Consolidation companies groan over student loans

Companies grumble as students combine long-term loans at lower interest rates

CRYSTAL ESPINOSA
STAFF WRITER

Major lenders are asking Congress to make loan consolidation a less attractive option for borrowers.

Last year borrowers saved thousands of dollars and consolidated more than $92 billion worth of loans after locking in a 4 percent interest rate, the Chronicle of Higher Education reported.

Now some major lenders in the student-loan program say it has become too easy for borrowers to refinance their loans and want Congress to revise the 10-year-old system.

The program, designed to help borrowers repay loans by combining multiple loans into one with a fixed interest rate, allows borrowers to repay student loans over a span of 30 years.

But major lending companies want the program to change and under their proposals borrowers could no longer lock in fixed interest rates for up to 30 years.

Instead, they would be charged the same rate as all other federal student-loan borrowers are charged in a given year.

It is unclear however, whether the money would actually benefit such programs if Congress does not agree to adjust the program.

PLEASE SEE Student on 4

Attack renews push for gay protections

Christine Dillert
STAFF WRITER

Two UCF students were attacked last Saturday while attending a birthday party at Πegasus Landing. The two victims, Heath Frank, 20, and Carlos Smith, 22, are calling the incident a hate crime, saying they were beaten for being gay.

UCP police officers responded to the victims' call at 1:40 a.m. and arrested Eduardo Mongio, 20, who was visiting a resident at the apartment complex. Mongio is not a UCF student.

Eyewitness accounts state that Mongio appeared severely intoxicated and was continuously harassing gay students leaving the party.

“He was calling us derogatory names and...

Web wins students’ attention in wired classrooms

Professors use kill switches to keep students unplugged, engaged in lectures

Krista Zilizzi
STAFF WRITER

Classroom distractions are nothing new, but these days they're not what they used to be either.

Instead of passing notes, whispering and daydreaming to pass class time away, students are now using the very distraction that educators have been pushing into classrooms for the past decade — the Internet.

In Danielle Moron's Design for Communications class on a recent afternoon, several students sat behind computer screens checking their e-mails while Moron's lectures about Web servers and IP addresses.

"Seven million new domain names are being registered every day around the world," she tells her class, but no one seems to care.

One student is too busy researching graduate programs at UCF to click to the Web site that's related to Moron's lecture.

PLEASE SEE Professors on 2

Homo sapien prowess

When radlads and robots compete, who wins man?

-OPINIONS, 9
Professors call Internet a distraction

FROM PAGE 1

while another student is window­shopping or e-mailing her boyfriend. A third student reads a Ch Calculus text­book.

While Moroux urges her class to embrace the Internet as a learning tool, her classroom is an example of the struggles professors have these days to bring technology into the classroom while retaining their students' attention.

"If I didn't have the Internet, I couldn't teach this class," she said. "[But] I do get a little annoyed when students aren't paying attention, which is why I walk around and my assistant identifies students not on task. I do a lot of monitoring."

But students, who have grown accustomed to tapping on keyboards and surfing at computer screens on a day-to-day basis, say the Internet is only a temptation for them while another student is window­shopping, e-mailing her boyfriend, or e-mailing her boyfriend. Another student reads a Ch Calculus text­book.

"She's already asleep, because students get enough," Schwartz said. But students, who have grown accustomed to tapping on keyboards and surfing at computer screens on a day-to-day basis, say the Internet is only a temptation for them while another student is window­shopping, e-mailing her boyfriend, or e-mailing her boyfriend. Another student reads a Ch Calculus text­book.

"We're all humans and it's pretty convenient to turn to devices that allow them to turn to devices that allow them to turn to devices that allow them to time they're doing something else."

"Most of the students are respectful and they do what they're supposed to do," she said.

But students, who have grown accustomed to tapping on keyboards and surfing at computer screens on a day-to-day basis, say the Internet is only a temptation for them while another student is window­shopping, e-mailing her boyfriend, or e-mailing her boyfriend. Another student reads a Ch Calculus text­book.

"It's not like I'm being deprived because I'm not surfing during lectures," she said. "The Internet is always there, I can surf when I go home."

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"Technological teachers could monitor what students are doing [on the Internet with this technolo­gy], but it's not effective," Brokaw said.

Brokaw ends the new monitoring technology on the Internet for students who are using the Internet in the classroom. And most students agree with her.

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Rally planned to prompt change

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I seemed like a very bigoted guy," said Joseph Annunziato, 20, vice president of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Student Union (GLUESU). "He was just looking to fill people.

At 2:30 a.m., Frank walked outside of the apartment to look for some friends in the freezeway, where he was met by Mongeon's antigay and Bisex. Smith tried to rescue his friend from the attacker and was thrown against a wall and pushed to the ground.

"He didn't have a reason to be there and I don't understand why his other friend didn't hold him back when he hit me," Frank said. "It was like entertainment for them.

Most people who have worked with the UC Police to help officers fill in the details of the incident. As Jan. 7, the UC Police Department has extended its jurisdiction to residential properties that are off-campus but controlled by the UC Property, which includes Pegasus Landing, formerly Knight's Crossing, and Pomegranate, formerly Knights Court.

It is an uncommon occurrence to see a case like this — maybe even a year," said Sgt. Troy Williams of the UC Police. "We may now see more because of our larger jurisdiction. So we'll just have to have better enforcement.

Frank and Smith plan to file a civil suit against Mongeon and are working with legal services to raise the first-degree mis-
demeanor assault charge to a hate crime, a third-degree felony. The state attorney's office will make a decision after reviewing investigators' reports.

In the meantime, Frank and Smith hope to create a greater awareness for gay rights and tolerance at UC. With the help of UC's GLUESU, they plan to rally Tuesday outside the Student Union to inform students and faculty of the inci-
dent and hope it will prompt a change in creating a gay protections on campuses.

Last month, after contentious debate, the Orlando City Council approved a law that protects gay and lesbians from discrimination in employment, housing, and other public accommodations. It does not address acts of vio-
ence against gay, which are covered by state law.

As that debate intensified, UC President John Hitt adopted a new policy in October stating that all people at UC should be treated with "dignity and respect." But UC still has no formal pol-
icy that specifically addresses discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Orlando's new law does not extend to UC which is outside the city limits and adheres to policies set by the Florida Legislature.

Smith wants Hitt and the Board of Trustees to make a case before the Legislature to put sexual orientation protection in a place at all state universities.

"It is important for everyone to be aware [of the intolerance of gay]." said Frank, who agrees that the state should review its anti-discrimination laws for universi-
tions. "Who knows if other schools may be having the same problem with those types of crime."
Student advocates oppose new modifications

Exiles plot Iraq model

CAROLYNN MURPHY
THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON—One night last week, six Iraqi-born men gathered around the dining room table in a house owned by a local Iraqi physician. A seventh joined them via speakerphone from Germany.

On the wall, hand-drawn diagrams and circles illustrated links among various "working groups"—agriculture, infrastructure, the economy and other issues that would confront Iraq after the fall of Saddam Hussein. The conversation, switching easily between Arabic and English, was spiced with such phrases from the Qur'an as "Submit yourself to Allah."

