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 roving,” Toscano said. “Unfortu- nately 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 two weeks away from the end of their term, holding elections in the fall semester would require the appointment of a temporary president. “We would take prece- dents from a long time ago when SGA had been disbanded and an appointment was made and that would come from the power of the president or a designee which

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Cecilia Hamilton, Associate Vice President and Controller
FIU

American Express and Master- card, the payment methods currently available, do not which will also affect the students.

Visa does not allow any “merchant”, in this case the University, to charge the “customer” a percent fee although Visa charges the University a percentage. Instead, Visa allows the University to charge a flat conve- nience fee.

Visa requires that the Univer- sity charge the same flat fee for all payment methods it employs. Currently, students pay a 2 percent fee when they pay their student account via credit card. Once the switch takes place, students will pay a flat fee of $11.50 irrespective of the payment method they decide to use.

SEE VISA, PAGE 2
Former county manager to speak

MARIELLA ROQUE
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Pi Alpha Alpha, the public administration honor society, will hold its recurring induction ceremonies 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 FIU 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’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.

Lelany Barea, a junior in business management said, “the flat fee of $11.50, when weighing the costs 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.

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The GPA minimum requirement for an undergraduate student to join PAA is 3.0 and for a graduate it is a 3.7. “We’re trying 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.”

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VISA, PAGE 1

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The Beacon – Friday, April 20, 2012 www.fiusm.com

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NEWS FLASH

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 S. Hoskins recused herself Wednesday because of a potential conflict that relates to her husband.

He works with Orlando attorney Mark Nelbane, who was first approached by Zimmerman’s family to represent them when they would leave, their lawyer said.

The family was detained by Pennsylvania authorities last May after U.S. Navy SEALs raided the compound where they would leave, their lawyer said.

The five women were convicted in the Atrocities section, the article titled “Sensoria your senses,” appeared in Vol. 23, Issue 89 of The Beacon.

The Beacon will gladly change any errors.

– Compiled by Melhor Leonor
Rita Maisak (left) is 0-4 in her last four matches heading into the Sun Belt Tournament in Denton, Texas.

JONATHAN JACOBSKIND
Staff Writer
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Last time this year the Panthers were hoisting the Sun Belt Conference trophy.

After 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, Denver and Middle Tennessee.

The Panthers, who have not had a match since April 6 when they lost 4-2 to Fresno State, have earned a first round bye. They will have to wait to play the winner of the Western Kentucky and South Alabama contest in the second round. The tournament host and Sun Belt leading 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. Coincidently, 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 survive a 2-1 record in the Sun Belt with wins coming against South Alabama and Florida Atlantic.

“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.”

“That 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

Rita Maisak (left) is 0-4 in her last four matches heading into the Sun Belt Tournament in Denton, Texas.
Back and forth game falls Panthers’ way

inning after Pablo Bermudez snuck a single past the second baseman. Thomas called for a hit and run and Burns executed it successfully.

After Burns stole second base, Henry got his second RBI with a grounder to the shortstop.

Once again, however, the Dolphins answered back. Dodds struggled to end the inning after getting two outs, walking two batters and hitting another one. The second was a bases-loaded walk to tie the game.

Errors sabotaged the Panthers in the sixth inning after two botched ground balls resulted in a 4-2 Jacksonville lead.

As fast as FIU lost the lead, however, they regained it in the eighth inning with a dominating come back.

Two wild pitches and a two walk later, the bases were loaded with no outs for FIU. Martinez and freshman Aramis Garcia cashed in with singles to knot the game.

In the ninth inning, Burns showcased his arm with a laser throw to home to nix what would have been the game-winning run.

FIU capitalized on momentum shift after Oscar Aguirre smacked a single to center field. Fernandez led off with a groundout, bringing up Martinez. Martinez drew a walk and Burns singled home Megan Horne, who was on second.

The team owns a 7-3 record in their past 10 games and have 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 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.

Pitchers hold Blue Raiders to one run in two games

ANTHONY GIVAS
Staff Writer
anthony.givas@fiu.edu

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 tripppers 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 Tesey.

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

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Graduating means transition

CAROLINA SOUTO
Staff Writer
life@fiusm.com

Graduation is a dream come true; it is an accomplishment, a milestone. While our brains are still busy thinking about finals, the graduates hear their approaching future in ticking clocks hanging on the walls of quiet libraries and in the whispers of scattered students saying “I can’t believe it’s almost over.”

Undoubtedly, graduation is a beautiful time in a student’s life. However, the reality is that there are some graduates who still don’t have the next ten years planned out – let alone the next month.

