Law school moves up in US News Report ranking

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In a recent graduate school update by the US News & World Report, the FIU College of Law made a significant jump in the rankings, rising 19 spots.

Out of 195 spots, the University went from 132nd to 113th. The jump was celebrated by the dean and faculty as it gave merit to the University as a growing institution for law students.

One factor for students who choose FIU is the cost. “FIU’s loan debt would be more equivalent to a car payment versus a mortgage payment. Most law schools leave you with a mortgage equivalent in debt without a house to show for it,” said FIU graduate Michelle Nahmias, who is currently considering it among her choices for law school.

The jump in ranking, however, gave attention to the University for its other offerings.

The decade-old college ranked first in Florida bar passage last year, organized law clinics for well-versed students to offer legal counseling to members of the community, and performed well in several courtroom competitions, one of which was judged by Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito.

“The rankings are not my top factor but they’re definitely a factor in the back of my head because it is really unheard of for a school that’s 10 years old, or any school for that matter, to jump 19 spots in the rankings,” said Nahmias.

Law professor Noah Weisbord acknowledged FIU’s accomplishments since he began teaching at the University in August 2010, praising the management and the motivation within the college to further its reach.

“The US News & World Report rankings are made through what the US News calls ‘input and output measures’ of all universities, which would explain why the Ivy League schools are always at the top. Despite criticism, schools continue to strive to work their way up.”

“We always criticize the ranking system, but for some reason, there’s some sort of social desire to end up at the top,” Weisbord said. “We know reasonably that these rankings miss many important factors, but it is human nature. I take it with a grain of salt.”

He continued, “The institution is important and even though FIU isn’t ranked among the top 10, they are certainly advancing.”
FIU snaps longest losing streak of season against WKU

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On March 21, the Panthers took a tie game into the ninth inning and could not come away with a win. Two days later, they found themselves in the same exact position. This time, they made sure to capture the win. Despite committing a season-high six errors, FIU finished in first place over Stetson 6-5 on March 23 after defeating the Hatters 9-4 on March 25.

The Panthers won two out of three games from the Hilltoppers in Bowling Green between March 23-25. The theme of the match continued, as Sloppy defense got the better of the Panthers in the bottom of the first inning, as errors by Shantz in left field, Kirsch at first base and freshman Aramis Garcia at the plate. Garcia drove one out to the warning track, however, and ended the inning with no runs. A lengthy rain delay halted the game in the top of the sixth inning, where Hageman was substituted for Tate Glasscock.

The Panthers took two out of three games over the Toppers, winning 5-3 in 11 innings on March 24 and losing 9-4 on March 25.

The win was FIU’s first in five games and only the second on the road this season. It was at the expense of WKU’s starting pitcher Justin Hageman, reigning Sun Belt Conference Freshman of the Year.

Panthers Nathan Burns, Adam Kirsch and Roshe Woodward all recorded three hits in the match with Mike Martinez and T.J. Shantz chipping in with two hits each.

Redshirt junior left-hander Mason McVay pitched five innings, allowing one earned run, three walks and six strikeouts.

The first eight runs of the game were scored in the first two innings, as both teams got off to a fast start.

After leading the game off with a single, Burns came around to score on senior Pablo Bermudez’ first sacrifice fly of the game. Shantz, who hit a single after Burns, scored on Martinez’ hard-hit double off the wall one batter later.

Sloppy defense got the better of the Panthers in the bottom of the first inning, as errors by Shantz in left field, Kirsch at first base and freshman Julius Gaines at shortstop allowed the Hill Toppers to tie the score 2-2.

Gaines was hit by a pitch in the second inning and moved to second base on Woodward’s single. With two men on base, Burns drove in Gaines on an RBI single.

After Hageman hit his second batter of the inning, Shantz, Bermudez followed with his second sacrifice fly to make it 4-2.

Once again, however, the Panthers could not hold steady in the field after a failed pick off attempt, and another error by Gaines allowed the Hill Toppers to score two more runs and tie it 4-4.

FIU had a chance to break the game open in the fourth inning when they had the bases loaded and freshman Aramis Garcia at the plate. Garcia drove one out to the warning track, however, and ended the inning with no runs. A lengthy rain delay halted the game in the top of the sixth inning, where Hageman was substituted for Tate Glasscock.

In the eighth inning, Shantz led off with a single and eventually stole his team-leading sixth base and ended up at third base by tagging up. Martinez then drove him in to take a 5-4 lead.

The theme of the match continued, however, with WKU tying the game back up after a bases loaded walk in the bottom of the eighth.