"I think to be at war by February" and "the first 100 days." This was a board meeting of Iraqi National Group, formed in the fall by exiled Iraqis with the goal of mapping out recommendations for the first months of a transitional government in Baghdad.

"It's given to the majority of Iraqis that they will have an opportunity to re-evaluate their lives otherwise, and whoever comes to power in Iraq will need this group," said Latifali Khiloo, who is a member.

As the United States moves closer to a military attack against Saddam's government, the first uprisings of 1991 are being replayed. Saddam's regime has been warning that with the removal of the last US troops from Iraq, the United States would regret the decision, calling the Future of Iraq Project, has brought professionals from the Middle East and the rest of the civilized world to discuss such issues as judicial reform, war crimes trials, public finance, agriculture and energy policy. Last week, about 30 Iraqi lawyers and judges in the United States who phoned relatives in Iraq's mandated zone in Syria. Fadul said, "It's a given to them that the 1991 rebellion, working as a nurse. He would support from the system against us, but we are afraid of is what's going to happen."

Despite the experience, Fadul gives The State Department's initiative, which has been met with qualified support to the Iraqis by the US military and the rest of the civilized world for democracy.

"We're still in the first 100 days," said Jamal Bhamelah, who is a member and was bombed, said he had a "rebel" in the vehicle. Lashinsky admitted that he had been smoking and said he had a "roach" in the vehicle. Lashinsky removed a marijuana cigarette approximately three inches in length from the ashtray. Kimberlin was given field sobriety tests before her arrest.

Exiles have been mixed with apprehensions about damage to Iraq's infrastructure by US bombs and the possibility that Saddam Hussein could unleash chemical or biological weapons in order to complicate an invasion. They are also worried about the fragility of the coalition political groups that are fighting to take control in post-Saddam Iraq. And they fear that the US military will fail to protect the Iraqi people on its own. Saddam may unleash chemical or biological weapons in order to complicate an invasion.

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COX

When you look at the benefits of one thing, you have to also weigh the costs," said Mary McCarthy, director of the UCF Student Financial Assistance.

"Looking at the cost of education over several years and all the different variables that can shift. If you move from one area, you are going to lose some of the benefits of living in that area."

The Consumer Bankers Association has even called for changes regarding loan consolidation, including changing the fixed rate of consolidated loans to a rate of all other federal student loans.

"What we are suggesting is that interest rates be the same for consolidated loans as they are for those who consolidate their loans," said Fritz Elmendorf, vice president of communications for Consumer Bankers Association. "The interest rates should be equivalent, either fixed or variable. So consolidation does its original purpose, provide simplicity and streamline terms and make it advantageous for a significant number of students to consolidate."

Other proposals, such as one offered by the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, suggested changing a small fee for those who consolidate their loans.

Student advocates claim lenders will limit the borrowers' ability to consolidate loans for two reasons — to raise the cost of the marginal borrower and drive competition out of the market for well-established lenders. Other proposals, possibly to be offered by consumer advocates, may be either fixed or variable. So consolidation does its original purpose, provide simplicity and streamline terms and make it advantageous for a significant number of students to consolidate.

"The program was designed to be a convenience, to have changes in this area."

"We're still in the first 100 days," said Jamal Bhamelah, who is a member and was bombed, said he had a "rebel" in the vehicle. Lashinsky removed a marijuana cigarette approximately three inches in length from the ashtray. Kimberlin was given field sobriety tests before her arrest.

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Coach quits after firearm incident in gym;

Nolan Richardson III resigned after being suspended from his job as men's basketball coach at Tennessee State University after apparently threatening one of his assistants with a handgun during the winter break. According to a police report published in The Tennessean, Richardson said he was upset when only four players showed up for an evening practice on December 11.

Richardson, 34, who became Tennessee State's head coach in 2000, could not be reached for comment. The university named Steven Smith as acting head coach.

Arkansas released the elder Richardson in 2001 after he had accused the university and its fans of treating him differently because he is black and then demanded that his contract be bought out. He is suing Arkansas.

Touch up

Students in a women's studies course at Iowa State University have turned an assignment to educate others about women's issues into an opportunity to stage a successful protest.

The object of their (in)was a mural that has decorated a kitchen in a coed dormitory since 1984. The mural, located on a men-only floor, features three soldiers. All are armed, one holds a beer keg, and one clutches a scantily clad woman under an arm.

Several of these groups are members of the university's women's studies group. Information like this could account for as much as 65 percent of the decline in these methods do not depend upon taking a pill once a day. Women are more likely to use them correctly, avoiding an unwanted pregnancy, experts said.

Iowa State U.  

FROM PAGE 3

the approval of mifepristone (formerly known as RU-486) by the Food and Drug Administration in September 2000, chemical abortions accounted for 6 percent of abortions.

The last survey, in 1996, also had reported a decline in abortion rates and numbers of abortion providers. The 2001 survey shows a 5 percent drop in abortion rates since 1996.

It is not clear why abortion rates are decreasing, said study co-author Lawrence L. Finer, the institute's assistant director of research. But he added that there is evidence that emergency contraception—in which the hormones used in birth control pills are taken within a few days of sexual intercourse—could account for as much as 43 percent of the decline in abortions since 1994.

It is also likely that a greater availability of other contraceptive methods is contributing to the decline, experts said. In the past few years, American women have been presented with a range of new contraceptive choices such as a patch, vaginal ring, monthly shots and new intrauterine devices with fewer side effects.

Because these methods do not depend upon taking a pill once a day, women are more likely to use them correctly, avoiding an unwanted pregnancy, experts said.

SU 'radicals' urge social change

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — These Florida State University students are well-versed in issues ranging from the possible war with Iraq to the death penalty to how student government is selecting troops.

They listen to National Public Radio, write anti-oppression letters to governments, and protest major institutions. They are members of what they call progressive or radical organizations. Several of these groups are conducting workshops on political, cultural, and sexual issues this week.

The workshops are part of the campus's first Radical Rush, which is open to the public. They got the idea from the University of Florida and University of Central Florida, which also hold Radical Rushes.

These organizations are for people who want to change the status quo in their community and the world, students said.

NORMIL, the National Organization to Reform Marijuana Laws, was to hold a workshop about First and Fourth Amendment rights. It will include information on situations such as how to handle being pulled over by the police.

VEX, Voices of Planned Parenthood, will do a workshop on sexuality, which will include information on the "morality" of sex. Information like this will be valuable for both the straight and gay communities.

Amnesty International will provide information on a variety of topics, such as the death penalty, human rights violations in Iraq and the plight of Haitian detainees. CRP also will offer a workshop on body image. Students said it's just a coincidence that the week falls at the same time as the Greek rush week.

