a commuter school; a lot of its students attend classes on campus and leave after they are done. They have jobs to go to, family activities, hobbies and homework.

The hospitality dean, the dean of the Honors College and the assistant dean of the College of Arts and Sciences are trying different approaches to inspire students to become more engaged in their academics and community. They are using new technologies like Facebook and Twitter to communicate with their students and setting up channels with their friends and past students. He has a Twitter page he posts on regularly.

He goes around classrooms in the beginning of the semester to pass out his card with his mobile number for texting. If you want to speak to him, he will make the time to set up an appointment or you could just walk to his oﬃ ce where his door is usually open.

“I try to reach out through as many channels as possible,” Hampton said. “The message of getting students involved and engaged is not just a matter of ‘go do something.’ It is that you are involved because there is a purpose behind it that it is going to have an impact on the way you position yourself career wise and personally.”

Hampton encourages students to get involved in clubs and organizations and to take a leadership role. He wants them to build not only a resume but a portfolio to show to a future employer what makes them so special.

“The objective is that by the time the student graduates they are not out looking for a job, but that they have already found one as a result of the network they have built during their last two years in college,” Hampton said.

Kenton Harris, assistant dean

**PERU**

Leftist ex-officer tops vote, heads to runoff

**HONDURAS**

Army to support police in fighting drugs

*US company blames Cuba for barge loss Leftist ex-officer tops vote, heads to runoff  Army to support police in fighting drugs*