Universities lose in state budget plan

Tuition hike will recover most of lost state funding

That budget includes a recommended 8.5 percent tuition increase and a $60 million cut to state university spending. Meanwhile, about 22,000 new students are expected to flood university classrooms this year, with no additional money to accommodate them.

While administrators don’t expect the cut to drastically affect UCF, they are considering raising UCF’s tuition by 6.5 percent to make up for UCF’s $50 million loss.

The state approved an 8.5 percent tuition increase that applies to all in-state undergraduate and graduate students.

Florida debates FCAT-style test for college students

What’s the best way to determine how much someone learns in college?
A) Check the grades and the final GPA.
B) Analyze samples of the student’s assignments.
C) Let a person’s post-collegiate successes, or failures, determine how well they assimilated what they were taught.
D) Make it mandatory for every student to take a standardized test before attending a university, and then require another test be taken just before college graduation.

The Florida Board of Governors, which manages the state’s universities, is leaning toward option D.

The board is considering a plan to implement a standardized test for college students that would operate much like the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) for the state’s public schools. In effect, the test would determine how much a college student learned during his or her time at one of Florida’s 11 public universities.

Board Chairman Carolyn Roberts said those tests will provide taxpayers with empirical proof that their money is contributing to education, she told the St. Petersburg Times. Another board member, Steve Uhfelder added that the tests could provide a more accurate picture of which universities are the most successful, the Times further reported.

Unlike the FCAT, the college version of the test wouldn’t affect a student’s ability to graduate. It would, however, alter how funds are allocated to each university.

The board also offered two other options that could be used instead of, or in conjunction with, the college version of the FCAT. The state could gauge universities based on surveys conducted with employers that hire Florida graduates, or out-of-state universities could be commissioned to conduct peer reviews.

Sen. Chris Williamson, D-Atlanta, said he does not understand the logic behind failing the test. “There’s no motivation to do well,” he said. “If it doesn’t make any difference to the student, then people won’t take it seriously.”

Sophomore Jennifer Robbins, 20, also thinks the plan is flawed. “[Standardized] testing has no place in college,” she said.

Big classes are big stage for energetic teachers

A strong voice and energetic body language is a must for instructors of large classes in keeping students engaged and entertained.

Good instructors can engage hundreds

A National Gay and Lesbian Task Force survey of more than 1,000 homosexual students, faculty and administrators revealed that more than one-third were harassed within the past year. Twenty percent said they feared for their safety due to their sexual orientation, the study stated.

The sentiment among UCF’s gay community is much the same. And some gay stu

Homosexuals continue to feel hostility on campuses

UCF still without protection policies for gay students

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Please See Face-to-face on 6
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Incidents may be higher, but students fear speaking out

**FROM PAGE 1**

...say those harassment figures may actually paint a better picture than what really goes on.

"I would expect the number to be higher," said senior Matthew Parodi, 22, who serves as an adviser for UCF's Gay Lesbian Bisexual Student Union. "I think many incidents go unreported or unreported because most [gay] students are afraid of outing themselves. Much of the time, they are in a hostile environment that would not welcome their accusations."

UCF's gay population has plenty of reasons to feel unsafe on campus — mainly because no policies exist to protect them.

While the Orlando City Council passed a law protecting gays and lesbians from discrimination in public accommodations last November, UCF remains outside the city limits and the new law does not apply.

In January, two UCF students were attacked during a party in Pegasus Landing, a UCF-affiliated off-campus complex. The two victims claimed they were beaten for being gay.

With the increased hostility towards gays and lesbians, some believe UCF should take greater steps to protect students who report discrimination. "It is ridiculous that people are feeling unsafe in their own schools," said junior Talia Tabbouche de Souza. "Everyone should be treated equally, and if even one student feels for their safety on any campus, then the school is not doing its job. UCF's Gay Lesbian Student body should make sure for those students a priority and take disciplinary action against anyone who harasses gay students or discriminates against anyone else," said Souza. "Otherwise someone might suffer in silence.

There are procedures UCF needs to become proactive and clearly state that gay discrimination will not be tolerated.

"I believe gay and lesbian people now are more hostile in general — the UCF campus is not necessarily a safe haven. There is no serious protection for people" are perceived to be different at UCF. The gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community at UCF is viewed as a "safe haven."

But gay hostility on campus is no longer being treated just as an equality issue, but a human right issue as well, according to the Human Rights Watch.

Human Rights Watch claims that harassment and bullying can affect the emotional and physical health of students as well as their academic work.