National Briefs

FROM PAGE 3

2 Day Career Expo Event

Internship Fair
Experience, Exposure, Enlightenment

January 21, 2003
1:00 PM - 4:00 PM
Location: Live Oak

List of EMPLOYERS for both events at:
www.crc.ucf.edu

PROFESSIONAL ATTIRE REQUIRED
Sponsored by the Career Resource Center
Unit of Academic Development and Retention Division of Student Development and Enrollment Services

University of Central Florida
What’s News—

In Business and Finance

Holiday Sales Weak, Not for Autos

Retail sales climbed in December, but the gains were entirely in the auto sector as department stores suffered through a lukewarm holiday selling season.

Retail sales rose 1.6% after a 4.9% gain in November, the Commerce Department said Tuesday. But without autos sales, retail sales would have been unchanged for December. Auto sales jumped 5.1% last month, the largest increases ever, while auto dealers stocked sales with free-financing deals in the wake of the terror attacks.

The figures for December mean consumers sharply slowed their spending during the fourth quarter of 2002. Economists now believe the growth rate for spending in the fourth quarter will be only half the 4.4% pace recorded in the third quarter. Slow consumer spending, which accounts for two-thirds of economic activity, is expected to push growth in gross domestic product for the fourth quarter below an annual rate of 2%. GDP is the total value of goods and services produced in the nation.

One victim of weak holiday shopping was Panera Bread Co., trying to cobble together the right mix of doughnuts, bagels and coffee. It promptly announced plans to spin off its bakery stores, which compete fiercely, spending millions through which they distribute their products. Panera, headquartered in St. Louis, Oklahoma, this week filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy-court protection.

Economists: Hiring To Remain Slow

The nation’s labor market is experiencing one of its most protracted slumps in post-World War II history, and economists don’t see it improving much soon.

The Labor Department reported Friday that payroll employment contracted by 101,000 in December, led by more than 3,000 workers in the manufacturing sector, which eliminated jobs for the 20th straight month, and by struggling retailers that hired less than they normally would for the Christmas selling season. The unemployment rate held steady in December at 6.5%, but many economists believe it will edge higher in the first quarter, while the overall labor force was up 55,000.

For more than a year, economists have noted that the current economic recovery was too limp to spur hiring. In recent weeks, however, economists have speculated that the job market would start to pick up later this year, in part because they expect business confidence to improve as profits strengthen.

But Friday’s report suggested that, despite signs that the corporate sector is healing, cost-cutting remains the order of the day for many companies. That could mean the setbacks for labor aren’t over.

Kmart Closings

May Affect 35,000

Kmart Corp. said it will close 226 stores employing 35,000 workers and plans to emerge from bankruptcy by April 30.

In March, Kmart closed 280 stores, affecting 22,000 jobs. The Troy, Mich., retailer currently operates 3,260 stores employing 35,000 people. Kmart needs to close stores while under bankruptcy protection to allow it to get out of leases. The closings will be subject to court approval. Kmart is scheduled to appear in U.S. bankruptcy Court in Chicago on Jan. 28.

New Cable Channel

Planned for Blacks

Comcast Corp., the nation’s biggest cable operator, plans to launch a channel targeted at African-Americans in a venture with Radio One Inc. and company with 90 stations in 52 cities. The channel, to be launched in a few months, will feature news, opinion and sports-related programs for people in the 25-to-44 age range. The network could pose the first serious threat to Viacom Inc.’s BET, the No. 1 entertainment channel, which has come under criticism for cutting its programming.

Plan returns to Next Page

Healthy Eating?

Here’s a sampling of healthful, bathroom-tested food items and terms that they really measure up in terms of calories and fat:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Calories</th>
<th>Fat (g)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beef Stroganoff</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken Marsala</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The new year is shaping up as one in which all of the troubles bedeviling the media industry finally boil over into events.

The pending resignation of AOL Time Warner Inc. Chairman Steve Case closely follows last week’s departure of Sony Corp.’s high-profile music chief, Thomas D. Mottola and adds to a list of executive casualties that includes AOL Time Warner’s Gerald Levin and Robert Pittman; Viendi Universal’s Aja Jean-Marie Mosteller; and Bertelsmann’s Thomas Middelfeld, who is not linked to the AOL Time Warner’s turn at AOL Time Warner, Wilterm, former, veteran magazine journalist who was handed the task of reviving CNN 18 months ago, said on Monday he would quit as chairman and chief executive of CNN News Group, leaving the network in the midst of a brutul battle and preparations for a possible war on Iraq.

The big-name exits indicate that times are changing for executives who haven’t fixed the growing list of problems brought on by the consolidation of the entertainment industry. The departures also raise the question of whether the lumbering conglomerates make sense.

Today’s media business was built on the idea that all kinds of content creators—movie studios, record labels, theme parks—ought to be housed within the same corporal. Then, those same companies began acquiring the channels through which they distributed their entertainment—TV networks, cable systems and Internet service providers. The result is a sprawling mix of businesses, each with its own set of problems—many of which are now coming to a head. There is continuing fallout from the attempt to marry entertainment and technology interests, especially in the failed AOL Time Warner deal. The combination is rife with conflicts of interests, such as a cable operator and cable programmers residing within the same company, when they are normally sworn enemies engaged in brutal negotiations.

At the same time, there is rampant and growing piracy of the intellectual property that entertainment companies create. That is beginning to erode the foundation of the media business, which could soon be the same for movies. Yet even as that happens, media spending continues on the creation of film, music and TV shows. Hollywood studios continue fiercely, spending $15 billion or more in their design plans to keep them afloat.

What You Need To Succeed

New Leadership Needed

As Recent Visionaries Are Shoved Out Door

BY ROBERT CHARLTON

and MARSHALL PHIPPS

In December 2001: America Online and Time Warner announce merger. RUMOR: America Online CEO Steve Case announces retirement. NOVEMBER: Bertelsmann chief Thomas Middelhoff. GONE SOUR


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Gone Sour

Some key departures and divorces in the media industry’s recent history, membership-based online music venture. No December 2001: AOL Time Warner CEO Gerald Levin announces retirement. November: Bertelsmann chief Thomas Middelhoff. GONE SOUR

Detroit Sees SUV Backlash Growing

BY JEFFREY BALL

A unsettling thought is taking root at auto makers who rely on sport utility vehicles for a big chunk of their profits: The largest SUVs are becoming unpopular.

The death of the SUV has been falsely proclaimed off and on throughout its declining era. But now some of the big three's top executives are saying that SUVs have become the butt of ridicule, with their buyers(excuses) people images in the average American consumer but running national TV commercial suggest ing that people buy such minivans instead of SUVs because the minivan goes further on a gallon of gas. SUVs have become the butt of jokes for political satirists and cartoonists. A group called the Earth Liberation Front has claimed responsibility for a series of vandalism attacks on SUVs, including one this month in a Pennsylvania car dealership. But what has some Detroit executives particularly wor ried are signs of a backlash developing among the next generation of auto buyers: the "millenials," who are now in their late teens and 20s. "It's a big deal, and it's real," says James Scion, Chrysler's executive vice president for sales and marketing.

Criticism of big SUVs is clearly getting louder and broader. The Detroit Project, a coalition headed by the Detroit Free Press, has released a series of television ads voicing concern about the effects of SUVs on the environment.

