Central Florida Future, June 24, 1998

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Recommended Citation
Plus/minus grading approved, begins fall of 99

By NICOLE KING
News Editor

UCF's proposed plus/minus grading system has been approved by the university process. It will be applied starting in the fall of 1999.

The system will not use either the A+, F, or F- grades. A C will be a 2.0 and a B will be a 3.0, but a C- will be a 1.75 and a B- a 2.75.

Dr. Terri Fine, chair of the Plus/Minus Implementation Committee, said the system was designed with a specific purpose in mind.

"We wanted a C- to be below a 2.0," Fine said. "We didn't want to encourage students to do less than C work.

"What it means is, students with a C- average graduating right now from UCF have a 2.0 GPA," she said. "Under the new system, they wouldn't and every major and every college require a 2.0 GPA to graduate. So if you have that C-average, you are not going to graduate.

"The positioning of the C- on the grading scale does not sit well with many students.

"What about those individuals on the low end of the scale?" said general management major Joe Baker. "I think it is those individuals who are going to fall to the bottom of the scale. It's really going to hurt them.

"Having a C- below a 2.0 is like saying you have a D," said Elizabeth Owens, 19, Student body Vice President Richard Maxwell agreed.

"I was on the Senate when the Faculty Senate asked for a recommendation," Maxwell said. "I was one of the main ones against the way it was structured. I like the system but I think a C- should be a 2.0 and a C should be higher.

"The job here at the university is to help students get their diplomas and help them get established in their careers. The job here isn't to make it tough for them. If they are going to make the job harder for them now by sliding the scale down, it doesn't seem reasonable."

Maxwell said he is concerned that students may have to retake classes they got low Cs in.

"Before, if you passed a class with a 70, you passed the class," he said. "With the new system, if you pass a class with a 70, you have below a 2.0, you have just failed that class and you have to retake it."

According to Terri Fine, one of the main purposes of the plus/minus system is to give students more recognition for their grades.

"The Faculty Senate's argument was that we want to help children overcome their fears of learning new languages," said Myrna Creasman, assistant director for the center.

"We want to help children overcome their fears of learning new languages," said Myrna Creasman, assistant director for the center.

"The purpose of the plus was to allow the children to really have fun with the language," Creasman said. "In the future, we plan to offer more languages to the children, increasing the number of languages available for the children to learn."

The camp instructors were two UCF international students who are native speakers of Spanish. They were Alejandro Ularriz, from Ecuador and Alejandra Morales from Venezuela.

"We also hope to have some of our students from the center who are from Spanish-speaking countries to come and visit the classes and talk to the children about their countries," Creasman said. "That way the children will not only experience learning the language but will also be exposed to students who come from Spanish-speaking countries.

"Many people don't realize that there are over 800 international students at UCF, and there are 34 countries represented by the center.

"This started as a personal project for me. I wanted my son to learn another language. I had him go through the two week Spanish day camp here before he started his Spanish program at high school. Sure enough what he learned during the summer benefited him so much in high school."

"Americans have this mental block about learning another language, as if, in fact, there is an enigma to it."

Wireless service reaches out, touches UCF

By GWEN R. RHODES
Staff Writer

Beginning this fall, qualifying UCF engineering students will be eligible to receive scholarships from the AT&T Wireless Endowed Scholarship Fund.

Last week, AT&T Wireless Services Inc. donated $100,000 to establish a scholarship fund for students majoring in electrical engineering or electrical engineering technology.

Under a statewide matching program, the scholarship fund will be supplemented with an additional $50,000. Eligible students will be able to use the funds for tuition, books and other fees.

Students must be full-time juniors or seniors with at least a 3.2 grade point average. In addition, they must demonstrate financial need and leadership or community service.

AT&T Wireless Services Inc. is the largest digital wireless carrier in the United States. AT&T also provides messaging, wireless data and aviation communication services.

"Engineering students were chosen because radio frequency engineering is the backbone of building any wireless network," said Noel Perkins, director of media relations for AT&T.