And that, Parodi says, is particularly detrimental to gay students because most won't reach their academic potential, while others may drop out if they don't feel safe in their surroundings.

UCF Counseling Center psychologist Andrew Blair acknowledges that to curb the problem of sexual discrimination, the issue has to go right to the top.

"It is systemic and starts above the university. [It starts] in the state government. By offering protection from discrimination, "Blair said. "[UCF] I don't know how ever it might be Discrimination is about behavior, while prejudice is about beliefs and attitudes."

For example safety, the National Gay and Lesbian Task force has several recommendations a university can take to curb harassment.

• Training sessions for campus police on gay issues and hate crimes.

• Create alumni groups for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students.

• Encourage discussion of sexual orientation during student orientation.

• Provide gender neutral bathrooms.

UCF provides students resources such as the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Student Union to combat gay prejudice and discrimination. The UCF counseling center offers gay and lesbian discussion groups, including an outreach program called ALLIES that battles the stereotypes and prejudices surrounding homosexuality with education.

UCF officers are also trained to identify hate crimes and bias against homosexuals through 8-hour mandatory diversity course.

Organizations such as Legal Defense and Education Fund and The American Civil Liberties Union believe that legislation is the best way to combat the hate crimes.

"Enforcement all instances of umfairness. Alert school officials and/or them you expect them to take proper action about abuse that goes on in hallways, school yards and classrooms," their Web site states.

Blair says that choosing a school, students should research its environment.

Before attending a university, find out about resources, campus climate, groups on campus and even places and resources outside of the UCF campus, Blair says. "Also, find a school that will work and seek information off the Internet."

Said Simoes de Souza: "Everyone should be able to go to the school and walk without worrying about being themselves. That's a basic part of the college experience."

**Bright Futures do continue, for now**

**FROM PAGE 1**

UCF computer engineer professor of people's technology Hussam Jubara, the computer engineering professor who has been arrested twice for immigration violations in the last three months, will not return to UCF this fall.

Jubara's e-mail address has been deleted from the university's information database, and Jubara has not applied to any other computer engineering school in Florida.

"I am not applying for any other teaching contract with the university in the midst of the second arrest last year," said Jubara, assistant director of the UCF's Computer Engineering Department in the middle of his second arrest last year.

Like any visiting professor, Jubara is required to register for a new contract at the end of each academic year; visiting professors teach on a year-to-year basis.

"I was convicted in May, " Jubara explained. "He told the College of Engineering that he did not plan to seek a new contract for the fall.

Last month, FFL, Orange County deputy sheriffs and Immigration officers arrested him.

Jubara had chosen not to apply for another teaching contract with the university in the midst of his second arrest last year.
Anti-hazing laws weak, often are overlooked

Most states have them, but law enforcement rarely cites offenders

V. DION HAYNES
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

The activities of the Kappa Alpha Psi sorority at Purdue University caused a national furor when one of its pledges, a young man from St. Louis, died after plunging into a canal during a hazing ritual. Amid the screaming headlines and the editorial cartoons that demonized the perpetrators, Illinois adopted what was to become the first anti-hazing law to deter activities at school subjecting any student "to ridicule for the pastime of others."

That law was passed 102 years ago, on May 10, 1901, which makes the recent case involving students from Glenbrook North High School in north suburban Northbrook an example of a persistent problem. The same theme, that alcohol was involved, was present in the newspapers were about the death of a West Point cadet and the subsequent trial during which another young cadet, Douglas MacArthur, testified to rampant hazing at the academy.

Yet the practice continues, and the Illinois General Assembly has focused attention on the Illinois law under which 15 students in select schools have been charged and similar statutes in 42 other states.

Despite the nearly unanimous support among the states for such legislation, anti-hazing advocates contend the laws are toothless and often overlooked.

"Kids are more desensitized to the hazards. The initiation rites of a generation ago may seem tame and lame... They try to find more ways to go over the top," said Tom Hutton, staff attorney at the National School Boards Association, which has helped draft anti-hazing policies for numerous districts.

"They try to find more ways to go over the top," he said.

For generations, hazing has been an integral part of society's rites of passage, regarded as a rite of passage for one's acceptance into a group. The practice itself is deemed a crime punishable by fines or imprisonment. In 1990, most national fraternal organizations have banned hazing, replacing the physical and psychological intimidation at the center of their pledging activities with dramatically milder, largely meet-and-greet memberships.

