Students ‘question their earlier, untested beliefs

He was awarded a scholarship to attend The American University in Bulgaria, where he became fascinated with the idea of democracy and free markets that were not found in Albania. During his collegiate studies at The American University, Skendaj was highly influenced by the teaching styles of his professors. He said, “My professors were very open-minded. They often had us debate or present in class, allowing us to question assumptions and reevaluate what we had previously been taught.” He enjoyed learning in this way and now applies it into his own style of teaching.

Narcotics and theft, a semester-wide occurrence

DIEGO SALDANA Staff Writer

Hide your phones and hide your wallets, thefts are the most common crime at the University. There have been 130 thefts and 55 arrests so far recorded this semester. More than half of the reported thefts were of cell phones, wallets and laptops while 28 of the arrests were narcotics related.

University Chief of Police Alexander Casas said the majority of the theft cases were opportunistic, in which the victims had not been vigilant over their stolen items. “This is actually a very safe place [but] you still have to reduce the opportunities for the opportunists,” Casas said.

“I don’t feel comfortable leaving my personal belongings at school because there have been many thefts before... I don’t feel it’s secure. If I’m in the library, I never leave my laptop or purse unattended even if someone else is watching my things,” said Aman Onallah, senior international relations major.

Senior music major Elexis Ansley is not at the number of thefts that have occurred and thinks most of the culprits are students who steal to sustain themselves. “Kids are poor, if they find something and someone’s not looking [then they are going to steal],” Ansley said.

The majority of arrests were narcotics related with a total of 28 narcotics accounted for, according to recent reports.

Casas said narcotics is the most common reason for arrests to be issued. He explained how the department apprehends suspects. “We will usually get called by an anonymous complaint or we’ll happen upon an area where people are engaging in [narcotics-related] activities,” Casas said.

Senior psychology major Jonathan Aguilar de Dios is surprised at the number of narcotics arrests this semester. “That’s kind of crazy. I didn’t think there were that many narcotics issues being dealt with in our school,” Aguilar de Dios said.

Casas said the most common narcotic confiscated is marijuana. “I’m definitely not surprised. It’s a common drug among college students,” said Carlos Coba, senior political science major.

Ansley thinks the use and possession of narcotics is an unintelligent move on the part of students. “It’s stupid to use drugs while at school,” Ansley said.

Some of the semesters most peculiar cases include an abandoned boat by BBC, a taxi driver not getting paid his fare outside of the Graham Center and a fire on the nature preserve.

Additional reporting by Miriam Arias and Natalie Montanez.

THE HOLIDAY SEASON IS A TIME WHEN BUSY PEOPLE CAN BECOME CARELESS AND VULNERABLE TO THEFT AND OTHER HOLIDAY CRIME. DURING THE HOLIDAYS MAKE A POINT OF ENSURING YOUR SAFETY. HERE ARE SOME SAFETY TIPS YOU MIGHT WANT TO FOLLOW:

Panther Sports Talk Live
Listen every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday on Radiote FM from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. on 88.1, 95.3, and 96.9 FM

STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Scholarship

Code approaches compromise

ASHELY MARTINEZ Staff Writer

The Student Government Association scholarship code received the approval to move forward. With 20 in favor and five against, the controversial scholarship code was approved under senate resolution 1231 during a Student Government Council meeting at the Modesto Maidique Campus senate session that took place last Monday.

In last week’s senate session, Laura Farinas, president of SGC-MMC, presented various issues that would affect the piece of legislation presented. Alex Castro, vice president of SGC-MMCC, said everyone should act like adults while dealing with the issue.

“I know that last week was an interesting and controversial week but let’s simply be adults and move forward for the issue at hand,” Castro said. “Let’s get to work because I don’t think it’s the best thing for this senate to deal with political warfare when there’s progress that needs to be done.”

One of the issues presented deals with the University-wide committee, which, according to Farinas, should have seen the legislation first. Giovanni Castro, senator-at-large and senate speaker, said the senate section article 4 in the U-W constitution, titled Amendments and Establishments, states that election codes and scholarships must be passed by the
Pot legalization now a free ride to smoke on campus

NICHOLAS K. GERANIOS
AP Staff

Young voters helped pass laws legalizing marijuana in Washington and Colorado, but many still won’t be able to light up.