"Our goal is to help those students who may one day have an interest in working for AT&T or working in the wireless industry," Many UCF engineering students are already majoring in radio frequency engineering.

"Public-private partnerships such as the one we have forged with UCF enhance the quality of life in the communities where we live and work," said Mike Fannon, AT&T Wireless Services.

"It is our hope that students who benefit from this endowment will consider joining the AT&T team upon graduation."

UCF President John Hitt said the donation will have numerous benefits.

"I am delighted to accept the gift from AT&T Wireless on behalf of future students who will benefit from the company's generosity," said Hitt. "In a larger sense, all of society benefits when deserving students are given the opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills and values that equip them to live a more fulfilling life and to contribute positively to the community."

"I wanted my son to learn another language. I had him go through the two week Spanish day camp here before he started his Spanish program at high school. Sure enough what he learned during the summer helped him so much in high school."

"Americans have this mental block about learning another language, as if, in fact, there is an enigma to it."
Studying does not need to be a lonely experience

By LINDA RAMOS
Staff Writer

According to 1990 research conducted by the Harvard assessment seminar group, students who partake in study groups on a regular basis usually perform higher in terms of GPA than students who study by themselves.

While some students prefer to review material on their own because the solitude clears their thinking, other students can benefit from the social experience of the study group.

A study group's purpose is to clarify confusing and complicated material in preparation for an exam; however, forming, organizing and maintaining a study group is not as easy as it seems. The first step in forming a group is to choose the group members.

Five or six students who are interested in learning and benefiting from the group should be selected. Avoid students who want to join the group so that someone else does all the work.

Once members have been selected, give the group a one-time-only-no-obligation trial study session. All members of the group need to feel comfortable with each other in order for the group to function as an effective cohesive unit.

After the members have committed to being part of the group, a group organizer should be appointed. This person's duties will include delegating reading assignments (chapters/notes), coordinating discussions, mediating any group conflicts, keeping the sessions on time and preparing an agenda for each session.

All group members should participate in deciding when and where to meet. The Harvard group suggests sessions should be held once or twice a week for the duration of the class.

The location for the sessions should be a place that is accessible to all members, but yet not so demanding that members would need to involuntarily play host or hostess. The library is the most effective location.

Group members should prepare prior to each session, according to Jeanne Shay Schumm and Shawn A. Post of Executive Learning.

During the study session, Diane Loulou's article "Making the A: How to Study for Tests" suggests that group sessions follow a structured format.

First, members should go over notes to make sure that all other members are up to date. Second, members can ask their questions on the material they don't understand and prepared mock test questions to quiz other group members.

Studying does not need to be a lonely experience. And benefiting from the group should be a one-time-only-no-obligation trial study session. Once members have been selected, give the group an effective location. The location for the sessions should be a place that is accessible to all members, but yet not so demanding that members would need to involuntarily play host or hostess. The library is the most effective location.

During the study session, Diane Loulou's article "Making the A: How to Study for Tests" suggests that group sessions follow a structured format.

First, members should go over notes to make sure that all other members are up to date. Second, members can ask their questions on the material they don't understand. Third, members can go over their assignments (maybe each group member had to read a chapter). Fourth, members can quiz each other on mock test questions that they each have prepared. Fifth, some time should be spent on preparing the next session's agenda.

After the study session, members should keep up with their group assignments. The point of the study group is for students to pool their unique backgrounds, knowledge and resources to help each other to succeed.
Education system getting away from education

BY JASON HEIRONIMUS
Opinion Editor

Have you ever felt like the man is trying to keep you down? Have you ever felt like the system was specifically designed to keep you from attaining your personal and/or professional goals? Well, whatever invented the notion of "the man" as an overwhelming conglomerate who seeks to hold the average person from achieving seems to have some legitimacy.

As some of us enter the second semester of a grueling summer session we are deep in the midst of a fight with just such a system. (Mind you I am fresh from a screening of the new X-Files movie so feel free to scoff and smirk.) Sometimes it seems that our system was created with many intricate twists and turns that have been constructed just so that you will slip up.