Hazing laws are called the "Sucreries" of Pograce. In 1901, Illinois passed the national midpoint in the practice. Advocates were accused of being criminal or wild and the other students justifying hazing by asserting they needed a ritualistic excuse.

Still, one would get hit with wooden objects or patted with a book or tying pan," said Nuwer, who also teaches journalism at Franklin College and Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis.

"Now, under the 43 state anti-hazing laws, spurred by dozens of hazing-related deaths, the practice is deemed a crime punishable by fines or imprisonment."

"Vicissitudes and anti-hazing advocates, however, insist more needs to be done to enforce such prohibitions."

In 1990, Alice Haben of Oregon, Ill., launched a campaign to toughen Illinois 1901 anti-hazing law. The General Assembly amended the law in 1999, changing the crime from a misdemeanor to a felony if a victim is seriously injured or killed. Haben died after her 19-year-old son, Nick, died after being forced to drink large amounts of alcohol as an initiation ritual for a lacrosse club at Western Illinois University.

Hazing charges against 12 men who allegedly forced her son to drink the alcohol were dropped, though Haben reached a settlement with them in a civil suit.

"Drunks driving 30 years ago was no big deal. But Mothers Against Drunk Driving made it an issue, and it is now frowned upon," Haben said. "If people are made aware of what is happening with hazing, we can do the same things."

Experts say those anti-hazing laws wary. For instance, New York and Texas are considered to have strong laws and impose severe penalties against perpetrators of hazing even if their victims agreed to participate. In North Carolina, which is considered to have a weaker law, prosecutors have applied the ban to public schools but not private ones.

South Carolina's law applies to fraternity members involving the Citadel military college or sports teams.

A 2000 study concluded that hazing affected nearly half of high school students selected for the survey. The practice is routinely used as initiation for sports teams, scholastic groups, bands and even church youth organizations.

"The study called Initiation Rights of Assured Americans, cited that about 48 percent of students said they had participated in hazing activities at school but not in high school. Yet the hazards. The study is deemed a crime punishable by fines or imprisonment. Walter Eversore, staff attorney at..."
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Face-to-face time makes world of difference for lecture hall students

FROM PAGE 1

He tries to exact his students into thinking actively about what is being discussed during the lectures. "I try to encourage them to discuss and debate while I monitor the discussion," he said.

Senior Melissa Berkofsky remembers taking Negy’s General Psychology course her freshman year. "I barely ever missed a class, the material was so interesting," said Berkofsky. "His lively discussions on the different theories of psychology kept me coming back to each class," she said. "I would recommend this class to all incoming freshmen who need to take a general education elective.

For Negy, a good instructor is someone who challenges his or her students to think about topics that are prohibited at normal social gatherings, such as race, politics, sex and religion. "I actually have less respect for the professors who purposely avoid topics that are controversial all because they are so concerned with offending students or rewriting low student ratings," Negy said.

Negy needs not worry about students evaluating him poorly. Thirty-five percent of his students believe his description of the course material was very good. His communication of ideas and information were also ranked very good, according to his student evaluations from 2002.

With hundreds of students to teach, Negy's office hours could overwhelm him if not for a screening system he set up. He offers help only to students whose discussion is working hard enough or are needy enough. For many of his students, engaging lectures are all they need. Another UCF teacher, Seth Elshemier, has found a way to keep his big class motivated, even though they meet four days a week at 8 a.m. Even though the class begins so early, students do not miss a class due to the interesting and important material covered each class meeting.

Elshemier keeps his students thinking by passing around models, asking questions and having students work on problems in class. "It is easier for a student to get lost in a large class, but that is why a good instructor should make sure students know how to take the initiative to get assistance if they need it," Elshemier said.

He offers students feedback through his office hours, where students can pick up graded tests, or they can contact him through e-mail. Elshemier also considers students’ feedback from student evaluation forms. "I see some recurring or helpful suggestion, I will use it to serve future students," he said.

Last year, 40 percent of Elshemier’s students evaluated his stimulation for learning as very good. Forty percent also said he was very available to help students inside and outside of the classroom.

A professor must convince a student that the course material is not only understandable, but worth the effort to learn. Elshemier said. "Students will take their cue on how interesting and important a topic is based on how well an instructor conveys the enthusiasm that first led them to that field," he said.

Despite efforts by big-class teachers like Elshemier to keep their students involved, senior Kariel Wokewskan says out-of-class assistance is still important to succeed. "The lecture class was a bit overwhelming with 300 students, but the lab helped to clarify the weekly material with a smaller class size," said Wokewskan. "If you are going to enroll in a lecture class, try to schedule a lab offered or visit the professor’s office,” she said.

