University to accept Visa credit card payments

LAUREN ROVIRA
Staff Writer
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Students disheartened with Panthersoft’s payment options will have a new alternative starting spring 2013. As a product of numerous requests and consumer research, the University will be adding Visa credit cards to the acceptable payment methods for students and parents to utilize on Panthersoft.

“Many people seem to have only a Visa card, or cards, and therefore can’t pay tuition by credit card,” said Cecilia Hamilton, associate vice president and controller at the University. “The Wall Street Daily last year said ‘Based on total volume, transactions and cards issued, Visa outclasses all its competitors. It boasts a worldwide market share of 63 percent, according to the Nilson Report. MasterCard comes in a distant second, with about 31 percent.’”

She said that the University wants to “give that 63 percent a chance to pay by credit card, if they wish to do so.”

“[This] would make paying a bit easier,” said Vania Pedraja, a junior majoring in public administration. “My checking account is linked to my Visa debit card so I would be able to pay off my tuition directly from my checking and not have to charge it to my [other] credit card.”

The change has yet to take effect and work remains to be done to adjust the system. “In terms of what still remains to be done, it will require [University Technology Services] to build the ‘bridge’ between the Panthersoft system and the vendor who will be accepting and processing the credit card payments on our behalf,” said Hamilton.

Visa has particular rules that however, mobile polling stations will not be allowed. “As far as campaigning, I think everyone knows who the candidates were,” Toscano said. “Between that and social media and The Beacon, I think there has been enough publicity of who the candidates are.”

According to Toscano, Campus Life staff will be controlling voting through polling stations set up on campus. “We’re working on…one [station] for the first day in GC and then on the second day I would like one stationary and one rotating,” Toscano said. “Unfortunately we’ve reverted back a few years by just having polling sites, where you can’t use your iPad [and] you can’t use your tablet.”

He also added that because of the present electronic voting system, only students enrolled for the majority of their classes at Modesto Maidique Campus at the time of voting will be allowed to participate in the Special Election. “It’s where you are at that point,” Toscano said. “The roster that comes from Panthersoft gives us what is registered on that first day [of voting]. It’s the only way the system recognizes the students.”

With the current SGA members narrowed down to the second week of summer A, and as an alternative, the fall semester.

“We met with IT and if there is going to be a Special Election, we’re looking at the week of May 14 and [we would] put announcements that first week of May 7 through SGA,” Toscano said.

The Special Election, which involves the current Student Government presidential candidates, is a result of the recent Student Government Association Supreme Court ruling that the 2012 presidential election was rife with voter fraud. The Court stated that the evidence revealing supporters of the Laura Farias and Alex Castro presidential campaign gathered Panther ID’s and passwords to cast votes, was enough to call for another election.

Candidates will be allowed to campaign during voting days;

There are a lot of what-ifs in this. We are looking at those time frames…and if we go on this route, I’ll be happy if we hit a thousand.

Jose Toscano, Associate Director of Campus Life

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Candidates will be allowed to campaign during voting days;
The Beacon – Friday, April 20, 2012

NATIONAL

Judge quits Trayvon Martin case, cites conflict

The judge presiding over the Trayvon Martin shooting case has removed herself after George Zimmerman’s attorney said she had a possible conflict of interest.

Florida Circuit Judge Debra Bryant recused herself Wednesday because of a potential conflict that relates to her husband.

She works with Orlando attorney Mark NeJame, who was first approached by Zimmerman’s family to represent the neighborhood watch volunteer.

But NeJame declined and referred them to Mark O’Mara, who is now representing Zimmerman. NeJame has since been hired by CNN to comment on the case.

WORLD

Bin Laden family deportation hits more snags

The plan to deport Osama bin Laden’s three widows and their nine children from Pakistan ran into more bureaucratic hurdles on Wednesday, making it uncertain when they would leave, their lawyer said.

The family was detained by Pakistani authorities last May after U.S. Navy SEALs raided the compound in northwest Pakistan where the al-Qaeda chief was hiding and killed him. The American commandos left bin Laden’s relatives but took his body, which they later buried at sea.