You may, or may not, want to know what has spawned this disgust for the system that we are now entangled in. It has come to light that many students are being involuntarily withdrawn from classes without any prior notice to remedy the situation. I have had the unfortunate pleasure of being just one of these students for the last six weeks. Upon the production of this column I am still uncertain as to whether or not all the work that I have done for the last month and a half will count on the record. If I discover that it will not, I hereby officially announce that I am completely unresponsible for my actions.

There are several reasons why a student may be withdrawn from his/her classes, and I am sure that at least 50% of the time it is for a legitimate reason. Though my numbers can in no way be perceived as even close to accurate, because my survey was composed of only two people, in which case the percentage should be even more outrageous, the point is made. Often students are made aware of their unstable enrollment status by way of sheer luck. They haphazardly go into financial aid and check on a loan, and the kind financial aid employee informs them, with a look of complete bewilderment, that they aren't enrolled in any classes and, shouldn't they know that anyway?

One of the key factors in this conspiracy is that the lines of communication, which seem to have gotten much more convenient by way of E-mail or even the postal service, have completely shut down. It is my firm belief that when a student is withdrawn from classes they have the right to know as soon as possible. Most students do not seek to be withdrawn from their classes, and if they do they have too much time on their hands and desire it in the first place, so they should receive notice. Please, somebody tell me, am I so wrong? Even the I.R.S., the epitome of a government run machine whose purpose seems only to make our lives difficult, gives ample warning to those who are going to receive an audit.

How has obtaining a college degree become such a difficult task? This is not even considering the absurdly long hours you have to put in to slip out of the whole charade, this is only in reference to the other half of academics which requires a student to check up three times a day on their financial package, to call at least four hundred times to register for classes, to go through the painstaking process of trying to get the right classes to graduate, and all this while trying to find a parking space to get to class on time. At some point the focus has been lost. At one time college was a center for learning, where the next generation went to exercise their minds and the kind of mind the nation is seeking to hold the average person from achieving seems to have some legitimacy.

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High school is so cool!

By STACEY COPELAND
Staff Writer

Has the Breakfast Club reconvened? It almost seems like this is the case in the new teen dramedy "Can't Hardly Wait." We have the popular prom queen, the superjock, the nerd, the outcast, the quiet writer and the annoying oddball. This is a 90's version of the classic John Hughes teen comedies. This one just involves a high school graduation party instead of detention. The film takes place on the night of Huntington Hills High School's senior graduation. But none of the fun actually starts until long after the ceremony is over. All the main characters find themselves thrown together at a huge celebration party where anything goes.

Preston (Ethan Embry), an aspiring writer, has been in love with Amanda (Jennifer Love Hewitt), the popular beauty, ever since the first day he laid eyes on her in their freshman English class. Too bad she's been dating the dim-witted superjock Mike (Peter Facinelli) for the last four years. Right before graduation Mike decides to dump Amanda so he'll be free to date other girls in college. Preston, whose infatuation with Amanda has grown even more intense with each passing year, spends the last four years of her life with the wrong person. The rest of the cast just basically seems like they'd like to tell the girl about his feelings. Embry's portrayal of the lovestruck teen is so convincing that it makes you want to smack the boy on the head and yell, "If you don't tell her how you feel, nothing will ever happen!"

Laren Ambrose plays Denise, a super-intelligent introvert who has never quite fit in. The sensitive teen clowns up getting locked in a bathroom with the class clown, Kenny (Seth Green). Kenny, a white guy pretending to be a homeboy, also turns out to be an old childhood friend. The two of them spend most of the evening unloading emotional baggage on one another and finally realize they don't hate each other as much as they thought they did.

Meanwhile, William (Charlie Korsmo), the sci-fi loving class valedictorian is, on top of the garage with his two bespectacled best friends plotting revenge on Mike the super jock for all the torment he has put them through since kindergarten. William decides to join the crowd for a few minutes to mingle and discovers that he likes to party instead.