With a tie game in the top of the ninth inning, Burns drove in Kirsch with his second RBI of the game with a two-out single as his teammates roared from the dugout.

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Burri’s sacrifice fly hands FIU series win over UNT

The Panthers have won four of their last five games dating back to March 14.

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With the Panthers splitting their double header against North Texas on Saturday, FIU was able to win the rubber game of a three-game series against the Mean Green – this time in an extra-inning affair. FIU 15-14 (3-1, SBC) took care of North Texas in a tight 6-5 game on March 26 at home.

Anthony Guivas

Burri’s sacrifice fly hands FIU series win over UNT

North Texas got off to a hot start, lacing a pair of home runs in the first inning to grab an early 3-0 lead. Jenn Gniadek got the start but only lasted two frames while giving up four earned runs on six hits. Mariah Dawson, who leads the Sun Belt in strikeouts, replaced Gniadek. Unlike the first game of the series where she pitched a complete game but got the loss, Dawson was able to control the tempo for FIU.

“I came in with the mindset that I’m not going to get mad no matter what happens. I’m just going to stay positive towards everyone and stay confident within myself,” Dawson said.

Dawson pitched six innings, allowing only two hits while giving up one run.

North Texas notched another run in the top of the third, extending their lead to 4-0. The FIU bats came out in the bottom half of the inning, scoring three runs, cutting the deficit to one. An Ashley McClain single that scored Kayla Burri from second and moved Beth Peller to third got the Panthers started.

With runners on first and second, the North Texas starter issued two bases on balls—one to Brie Rojas that loaded the bases and one to Jessy Alfonso giving FIU another run on the scoreboard. One out later, Kelsey Grabiak laced an infield single to third base, scoring FIU’s third run.

FIU snatched their first lead of the game in the fifth inning as the Panthers played small ball. After getting back-to-back singles from McClain and Rojas, Alfonso laid down a sacrifice bunt, moving the runners over. Alex Casais then hit a shallow fly ball that scored McClain and moved Rojas to third. Grabiak then followed up with a bloop-single, handing FIU a 5-4 lead entering the seventh inning.

But North Texas wouldn’t go away. In the seventh, Brooke Foster hit a home run to send the game to extra-innings.

In the eighth, Erik Arcuri led off with a double and was then moved to third thanks to a Megan Horn’s sacrifice bunt. The game then ended on a walk-off sacrifice fly in the ninth inning by Burri. Arcuri tagged from third base to win the game.

“With UL [Louisiana] in our conference, every single game matters. We need as many wins as we can. So the more we win, the better we can be, especially against teams like these. We should be able to beat them all three games” Dawson said.
Asst. News Director

going to sit down and evaluate "the only non-eligil-
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New mural leaves a mark

KRISTY SHORE
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Hope, love, and dominoes are just a few of the canvases painted by students, faculty and staff to contribute for the next Grizzly Bear collective.

Daniel Rossen, better known as one of the front men for the darling indie band Grizzly Bear, has always been a very prolific musician.

From his work as a guitarist with Grizzly Bear, to his side project Depart -rial from him that both delights fans, but also provides some insight as to how Grizzly Bear’s sound might evolve in their next record.

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Rossen excels as soloist

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From his work as a guitarist with Grizzly Bear, to his side project Depart -rial from him that both delights fans, but also provides some insight as to how Grizzly Bear’s sound might evolve in their next record.

Silent Hour/Golden Mile” is his first production released as a solo artist, and it provides some of the best pop songs I’ve ever heard. The simple structure and rhythm presented in “Up On High,” to much more complex yet appealing songs like “Golden Mile,” Rossen presents a brief yet very dense look into the next phase of his sound, and provides a very exciting prospect of what his future could be both as a solo artist and part of the Grizzly Bear collective.

Solo projects often branch out as an alternative for the artist to show their “own vision,” and in the case of lesser bands, it often serves as a precursor to the disman-This week, Rossen presents a brief yet very dense look into the next phase of his sound, and provides a very exciting prospect of what his future could be both as a solo artist and part of the Grizzly Bear collective.

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Prayer makes its way into the pep rally

O n March 23, State Bill 98 was quietly signed into law by our very own Gov. Rick Scott, which will allow students to give “inspirational messages” during school assemblies as of July 1.

This includes leading classmates in prayer. Teachers, however, are still not allowed to do so.

As a Christian, I should be excited about this. I should be glad that students finally have a safe forum to share their beliefs with their peers en masse.

Admittedly, I am cautiously optimistic at best.

This law could indeed be great for students who wish to proselytize and serve as a bulwark for the promotion of freedom and expression. However, I cannot ignore the risk this may pose for students that don’t share the religious beliefs of the majority.