Pakistani interrogated the family members and eventually charged the widows and two adult daughters last month with illegally entering and living in the country.

The five women were convicted at the beginning of April and sentenced to 45 days in prison, with credit for about a month served.

Pi Alpha Alpha, the public administration honor society, will hold its recurring induction ceremony on April 27, with former Miami-Dade county manager George Burgess as the keynote speaker of the event.

“Given [Burgess’s] long history in public service, he can speak about what it means to make a commitment to public service,” said Agatha Caraballo, former president of Pi Alpha Alpha.

Burgess, who worked as manager for the county for eight years, resigned from this position the same day former mayor Carlos Alvarez was removed from office last year.

Following his resignation, Burgess became chief operating officer at Becker & Poliakoff, a law firm based in Ft. Lauderdale.

“Students are in government programs because they really have a desire to be public servants,” Burgess said. “It’s a noble thing [and] it’s a tough job.”

Burgess has also recently joined FIU as a distinguished practitioner in residence, teaching courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels this upcoming summer and fall.

“We want [students] to hear him speak as a successful practitioner,” said PAA President Nicki Fraser. The PAA chapter was reestablished in 2009 under Caraballo and the current advisor for the society, Professor Jean-Claude Garcia-Zamor.

“We invited [Burgess] because he is the perfect role model and guide for students who plan to work in government,” Garcia-Zamor said. “He is going to speak about the virtues of public service.”

The GPA minimum requirement for an undergraduate student to join PAA is 3.0 and for a graduate it is a 3.7.

“We try to explain to our students how important it is to be a member,” Garcia-Zamor said. “We are an elite group [and] we are very happy to have this program.”

The PAA was “formed to recognize and promote excellence in the study and practice of public policy and administration.”

“We’re trying to get public administration students to be more active,” Fraser said. “We’re hoping Burgess will [motivate] the students. We want [students] to know that there is a viable profession within public administration. Public administration encompasses everything.”

Charges include flat fee of $11.50

“Here at FIU our average tuition credit card charge is about $650. Right now a student would pay $13 for that charge,” said Hamilton. “Under the new method, the student would pay $11.50. So it will cost less for a student who charges more than $575.”

Unfortunately, of course, a student who charges a smaller amount will pay a higher fee than under the current method,” she said.

Lelanya Barea, a junior in business management said, “the flat fee of $11.50, when weighing the cost I believe will be better than the 2 percent charge considering classes during any given semester will normally cost a student over $600 dollars.”

Currently, UTS is still working out the technology issues and is discussing completion time with the vendor.

“When the new method is up and running, there will be a change in the way the web page, the payment portal, looks and functions,” said Hamilton.

NEWS FLASH

CORRECTIONS

In Vol. 23, Issue 89 of The Beacon in the At Bay section, the photo for the article “Professor stresses the need to ‘knock on every door,” was not taken by Alfredo Aparicio. It was written by Sandy Zapata.

The Beacon will gladly change any errors. Call our MMC office at 305-348-2709 or BBC at 305-919-4722.
Panthers continue winning ways with extra inning win

EDUARDO ALMAGUER
Staff Writer
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Whenever FIU has trailed after the seventh inning this season, the outcome has been almost never good. They owned a 1-12 record. Comebacks were not in the books for the Panthers.

But after a late-inning surge on April 17 against the Jacksonville Dolphins (14-24), FIU notched win number two when trailing after the seventh inning. The 5-4 extra-inning win continued the Panthers’ dominance in the month of April.

The Panthers (22-14) have won nine of their last ten games in the month of April. The lead did not last long as Adam Brett Walker hit a solo home run to tie the game for Jacksonville.

Head coach Turtle Thomas played small ball in the third inning. Slugger Jabari Henry moved up to third in the lineup and knocked in two runs, making him the first Panther to reach 30 RBIs this season.

Right-hander Logan Dodds overcame a rocky start (6 IP, 3 ER, 6 BB, 5 K) and managed to keep his team in the game until Eddy Pidermann came in to vulture his sixth win of the season.