The flaws are even more pressing now because the number of SUVs on the road is growing faster than at any other time in the past 20 years, according to the Detroit Auto Dealers Association.

"SUVs are here to stay," says Lawrence H. Levy, a media consultant and assistant professor at the University of Michigan. "But if you're going to market to a younger generation, you have to be mindful of their concerns."}

But SUVs aren't the only concern for auto makers. The U.S. auto industry is facing a host of challenges that could push the line further.

Although two California lower courts dismissed the suit, the state's top court said Nike's communications were "directed by a commercial speaker to a commercial audience" and so were subject to "state laws barring false and misleading commercial messages." Nike then filed an appeal with the Supreme Court.

Odds & Ends

Sanad Arabia drove its fellow OPEC members to agree to an oil production increase in response to the recent sharp drop in oil invento ries caused by a prolonged strike in Venezuela, and fears of further sup ply disruptions if war breaks out in Iraq. The National Football League is refusing to run Las Vegas tourism ads during the Jan. 31 Super Bowl, citing a desire to avoid "an association between the NFL and gambling."
Condom pros outweigh condom cons

Recently, the Bush administration changed health information published by the government on two Web sites to eliminate the religious conservatives who make up a key constituency for the President. The Web site for the National Cancer Institute now says that the evidence is inconsistent to rule out an association between abortion and breast cancer. Although no new evidence or studies prompted the change, the Web site no longer says that there is no association between the two.

A Web site for the Centers for Disease Control used to say that educating young people about condom use did not lead them to engage in sex earlier or more frequently. The CDC Web site no longer says that.

Although the change in the abortion information may discourage women from having abortions, which is not necessarily a bad thing, the new statement, unsubstantiated by new information, intends to scare women from having abortions. It may also frighten women who have already had abortions.

The omission of information about condoms on the CDC Web site is far more disturbing. As it has little, if any, basis in science. Rather, the change intends to appease abstinence advocates.

Encouraging condom use will not stop people from having sex. People have been having sex since the beginning of time, and certainly long before condoms were invented. Since people are going to have sex anyway, they should use condoms to protect themselves.

Critics of condoms claim that condoms do not completely protect people from sexually transmitted diseases or unwanted pregnancies. Condoms, they claim, have imperfections that leave users at risk of contracting diseases.

They say that improper use of condoms can make users just as vulnerable to pregnancies and STDs as people who do not use condoms.

Condoms may not be perfect, but they are certainly better than nothing. The campaign against condom education will have serious consequences both nationally and globally.

Abstinence-only sex education will not stop Americans teenagers from having sex, but discrediting condoms may make teenagers less likely to use them. As a result, more teens will get pregnant and more will contract diseases.

Internationally, as the U.S. distributes fewer and fewer condoms in its development countries that desperately need them, pregnancies will arise, as will the spread of AIDS. In Africa, where AIDS has taken a terrible toll on the population, infection rates will reach catastrophic proportions.

Abstinence in the best form of birth control, but discrediting the effectiveness of condoms and expecting people to not have sex will have disastrous effects.

Our STANCE:

Condoms

The omission of information about condoms on the CDC Web site is far more disturbing. As it has little, if any, basis in science. Rather, the change intends to appease abstinence advocates.

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Condoms

No means no, no matter what

A recent decision by the California Supreme Court broadens the definition of rape and reinforces the truth that rape is wrong. In all cases and at all times. Now, if a woman changes her mind during sex, her partner must immediately stop or be guilty of rape.

The Jan. 6 decision, in the case of a woman who consented sex but later withdrew consent, should make men respect women more, and strengthen women's rights.

Men (and women) have an obligation to respect the wishes of their partners during sex; if a woman tells her partner to stop during the act of sexual intercourse, he should immediately stop. If a woman no longer wants to have sex, even if she is being coerced, he must stop.

Men must respect women's rights and wishes during sex, even if a "yes" given minutes before becomes a "no." This decision recognizes a victory for women's rights. Women have come a long way in establishing their sexual rights. Only decades ago, women had limited sexual rights, and men too often got away with rape. The feminist movement of the 1960s helped bring about progress regarding rape, and this ruling continues that progress.

Women should never be forced to have sex, even if they previously agreed to it. The court's ruling declares that "no means no," whether a woman says it before or during sex.

The court's decision correctly gives women the right to change their minds during sex. Men should not force women to have sex, even if the women previously gave consent.

Rape is a serious crime, and the penalties for committing rape should reflect the seriousness of the crime. Men who continue to have sex with a woman after she clearly states that she no longer wants to have sex should face serious penalties.

Men who continue having sex with women against their wishes deserve harsh punishments. Although not as savage as raping a woman at knifepoint, this is still rape. Prior consent does not give a man the right to continue sex with a woman against her wishes.

Sex should be an enjoyable activity for both partners. If one no longer wants to do it, the other should honor her (or his) wishes, whether they are having sex for the first time or the hundredth.

Our STANCE:

No means no, no matter what

Letters to the Editor

Perez's past actions make him questionable candidate

My concern in the upcoming mayoral election lies with our candidate in return to our office. Even though he is the candidate of the Muslim societies that produced the terrorist hijackers.

I'm wondering if that's what Mr. Perez meant when he quoted the Quran while flying our airplanes. I'm wondering if that's what he meant when he stated that he opposed gay participation in the Boy Scouts.

I wonder if he will take the same view he had of the Muslims that really wouldn't think twice if he had the same attitude concerning how any of his or President Bush's, who refuses to ban gay participation in the Boy Scouts.

INS laws weed out terrorists

In your editorial, "International students deserve merit respect," you wrote: "What is it about our . . .

I'm wondering if that's what Mr. Perez also support Hitt in the 1996 election. In 1996, after the INS shutdown in 1995. which, after financial mismanagement in the quality control department?

I'm wondering if that's what we should expect from Mr. Perez. In the future. Responding to the needs of an out-of-control organization is the only thing that makes the INS more efficient.

Respect must be earned

International students definitely offer the greater hope to enrich the Muslim societies that produced the terrorist hijackers.

Respect must be earned. it takes love and understanding to respect other people, and the INS is not respecting these students.

Many do not keep up their student requirements because they want to work instead of going to school full time. But a student visa is not a work visa. A few come here on an exchange visa, and they want to work because they want to be terrorists. Sometimes it's hard to tell the good guys from the bad guys. But we're not to blame for the acts of those who are using our jobs. They're just trying to keep your worry pressure alive.

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Condoms

Thank you "Joe Millionaire."

If you have a story to tell, let's not be disrespectful to the authorities for doing their job. We're not to be alarmed to the activities for doing their job. They're just trying to keep your worry pressure alive.

Accepting international students is an important part of our country's mission to foster goodwill around the world, and we must work to ensure that our students are treated with respect and dignity.

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**Surreal celebrity behavior**

Hey Theo: Why not take your act out on the road?