Most universities have codes of conduct banning marijuana use, and they get millions of dollars in funding from the federal government, which still considers pot illegal.

With the money comes a requirement for a drug-free campus, and the threat of expulsion for students using pot in the dorms.

“Everything we’ve seen is that nothing changes for us,” said Darin Watkins, a spokesman for Washington State University in Pullman.

So despite college cultures that include pot-smoking demonstra-
tions each year on April 20, students who want to use marijuana will have to do so off campus.

But the laws are fraught with complications, especially at places like college campuses. At Wash-
ington State University, students who violate the code face a variety of punish-
ments, up to expulsion, according to Watkins. The same is true at the University of Colorado Boulder, where the student code of conduct prohibits possessing, cultivating or consuming illegal drugs.

“If you possess marijuana and are over 21, you still may face disci-
pline under the student code of conduct,” Hurf said.

Gayle Gasperski, chief of the Eastern Washington Univer-
sity police department, said that while they await guidance from the state Liquor Control Board, which is creating rules to govern pot, one thing is clear.

“The drug-free environment is going to remain in place,” he said. Even if conduct codes did not exist, marijuana remains illegal under federal law and colleges must protect the institution.

The Drug Free Schools and Communities Act requires that any university receiving federal funds adopt a program to prevent drug use by students and employees, much in the same way other federal funding for law enforcement and transportation comes with clauses stipulating that recipients maintain drug-free workplaces.

Washington State, for instance, receives millions in federal research funds each year, which prohibits them from allowing substances illegal under federal law on campus.

College dormitory contacts also tend to prohibit possession of drugs, officials said. Dorms and other campus buildings also tend to be smoke-free zones, which would block the smoking of marijuana, officials said.

At Eastern Washington, there is a student-led movement to ban smoking even outside across the entire campus, Gasperski said.

In addition, NACA rules prohibit student-athletes from consuming marijuana or other illegal drugs.

With all these complications, it is reasonable to expect that some students will be confused by the new laws.

“Some type of communication is going to come out from the univer-
sity to clarify this,” said Angie Weiss, student lobbyist for the Asso-
ciated Students of the University of Washington.

CORRECTIONS

In Vol. 24, Issue 46 of The Beacon, the article “Badminton club at FIU exploding with interest” reference the club meeting at the Biscayne Bay Campus. It should have stated that the club meets at the Modesto Maidique Campus.

The Beacon will gladly change any errors. Call our MMC office at 305-348-2709 or BBC at 305-919-4722.

Pot legalization now a free ride to smoke on campus

CODE, PAGE 1 November 30, 2012

senate before being discussed at U-Wide meetings.

It’s been a controver-
sial issue at U-Wide meetings with certain leaderships but it’s here in black and white,” Castro said. “Once this passes, it’s been a controver-
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The truth about instructor evaluations

JUNETTE REYES
Staff Writer

The beginning of this semester saw the teachers of Chicago, Illinois go on strike, one reason being that they opposed the idea of their jobs being affected by the students’ performance on standardized tests.

Our own University has its way of evaluating professors, though it is significantly different to the approach in Chicago; however, both inevitably lead to the students, in one way or another, to determine how well a professor does his or her job.

Of course, this only seems reasonable; the students would seem to be the best candidates for such a task since they are, after all, the ones being taught by the professors in question.

It can also be argued, however, that not all students understand the importance of these evaluations or the importance of the role they play.

Not so surprisingly, these evaluations are a pretty big deal to the departments of the University. There might be some slight differences from department to department when handling the evaluations, especially when determining the structure and time in which they are dealt with; however, it is all generally the same.

Professors are given a certain amount of time to have the evaluations distributed, filled out, and returned to their department, where the scantron and commentary sheets are reviewed.

The evaluations themselves are composed of a mandatory scantron sheet, in which eight of the questions are specifically mandated by the State while the rest are added by the University; an additional commentary sheet completes the evaluations set and is sometimes even more influential than the Scantron sheet.

It is how these evaluations are taken into consideration from department to department that challenges the sensibility of allowing students to determine how well a professor does his or her job, especially because a misunderstanding of how important these evaluations really are can lead to the dismissal of how seriously they should be taken.