Junior Nathan Burns led off the game with his conference-leading seventh triple of the season and later scored on senior Mike Martinez’s deep sacrifice fly to give FIU a 1-0 lead.

Despite losing five out of their last six meets, the tennis team has another tough obstacle to overcome. It wasn’t easy the last time and it won’t be easy again this year.

The Panthers will travel to Texas and try to return back home to South Florida as back-to-back Sun Belt champions.

With a possible NCAA tournament berth at stake, winning the SBC would also solidify the sixth SBC title for the program. FIU has won five out of the last seven Sun Belt tournaments.

The Panthers were awarded the fourth-seed on April 17 by the conference, just behind North Texas Mean Green wrapped up the top seed of the 2012 SBC and could meet the Panthers in the semifinals.

The Panthers are no strangers to the Waranch Tennis Center in Denton, Texas. The Mean Green defeated the Panthers 4-3 back on Feb. 26, delivering FIU their first Sun Belt loss since the 2010 conference championship game. Coincidentally, it was the same Mean Green program that outlasted the Panthers in that 2010 title bout.

“It’s been a really good break,” said Lisa Johnson, who is competing in her final SBC Tournament. “As a team, we got a lot of great chances to work on some things we needed to work on for the Sun Belt Tournament. We’ve been working a lot more on points, playing a lot of singles and doubles points.”

Despite a season entailing several losses to some of the top ranked schools in the nation, FIU managed to suffice a 2-1 record in the Sun Belt with wins coming against South Alabama and Florida Atlantic.

The Panthers have won nine of their last ten games in the month of April.

We’ve been working a lot more on points, playing a lot of singles and doubles points.

Lisa Johnson, Senior Tennis team

Since Melissa Applebaum-Dallau took over the reign as FIU’s head coach, the Panthers have been a force to reckon within the Sun Belt tournament, boasting a 27-2 overall in tournament play.

“Last time this year the Panthers were hoisting the Sun Belt Conference trophy. This year I think we really have a strong group of girls. [The Sun Belt Tournament] is what we train for all year and I am confident that this team will stay focused and perform well.”

SEE TENNIS, PAGE 4
The pitching duo of Mariah Dawson and Jenn Gniadek led FIU to a doubleheader sweep over Middle Tennessee on April 17. With the sweep, the Panthers are inching closer to second place in the Sun Belt.

**FIU 3, MIDDLE TENNESSEE 1**

The Panthers beat the Blue Raiders in game one of doubleheader 3-1. Dawson tossed a complete game for FIU.

Dawson carried the team on her arm as she pitched a complete game for the Panthers while giving up one run and striking out a season-high 12 hitters. Dawson, the current Sun Belt leader in strikeouts, now stands at 17-10 to go with 169 strikeouts on the year, a career-high for the sophomore.

With the bats of the Blue Raiders silenced, FIU turned on their offense in the fifth when Brie Rojas delivered a solo home run to tie the game at one a piece. Rojas has hit a home run in two consecutive games, giving her five round trippers on the year.

FIU then scored the winning run on a Kelsey Grabiak RBI single in the fifth inning. The Panthers also added an insurance run in the seventh inning thanks to a Middle Tennessee error.

**FIU 2, MIDDLE TENNESSEE 0**

After defeating Middle Tennessee in game one, the Panthers clinched the doubleheader sweep, shutting out the Blue Raiders by a score of 2-0. With the victory, FIU notches their second consecutive Sun Belt Conference series win.

Much like the first game of the doubleheader, game two was decided by pitching. Gniadek, the starter, tossed a complete game shutout, striking out four batters and only giving up four hits. With the win, Gniadek now stands at 7-7 on the year. The Panthers’ scoring got underway in the third inning when Rachel Slowik, who reached base on a Blue Raider error, was brought home back-to-back singles from Shelby Graves and Abigail Tessey.

FIU’s final and decisive run came in the seventh inning when Erika Arcuri singled home Megan Horne, who was on second.