Teacher Daniel Vaughan knows the power of connecting with students in smaller numbers. "I am available to all of my students during office hours, before and after class, and via e-mail and telephone. Even my cell phone number is published on my Web site," he said.

 Vaughan said students can learn equally as well in larger size lecture classroom and smaller ones if the professor knows the subject, he can orally communicate that subject to others and cares about the students.

Some people take it more seriously than others
Not being able to listen to your teachers might be a disorder

Natalie Rodriguez

Some students, no matter how smart, just can’t listen. It’s not that they’re learning impaired; they just can’t process the information that most students can. These “learning disabled” students suffer from a litany of problems with one thing in common: they barely have a hint that anything’s wrong.

At UCF, this unusual disability includes students with specific auditory, analytical, and linguistic disabilities and those with attention deficit hyperactive disorder. Of the 525 students who were registered at Student Disability Services in fall 2002, 80 percent had a learning disability.

The most significant problem for college students with learning disabilities face is “people not understanding their disability because it’s hidden,” said Philip N. Kallin, director of Student Disability Services at UCF. A person with a learning disability shows little sign of problems in everyday life, he said.

The term learning disability is used to describe the difficulty a person with average or even high intelligence has in acquiring basic academic skills.

There are ways to overcome the challenges these learning disabilities pose through identification and accommodation. At UCF, Student Disability Services offers individualized services to those students who present a recent or updated documentation of their learning disability. Kallin said Student Disability Services only works with those students who come to them.

One of the more popular accommodations is allowing more time for learning-disabled students to take tests than other students. Student Disability Services administrators over 2,000 tests in an academic year. Students also get help with note taking. Class notes are transcribed by other students for those with difficulty learning and understanding speech.

For students who have trouble understanding text, Student Disability Services provides audio recordings of textbooks, and coaching that enables students to cope with their disabilities.

UCF does not offer specific disabilities programs though, and does not offer remedial courses for students with specific learning disabilities. According to the New York Times, students with learning disabilities represent the fastest-growing group of college applicants.

Recent research and studies of the disability may have contributed to growth of this category by labeling long-suffering students, said Assistant Director of Student Disability Services, Louise Frederici.

Experts are unsure of what causes learning disabilities. It may be due to heredity, bad teaching, moving from school to school, brain damage or an accident at birth.

“There’s not enough data to say that this causes learning disabilities. We do know that those are some of the associated causes,” Kallin said.

The key to overcoming learning disabilities in colleges is seeking out help, studying and staying committed. A learning disabled student needs dedication, he said. “For every hour that the non-disabled student puts in for studying, the learning disabled will probably need two to three hours of additional study,” he said. Kallin added that learning disabled students need to be open to learning new strategies so they can be successful.

Some signs that may indicate a learning disability are memory problems, reading, writing and listening trouble, time management problems, trouble meeting deadlines, organizational problems, and lack of attention.

According to the National Center for Learning Disabilities, learning disabilities vary widely. They can be dyslexia, trouble reading, writing or spelling. Sufferers may also have trouble with math, concepts of time and money, executive dysfunction or impulsivity and anxiety. The level of the problem also varies, from mild to severe.

Students who think they have a learning disability should contact Student Disability Services. High school students with learning disabilities should prepare for the transition to college by presenting recent documentation of their learning disability, such as a report from a psychologist, psychiatrist or neuropsychologist.

UCF students have access to free psychiatric help on campus, and can be screened for learning disabilities.

Test may greet freshmen and departing seniors

Page 1

“We’re supposed to pick a major and learn about it. It’s not about four years of all the different subjects,” said President John Hitt, the chairman of Florida’s State University Association. He’s wary implementing such a program, the St. Petersburg Times reported. The cost of creating and grading such a test would be prohibitive, he said.

University of Florida President Charles Young wasn’t necessarily opposed to the idea of a college FCAT, but said that the universities should help design the test to ensure that they are representative of the material being taught, he told the St. Petersburg Times.

The Board has already planned its next move: finding out what the state’s 200,000 public university students are learning. Through a committee, this research should produce a list of information students can be tested on.

If approved, Florida will be the only state in the nation that uses standardized testing to determine funding for higher education.

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Cracks in building's face force students out of classes

Brandon Hardin/staff writer

Classes and some faculty offices were forced to move out of the Business Administration Building after inspectors found flaws in the building's construction. Problems include cracks in a brick façade and missing concrete.