To be more specific, I am not confident that a student who wants to share a passage from the Quran or the Bhagavad Gita will be as welcome as their peer who wants to share a passage from 1 Corinthians.

As for non-believers, this law poses a threat to their rights as well.

Our First Amendment doesn’t just give all of us freedom to practice any religion; it also gives us freedom from practicing religion. Therefore, these students may also become marginalized, even targeted for their lack of faith.

At the very least, they will be forced into a highly uncomfortable position should the overwhelming majority of their peer’s bow their heads in prayer during a required school assembly.

Granted, if any student - or teacher, for that matter - doesn’t want to take part in an assembly where spiritual content is included, they reserve the right to simply walk out.

However, in my experience, it isn’t that easy. In high school, I was subjected to a mandatory “surprise assembly” in which there was religious content that I didn’t agree with at the time. In theory, I could have simply walked out.

In reality, I was, ironically enough, seated in the front row.

Meanwhile, security guards who had a history of not even permitting bathroom breaks during similar student gatherings flanked the doors of the auditorium, thus making a clean exit highly unlikely, if not impossible.

Later in class, even my teacher expressed her disapproval, stating that she had known about what the assembly entailed, she would have abstained from attending while still allowing interested students to go.

If this law is going to be of any benefit, schools must honor all sides by allowing freedom for both the devout and the devoid.

We would have appreciated it if we were given a choice to stay behind and remove ourselves from this uncomfortable situation.

Likewise, if a student is to deliver a religiously-charged message under the protection of this law, then students and teachers should be notified beforehand so students can choose to attend rather than being blinded-sided as we were.

I am all for freedom of religion and religious expression. In fact, I encourage it. However, if this law is going to be of any benefit, schools must honor all sides by allowing freedom for both the devout and the devout.

Just as these students now have a right to share their message, other students should maintain their right to not listen. In theory, this law is right in lines with our principles; now, let’s see if these principles are either upheld or challenged in practice.

“As Class Dismissed” is a weekly column critiquing education in America. Email jasonynelliott@fiusm.com

RESPONSE TO LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Student Government needs to focus on responsibilities

To the Student Body,

On March 23, 2012, FIU Student Media published a letter on behalf of SGC-MMC President Patrick O’Keefe responding to Samir Patel.

This letter seeks to clarify many of the allegations made in the O’Keefe letter.

It goes without saying that transparency is the cornerstone of good governance. Without transparency, the Student Body cannot know the cornerstone of good governance. Without transparency, the Student Body cannot know how its resources are being utilized by SGA.

Thus proper implementation of regulations regarding transparency are crucial and, of course, mandatory. Though it appears as if the SGC-MMC has forgotten about the crucial and mandatory part.

The letter written on behalf of O’Keefe is overflowing with political grand-standing and outright lies.

In the letter, the Student Body is told that the current Administration’s persecution attempts against the Coalition of Students for Reform and its members is nothing more than an attempt at greater transparency.

Without evidence, sans a few sarcastic remarks from a Facebook post, the O’Keefe administration filed its baseless suit. The sole purpose of the suit was for political gain.

That act greatly compromised the integrity of SGA and is an appalling use of our government’s resources and time.

As a testament to the ludicrous nature of the grievance filed against Samir Patel and Carlos Rodriguez, during the Supreme Court hearing the Attorney General uttered statements such as “CSO [Council for Student Organizations] governs SGA, I think…”

This shows a shocking lack of knowledge of how our SGA is structured and a disrespectful lack of preparation to discuss the issues at hand.

Statements showing the complete ignorance of SGA structure were not the only outlandish things stated.

President O’Keefe went on to lie to the court, stating how he had requested minutes from CSR.

If this indeed had happened, O’Keefe, his administration, and those advising them would have clearly seen that the secretive meetings they alleged took place, had never occurred.

Furthermore, in their attempt to discredit CSR, they point out how they do not know how the finances and membership of the organization work.

Again, had they asked, they could have seen how CSR does not have finances, operating on a budget of $0.

As to our membership, it is clearly displayed on the very same website they used to file the case that membership is open to all FIU students.

Had O’Keefe and his administration bothered to actually ask questions about CSR, perhaps they would not have written the suit, unless of course it was done so for political gain, which is the CSR’s contention.

Daniel Peterson

The problem with pizza

There is no such thing as a free lunch, especially if it’s during election time here at FIU!

The “free pizzas” that the Student Government Council at the Biscayne Bay Campus “provides” students, if and only if they vote, is paid for by all students, through A&F fees, regardless of whether they vote or not.