The team owns a 7-3 record in their past 10 games and has won three consecutive games. The Panthers still sit in third place in the conference just behind South Alabama for second place.

The Jaguars have a higher winning percentage than FIU despite both teams being percentage than FIU. The league has five games remaining and the Jaguars are five games over .500 in six games over .500 in the conference.

With FIU’s offense racking up runs at a great clip, the end of the Panthers’ season may be decided on their pitching.

As Dawson continues her career year and Gniadek looking as if she may be turning things around, the Panthers could make 2012 one to remember.
Graduating means transition

CAROLINA SOUTO  
Staff Writer  
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With graduation around the corner, many things come to the minds of this year’s University graduates. There is a sense of excitement I am very excited at the same time because I am used to this walk out of school and walk into the job of a lifetime. As a result, fear is a common emotion that comes with such a big transition in life.

Kaledo isn’t alone the next month. Some graduates who still don’t have beautiful time in a student’s life. “I honestly have mixed feelings. I am very excited because it is a huge accomplishment, yet I am very scared at the same time because I am used to this schedule’ of always being in school and having classes. But after graduation, it’s like, well—now what?”

Luckily, through hours of research experience, there is always access to useful information on the internet. The Adventurous 500 provides some great advice in “10 Things To Do After Graduating College,” like writing down a few definitions short-term and long-term goals to keep up momentum and reminding us that sometimes failure is inevitable. Although graduating doesn’t guarantee a job right away, there is comfort in having been equipped with the tools to succeed.

The proof of this hangs on the walls of every doctor and lawyer in business: diplomas. While Waters does eventually want to return to school after graduating from the University, she is adamant about graduating and gaining work experience. “I do want to spend some time out working in my field, gaining the experience that I need to continue to prosper. I also have personal goals that I want to accomplish for my own satisfaction. By not being in school, I will have more time for that.”

As for Giovanni Gonzalez, also a soon-to-be graduate, said “I plan on staying at my current job so that I can eventually move into my own place. For now, I’m just going to chill and take it easy,” he said. “I am still too young to go into the corporate world, but I plan on pursuing a career with my information and technology degree in a couple of years.”

Giovanni Gonzalez  
Class of 2012

Small class projects start charity

CAROLINA SOUTO  
Staff Writer  
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Professor Paul Feigenbaum and the students of his community writing and rhetoric class of spring 2012 are on a mission to promote community activism and awareness. As a response to the time caring for children in foster care who have been abused, neglected and/or abandoned.

One of the things the course aims to teach is that community activism is possible without the sacrifice of a student’s plan for success.

Andrew Barrocas, one of Feigenbaum’s students, said “I think the most memorable thing will take place from the course is just being aware that you do have a chance to be either actively or not and that something like that doesn’t necessarily have to come at the expense of your career.”

The course materials are very exposed to throughout the semester attempt to defy the assumption that becoming a successful adult becoming a community activist is inconvenient.

“Peace One Day” was my favorite piece covered in class. I liked it because it gave a realistic account of the struggles an activist faces: the often lengthy trial and error process involved in trying to achieve change and the possible outcomes that can be achieved when working together as a community,” said Sandra Ore.

As for Richard Benavides, “the course dialogue has helped me think more about the process of civic engagement.”

For Feigenbaum, the process is an essential step in balancing a life filled with work, home and school duties, with social activism. This semester, the class’ attempt at making a difference was met with many obstacles. Nonetheless, the process is proving to be rewarding.

Even though finals are around the corner, the students of the community writing and rhetoric class are working hard in helping their community and in providing access to the same opportunities for future students at the University.

Jamaica offers a widearray of colorful dishes.

Culture is rich in island nation

From Miami, you can find yourself backsking on ivory-colored beaches, sipping delicious rum or even munching on beef patties in less than an hour’s flight.

Located less than half of a thousand miles from South Florida, Jamaica offers various delights, including an active nightlife, delicious meals and beverages, entertaining sports events and hot, yet bearable weather.