Repairs to the 12-year-old building have begun, as crews noticed the building is condemned circulate throughout campus.

Physical Plant Director Richard Paradise said a faculty member asked him one day, "Why are we working in a condemned building?" Paradise said. Such concerns are unfounded, he said.

"Neither of the problems, as far as we know, create a hazard for anyone in the building," Paradise said. "Structurally, it's OK. We just need to be prudent about repairs."

During an inspection of the newly built Business Administration Building early spring, crews noticed cracks in the façade of its older sibling. Following the discovery, UCF hired a forensic architect to find out what was wrong with the building.

The cracks formed from years of enduring Florida's sweltering summers and cool nights, causing expansions and contractions to the masonry. Those fluctuations caused the concrete and brick to shift around just enough to form cracks.

The building's problem was aggravated by poor construction. Spots along the façade which should have been anchored to the building's concrete block structure were left free-standing, making the façade less stable.

Within the block structure are another missing component was found — concrete. Some columns in the building that should've been filled with concrete were left hollow, weakening the structure.

As workers made repairs to the brick, they were identifying these columns and planning repairs for them.

"We're going to be very methodical about repairs," Paradise said. "Safety is going to be the key factor."

Repairs estimated to take between six months and a year have begun, with a coordinated series of repairs, one section at a time.

A consultant is currently estimating the repair cost.

No fault for the building's deficiencies has been determined.

"Right now, we're seeing what reaction the university has and identifying who is responsible for the problems," Paradise said.

Repairs will begin on the southeast wing of the building, and move clockwise to the west and then to the north wing. Priorities of the buildings are held until the repairs are complete.

Faculty in exterior offices of the building were relocated, and some classrooms had to be temporarily moved. For the duration of summer term, the public lab in Hall 101 is now in Hall 103, and the Magneto/Teaching Lab is in Hall 104.

Bret Hart / CFo

Parts of the Business Administration Building have been evacuated due to hollow interior columns and the deterioration of the exterior walls.

Teacher linked to terrorism suspect

Jubara for the second time changing he falsified immigration documents.

Authorities said Jubara lied about a previous marriage, did not list all prior names he had used and did not accurately represent his immigration history. In addition, authorities said he earned $20,000 under-the-table between 1995 and 1996 while working at an Orlando retail store.

The professor is linked to Jesse Maal, an Orlando retail shop mogul who was arrested on charges of money laundering and employing illegal aliens at his stores. He is also connected to University of South Florida professor Sami Al-Arian, who faces terrorism charges. INS agents say he worked at Maal's Big Bargain World store on International Drive in the mid-1990s and was allegedly involved with the Islamic Concern Project, a Tampa group started by Al Arian that allegedly served as a front for terrorism.

He currently remains in jail, and a government motion to remove a deportation case against him has been filed.

Sorority house mother passes away

Jean Walter, house mother for the Alpha Delta Pi sorority, died May 23. Walter had retired in March and moved back to Kansas after months of failing health.

She moved to Orlando in 1990 and served as house mother for the Alpha Delta Pi sorority for 13 years. Survivors include a son, Joseph; three daughters, Paula Righty, Cynthia Hupach and Betty Ballant; a brother, Gordon Quillen; eight grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Private memorial services will be at a later date in Topeka, Kan.

Memorial is suggested to the organization of the donor's choice.

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"The Tenant Quote"

UConn students charged with staging kidnapping

FROM PAGE 3

es in basic computer-graphic programs, such as Photoshop, she said experimenting with computers is, well, not quite in fashions.

The virtual fashion show was a joint effort between 12 students working voluntarily with Donahue at the Fashion Institute and 38 students in a computer-graphic course at Simon Fraser University, in Surrey, British Columbia.

The students in Surrey, most of them specializing in computer-graphic courses, created the virtual space using a virtual-reality platform called Atmosphere, made by Adobe, the software company that also makes Photoshop and other popular graphics programs.

The platform allows several users to enter an online "room" at the same time and to communicate with one another by typing messages that appear in a chat window on each user's screen. During the virtual fashion show, some of the student designers were on hand to answer questions from online visitors.

Cautionary tale

Sylla's Magazine recently published an article about how the Internet makes it easier for students taking online courses to plagiarize.

There's just one problem with the article: Many of its passages seem to have been plagiarized, if only inadvertently.