The student evaluations are used as part of the overall assessment of the faculty, who are annually evaluated on their teaching, research, and service.

For the most part, student evaluations play a significant role in terms of the professor’s pursuit of tenure. Professors may also take the commentary sheets into consideration when planning their future lectures.

But most importantly, particularly when dealing with adjunct professors, the evaluations are an anathema to the rehiring of a professor.

Naturally, it would have to take more than one negative evaluation to seriously influence a professor’s standing (it is fairly easy to differentiate a problem with the professor from a disgruntled student’s effort for revenge).

Still, students should be careful and considerate of how they handle the evaluations so as not to misrepresent a professor.

Although it can be questionable to impart such responsibility on students, whose opinion of a teacher is so influenced by their personal performance in the classroom or something as trivial as the professor’s attractiveness, there really isn’t another option.

Broadening the University’s awareness of its professors’ in-class performance is necessary, which is why options such as random visits to the classroom could be useful; however, the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the University and the United Faculty of Florida prohibits random visits to the classroom and therefore requires that faculty members must be given two weeks’ notice before they are visited in the classroom.

It may not seem sensible to have such high expectations, but if students were given an idea of their evaluations’ value (or lack thereof) before submitting it, perhaps we could expect them to take it more seriously.

It is their education, after all, so they should take the initiative to improve it fairly.

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PHILIPPE BUTEAU
Editor-in-Chief

If your dream is to be a professor one day then make sure you drop two words from your vocabulary: power point.

While I’m pretty sure most students lean more towards liking power point presentations as their professors’ tool for lecturing, my eyes roll once I realize that’s what is in store for me for the next 15 weeks.

On one hand power point presentations make note taking easy; all students have to do is download the slides and follow along as the professor lectures. However, for me “follow along” means daydream and for the professors “lecture” means read from the powerpoint.

It may not necessarily be a word-for-word read from the powerpoint but it still carries the monotone delivery of a powerpoint presentation. This is just one problem I have with powerpoint presentations as lectures. Every professor ends up sounding like Ben Stein.

I understand this can happen regardless of what means the professor uses to deliver his/her lectures, but I believe powerpoint presentations helps make their lectures “Stein-y”.

Now combine that with the fact students who are watching a powerpoint presentation and listening to Professor Stein do not have to take notes. As I said students can download the slides online, from blackboard usually. What is there for a student to do in a class where notes do not have to be taken?

Skip. Send text messages. Browse the Internet.

Some would do those things regardless, but others, like yours truly, would find a way of being engaging themselves with the class in one way or another.

When I am faced with a powerpoint lecture, as I was in spring and fall 2012, I avoid downloading the slides and force myself to take notes. The idea of forcing yourself to take notes may sound crazy to professors, but if you’re tool for lecturing makes it so I don’t have to, than why should it?

Something else I do when staring down the barrel of a powerpoint presentation is try to come up with questions for every or every other slide. Even if I don’t ask the question, trying to come up with questions keeps me focused on what I’m listening to and seeing.

Again, a professor reading this may think students should be focused regardless.

Another problem with powerpoint presentations being a part of lectures. As much as I love how exciting a powerpoint presentation is to be a part of – there’s a lot of sarcasm in there I’m sure every professor prepares a lesson for that particular day’s lecture.

End of the line.

This is the Beacon’s final issue for the fall semester.
We will resume publication for the spring semester Jan. 7

Happy Holidays!

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Miss FIU found her prince at the Mr. FIU pageant

SELENA HUSSAIN  Staff Writer

The Mr. FIU pageant, organized by the Miss FIU Scholarship Committee, was held Monday night in the GC Ballrooms to not only crown the next Mr. FIU, but to raise scholarship money for the winner of the Miss FIU pageant in 2013.

“I think it’s pretty cool that they decided to include the guys, because both a girl and a guy should be a face representative of FIU,” said Santiago Figueroa, Student Alumni Association member.

The pageant began with a high energy dance performance from the Mr. FIU contestants that immediately pumped up the audience with school spirit and stamina. After the lively introduction, the contestants entered the talent portion of the contest, exhibiting their skills through song, dance, humor, poetry—eventually even athletic abilities.