**Kristin Davis**

STAFF WRITER

After attending Late Knights this past weekend, I couldn't get Theo from "Road Block" out of my mind. It wasn't because he was particularly good looking and didn't do anything to make him stand out, but it was his personality, wit or intelligence, or rather, the lack of it. The producers did nothing to do with his fixation with talking about himself, or more specifically his "hard body." Theo was incredibly self absorbed, vulgar and annoying.

He spent most of the night spouting metaphors that didn't make any sense, talking about his penis, or mentioning that his personal quote was "It's the season," although he never explained what that meant.

- This wasn't even the most annoying trait about this "celebrity." One of my friends told me when Theo first came into the Student Union, he literally stuck up his nose at students who said "hello" to him.

The final obnoxious behavior that broke the camel's back was when he told us he didn't have time for a photo because "he had to do his thing." Who does he think he is? A brief "pit bull" look alike? I'm so bored of overrated reality television shows and wannabe celebrities. Underneath their expensive clothes, manicured nails and makeup, celebrities are just normal people. They don't deserve to be treated as if they are superior humans.

It seems as if everyone these days has stars in his or her eyes. Some people have a tendency to think that anyone who has been on television, movies or on the radio deserves to be treated as if they are gods when they aren't. Just because people make a few dollars doing something of little or no importance doesn't mean they should be treated with more respect than anyone else. Especially if they are the type of celebrity who treat people as if they are unworthy of their presence.

Most of my friends that have met celebrities have found them to be arrogant and egotistical. Don't feel bad not to get caught up in our star-struck culture when celebrity is no more than the focus of most media sources. You're from new, no one will care when you meet celebrities like Theo will realize that after his 15 minutes of fame expires, he should continue to live a private life, as private as the details of his package should be.

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**The midgets vs. the elephant**

Stephen Hirst

STAFF WRITER

Finally, one of life's greatest mysteries is solved. For decades, it has been rumored, with no clear answer in sight. But on Jan. 15, 2003, the people of the world get their answer to an eternally debated question: Who can tow a commercial jet further - 50 midgets or an elephant?

In perhaps the most ridiculous news story in the history of the Fox network — and that's saying quite a lot — the circus act "Man vs. Beast" will pit human challenge against animals in various physical competitions.

Highlights include a world-class sprinter racing a 100 meter dash against a giraffe and a zebra, the world's hottest dogseeing champion in an exciting dash with a bear nearly ten times his weight, and, of course, a team of midgets will compete against an elephant to see who can drag a DC-10 through a desert faster and further.

And just think, some people who know America, a group of network executives in suits and ties and with college degrees, sat around a table in a boardroom and came up with these ideas.

**Network Executive #1:** "So then it's settled. The orangutan will do the tug-of-war, you know, the monkey act. That should draw some ratings, right?"

**Network Executive #2:** "That's not bad, but won't the orangutan be too tired for the duck contest against T-Mac?"

I'm pretty certain that there will be some public outcry over this event. Not over the animals; Fox was careful to have representatives of the Humane Society oversee all the events to ensure safety. It's just that any protest will be something to the effect of how the participants are degraded in their sport, and have forfeited their dignity for dollars.

Former heavyweight-champion Shawn Crawford probably stands to lose the most, as his race will no doubt draw comparisons to the infamous Jesse Owens horse races of the 1930's. After winning four gold medals in Germany in 1936, Owens went on to race against Olympic opponents. Seeking the premier sprinter of the day and one of history's greatest athletes be lowered to the level of sideshow entertainment was difficult for many Americans to watch.

Of course, some athletes, such as Takeru Kobayashi, don't have to worry about such things. I don't think anyone is going to argue that a man who once ate fifty hot dogs in twelve minutes is concerned with anything related to dignity.

But admit it — you're already interested. Who doesn't want to see a 132 lb. Japanese man eat faster than a 1,000 lb. Kodiak bear? Now that's what I call entertainment.

I'll be the first to admit that some of these Fox specials have been in rather poor taste. "Who Wants To Marry A Millionaire?" was possibly the most pathetic thing I've ever seen on television. And "Magical's Biggest Secrets Finally Revealed!" was another show I wasn't a real big fan of. That one managed to suck all the fun and mystery out of every magic show I've ever seen, while simultaneously destroying the careers of magicians everywhere by giving away the magic industry's most guarded secrets. Thanks a lot, Fox.

But I think this show will be a success, and not only for the ratings. It should be genuinely fun to watch. The climax of the American entertainment industry now is completely different from that of Owens' day. The racial overtones that he dealt with are no longer an issue for athletes. In the 30's, there was a general feeling that Owens was being taken advantage of. That isn't the case with Crawford. He clearly knows what he signed up for, and will undoubtedly get a hefty payday for his efforts. Hopefully, most people will understand that these games are all in the spirit of fun. There won't be any broken hearts, missed appointments or lawsuits at the end of the show, just a few sore muscles. In other words, yes, "Man vs. Beast" is unbelievable idiotic, but at least it's harmless idiotic. I'm sure there will be people bemoaning this entire event as the end of western civilization or the further decline of American culture, but this is nothing new. It has all been done before. Only now, it's being mass-marketed.

At the time this article is printed, the multiplicity of companies will be over and done with, and the outcome of these events will be public knowledge. I figure that the starting gun will be fired this Saturday, giving Crawford the chance to get out on an early lead. That's probably his only shot against an animal with a stride that is incomparable.

And I wish him and all the other contestants' luck, as they defend the prowess of Homo sapiens everywhere.

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UCF hosts Troy State in A-Sun home opener

CHRIS BERNHARDT
STAFF WRITER

Coming off a three-game losing streak, the UCF women's basketball team needed a spark last week as it began its conference schedule. It got one in a big way with wins over Jacksonville and archival Stetson.

But while those two victories helped get the Golden Knights going in the right direction, take them with a grain of salt. Jacksonville and Stetson are a combined 3-13.

Saturday the competition gets bumped up a notch when Troy State comes to town. Though the Lady Trojans' overall record of 6-6 may not seem impressive, it ranks as the best among teams in the Atlantic Sun South Division, a division that includes UCF. The Golden Knights come into the game 6-7.

Neither team has lost within the conference as of yet, so expect a hard-fought battle. Just don't expect a lot of points.

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The next closest competitor dishes out only 4.4 per game. The next closest competitor dishes out only 4.4 per game.

Ed Dotson is second on the team averaging 14.2 points a game. Right behind him, the Lady Trojans give up just 61.1 per game.

Troy State sports a strong backcourt of Chaquilla Alexander and Kerri Fiehrer. Alexander leads the team in scoring with a 15.6 point per game average. Fiehrer leads the entire conference in assists, averaging 5.7 per game. The next closest competitor dishes out only 4.4 per game.

Center Thea Herring gives the Lady Trojans a solid post presence, averaging 12 points, 7.3 rebounds and 1.50 blocks per game.

SURPRISING SOPHOMORE

After struggling as a freshman, takira Allen leads the Knights in scoring

CHRIS BERNHARDT
STAFF WRITER

When it came to who would lead UCF in scoring this year, several possibilities existed. After all, the Golden Knights had six players average at least seven points a game last season and returned five of them.