Nicole Warrington-Granston, a political and international relations graduate student, was born and raised in the parish of St. Andrew located in the capital of Jamaica, Kingston—the perfect vacation spot with bustling activity and its close proximity to the beach.

Nightclubs are very active in Kingston for both tourists and locals alike. Clubs such as Fiction, Club Privilege, and The Quad are the places to go, with restaurants of various foods found nearby. Indian, Chinese, Thai and Middle Eastern restaurants are common on the island, but don’t be confused. There are spots on the roadside that offer Jamaican cuisine, such as pan chicken.

Among the wide array of Jamaican cuisine is the national and traditional dish, ackee (a fruit) and saltfish.

“It’s an excellent dish, especially if you add a little bit of bacon bits. One of the major dishes is also Escovitch fish with bunny,” said Warrington-Granston.

Bammy is also known as cassava cake. Other delicacies include breadfruit, fried dumplings, fried plantains and holiday foods.

“One thing Jamaicans always eat at Easter is bun and cheese. It is shaped like bread, but it is very sweet,” said Warrington-Granston.

Around Christmas time, Christmas cake (fruitcake), Christmas pudding and sorrel, a sweet drink cultivated from the sorrel herb, are very popular. Fast food restaurants such as Kentucky Fried Chicken and Burger King are common there, but Jamaica’s own fast food chain, Island Grill, sells local dishes that include jerk burger, jerk chicken, barbeque chicken and stew peas with rice.

Beef patties and rum are also well-known on the island. Called “Jamaican beef patties” in the United States, Jamaica’s patties can be bought by the dozen or half dozen. Appleton Jamaican rum is the most popular among tourists and locals.

“You cannot leave Jamaica without having Appleton rum to drink,” Warrington-Granston said. “Once you mix it with Pepsi or cranberry juice, you’re set.”

Although the culture in Jamaica differs from

GIVIN G BACK

Small class project starts charity

HOLLY MCCOUG

Available online at FIUSM.com
Bob Marley comes to life again

It’s hard not to have heard of Bob Marley at least once in your life. At the very least, you’ve probably heard one of his songs. For those of you who have ever had the slightest interest in his life, the documentary titled “Marley,” is worth your time.

The documentary, directed by Kevin Macdonald, examines the artist’s life from the days of his youth to his untimely end, showing audiences not only the man everyone saw on stage, but the remarkable individual that those closest to him knew.

“Marley” starts off with information that would surprise many; the documentary reveals Marley’s birth in 1945 to a young Jamaican woman and an elderly captain in the British Royal Marines. The development of his music style is showcased during his time with the Wailers and the I Threes.

His participation in the Rastafari movement had a great effect on him; its presence is as heavy in the film as it was in his life. Reggae music was a large part of the religious culture and his determination to spread the music to the world to promote peace and love is heavily featured in this film.

Rather than simply presenting an artificial look at the musician’s life in a shorter documentary, the film truly makes use of footage, impressive live performances and deep interviews with family, friends and others close to Marley. Macdonald shapes this film in the best of ways.

Having made multiple documentaries and scoring an Academy Award for his documentary titled “One Day in September,” Macdonald was the perfect choice for director of this film; he has structured the film in such a way that even those who don’t have much knowledge of the musician will find the film compelling.

While many music documentarians heavily feature the music of the artist rather than the person behind it, “Marley” balances the two beautifully. The use of music and live performances throughout the film does not take away from the narrative since the songs are often tied into the historical context that is presented in the film.

The inclusion of both the positive and negative aspects of Bob Marley’s life is another interesting addition to the documentary. Many filmmakers choose to portray certain figures as gods rather than people, but the interviews with Marley’s family and friends provide a balanced look at his actions, whether in terms of his music, parenting, faithfulness and even his health.

I took a chance on this documentary, not knowing much about Bob Marley and I came out pleasantly surprised. Many audience members who found inspiration in the man were moved to tears and there’s no surprise as to why. “Marley” is one of the few films that truly captures the essence of the subject it investigates.