“We definitely enjoyed the performances, they were very creative,” said Shirley Armenteros, a pageant judge. “There was a lot of variety in terms of what people did.”

Marc Mobley, another pageant judge and found the performances entertaining.

ALFREDO APARICIO  Staff Writer

The end of the world is upon us, but will that be exactly, and how, has been the subject of debate for some time. The theory that says the world will end in 2123 is based on the Mayan Long Count calendar that begins in 3114 B.C., and marks time around 384-year intervals called Baktuns. The 13th Baktun, a number referred to the Maya, ends on Dec. 21, 2012.

Originally predicted by Christian radio host Harold Camping to be on May 21, and then on Oct. 21, 2011, the infamous end of the world has yet to rear its ugly head. The latest date, Dec. 21, 2012, keeps the same date in a different month, but as the skepticism grows, so do the expectations.

The 2011 film, “2112,” starring John Cusack, envisioned the end of the world as a cleansing of sorts brought on by a massive tsunami, which wiped out everything and everyone not on a giant submarine but through the government.

Another theory suggests Earth will collide with Nibiru (“Planet X”), though there is no evidence to confirm Nibiru exists, dubbed by UFO Aficionado Nancy Leider, who claims to not only be in contact with aliens, but originally said the world would end in a catastrophic disaster in May 2003, only to change the date to Dec. 21, 2012 later on.

Furthermore, no evidence exists to support the theory that solar storms, which are surges of electrical particles from the Sun making their way to Earth and turning up the temperature, will be responsible for the end of the world.

The Mayans themselves believed the end would include a solar shift, violent earthquakes, and a Venus transit. N. David Cook, a professor at the Department of History, believes that the world will end someday, just not this year.

“These stories have always been interesting to me because there is an ‘end story’ in many civilizations; this isn’t the first one,” said Cook. “It’s something ingrained within the Mayan culture, as well as Christianity and other religious systems, so it’s something I’ve come to expect, but the when is something humans aren’t capable of saying.”

The bandwagon of 2012, for Cook, has taken hold of people, in part, because of the increase in telecommunications and technology around the world.

“Facebook, twitter, the internet in general has created greater possibilities for the rapid spread of ideas,” said Cook. “It’s both good and bad because if the information is presented in a convincing fashion, people can be swayed into making irrational or dangerous decisions because people are always looking for answers but answers are never clear cut.”

On an economic level, Cook believes 2012 has also been able to increase the global market economy by spawning successful books, movies and even tourism ventures to the Yucatan Peninsula, for example, the home of the Mayans.

“There are economic interests behind stimulating this belief, and while there are people that can afford to do so, they will take advantage of this idea, but human existence is within our hands, so one has to be careful to how these ideas and myths are spread,” said Cook.

“Let’s assume there’s still a long time to look forward to, so we have to make sure this place we have is the same one we pass on.”

Gustavo Gutierrez, a junior political science major, first heard about 2012 through Internet articles and hearsay.

“I thought it was a silly notion, and still do, to think the world will end because an ancient calendar says so,” said Gutierrez. “There is absolutely no evidence to back it up.”

Alexandra Llarena, a junior history major, heard about 2012 in high school, when the world was supposedly set to end in August of 2012.

“I was so disinterested that I didn’t even research the date; now they say it’s in December, not to mention, the date has been changed several times, so what does that tell you,” said Llarena. “Considering that the Mayan calendar doesn’t even count leap year, I don’t know why people are so fascinated; it’s a waste of time, so move on with your life. For me it’s just four days till Christmas, nothing more.”

Victor Guerrero, a junior anthropology major, believes people have believed 2012 because of the hype that has been made about it on the Internet and through various media.

“I thought it was kind of funny because I never thought people would take it so seriously. To be honest, I don’t care about their culture and find them to be extremely intelligent people, but their ‘super powers’ didn’t seem to help them with the Spanish,” Guerrero said.

“I don’t see any reason in believing something that has no merit; I don’t think it will happen, and if it does, I can’t help it, so it’s not worth thinking about.”