The movie is terribly cute, but the only characters that seem anything more than two dimensional are Preston and Amanda. Preston's loveliness almost makes you hate his heart ache. And you feel Amanda's angst when her sudden eigenthal status makes her question who she really is and why she spent the last four years of her life with the wrong person. The rest of the cast just basically seems to lend comic relief to the movie.

One of the funniest aspects of the movie is the cartoon roles worked into the script. Jerry O'Connell plays an "over-the-hill" former high school jock who finds that things are very different in college. In between bellches, he reminisces about the glory days with Mike and warns him that college girls are much harder to impress than high school girls. This sends Mike running back to Amanda, who tells him he needs to get lost.

Another hilarious cameo is Jenna Elfman as a "down-on-her-luck" stripper who has to fight with Preston for a phone booth at 2 in the morning. After settling their dispute, she recounts her tale of lost love when she did't have the nerve to admit to Scott Easton that she was in love with him when she got to meet him. She tells Preston that fate will only take him so far then it's up to him to do the rest.

The movie is fast paced and amusing, but extremely lacking in depth. The occasional dramatic event mixes with a large amount of slapstick humor to create a movie that is well worth watching. Just don't bother bringing the hankies. This is MTV humor to the extreme.

July movies keep the temperature rising

By STACEY COPELAND
Staff Writer

Are you tired of the summer reruns on tv yet? With NBC's lame tag "It's New To You!" ringing in your ears, you're probably ready to hit the theaters to catch something new. Well hang on to your seats, folks! July looks like it's going to be check full of entertaining flicks.

•Armageddon (July 1) -Starring Bruce Willis, Ben Affleck, Liv Tyler, Billy Bob Thornton, Steve Buscemi. This is the second time this summer an asteroid has threatened the earth. But nobody panics, Bruce will save us! As Harry S. Stamper, an expert on drilling holes in big rocks, Willis risks his life to keep the plummeting asteroid from killing all the good people of Earth. Ben Affleck (who gymances Willis' daughter, played by Liv Tyler) and Steve Buscemi join him in the fight to save the planet while Billy Bob Thornton directs the crew of misfits. The verdict? It certainly looks more promising than "Deep Impact."

•Lethal Weapon 4 (July 10) -Starring Mel Gibson, Danny Glover, Joe Pesci, Rene Russo, Chris Rock. Warner Brothers has admitted to the fact that they were scrambling to get a sequel, any sequel, into theaters this summer. So much so, in fact, that the actors found themselves improvising unfinished dialogue on an unfinished set. Everyone in the cast is just crossing their fingers and hoping for the best. But don't worry if you're a fan of the past "Lethal Weapons," they probably added lots of gun fire and explosions to make up for the lack of actual an plot line.

•Small Soldiers (July 10) -Starring Kirsten Dunst, Jay Mohr, Phil Hartman, Denis Leary, the voice of Tommy Lee Jones. The director of this movie, Joe Dante, claims that this film is "Toy Story with teeth." This commando comedy is about little playthings waging warfare against each other and their owners. Plot lines beyond that are sketchy but a merchandising extravaganza is sure to unfold as the release date draws near. Rumor has it that this flick might be one of the best of the summer.

•There's Something About Mary (July 15) -Starring Cameron Diaz, Matt Dillon, Ben Stiller, Chris Elliott. Do you remember that guy you ditched on the night of senior prom in high school? You might want to watch if he happens to see this movie, he might learn a trick or two from it. Stiller plays a loser who hires a sleazy private investigator (Dillon) to track down the girl who broke his heart in high school. When Dillon does find the girl (Cameron) he falls in love with her too. It sounds sweet doesn't it? Just a word of warning. This movie was directed by Peter and Bobby Farrelly, the brains behind "Dumb and Dumber." They've described the movie as "Sleepless in Seattle with a lot more toilet humor mixed in." Sounds, um, interesting...

•Mask of Zorro (July 17) -Starring Antonio Banderas, Anthony Hopkins, Catherine Zeta-Jones. Hopkins plays the fiftysomething original Zorro mounting a young Mexican (Rundins) in the arts of love and swordplay. The plot line gives a little flurry beyond that. And with a confusing trailer for the film currently running at theaters, no one is actually sure what the movie is actually about. Too bad many people won't take the time to find out.