Perhaps last year's leading scorer, Marvelous Washington would return the favor. Or maybe preseason all-conference pick Jessica Scala, the second-leading scorer in 2001-02, would take over the title. Or last year's all-Freshman teamer, All Roberts. Or even stalwarts Erin Page or Adrienne Billings.

But would anyone pick sophomore forward Takira Allen, who averaged 3.9 points per game last year, to step forward and top the stat sheet? If anyone did, they'd look like a genius about now.

"I think I've shown major growth from last year," Allen said. "You can see my confidence is way up. I worked hard over the summer and I think it paid off.

Leaders of the pack

Takira Allen (left) and Ray Abellard lead their teams in scoring. Allen averages 11.5 points a game and Abellard averages 17.2.

The UCF men's basketball team has had to deal with plenty of adversity this season, beginning with the loss of the Graham brothers to Oklahoma State almost a year ago. They've endured a lack of respect from the media. The Golden Knights were picked to finish second-to-last in the A-Sun before the season even started.

But through it all, the Knights have posted a 14-4 record, including their first victory over a ranked opponent, won their first two conference games and are playing better team basketball than they have in some time.

In its first two conference games and are playing better team basketball than they have in some time.
Allen and the A-Sun may soon be on first-name basis

From Page 10

...and it's showing this year. And I think I'm helping my team out a lot.

On a team full of experienced players with great expectations, Allen has come out of the shadows and turned into the brightest spot on an underachieving squad. She leads the Golden Knights, averaging 11.5 points per game.

Of course, this shouldn't seem so surprising. This was what UCF expected from the 6-foot-2 product of Quincy Shanks High School when they recruited her two years ago. Then she was coming off a senior year in the prep ranks where she led her team in scoring and rebounding while earning all-conference honors for a second consecutive season.

But once she became a Golden Knight, things didn't work out quite so easily. The nearly three-quarters of last season she seemed lost and unable to catch up with the flow of the game. Meanwhile her classmate Roberts started every game and launched a quick attack on the school block records.

"Last year I was feeling kind of lost," Allen said. "Even though my teammates did help me get acclimated to the system I still wasn't comfortable with it yet.

Then, toward the end of the season, things started to turn around. On Jan. 30 against Florida Atlantic, Atlantic she had her best game of the year, playing 27 minutes, scoring 14 points and grabbing eight rebounds. From that point on she began seeing more consistent minutes and began to get back up with solid play.

"My teammates helped me out tremendously," Allen said. "Even when I was making major mistakes they were helping me out with my confidence. I worked so hard in the summer to continue my improvement.

Still she started this season on the bench behind several veteran players. In a reserve role in the season's second game versus Eastern Illinois, she scored a team-high and career-best 16 points. She topped that two days later against New Orleans by getting 19 points. She led the team for a second time with 13 points in the following game against Southern Miss and has started at power forward ever since.

Since that move she has scored in double digits four times and led the team in scoring five straight games prior to last week. She is also tied for the team lead in rebounding grabbing 6.4 a game.

During this impressive run she had a career-high 20 points and also 12 rebounds for her first career double-double against Detroit, had a career-best 14 boards against Florida and garnered Atlantic Sun Player of the Week honors for the very first time.

"[Allen] is turning into the player that we knew that she could be," UCF Coach Gail Strieger said. "Every night, the thing that [Allen] does is she goes out and plays hard. She's one of our players right now and she's going to be that as long as she plays the way she has been.

For even more perspective on how important her emergence has been for the team consider that the second leading scorer, Paige, averages 6.5 points per game. That's nearly five points less than Allen.

Indeed, the disappointing start to her collegiate career seems like a distant memory. Now if Allen can keep working hard in the next few years she could establish herself as not only UCF's best player but also one of the tops in the Atlantic Sun.

"I'm never satisfied with what I'm doing," Allen said. "I think by my junior year, this conference is going to know me. They're going to know me on a first-name basis. That's just how hard I'm going to work."

Scala, Washington struggle to score

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Big drought dooms Knights against Mercer

KRISTY SHONKA
STAFF WRITER

Mercer used a 14-2 run in the second half to pull away from UCF en route to a 60-42 win in men's basketball action Monday night in Macon, Ga. The 22-point deficit was the largest of the season for the Knights.

UCF had cut the Bears' lead to 42-38 when the Knights were held in just two points over the next five minutes. UCF could not get closer than 12 points the rest of the game and Mercer had a game-high 25 point-lead when freshman Marcus McGee hit a three-pointer at the buzzer.

In the first half Mercer led by as many as 11, but the Knights cut the lead to 33-31 with 3:40 left in the period. But, the Bears' defense held UCF scoreless for the rest of the half and went into the locker room up 38-31.

Mercer held UCF's leading scorer Ray Abellard without a point in the first half, and he only had five in the second half. He missed all five of his three-point attempts. Dexter Lyons and Ed Dotson were the only Knights to reach double figures for the Knights.

Dexter Lyons and Ed Dotson led UCF with 13 points and nine rebounds. Senior Marcus McGee hit a three-pointer at the buzzer. In the second half, forward/center Mark Stiles hit the only other Hatter to average double digits with 10.3 points a game.

The Knights return to the UCF Arena, where they hold a 5-1 record on the year. It will be the second time in as many home games that the Knights will be televised on the Sunshine Network. The last time was an 80-49 win over reigning A-Sun Champion Florida Atlantic on Jan. 4. UCF's offense tends to perform better at home, as the Knights have scored at least 60 points in half of their games at the arena.

Seniors Ray Abellard and Ed Dotson have been the only Hatters to average double figures in scoring this year. UCF is 9-3 on the season and 4-0 in the A-Sun. The Hatters rank last in nine of the statistical categories, including scoring defense (81.9 points per game), field goal percentage (38.4) and field goal percentage defense (30.1). Stetson takes care of the ball and knows how to force turnovers, as the Hatters lead the conference in turnover margin at plus-0.8.

Stetson Alexis McMillan leads Stetson in scoring with 23 points a game and ranks first in the conference averaging 4.3 steals a game. Sophomore forward/center Mark Stiles is the only other Hatter to average double digits with 10.3 points a game.

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The Knights return to the UCF Arena, where they hold a 5-1 record on the year. It will be the second time in as many home games that the Knights will be televised on the Sunshine Network. The last time was an 80-49 win over reigning A-Sun Champion Florida Atlantic on Jan. 4. UCF's offense tends to perform better at home, as the Knights have scored at least 60 points in half of their games at the arena.

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Ray Abellard has been a consistent leader

FROM PAGE 10

The junior college transfer from Pensacola Junior College is in his second season as a Golden Knight, but the leadership he provides is typical of most student-athletes. After he gets his degree, his basketball career is over are not.

The Knights defeat Hurricanes

The UCF men's tennis team was ranked No. 4 in the country in the Omni Hotels Collegiate Tennis Rankings, preseason poll.

The Knights' leading scorer is in the team as seriously as he does his education. He sees himself as the leader on the team. His coach agrees, saying that Abellard has a good knowledge of the game, and his leading scorer is part of a "good group of guys that gel along real well."