The general consensus is that getting a degree doesn’t mean you walk out of school and walk into a job of a lifetime. As a result, fear is a common emotion that comes with such a big transition in life. Kaleidoscope, while eager to graduate, said “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, what now?”

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 defined 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 of working 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’ll 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

Culture is rich in island nation

From Miami, you can find yourself backing 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 bammmy,” said Warrington-Granston.

Bammmy 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.

“Jamaican beef patties are 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 learn about 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...
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 close 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 Royale 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 movie 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 the subject it investigates, 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 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.

While many music documentaries 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.

This film is heavily featured in this film.

UPCOMING WEEKEND EVENTS

**20 FRIDAY**

**MULTIDIMENSIONAL FAMILY THERAPY FOR ADOLESCENT SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND DELICENCY**

WHEN: 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
WHERE: MMC GC 314
HOW MUCH: Free

**OCEAN LIFE LECTURE SERIES: “FOUND: THE SEA TURTLE LOST YEARS”**

WHEN: 6-8 p.m.
WHERE: Murray E. Nel-son Government and Cultural Center
HOW MUCH: Free

UPCOMING WEEKEND EVENTS

**21 SATURDAY**

**MULTIDIMENSIONAL FAMILY THERAPY FOR ADOLESCENT SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND DELICENCY**

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WHERE: MMC GC 314
HOW MUCH: Free

**OCEAN LIFE LECTURE SERIES: “FOUND: THE SEA TURTLE LOST YEARS”**

WHEN: 6-8 p.m.
WHERE: Murray E. Nel-son Government and Cultural Center
HOW MUCH: Free

**NEW MUSIC MIAMI AT CARTA MIAMI BEACH URBAN STUDIOS: AMERNET STRING QUARTET AND NODUS**

WHEN: 12:30-1:30 p.m.
WHERE: MMC GC 314
HOW MUCH: Free

**INTERNATIONAL SPACE APPS CHALLENGE**

WHEN: 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
WHERE: ENGINEERING CENTER 2300
HOW MUCH: Free

**FIU SCHOOL OF MUSIC PRESENTS KEMAL GEKIC IN CONCERT AT CARTA MIAMI BEACH URBAN STUDIOS**

WHEN: 4-6 p.m.
WHERE: ENGINEERING CENTER 2300
HOW MUCH: General Admission is $25.00
WHERE: CARTA Miami Beach Urban Studios

**FIU SOFTBALL VS. FLORIDA**

WHEN: 1 p.m.
WHERE: AWAY GAINESVILLE
HOW MUCH: Free

**FIU BASEBALL VS. UALR**

WHEN: 6-6:45 p.m.
WHERE: HOME MIAMI, Fla.
HOW MUCH: Free

**GREEN CRITICS’ LECTURE SERIES WITH URSULA VON RYDINGSVARD**

WHEN: 6-6:45 p.m.
WHERE: HOME MIAMI, Fla.
HOW MUCH: Free

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HOW MUCH: Free
Santaroum’s exit - inevitable, lacked sincerity and passion

NEDA GHOMESHI
Opinion Editor
neda.ghomeshi@fiusm.com

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 “end his campaign the right 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 some sort of sincerity and passion - his departure has nothing to do with sincerity or passion. His platform and campaign lacked both sincerity and passion - his departure was the most sincere move.

He’s said that if a rape victim becomes pregnant, that woman should carry the fetus to term and “make the best of a bad situation.” His perspective on this matter lacks both sincerity and passion.

Santorum’s exit was inevitable - he was not going to be the Republican nominee for the 2012 general elections. This was his most sincere move.

Another reason that the predicament team manager had was his daughter’s illness. 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.”

Apparently, Santorum’s definition of success is winning some states, but losing most and gathering some Republican supporters, but further discouraging moderates and liberals.

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.

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

That schools should therefore feel compelled to cover themselves with a vigilance that borders on voyeurism is understandable. However, stretched so thin as they are, with 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.

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 choose to surf.

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” made up just a handful of examples for the degree to which schools are now adapting 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 difference 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, management, and the eviction of such of the former, the Beacon welcomes any letters regarding or in response to its editorial, send them to opinion@fiusm.com.

Student wrongfully expelled

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Seventeen-year-old Austin Carrol posted a vulgar tweet a few weeks ago, some media 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 claims that, and the school has nothing to do with baseball and should, therefore, be irrelevant to his profession.