•Saving Private Ryan (July 24) -Starring Tom Hanks, Matt Damon, Tom Sizemore, Ted Danson, Edward Burns. Spielberg has once again decided to go against the flow and place a human story amidst the sea of monster and demolition movies out this summer. During WWII, eight American soldiers sneak behind enemy lines to find lost paraatrooper James Ryan (Damon). The government has realized that he is the sole surviving brother of four siblings who went to war and they have decided that it would be extremely good public relations to get him home safely. The film kicks off with an emotional reenactment of D-Day with thousands of soldiers. Samuel L. Jackson and Kevin Spacey play cat and mouse in this action-packed adventure.
Senate finishes drawing up budget

By JOHN TURNER
Staff Writer

The activity and service fee budget, first introduced in November 1997, ended its process on June 11.

"It was a long and arduous task and not everyone will be pleased, but I am proud in the way the senators worked on a budget with so little money to work with," said the Senate Appropriations Chair David Siegel.

The Senate passed it with more than two thirds voting in the affirmative.

The budget process started in the activity and service fee committee, which sends a recommendation to the Organizations Appropriations and Finance Committee (OAF).

This Senate committee can either accept all the recommendations or make revisions to the budget. The OAF Committee opted to revise the budget, which ended at $4.8 million for fiscal year '98-'99.

Because of the lack of monies this year, some clubs were reduced in their original budget requests. There are more clubs than in the past budgeted in this allocation.

Some organizations like the Greek Council were zero budgeted from its $43,000 request this year, because it did not use most of the money that was allocated to it by the Senate last year.

Senator Jaime Halscott said he was pleased with the outcome of the budget.

"It is absolutely wonderful that for the first time in years the annual budget is going to administration in an appropriate time," Murphy said. "I think they will be happy with that." Senate President Pro Tempore James Halscott said he was happy with the results of the budget.

"I hope to see the trust fund issues addressed by the executive branch with the administration," Halscott said.

The fiscal year 1998-1999 budget will now go to administration for approval.

Senate elects new president pro tempore

By JOHN TURNER
Staff Writer

The Senate of the Student Government Association (SGA) officially accepted the resignation of Senate President Pro Tempore James Barnard and elected Sen. Matt Henderson as the official spokesman of the legislative branch.

Barnard resigned due to career advancement and a schedule conflict with his graduate program.

The Senate nominated three senators, Halscott, Dominic Fortello and Charlie Lee.

Lee said he dropped out of the election because he lost interest in the position.

Halscott was elected by a vote of 18-1. He is the second freshman senator elected to this office. The first was in the fall of 1995.

Halscott qualified for the position because he has held numerous posts with the Senate.

Some of his positions on the legislative branch include: a membership on the activity and service fee committee, chair of the operations review committee and three other memberships on committees of the Senate.

Halscott is currently the vice president of New Member Education for the InterFraternity Council.

Halscott has set goals for the legislative session.

He said he will make clubs and organizations on campus aware of what the Senate can do for them with respect to funding.

Halscott also said he plans to seek reform in some aspects of the legislative branch, including the revisions of some laws currently on the books.

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Site brings World Cup flavor home

By VICKI DEORMIER
Staff Writer

If you love soccer like most of the rest of the world does, you probably are glued to a television every spare second, watching broadcasts of World Cup matches from France.

Some of us, however, have lives. There are classes, for example, and jobs. And boyfriends and assignments, all of which demand attention, taking precious time away from the games. But help is available on the web.

Pop over to www.france98.com for the most comprehensive look at the goings on at the Coupe de Monde (World Cup) on the internet.

The official site of the games allows you to view it in French or English and will tell you anything in the world you want to know about the games.

Scores and highlights from the latest games, including those going on now? Got it.

And on and on. You don’t have to just bop silently along from spot to spot either. There are sound bites from players, coaches and even fans that bring the games alive. You not only see photos of the winning goals, you can hear the cheers, too.