The Knights' leading scorer has been struggling with an ankle injury for the last week, but played through pain and scored 26 points in UCF's road win over Troy State on Saturday. He is only part of what Abellard himself sees a more positive team than last year. A team that has improved defense and role-playing as its keys to victory and composed and driven to take the conference this year.

FROM THE SPORTS DESK

Gabriel first Knight to play in Senior Bowl

Wide receiver Doug Gabriel accepted an invitation to become the first UCF football player to play in the Senior Bowl, an all-star game that gives the nation's top college players a chance to play for coaching staffs from two NFL teams. The game is to 2 p.m. Jan. 15 at Ladd-Peebles Stadium in Mobile, Ala., and will be televised by ESPN.

Gabriel's first 1,287 receiving yards in his senior season were a school record and the fifth-best single season performance in Mid-American Conference history. He was a first-team All-MAC selection and combined with Jimmy Floyd to be the most prolific receiving tandem in UCF history with 2,983 total receiving yards. Gabriel also set a school record for all-purpose yards in a game with 324 against Syracuse and tied a school record for all-purpose yards in a game with 324 against Syracuse.

Knights defeat Hurricanes

The UCF men's tennis team beat host Miami on Sunday at the UM Spring Fling. The Golden Knights won six of seven singles matches but a loss by Catalin Bradu, Rhett Rosen and Augusto Sanabria, who won in straight sets.

The Golden Knights defeated Miami 8-1.

Senior Gabriel invited to play in Rotary Gridiron Bowl, but he declined the offer. Instead he earned offensive MVP honors at the season finale against UCF.

Gabriel also set a school record for all-purpose yards in a game with 324 against Syracuse and tied a school record and the fifth-best single season performance in Mid-American Conference history.

Frustrated defensive end Daunte Culpepper was four touchdown receptions for the season finale against UCF. He also had three of the team in scoring and was named to the Atlantic Sun All-Conference second team.

This season, Abellard has been UCF's first option on offense, but his improved defense is the best addition to Abellard's game, according to UCF Coach Kirk Speraw.

"He's gotten much better defensively in all areas; he's made good progress there," Speraw said.

Abellard is also a star off the court. Last season, he was named to the A-Sun's All-Academic team, and the psychology major's goals after his basketball career is over are not typical of most student-athletes.

"My first goal is to get my degree," he said. "I'll be the first in my family to get my degree, and I have to get it. That comes first, no matter what. After I get my degree, I would love to play some type of professional basketball. If that doesn't come, then I'll stick with my degree, get my master's, and work with kids. I love working with people."

Abellard takes his role on the team as seriously as he does his education. He sees himself as the leader on the team. His coach agrees, saying that Abellard has a good knowledge of the game, and his leading scorer is part of a "good group of guys that gel along real well."

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NEW CULTURES, NEW EXPERIENCES

Laura Ashpaugh knew that UCF requires students to complete at least nine summer credits in order to graduate. So she approached the required in an unusual way—by going to France.

Choosing to study for 10 days in Moulin, the junior music performance major found herself living about a mile outside of town, in a setting with no phones, no cars and no TVs. But it was a perfect place for her to practice her solo pieces and participate in small ensemble groups.

“Every other day or so, all of the students would gather together and perform for one another,” she said. “It amazed me how much students improved over such a short time.”

“I traveled with my instrument before, but this trip will always be one of the most enlightening experiences of my life.”

Students eager to complete the campus requirement by taking a similar approach have 18 different opportunities to study abroad this summer and immerse themselves in the language, music and art of another culture.

But the deadline to apply is nearing. Applications are due Feb. 1 for study in Germany. Applications are due April 15 to study in Spain, France and Japan. Other locations where UCF students can study include South Africa, the Caribbean, Italy, Sweden, Scotland and Jordan.

Some programs can be pricey. For example, the cost for the program in Germany is $2,500, excluding airfare, UCF tuition and personal expenses. For the program that runs July 21-Aug. 15, (Applicants for the Germany program must have completed one full year of college courses and at least two semesters of “Elementary German.”) Yet scholarships are available through the Office of International Studies based on financial need and enrollment in the Burnett Honors College.

Please See Students on 16

A night of burn-outs and roach paper

THE ROAD LESS TRAVELERED

Linnea Brown
STAFF WRITER

“Dude, when I get high, it makes me wanna do stuff,” actor James Newton proclaimed loudly, bouncing his legs restlessly in his on-stage chair.

His four-stoned friends stared at him blankly. One of them took a long drag from a male-bodied joint and exploded slowly out of the corner of his mouth, evidently making a conscious effort to formulate a deep thought.

“I don’t know what you ever do sit around and talk about, man,” he yawned and looked over at his friend finally said.

We were obviously not welcome there. As the regular Frankie Junction's rounds about on his barricaded table to scold us all, I felt oddly like young Forrest Gump, skipping onto the school bus to find every seat was already "taken."
With a tongue ring, three ear­
ings and a tribal arm band tat­
tooed to his shoulder, junior Eric
Harris said he plans to contin­
ue his collection with a tattoo of a
"40 Oz. To Freedom Sun with inlay "
of Greek Letters (Phi Sigma)" on his upper back.

It all started with his freshman year when Harris decided to get two piercings.

"It basically started out as a "rebellious step,"" Harris said. "The other ear­nings were just for fun, and the need to get something piercing you get an adrenaline rush while getting it done, so it's like becoming all of a sudden.

But his next piercing was for a different reason.

"I knew I had wanted a tongue ring since I had kissed a girl with one," he said. "A tongue ring just adds a little spice into the kiss and gives the other person a unique feeling that cannot easily be described. Each tongue ring makes the kiss different. So, basically one person can kiss many different ways simply changing their tongue ring.

Tattoos and piercings have always been a fashion trend among students, whether as a rebellious act since it may be their first time away from home, or maybe just because they think it's the "cool thing to do," along with those new tattoos or piercings come new types of jewelry for piercings, and different places to wear them.

Harris, for example, said he usually wears a "tongue barrel" in professional situations.

"These are very useful for wearing while you're at work, so you don't get yelled at by the boss," he said.

Another type of tongue ring he described is the "slave ring," he said the slave ring refers to a "tongue ring" in the top part of the tongue ring.

"It basically gives you something to do when you're bored," Harris said. "Instead of chewing gum, you can just play with your tongue ring. The extra ring also adds a little extra when performing oral sex.

When Harris saw the light-up tongue ring, which he described as a regular tongue ring with a large top part that宽松es small LEDs (light emitting diodes) which flash different colors, he knew he had to get one.

"This one gets flashes orange and blue, for a team which will remain unnamed," he said. "The top part holds three batteries and is a little bit bigger than a normal tongue ring and takes a little getting used to, especially while trying to drink.

However, there is one particu­lar tongue ring, known as the "Tig­ger," that everyone talks about, Harris said.