Michael Heberling, president of Edge College's Center for Graduate Studies, found that the 1,600-word article, which appeared May 1 on Sylla's Web site, included about a half dozen passages that were lifted almost verbatim from an essay of his own.

His 3,000-word text had been published in the spring of 2002 in the Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration. His article was titled "Maintaining Academic Integrity in Online Education."

To Heberling, the similarities were striking. "Colleges offering online education face a great deal of scrutiny among educators over the question of academic integrity," says the Sylla's article. That's much like a sentence of Heberling's: "Online education has come under a great deal of scrutiny over the issue of academic integrity."

Another example: "However, a strong case can be made that it is more difficult for educators to detect cheating in the virtual classroom," says the Sylla's article. Says Heberling's article: "Ironically, a strong case can be made that it is actually harder to cheat online and that it is also easier to detect."

The Sylla's piece, titled "Probing for Plagiarism in the Virtual Classroom," was written by Lindsey S. Hamlin, a graduate student in communications at Florida Atlantic University, and William T. Ryan, an associate professor of international business at Florida Atlantic.

Heberling contacted Sylla's officials and the authors. Hamlin sent an e-mail message to Heberling, apologizing for using sentences that were so close to his own.

Although he was angry when he first came across the story, Heberling says he now realizes that it's a perfect example of how easily people can plagiarize without intending to, especially when research is conducted online.

Analyze this

They said they were doing psychological research. But three undergraduates at the University of Connecticut's Hartford campus are now participants in the criminal-justice system, following their arrest this month for allegedly staging a fake kidnapping.

The three were charged with breach of peace.

"We received a phone call from a motorist who noticed someone blindfolded and gagged in the car next to her," said Thomas Transo, a detective sergeant in the West Hartford Police Department. "She was alarmed and thought an abduction had taken place."

Another witness reported seeing a man in the car remove a blindfold and gag, reported Transo.

"We're trying to turn this into a psychological experiment to study how people react to distress."

The students' names are not listed in area directories, so they could not be reached for comment.

"- Compiled by WES . JON

PANAMA CITY

The Platform Allows Several Users to Enter an Online "Room" at the Same Time and to Communicate with Each Other by Typing Messages That Appear in a Chat Window on Each User's Screen. During the Virtual Fashion Show, Some of the Student Designers Were on Hand to Answer Questions From Online Visitors. Cautionary Tale

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THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION SENT SHOCKWaves through the mass media industry with its decision to ease restrictions on ownership of television stations and newspapers by large media firms Monday. The decision follows a month of public debate, mostly against the rule changes that FCC Chairman Michael Powell says will help television networks survive in a changing world.

The most notable change allows companies to own no more than two TV stations and a newspaper in the same market, a previously prohibited practice.

Both conservative and liberal consumer watchdog groups have criticized the proposed changes, saying Americans will suffer the consequences of the decision through decreased competition and increased consolidation of media outlets.

The proof that this type of change hurts consumers is there, as Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., noted, the 1996 Telecommunications Act that removed the radio station ownership limit of 40 stations in the nation was supposed to help consumers. The theory was that competition could take care of the need for programing diversity.

A small group of rich radio companies forced the idea into law, and instead of helping consumers, it created a monster.

Since the rule change's backers, Clear Channel Communications, has since expanded its radio station holdings to over 1,300, making it five times larger than its closest competitor and allowing it to homogenize content across the country, including in the Orlando market.

Combined with its Fox entertainment operations, Clear Channel has taken control of the music promotion business and closed off small-time artists to airplay. This is why we hear the same music on almost every FM station in Orlando, and why we can hear the same music in every major city across America.

More frightening than radio consolidation is what faces major cities when the current rule changes are implemented. Now that television stations and newspapers can combine into the same company serving the same audience, the natural result will be a decrease in the variety of voices consumers hear.

This is why so many are overreacting Monday's rule change, newspapers and television stations are legally separated.

Though they could cooperate with each other, they couldn't be the same entity. We saw this cooperation in Orlando in the Orlando Sentinel and Bright House Networks Channel 13 shared each other's medium, providing each side with the opportunity to reach a broader audience.

While sharing the content, rather than producing unique content, the number of news and entertainment stories pursued decreased.

If the Sentinel were to merge with Channel 13, it's likely both news outlets would produce fewer stories.

Compounding the problem is another rule change that allows companies to own enough television stations to cover 45 percent of the American viewing audience. The current limit is 35 percent.

Networks like ABC, CBS and NBC can now get more control over the stations broadcasting their coverage by buying them; they'll also get more control over the content Americans see.