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VICTORIA RIVERA
Contributing Writer

Amid finals and preparations for vacation, it may be difficult to notice, but the University seems to be missing a popular frequenter: ducks.

Where have they gone?

Although the reasons for their absence are not clear, ducks have specific needs for a habitat and alterations to it may cause them to leave.

Seema Sah, lab manager in the Department of Earth and Environment, tested University pond waters last semester.

“If the water was contaminated, then the animals in it, such as the fish and turtles, would not be there,” Sah said.

None of the water samples in her lab reports, which were obtained from each pond, were contaminated last semester. Each of the water samples had a moderate concentration of chemicals, which is considered normal.

John Withey, assistant professor of biology and urban ecologist, researches terrestrial vertebrates, especially birds.

He said this movement of animals, such as ducks, to different environments is called “habitat selection.”

He reasoned that the construction on campus is one possible factor that affects the ducks’ habitat selection.

Construction will only affect the ducks’ habitat selection if it causes loud noise levels near the pond, which will cause them to move to another pond,” Withey said.

Overpopulation might also affect the ducks’ habitat selection. However, Withey explained that because ducks are urban adapters, overpopulation has no impact on their choice of habitat.

Perhaps, the most vital factor in habitat selection for ducks is food, according to Withey.

“In general, ducks will probably be more abundant where there is more food, such as fish and vegetation,” Withey said. “Ducks will also be attracted by food provided by people.”

Human feeders are unaware that bread lacks nutrition for ducks, according to Melissa Mayntz, a birding blogger and a member of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

Feeding bread to ducks can lead to malnutrition, overcrowding, pollution and diseases.

But students and faculty can feed ducks a variety of healthy foods for their appetite, such as wheat, oats, rice, grapes, milo and several other healthy choices, according to Mayntz.

Natalie Marquez, senior biology and criminal justice double major and president of the Pre-Vet Society, said ducks need access to clean water, shelter from predators and bad weather, but most importantly, they need proper nutrition.

Marquez reasons that when the ducks’ nutritious food sources at a pond are lacking, they will stay in the same pond as long as humans provide food for them.

“Ducks typically eat whatever you give them,” Marquez said.

Marquez believes people should not feed ducks because it can cause a variety of health problems for them, including behavioral changes.

“Ducks are not domestic and need to stay wild,” Marquez said.

When students and faculty feed animals, especially the ducks at the University, they should be aware that they are risking their own safety.

“When hungry, [animals] will go as fast as they can to get the food. If they happen to bite because your finger was in the way, so be it,” Marquez said. “As they become impatient, like children, they will try to get your attention for food.”

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Turnovers a concern heading into homestand

RUBEN PALACIOS  
Staff Writer

In every FIU women’s basketball loss there is one constant: turnovers.

Through Nov. 28, the team is averaging 15.6 turnovers per game while only forcing opponents to 12 turnovers per game. Their negative turnover margin is second worst in the Sun Belt Conference and is in large part, the reason they’ve lost their games.

In all three losses, FIU turned over the ball more times than their opponents, while in their two wins they have less turnovers.

“To beat quality teams, you have to concentrate all the way through and minimize on your mistakes,” Head Coach Cindy Russo said.

Senior shooting guard Carmen Mínguez leads the team with a whopping 23 turnovers, including 16 in a two-game span, both losses. In the team’s two wins, she has only four turnovers.

Despite being the third-best team in the conference in total turnovers, FIU does not force their opponents to commit many turnovers.

The squad ranks dead last in the conference in steals. Through five games, they have only totaled 30 steals at a pace of six steals per game.

This deadly combination of high turnovers and low steals is one of the biggest reasons this team has had a rocky start.

JERICA COLEY IS KICKING INTO GEAR

Junior guard Jerica Coley recently garnered Sun Belt Player of the Week honors, an award voted upon by all the head coaches in the conference. The award is Coley’s first of the season and fifth of her career, which ties an FIU record.

Coley had an outstanding week helping her team to a 1-1 record in the 18th Annual FIU Thanksgiving Classic. FIU defeated Iowa in dramatic fashion; Coley broke out her “SuperGirl” cape as she drove coast-to-coast for a buzzer beating layup that gave the Panthers a 66-65 victory. Coley swished through a season-high 31 points in the victory. She also corralled six rebounds, a team-high four assists, two steals and a block.