“Marley” reveals not only the infamous reggae artist’s music, but lets viewers discover his persona as well.

Greeting people, more so strangers, with a “Good morning” gave her the impression that Americans kept more to themselves than Jamaicans. However, a presence of Caribbean identity at the University helped her warm up to South Florida.

As for sports, soccer is by far the most popular sport of Jamaica. Fans follow matches and the World Cup as religiously as basketball fans in Miami follow the Miami Heat.

Soccer is top sport in Jamaica

JAMAICA, PAGE 5

American culture, they is still very similar. Electronics, such as cellphones, laptops and computers are the same, although some are much more popular than others.

“The most popular thing in Jamaica is cell-phones. Everybody wants a Blackberry,” said Warmington-Granston.

With many people owning at least two, cellphones are much more popular than laptops and desktops, which are considerably more expensive in the country.

Warmington-Granston admitted that she felt a bit of a culture shock the first time she moved to Florida. The inclusion of both the positive and negative aspects of Bob Marley’s life is another interesting addition to the documentary. Many filmmakers choose to portray certain figures as gods rather than people, but the interviews with Marley’s family and friends provide a balanced look at his actions, whether in terms of his music, parenting, faithfulness and even his health.

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Reel to Reel will return in Summer B.

UPCOMING WEEKEND EVENTS

20 FRIDAY

MULTIDIMENSIONAL FAMILY THERAPY FOR ADOLESCENT SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND DELINQUENCY WHEN: 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free
WHERE: MMC HC1 Room 140

OCEAN LIFE LECTURE SERIES: “FINDING: THE SEA TURTLE LOST YEARS” WHEN: 6-8 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free
WHERE: Murray E. Nel- son Government and Cultural Center

21 SATURDAY

NEW MUSIC MIAMI AT CARTA MIAMI BEACH URBAN STUDIOS: AMERENET STRING QUARTET AND NODUS WHEN: 7:30 p.m.
HOW MUCH: This event is free and open to the public
WHERE: Lincoln Road Gallery

INTERNATIONAL SPACE APPS CHAL- LENGE WHEN: 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free
WHERE: Engineering Center 2300

22 SUNDAY

FIU SCHOOL OF MUSIC PRESENTS KEMAL GECIK IN CONCERT AT CARTA MIAMI BEACH URBAN STUDIOS WHEN: 4-6 p.m.
HOW MUCH: General Admission is $25.00
WHERE: CARTA Miami Beach Urban Studios

TO HAVE YOUR EVENT FEATURED EMAIL: CALENDAR@FIUSM.COM
WE WILL RETURN SUMMER B.
Santorum’s exit – inevitable, lacked sincerity and passion

NEDA GHOMESHI
Editor Opinion
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On April 10, Rick Santorum, former Pennsylvania Senator, made an abrupt announcement that he will be “suspending” (which really just means ending) his campaign for the Republican nomination for President of the United States due to his daughter’s illness. Basically, Santorum came to the realization that it’s nearly impossible for him to win the Republican nomination so he decided to “suspend” his campaign: “the best way, as commonly referred to by conservative Republicans.”

According to Fox News, “Santorum said the end of the campaign was a family decision.” Although he initially cited his daughter’s illness as his main reason for departing - which does make him appear to possess the sincerity and passion that his platform and campaign so desperately lacked - his decision to suspend his campaign has more to do with sincerity or passion. His platform and campaign lacked both sincerity and passion - his departure was his most sincere move.

With his conservative viewpoints, Santorum was hoping that states not only have the right to outlaw abortion, but contraceptives too. He’s said that if a rape victim becomes pregnant, that woman should carry the fetus to term and “make the best of it.”

He said that while Romney was accumulating more delegates, “we were winning in a very different way. We were touching hearts.” He may be correct about winning hearts, but that’s limited to those who follow his extreme conservative views, which is not representative of the country’s overall views. He finally understood that winning hearts is not the same as winning votes - hence, his formulated decision to suspend (terminate) his campaign.