Imagine a world where the television networks have even more control over content than they do already. Combine that with ownership of the news values in town for hard journalism, the newspaper. Now make the stories pushed by the network the top stories at your local newspaper.

Now ask yourself, in the public better served?

A recent Chronicle of Higher Education article highlighted a rarity in the university world: teachers who like big classes. The reason it's rare is obvious. Big classes, meaning those in auditoriums with over 100 students, are overwhelming and difficult to manage. Anyone who has seen a bad teacher try to handle 100, 300 or even 400 students knows what can go wrong. The teacher loses the class, and it starts getting noisy. The teacher gets frustrated, and snaps at the class to calm down. Students resent the teacher and tune out or just walk away.

For a university in rapid expansion like UCF, the big classes are a perfect solution to growing pains. Stretching the student-teacher ratio means more money coming in for less money paid to instructors. Why pay 10 teachers when one can do the same job, right?

Though teachers may be paid a bit better for talking to a filled lecture hall, their messages has a better chance of getting lost.

Despite the efforts of a few teachers talented enough to handle large classes, there is no substitute for classes small enough that teachers can know their students. A teacher who has 30 students can engage them on a personal level and interact with each more than once in a blue moon. That connection will inspire them to learn.

Unfortunately, at schools like UCF there is a conflict of interest so obvious and yet so unlikely to be resolved. The Master Plan says UCF will continue increasing enrollment, and UCF has to pay a lot more to build small classrooms and hire more teachers. With less money to work with than originally planned, the obvious choice is to schedule more auditorium classes.

On the other hand, the issue is overzealous teachers who dread the cavernous classrooms that will seem increasingly profitable for a school with a continued drive to increase enrollment. Teachers do better in smaller classes. Students respond better in smaller classes.

The only reason to have small classes is the FCC rule change.

UCF needs to reconsider its reason for being, to educate. When deciding between having more auditorium classes or more regular-size classes.

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UCF needs to reconsider its reason for being, to educate. When deciding between having more auditorium classes or more regular-size classes.
Mike Riegel

This would be a bigger waste of time than Al Gore running for president again. This would be a bigger waste of paper than Tom Green's "script" for "Freely Got Fingered." This would be a bigger waste of cash than taking a bunch of money and doing something crazy to waste it. (Sorry, I always run out of outlandish comparisons after I come up with two. It's a rare degenerative disease found in self-important college columnists.)

Of course I'm referring to the Florida Board of Governors' plan to make college students take a standardized test in order to find out how much they've learned. Under the proposal, students would take a test just before they attend college, and then another test before graduation to see how much they've learned. The results wouldn't affect a student's graduation, and it would affect the amount of funding UCF and the state's 10 other public universities would receive. It's basically the FCAT on Prozac.

Let me be one of the first to say that I'd rather eat dirt than take this test. Never mind my fondness for soil and soil-related products, this is a dreadful idea disguised as a heartfelt attempt to improve higher education.

The Board of Governors, whose members were appointed by Gov. Jeb Bush, rationalized this test by claiming it will hold public universities accountable for the money they receive from taxes. One member, Steve Uhlfelder, was quoted as saying, "Did we make any difference in those children's lives? It seems Steve and his buddies on the Board haven't set foot on a college campus in quite some time, because if they had, they would know that you can't find too many children in college classrooms — that's because an overwhelming majority of people attending college are adults.

We're not children, Steve. And if you really want to get technical, we pay for the classes we attend, unlike those poor children who have to take the FCAT.

Even if this test was imposed upon college students, it would be worthless and end up doing more harm than good. The point of attending a university is to narrow your focus of study to a particular major and become an expert in that field. Wouldn't it then be counterproductive to give someone a standardized test that covers several different disciplines?

I know that during my first two years I was forced to take several math and science classes, but I've spent the last couple of years avoiding them like Justin Timberlake's latest album.

I hate to point this out to officials throughout our great state, but there is already a litmus test for how much a person learns in college — it's called the real world.

The students who learn a lot normally get jobs and become productive members of society; the others continue playing video games while saving money to attend the next Adam Sandler movie.

But let's expose this testing nonsense for exactly what it is — a politically and economically-motivated measure that does nothing to help Florida's universities.

It's a convenient way for Gov. Bush to say that he's devoting money toward improving education in Florida. But what he's really doing is taking the same amount of money and dividing it unevenly so as to "reward" a university that does well on some standardized test that has absolutely no connection to a practical college education.