Unfortunately for Guillen, he just happened to make the comment as the manager of a team whose city almost always has something to say when Castro is mentioned.

Still, it is quite hypocritical of the protesters to react so strongly, having been excused from a world that would at this point in time surely think something quite unnecessary.

It is a matter of freedom of speech on both ends of the issue in terms of Guillen being able to speak his mind and the protesters being able to state their disagreements.

However, it is quite ridiculous how politically correct everyone is expected to be nowadays.

There is nothing we can do about people’s opinions but simply regard them as so, as long as they do not act upon them, should it result in the harming of another.

Guillen having any respect for Castro will have any effect on his career as manager, so just let it be.

Granted, he should have been careful with his comments, being a public personality and all. But, this does not call for an act as drastic as firing him.

Besides, this seems like one more thing to protest about, considering that the stadium has provoked enough uproar in the community, aside from everyone having something to say about Castro around here.

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 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 a feisty campaign who most everyone by surprise with his win in Iowa’s leadoff caucuses.

However, Mitt Romney, former Massachusetts governor and current GOP candidate for the Republican nomination, had more than twice as many delegates as Santorum.

While presenting his departing speech, he was attempting to highlight his surprising rise to the number two spot of the race.

Guillen’s off-field comments irrelevant to baseball career

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It has only been a little over two weeks since the opening-night game at the Miami Marlins’ new stadium, yet their manager is already in a whole lot of trouble.

This should not be surprising, however, given that the team has had problems before the season even started with the construction of the new stadium.

The difference between the two situations is that the predicament team manager Ozzie Guillen has found himself in has nothing to do with the stadium or baseball ball, which is a key fact that needs to be taken into consideration when assessing the situation.

Guillen was quoted by Time magazine as showing love and respect for dictator Fidel Castro for staying in power so long, which immediately received an uproar from the Cuban community in Miami. As a result of the protests, Guillen was forced to submit an apology to the Cuban community and was suspended for five games.

Guillen held a news conference at the Marlin’s stadium on April 10 to explain his off-field comments.

As a result of his daughter’s illness, Guillen stated that his main reason for departing - 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 “end his campaign the right 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 some sort of sincerity and passion - his departure has nothing to do with sincerity or passion. His platform and campaign lacked both sincerity and passion - his departure was the 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 a bad situation.” His perspective on this matter lacks both sincerity and passion.

Santorum’s exit was inevitable - he was not going to be the Republican nominee for the 2012 general elections. This was his most sincere move.

Another reason that the predicament team manager had was his daughter’s illness. 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.”

Apparently, Santorum’s definition of success is winning some states, but losing most and gathering some Republican supporters, but further discouraging moderates and liberals.

At least he finally admitted the real reasons for suspending his campaign: Americans don’t want an ultra conservative running their country; therefore, he had no choice but to “suspend” his campaign.

Santorum’s exit is a reminder to voters that politicians are politicians. Even when the time comes for them to step out of the light, they try to sugar-coat their departure.
On April 18, students, University faculty and staff and the community gathered in the Mary Anne Wolfie Theater for “Standing on the Side of Love and Justice: For Trayvon Martin.”

“Why do we as a society have to wait until somebody dies to decide 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 Religion class in honor of the 17-year-old teenager to support Jahavasis Fulton, a University student and Martin’s brother and to comprise a petition to repeal the stand your ground law.

On Feb. 26, Martin while walking unarmed holding skittles and a bottle of iced tea took a shortcut home through a neighborhood. George Zimmerman, the watchman for the neighborhood began following him acting upon suspicion. After a confrontation, Zimmerman shot Martin in the chest and killed him, claiming he was acting upon self-defense.

“The stand your ground law states that a person may use force in self-defense when they feel threatened without retreating first. A petition was set up for everyone to sign after the discussion forum for those who attended. “I definitely think he should’ve been convicted from the beginning,” said Rolando Ramirez freshman psychology major. “There shouldn’t have been any doubts.”

“We will still have 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 simple as he had 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 law 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 to care for their best and have their best interests at heart.

Lama Karma Chocho invited students to breathe with her in silence during a Buddhist blessing and pray 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 spent speaking of what was wrong 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.

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**Feral cat infestation brings unwanted health risks**

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Two years ago, the closure of several popular beaches in the area 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 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 are often endangered or threatened species found near the Bay including the Least Tern, Black Skimmer, Oyster-catcher and Snowy Egret.

Joel Heinen, professor of environmental science, believes 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 populations 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 out of 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 ringworms.

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 Burkepilke 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.”