On a conference call this Monday, a week after his public announcement to suspend his campaign, Santorum provided more reasons for his exit than just his daughter’s illness - maybe now he’s showing a little sincerity because of his honesty.

He said, “The bottom line is we wanted to take this race as far as we could to the point where we felt that we could be successful.”

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Student wrongfully expelled

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Seventeen-year-old Austin Carroll posted a vulgar tweet a few weeks ago, some media praised on the usage of the “F-word,” that got him expelled from his Indiana high school, sparking, predictably, another first-amendment debate about the limits of free speech.

It offers the twist, however, of questioning a school’s responsibilities toward students in an age of social networking and bullying-awareness.

The school has claimed that, despite Guillen having any respect for Castro will have any effect on his career as manager, so just let it be.

Carroll and his mother insist, however, that the tweet was made from his home computer, and, given that it bears no reference to the school, believe that he should face no consequences.

The school’s severe penalty of – and punishment for – what a student posts on their personal facebook, twitter feed or, weight loss does exist, is a non-issue, inappropriate, inappropriate and unfavorable of the school promoting itself to parents, it’s easy to imagine how the school’s administration will earn the ire of students and parents alike when a case of cyber-bullying culminates in an act of school-ground violence.

The community will want to know why the school allowed this to happen, why nobody was paying attention to the clues online.

Thats schools should therefore feel compelled to cover themselves with a vigilance that borders on voyeurism is understandable.

However, stretched so thin that there might be, a shortage of teachers and ever-diminishing funds, public schools have no business involving themselves with what goes on among their students online, certainly not when the student posts things from a private network.

Public schools have no business involving themselves with what goes on among their students in social media, certainly not when the student posts things from a private network.

They should not be burdened with the responsibility of tracking Internet quarrels, nor should they be granted the authority to punish the online indiscretions – however alarming or idiotic – of their students. These are the responsibilities of a parent, in whose home the child is raised and on whose computer they chose to post those profane words.

The banishment of sodas and vending machines, the rules against hugging classmates in hallways, the implementation of uniforms and even, in Britain, the new rule forbidding students from claiming a “best friend” make up just a handful of examples for the degree to which schools are now adopting the role of a guardian, pressured as they are by communities of hyper-sensitive parents who want them to neutralize the environment, regulate identities and discourage all displays of provocation so as to avoid the inevitable, the beneficial: a sense of self.

At the same time, they’re expected to provide an education.

Parents need to decide if they want public schools to be centers for detention, chief, management, and the extent of each of the five sections. The Beacon welcomes any letters regarding or in response to its editorial, send them to opinion@fiusm.com.
Forum held to discuss Trayvon Martin incident

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On April 18, students, University faculty and staff and the community gathered in the Mary Anne Wolf Theater for “Standing on the Side of Love and Justice: For Trayvon Martin.”

“We do not as a society have to wait until something horrible happens...their needs to be justice done?” said Desmond Meade, president of Florida Rights Restoration Coalition and second year graduate law student.

The discussion forum was organized by Linnea Pearson’s World Religions class in honor of the 17-year-old teenager to support the Trayvon Martin issues if we do not confront the issues that led to it,” Meade said. “How have we allowed our society to get to the point where hate is justified just because of the way a person looks, how they talk or economic status.”

According to Meade, some focus may be misplaced and not on the heart of the issue.

“Too much attention has been placed on the racial differences. It caused a divide between the races.”

According to Pearson, Fulton had been absent from class for a while and they did not assume anything since he has a different last name. Upon his return to class, he explained everything and the class decided they wanted to do something to help.

“This is everybody’s son and it’s scary,” said Natasha Torres junior international relations major.

“Nobody wants this to happen to them.”

Gwen Margolis, Florida state senator, district 1 claimed this is not your stand your ground if you have to run after the person to shoot him, speaking of Zimmerman.

According to Margolis, interpretations of the stand your ground law are flawed.

She urges students to vote for someone who will represent them best and have their best interests at heart.

Lama Karma Chotso invited students to breathe with her in silence during a Buddhist blessing and prayer and chant “om.”