Coley is third in the conference in blocks (15 total, 3 per game) and ranks third in both scoring and rebounding. The Senior’s 7-foot-1-inch point guard is 18th in the nation in blocks.

Through 71 career games, Coley scored 1,391 points which ranks eighth all-time at FIU. The countdown is on as Coley needs just eight points to move into a tie for seventh place, and is only 115 points away from being within the top five.

SOUTH ALABAMA SHOWDOWN

FIU will host conference foe South Alabama on Dec. 1, at the U.S. Century Bank Arena. Through Nov. 28, Univer- sity of South Alabama has a 5-1 record, but their level of competition has been low. Their wins have come against opponents with a combined record of 8-19.

The Panthers will have to try and defend Mary Nixon who is averaging 19.3 points per game through Nov. 28. Nixon led the Jaguars in scoring in all but two of their games so far.

The Jaguars are, statistically, the best defensive team in the Sun Belt.

They are only giving up 51.2 points per game. The FIU defense, which ranks fifth in the conference, gives up 63.2 points per game.

Panthers to take on highest scoring player in Sun Belt

KEVIN CASTANEDA  
Staff Writer

After a win against Coastal Carolina University last weekend, the FIU men’s basketball team finally gave Richard Pitino his first win as a head coach.

The Panthers, 1-2 as of Nov. 28, are coming back home to the U.S. Century Bank Arena to open up Sun Belt Conference play this weekend against the South Alabama Jaguars (2-3) Dec. 1 at 7:30 p.m.

The Panthers’ premiere shooter, Malik Smith, will have to out duel the Jaguars’ guard Xavier Robbins, who has averaged 12.8 points per game so far this year. Smith is currently scoring almost 18 points a game, placing him second in the SBC. The Jaguars also have a star forward in Augustine Rubit who is averaging 20.4 points per game, No. 1 in the Sun Belt, and 8.8 rebounds per game, fourth in the Sun Belt.

University of South Alabama comes in riding a three game losing streak with losses coming against Tennessee State University, Monmouth University, and Georgia State University. Both teams are at the top of the Conference in points per game with FIU second, averaging 72.3, and South Alabama third, averaging 71.8.

In the game against Coastal Carolina, Pitino changed up his starting lineup. He went with Joey De La Rosa at the center position, adding more size to his lineup. The 6-foot-11-inch center can possibly slow the Jaguars’ Rubit. Additionally, that would give FIU a bigger starting lineup than the Jaguars at almost every position.

Pitino expressed his sentiment about the new line-up in the win against the Chanticleers.

“Tymell Murphy responded great for us in the second half and Malik Smith has just been really solid for us this season. Joey De La Rosa gave us a lot too,” Pitino said.

Despite FIU’s high scoring ways so far this year, the Panthers have been giving up nearly 77 points to their opponents, which is the worst in the SBC.

After having improved their shot selection against the Chanticleers, shooting 53 percent from the field, the Panthers will now have to change gears and fix their defense. The Panthers will have to capitalize on their ability to steal and force the Jaguars to turn the ball over. This will be an easy task considering that Arkansas State averages only 17 turnovers a game, which is ninth in the conference. While the Jaguars’ block the most shots in the conference, averaging 5.6 per game.

Pitino, who likes to rotate his bench players in-and-out, has not seen productivity from the Panthers’ bench players as they average just 15 points off the bench.

If the Panthers plan to beat their first conference opponent, they will need to keep up their conference-best three-point field goal defense, allowing opponents just 23.3 percent from beyond the arc. Adding in the factor of size, they can potentially capitalize on rebounding as well.

However, it will be a struggle as FIU comes in with the worst offen- sive rebounding offense, averaging just 28.7 and South Alabama has one of the best rebounding defense, averaging 34.4 per game.

Additional Reporting by Brandon Wise
It’s been three weeks since the Panthers last entered the pool for a meet, a deserved break for a team battling a lot of illness and injury the first two months of the season. Many swimmers missed multiple practices and the coach hasn’t gotten the chance to really see the team at full strength. After recovering and resting for a few weeks, many of the girls are looking to have breakout performances.