Not only is this fee because students are paying for food they will never eat, unless they chose to vote, it borders bribery and it only happens at BBC, meaning students at the Modesto Maidique Campus miss out on the opportunity.

The Beacon does not dispute the effectiveness of enticing college students to do a myriad of things by promising pizza—especially in an uncontested election.

However, it is problematic that for some students, the driving impetus to consume the mediocre pizza they are salivating over as they pass by the Financial Aid office.

In a perfect university, students would want to vote because they want to be actively involved in student government. The Beacon recognizes this is not the reality; however, holding pizza hostage in exchange for votes is definitely not the answer.

If the rebuttal to this argument is that the pizza encourages students to vote, that only strengthens our concern - students need to be engaged because of issues and collective interest, not because they are hungry.

We respect SGA for attempting to make politics fun. Perhaps they could have regular “free” pizza parties that center on debates and student concerns prior to election day.

Another point to make about the problem with promising pizza to students that vote is that it cultivates a cavalier attitude towards voting.

Students who do not know the candidates and their platforms can’t possibly become familiar with their policies in the few minutes after receiving their pizza and before submitting their vote.

The Beacon loves pizza. We especially love pizza we have paid for, we just don’t like it topped with politics.
2012 SGC-BBC candidates all run unopposed

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It’s election season once again at the Biscayne Bay Campus and students can be ready to receive slices of pizza in exchange for their vote in an across the board, uncontested election.

Campaigning is set to commence today and will run until the opening of voting polls. Elections for the 2012-2013 Student Government Council at BBC will be occurring on April 3 to 4 with voting polls opening from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. in Academic One in front of the Financial Aid Office.

Students may vote in person or from any computer through my.fiu.edu, or through the Student Government Association’s website at sga.fiu.edu under the “Get Involved” tab.

Although there have been two petitions filed through the SGC-BBC supreme court pertaining to certain candidates eligibility to run for office, all positions in the 2012 election are uncontested.

A total of 12 senate seats are left vacant, including an Arts & Science, School of Education, Honors College, Hospitality Management, Journalism and Mass Communication, Nursing and Health Science, House, Broward Pines Center, Graduate, and three Lower Division seats.

All but one candidate, Ertha Jean-Francois, will be running as incumbents, with current SGC-BBC Speaker of the Senate Pablo Haspel and current SGC-BBC Senator at Large Oluwatoshibi Adekoya making the jump from the legislative branch into the executive as president and vice president, respectively.

This is the second year in a row that the SGC-BBC presidential ticket will be uncontested.

According to Rafael Zapata, Assistant Director of Campus Life and SGA advisor, mass emails will be sent out to the student body urging those eligible to apply for the senate positions still left vacant.

Students may apply starting May 7, the first week of the Summer A term.

According to Zapata, some of the issues that the SGC-BBC will deal with in the 2012-2013 school year will be the plan for Bay Vista Housing in terms of renovating or creating a new building and the expansion that both campuses are undergoing.

In addition, the new green fee initiative, a one dollar per credit hour fee that would be used towards renewable energy and environmental initiatives on campus, will also be a factor in the upcoming academic year’s agenda.

Election results will be announced on April 5.

CAPS to host series of events over the week

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Biscayne Bay Campus Counseling and Psychological Services will hold a Mental Awareness week from March 26-30.

The CAPS Body Image lecture will occur in Bay Vista Housing today from 5 p.m. followed by a CAPS emotional support lecture on March 30 at 8 p.m. The lectures hope to aid students in better understanding mental health issues.

“We want to encourage people to identify when they need to seek help and how they can on campus,” said Dr. Xuan Stevens, University Psychologist.

These lectures are meant to alter cliché thoughts of the general public regarding mental health and make them become conscious of the fact that all experience difficulties while living. Among the topics will be anxiety, depression and self-esteem.

“The lectures were very successful last year and this year we will be incorporating very positive aspects,” Stevens said. “The goal of this lecture is to help students identify and select strategies to deal with emotional problems.”

The first lecture will focus on body image satisfaction with discussions on body esteem as well as male body image.

“A lecture on body image would help me understand that a perfect body does not exist while still helping me expand my knowledge for personal gain and getting my ideal image in a more effective way,” sophomore Allysya Cardona said.

The residents at Bay Vista, the resident assistant coordinators and CAPS staff will coordinate together for both discussions. This is the second year they will take place in Bay Vista.

“Body Image is everything these days to young people,” sophomore Paulo Ramos said. “We were born in an age of digital enhancement which has made a lot of us have unrealistic expectations on what we should look like. I think that being reminded that it is so much more than that is always a good thing.”