“It’s gonna be a cycle we go through regarding profiling. This is a good opportunity to talk about the justice system,” Meade said.

“We need to come together and unite.”

According to Meade, a lot of people went away speaking of what was not done instead of how to fix it.

“If we focus so much on the verdict and think it’s the end all, then we are misguided.”

Sybrina Fulton, mother of Martin, addressed the students before leaving.

“I’m no different than any other mother. It hurts a great deal. My heart is heavy,” said Fulton. “As a people we are not that different. We have to love each other.”

University president Mark B. Rosenberg, greeted Martin’s mother and brother and addressed the initiative with profound condolences.

“We are hopeful that out of this tragedy we can learn lessons,” Rosenberg said.

Feral cat infestation brings unwanted health risks

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Two years ago, the closure of several popular beaches in Biscayne Bay due to an infestation of hookworms made headlines across the country.

As the number of infections grew, investigations led to feral cats as being the culprits. Many of these cats were abandoned or strays left without neutering or spaying, causing them to breed rapidly.

The feral cat population has reached the Biscayne Bay Campus. Mostly near the dormitories, cats are becoming an all too common site.

Ronid Exilus, who lives on campus, reveals that in addition to feeding them, students are unofficially “adopting” them and caring for their pets.

Exilus is not a fan of the cats and is not alone.

Dyon Burklepe, a biology professor, believes that feral cats are a definite problem. He explains that both feral and domestic cats are responsible for a decline in many songbird species and are killing millions every year.

Pamela Sweeney, the manager of the Biscayne Bay Aquatic Preserves which borders part of BBC, revealed that while the Aquatic Preserves and beaches have not had a problem with parasites from cat feces, they do worry that growing numbers of cats will threaten the safety of the many nesting birds in the area.

Many times the cats will stalk and kill birds or other small animals for reasons other than food, resulting in population decreases.

Their prey is often endangered or threatened species found near the Bay including the Least Tern, Black Skimmer, Oyster-catcher and Common Yellowthroat.

Joel Heinen, professor of environmental science, believes that feral cats are one of the worst species for the environment.

Not only do feral cats tend to attract raccoons, because of the abundance of food left outside for cats, but Heinen said there is a correlation between large feral cat population and growing rat populations.

“Many would say ‘but cats kill rats, so they should be rare.’ That is only true to a degree,” Heinen said. “The preferred prey range for feral cats is under 200 grams, while adult rats are typically 400 grams or so.”

Because of this, the average diet of a feral cat in the United States is mostly made up of songbirds.

Heinen also stresses that in addition to being a threat to native species, cats can be dangerous to humans. He says hookworms are not much to worry about, toxoplasmosis is a concern.

Toxoplasmosis, a bacterial disease easily transmitted to humans through exposure to cat feces, may cause miscarriages and birth defects. Feral and domestic cats are the only definitive hosts for the parasite Toxoplasma Gondii.

Cats often feed on the raw meat of prey infected with the parasite, which once ingested begins to lay eggs which find their way through the digestive tract to cat’s feces.

The eggs and larvae of the hookworm and the parasite Toxoplasma are found in cat feces, and cats prefer to bury their excrement in soil or sand.

Since people intentionally put themselves in contact with these vermin, and feed them, they are taking on high risk,” Heinen said. “What is not known is how many may have been pregnant women who miscarry some weeks or months later and therefore make no connection to their day at the beach.”

Jeanette Basto, a veterinarian at the Aventura Animal Hospital and FIU alumni, also adds that cats can transmit other zoonotic diseases (transmittable to humans from animals) such as roundworms, sarcocptic mange, and ringworm.

According to Basto, even the smallest population of feral cats can increase dramatically due to their fertility.

Sweeney and the county parks department, along with other animal organizations, have tried to combat the increase in abandoned cats in county parks, by hosting adoption events.

And while Burklepe doesn’t think that FIU is facing a serious threat he does believe that “Their [cats] control is essential to protecting wildlife in many urban areas.”