“The team is really coming around and ready to swim fast this weekend with the girls looking better than they have all season,” Head Coach Randy Horner said.

This upcoming weekend will be the second most important meet of the season after only the Sun Belt Conference championship, which the team has focused on winning this year. The Mizzou Invite format of the meet will lead to many of the fastest times the girls have swum this season. After battling through the toughest part of the season last month the ladies are not pushed as hard in practice now to rest their bodies for optimal performance.

“…we are really not concerned about team finish, it’s all about coming in and swimming best times of the season and giving us a snapshot of where we are and where we need to be in three months,” Horner said.

A welcomed recognition was awarded to the team just before thanksgiving break when the Mid-Major poll came out and collegeswimming.com ranked the Panthers 15th nationally. This is the first time the women’s swim program has received so much national attention having never been ranked so high in its history.

“We look at it with perspective,” Horner said. “It’s a great indication of where we are overall as a program and as team, but you don’t want to get caught up with numbers and rankings because it’s all about training and being ready to go to swim as fast as possible.”

The team didn’t break into the mid-major poll at all last year but are continuing to prove they are a force to be reckoned with, nationally as well now.

“The ranking goes right along with our focus to win a conference championship and make appearance at the NCAA’s National competition at the end of the season,” Horner said.

Some of that success can be attributed to some great international athletes being recruited to come to FIU. Three of the top swimmers on the team this year are from outside the United States in Sonia Perez-Arau of Spain, Martina Ribi of Switzerland, and Johanna Gustafsdottir of Iceland.

It’s a great experience for the student to have the chance to learn a lot about different parts of the world and cultures they maybe wouldn’t have gotten a chance to being on another team. This blending of international swimmers with Americans creates a great and diverse culture on the team, which in return helps the women be prepared for life after the pool and what they want to do.

The team looks rested and ready to compete this weekend, geared up to prove they are serious about their goals this season.
Registration struggles: the final stretch not so relaxing

CONSELO NARANO
Staff Writer

Unsuccessful advisement appointments,期末考试, hold balances, unapproved financial aid, and few parking tickets are just some of the impediments for more than 46,000 students trying to register for classes.

In 2011, the University’s acceptance rate was 39.4 percent.

This year, with a higher acceptance, the University is offering more than 200 programs including undergraduate, master’s and doctoral programs in more than 280 majors.

The University is expanding, but some students claim that there are not enough classes offered for their majors.

Carlos Escudero, a senior majoring in advertising, had to delay his graduation because he could not register for some classes that were prerequisites.

I should be able to graduate in summer, however, some of my classes are just offered once a year and most of them are connected and are requisites to take other advanced courses, Escudero said. “It is frustrating staying in college while I feel ready to acquire experience and work in my professional field.”

Mario Andrade Naveda, who is studying advertising, is one of the 2.938 international students at the University.

Naveda has a scholarship, but still feels the struggles of paying an out-of-state tuition.

“I am an international student I have to take a minimum of 12 credits, just one online class and I have to pay a high costly tuition,” Nevada said. “Also, as a requirement to register for classes, I am forced to obtain health insurance every semester.”

Andrea Green, undergraduate psychology advisor, said there are not enough classes to supply students’ needs, but many students don’t know that there is a time and a day to register depending on their year and major.

“FIU’s student population is growing, so classes get filled quickly. For that reason students must be aware of registration date,” Green said.

Green said it’s important to students to meet with their advisors.

“Students need to make appointments with their advisors to identify any problem to follow their Panther Degree Audit,” Green said.

President Mark B. Rosenberg, in his fall 2012 update release, wrote about the importance of seeing an advisor and the use of new online tools before registering.

“Our students are now using Major Maps and e-advisors for semester by semester tracking and feedback on progress to a degree,” Rosenberg wrote. “Twelve additional advisors were hired for this new academic year.”

Students are able to access their Panther Degree Audit and set up an appointment with their advisors online at my.fiu.edu.

Gilberto Campa, a junior majoring in international relations, is thankful for this new tool.

“Online access was fast and easy to use I set up an appointment with my advisor online and he helped me on my search classes as well as necessary requirements for graduation.”