Sometimes when you’re watching a game (or scanning for it on the web at this site when you should be working or doing an assignment) you might wonder about the stadium or the city in which the game is being played. This site even includes that kind of information.

Did you know, for example, there are six beaches in Lyon (where the U.S. lost to Iran and found itself, once again, out of the Cup)?

Four of them have life guards and one is reserved for nudists.

The temperature at the venue where your favorite team is about to take the field? Got it.

Ticket information in case you win the lottery and decide to jet over? Got it.

Sooner or later, the cheers, too.

New grading system can work for or against students

From PAGE 1

there are students whose performances are different enough within a trade category that it warrants documentation and recognition,” she said. “Professors were often torn in assigning grades. A plus-minus system will allow for some students to have a stranger GPA.”

Another concern about the system is how it will affect students already at UCF when it begins.

According to Fike, the system will not go back and change already existing grades. At the same time, those students who are currently enrolled at UCF and will be when the system begins are going to be held accountable under the new system.

A lot of students, like Charlie Adelson, 21, feel that the system will provide a better representation of their grades because they will be more specific.

“Whatever your GPA is, it will be more earned,” he said. “It will separate those people who get straight 90s from those with higher grades.”

“You’ll have a better idea of where you stand,” said Tom LaFrance, 27.

Others recognize the system as a double-edged sword.

“It will be good for the people who are doing good,” said 20-year-old Jason Schutz. “If you make an 89, it will show that you almost made an A. If you get an 80, it will show that you almost made a C. It could be good for you, it could be bad for you.”

Student body President Jason Murphy said: “It’s a situation where it will benefit some people and negatively affect other people. I think what they (the administration) have to view is how it’s going to affect the greater population.”

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UCF loses 10 to pro baseball

By JEFF CASE
Staff Writer

Jay Bergman said the Major League Baseball draft is like a double-edged sword, a device that can give a team instant public credibility while ripping apart its private, season-long chemistry. He may find it true that is after ten players, seven of whom are underclassmen, decided to forego their eligibility and sign MLB contracts.

Bergman will have to find replacements for three starting pitchers (shortstop Eric Riggs, outfielder Esix Snead and catcher Erik Johnson) and four pitchers who were going to play big roles on next year's team (Mike Maroth, Kevin Gordon, Lester Victoria, and Travis Held)

Jay Bergman said he decided to sign with his club for several reasons: He's a Red Sox fan, his goal in sight even while dealing with his illness. He may find how true that is after ten players signed this week.

Maroth, the Golden Knights top selection in the June draft, said he decided to sign with his club for several reasons: He's a Red Sox fan, his goal in sight even while dealing with his illness. He may find how true that is after ten players signed this week.

Maroth, as both third-round picks were in the same predicament. Johnson's decision to sign with the Rockies is surprising considering a disappointing junior season. After posting career highs in batting average (.348), hits (77), doubles (42), RBI (42) and slugging percentage (.697), Riggs had dreamed of being drafted all his life and took the drastic step of giving up his collegiate basketball career to make it happen. The Bowers showed up during the pitching rotation. Contract negotiation with the second round pick of the Colorado Rockies.

Johnson, a sophomore, was beginning to show steady improvement in his second season. After a redshirting year of pitch and catch for the battery for the Colorado Rockies. Johnson, a sophomore, was beginning to show steady improvement in his second season. After a redshirting year in 1996 and posting a 2.3 record with a 4.75 ERA in 1997. Gordon became an effective part of Bergman's pitching staff this year. A draftee of the pitching-starved Colorado Rockies, Riggs may be the hardest for Bergman to replace. The All-TAC shortstop led the Golden Knights in batting average (.394), runs (64), hits (87), doubles (26), RBI (67) and slugging percentage (.697). Riggs had dreamed of being drafted all his life and took the drastic step of giving up his collegiate basketball career to make it happen.

In a few years, Gordon and Johnson could be reunited in an UCF game of pitch and catch as the battery for the Colorado Rockies.

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