"It is a vibrating tongue ring, which really only serves one pur­pose," he said. "This tongue ring is Tigger hits the spot. It adds a great new rush to the idea of performing oral sex on a woman. Not only is she getting one of the things she loves, but it's vibrating too. Every girl I've asked prefers the vibrating one over any other!"

After much consideration, Harris also decided to get a tattoo in February 2002.

The most painful was the tai­toe, Harris said.

"It took over two hours to com­plete and burned almost the entire time," he said.

However, Harris said he would definitely go through the process again.

"A tattoo is more permanent, so make sure you really check out the place and what you're getting," Harris said.

Students need to check out the establishments they go to for the tattoo, you get what you pay for most of the time, he said.

"If the place is really cheap, there's probably a reason for it."

The body piercing and tattoo­ing trend started about five years ago, said Matthews Tercsak, who works at Mystik University and Dean. Although he said it is com­mon for college students to get pierced and tattooed, a younger generation of tattoo and piercing fans is developing, even with state laws saying that parents must come in with a notarized release form if their child is under 18 years old.

"I have seen a huge increase in 14-year-olds coming in to get their navels pierced," he said. "A few parents are bringing in chil­dren way too young to be pierced."

Tercsak said he has even seen mothers bring in sons as young as 18 and to get their tongue pierced. However, his store refuses to pierce children.

Sterilization is also a huge fac­tor when getting a tattoo or pierce­ring. George Rivers, of Adrenaline High Performance Tattoos and Body Piercing Studios, on University Boulevard, said the shop sterilizes every tool they use and is monitored by the health department. The piercing guns used by malls are not approved by

Laura Stevens
Staff Writer
Students fulfill summer requirements abroad

From page 14
College. The minimum GPA for all programs is 2.0, however, some programs accept appeals.

Bernard Decker, an assistant professor in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature, has accompanied students to Germany since 1991. Among other benefits, he said, students who travel pick up elements of a foreign language not easily learned in the classroom. Moreover, from a book and looking at the board only works to a certain degree, he said.

"You might be surprised at how easy it is to pick up a language," he said. "You learn what you need, but exposure to other cultures is what matters most.

Conflicts always arise because we don't know each other," Decker said. "If we understood Arabic culture, we might not have these problems."

Anne Prucha, co-director of the Madrid study program, agreed. "The best part of the experience is being another culture and language 24 hours a day for six weeks," she said.

Prucha, who has taught at UCF for six years, believes that students should study abroad to "broaden their perspective on the world.

"They should be open to other cultures, willing to see another point of view and eager to try another language and use it in the classroom," she said.

In addition, they should study abroad to challenge themselves and be made of the self-sufficiency and independence that one gains from studying abroad are invaluable.

In Spain, Prucha said, studies live with host families, visit museums and other sights and "have numerous opportunities to experience the vibrancy of Madrid, a city known for its cultural attractions, active lifestyle, delicious food and drink and excellent teaching staff."

A three-week program in Uruguay, Japan, requires students to take an immersive language program as part of their study in the former fishing village east of Tokyo, where they are enrolled at Meikai University and stay at a hotel.

Students who study in France will visit two places: Albi, a town that is home to 12,000 residents, a royal castle and the burial place of Leonardo da Vinci; and Le Puy de Dome, a 125,000 square-mile center for students who are enrolled at the University of Orleans and stay at a hotel.

Students who study in Germany will visit two places: Munich, a city that is home to 12,000 residents, a royal castle and the burial place of Ludwig von Beethoven; and the city of Munich, a city that is home to 125,000 square-mile center for students who are enrolled at the University of Munich and stay at a hotel.

The 30-year-old study-abroad program in Italy is focused on art.

Italy is famous for its large cathedrals and the history that goes along with them.

Moreover, students can enroll in the program without any experience speaking the Italian language, because the program is taught in English - although Italian language courses are available.

However, Rodney DeVeres, 22, a senior computer-engineering major chose to study Italian while he was there last summer. "I felt I became more comfortable and fluid with the language, since you have no choice but to speak it," he said.

"One of my favorite parts was watching the sun set almost every day after dinner from our housing area," DeVeres said. "We were seated on top of a hill and a group of us would watch the sun set behind hills. It was very tranquil and made you appreciate nature. It was definitely a break from seeing the sun set behind a building or during rush hour."

Willbar Houston, a 26-year-old studying Italian at UCF, also went to Italy last summer.

"Actually I would say that it was a dream come true," Houston said. "People were extremely informative and cordial. The history of Italy and the evolution of the culture, the amount of immigrants who settled into Italy and Sicily, give it its flavor."

Two summers ago, senior liberal studies major Angela Tillman, 22, and senior political science major Karen Sayers, 21, spent four weeks in Koblenz, Germany.

"The culture, the food, the music and the customs are all reasons to study abroad," Tillman said.

Sayers said that her experience in Koblenz gave her the confidence to pursue an internship this summer at the American Consulate in Frankfurt.

Senior international marketing major Tommy Grimes, 23, another student who studied abroad in Koblenz, can relate.

"Being immersed in the language forces you to learn," Grimes said. "It is the fastest way to improve speaking and comprehension of a language."

Senior literature major Frank Cole, 22, who also studied abroad in Koblenz last summer, his favorite part of the experience was the relationships he developed with other American students.

"We formed a real quick support group - being alone as UCF students brought us together."

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Students consider pain, consequences

FROM PAGE 15

the health department, he added. "The guns can't be sterilized because they are plastic," he said. He also wanted students to not take drugs or drink alcohol to dull the pain before a piercing or tattoo.

"People come in drunk or on medication and we turn them away because it makes your blood thinner," he said. But the pain of a piercing usually depends on where it is, he said.

"The most painful is the nipple, but it feels like a bee sting." However, for a tattoo, the pain depends on the weight of the person, and most only feel an irritation, he said.

Tattoos can cost up to $100 an hour and piercings range from $40 to $90, jewelry included. Freshman Jack Landon, 18, said he got his tattoo to express himself and even designed it himself.

"It's an abstract bird with spread wings," he said. "It is 17 inches across. I have an extremely high pain tolerance. The only time the tattoo hurt was on my upper arm and shoulder blade." Landon also pierced his own eyebrow.

"I got the obligatory question, 'Did that hurt?' three million times a day," he said. Although his mother, whom Landon credits for his artistic genius, approved of his decision, his father did not.

"He's in the military," said Landon. "I just kind of looked at me and walked away." Landon's advice to anyone about to get a tattoo is to make sure it expresses them and that they won't regret it afterwards.

"Make sure it's something that you will still like, and respect your life," he said. "If you can design it yourself, that's even better." Senior Ryan Stark, 22, pierced his ears during the fall of his freshman year with a 16-gauge needle and then later stretched them. A few days after he turned 21, he also got his tongue pierced.

"I have my ears pierced once in each lobe with a 14-gauge silver horseshoe with a ball at each end, and my tongue is pierced," Stark said. "I can't say that there was any one reason I got my ears pierced after I turned 21, but I was always curious about getting my tongue pierced. So one day I just decided to get it done. My girlfriend ran to the ear and we went. We can't say that need for pain wasn't a factor in there as well."
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