Students can check any holds on academic, administrative, financial or health, which will prevent them from registering for current and future semesters. Some financial or disciplinary holds would not allow students to receive their graduation diploma or certificates.

Sandeep Varry, coordinator of computer applications and external programs considers Major Maps, myfiu and e-advisors one of the most helpful tools.

“Students are notified by e-mail as well as by their FIU account of any hold or restriction for registration,” Varry said.

“Immediate action from the student is necessary to remove any impediment that will affect a successful registration.”

MORGAN GARCES
Contributing Writer

College is a strange place to worry about sin.

“Mary Lou Pfeiffer, Honors College fellow, who teaches a course titled The Seven Deadly Sins, chooses Mahatma Gandhi’s definition of sin. “Wealth and greed without consciousness.”

The Seven Deadly Sins, an Honors course, explains the seven sins: anger, gluttony, envy, greed, lust, pride and sloth.

Sinning expands into multiple religions.

Austin Avidan, a junior majoring in English, is Jewish and said in his religion a person can be forgiven for sinning.

“I know a Hasidic Jew who does a lot of funny things, like a crooked Har. He goes to temple all the time,” said Avidan. “The Jewish religion says you can be forgiven for your sins as long as you go to temple.”

Judaism states that violating the divine commandments to be a sin. Something as common as a tattoo is considered a sin.

But looking around, it is easier to spot a tattoo than a kippah, a cross necklace or a hijab.

“I think the way we think about religion has changed because it has been so pushed in our faces. ‘You have to think of something this way’ so we kind of pull back. I want to believe in a God because I want to, not because you say I have to,” said Avidan.

In college, many students begin experimenting with many “condemnable” acts such as trying drugs and exploring their sexuality.

Mina Ghobani, a junior dietetics and nutrition major and Shia Muslim, does not believe that this is a sin.

“I believe in God, I even pray 5 times a day and fast. Am I thinking about Him every time I take a drink? I am not doing something wrong to other people,” she said. “I use foul language, not pray on time, on occasion drink.”

I am not covered inproper attire. I go to prayer. I do pray and ask for forgiveness, and that is what Ramadan is for, to have a clean slate and ask for forgiveness.

Ghorbani said sinning can change from culture to culture and generation to generation.

When I wear skirts [my father] says it’s a sin and I just keep moving,” said Ghorbani.

Jamirie Depusori, a sophomore majoring in civil engineering said that according to the Bible, the breaking of the 10 commandments is a sin.

Stealing is listed as a sin according to the eighth commandment, so if a person logs in a neighbor’s wi-fi without permission they would be committing a sin.

Ethan Williams, a junior majoring in English, practices Daoism, which is a popular religion in China which focuses on natural order.

“I believe that the idea of sin came from the notion of karma. I don’t believe in sin, I believe more in cause and effect, or reac- tion. If you act and feel good then you will relive those back,” said Williams. “But if you focus on the negative and have those evil emotions, you will attract those feelings as well.”

Daoism follows the idea that a person will get out of sync with nature and if he or she does bad things: “If someone cuts you off and then you’re pissed off the whole day, you’re letting out that angry energy. Then, things like that are going to keep happening because you’re giving that out,“ said Williams.

Ned Chandler, a junior studying fine arts doesn’t believe in sin. He identifies more so with atheism ideology.

“I personally believe that sins are made up; there are no punishments unless you believe in it, then it’s guilt and a fear of going to ‘hell’. Sin is a rule made by the church to control people’s morals and behaviors.”

He said that some things that people do on a daily basis would be considered a sin in the past.

“There’s lying, premarital sex, stealing, not respecting your parents, wearing mixed material, and planting crops in the same field.” Chandler said.

Depusori admits to feeling guilty after sinning, but there are rarely any serious effects.

“Before, stealing may have been a goat and now it may be someone’s wife. They progress as we work, basically,” said Depusori.

Avidan believes humans are using religion for their own selfishness.

“ I think they’re not thinking about God so much and that after [sinning] they’re like, ‘I screwed up, let me go to temple so I can be forgiven,’” Avidan said. “I think that religion has turned into this selfish thing, just to make yourself feel better. I feel that religion should be a reason for family to get together and talk.”