Since this college FCAT idea is such a dismal failure, I'd like to propose my own solution. Let's have assigned lunch periods for everyone, allow seniors to leave campus once a month during lunch time, and force UCF administrators to call our parents each time we miss a class.

If we're not going to be treated as adults, then why should we be treated as such? I'll tell you why — because this is the way of the world. Once we leave high school and enter college, we get to do our own thing. That's the way it was when Big Daddy George H.W. Bush paid for little Jeb's education, and that's the way it should be.

I realize that tax dollars are at stake, and people want to see that their money is accomplishing something. But believe it or not, I pay taxes, too. Some of my hard-earned cash goes toward Social Security, but do I go to nursing homes and demand that old people wash my car and fold my laundry? Of course I do. Grandma and grandpa better just mess with my money.

There's only one proposal for a standardized test that I would even consider accepting. The test should be optional, and anyone stupid enough to sign up for it should automatically be denied their degree.

One of the most basic skills students learn in college is how to avoid tests. If you volunteer for one, then you should be sent back to freshman composition to start over.

After all, I'm this bastet one two judge how much I learned in college.
Legendary crew coach leaves team near the top

MEGAN RENTZ CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The Dad Vail Regatta in Philadelphia is the biggest event in women's rowing each year, and one that teams across the country strive to win.

It also serves as an annual recognition of the accomplishments of UCF Head Coach Dennis Kamrad, for whom the event's championship trophy is named and whose Florida Intercollegiate Rowing Association itself, but to the people around him. He takes pride and pleasure in his accomplishments, but after each win he remains as modest as ever.

"I'm proud of the staff and the direction that things are going," Kamrad said, "I think right now this staff is hot on the heels of our team's success, but also for his 3.72 GPA - The management graduate student is the second student athlete to receive this honor.

This year, the Knights defended their sixth consecutive NCAA Intercollegiate Rowing Association championships by adding another seventh, finishing first in the Varsity and Junior Varsity 8+ categories, as well as first and second in the Lightweight 4+ event.

As for next season, Kamrad stated, "We've got a good squad and we're looking forward to next year. As is true in all sports, we've taken inventory both physically and mentally to figure out where we're headed for next year."

Kamrad's success as a coach is evident in the long record of accomplishments by his teams. Each year UCF competes in prestigious conferences with the likes of Villanova, Harvard and Purdue. UCF currently ranks as one of the top rowing teams in the nation.

This year the Knights spent the season fluctuating between seventh and eighth in the national rankings. Heading into the Dad Vail Regatta, the women were ranked seventh in the U.S. Rowing Collegiate Women's Lightweight 8+ Poll.

Yet even with that regatta's championship trophy named in his honor, Kamrad remains as modest as ever. He takes pride and pleasure in his accomplishments, but after each win he turns over a new leaf and looks forward to the next one.

"I'm proud of the kids," said Kamrad. "They've got a lot of potential and the direction that things are going. I think right now this staff is going to take it to another level."

And Kamrad has not only brought irreplaceable experience and dedication to UCF, but also to the Central Florida community.

He has had a hand in starting numerous high school programs in the area, as well as the Florida Athletic Club and the Orlando Rowing Club. These clubs also have gone on to win national events, including the Head of the Charles, the Canadian Henley, FISA Veterans and Masters Nationals.

As the Kamrad era comes to an end, the members of this year's rowing team will remember he was the last to be coached by a legend who will be forever remembered at UCF.

Another dodgeball season begins with controversy

Wednesday nights are when the true intramural participants break out of their egos and enter the dodgeball arena. Sigma Chi was back with new faces to try and take its third dodgeball championship. Sigma Chi (9-1) took out Kappa Sigma (7-2), Ouatina (5-7), and Dodge This (1-4) to earn 1,000 points the first night. Teams play a three-game series each night against three different opponents.

Even with Kappa Sigma's loss to Sigma Chi, the Sigma set a dodgeball record by defeating Dodge This in 21 seconds, racking up 475 points in that match and accumulating 1,005 overall points.

The Lightweight 8+—new team finished third at the prestigious Dad Vail Regatta in Philadelphia, a competition whose trophy is named for retiring UCF Head Coach Dennis Kamrad.

The Knights also ran into trouble at the Georgia Tech Invitational earlier in May as Larson was the only UCF competitor to crack the top 10 in her event.

The Knights, however, were able to build some momentum as the season comes to a close, placing third in the ACC Championship, and earning a trip to the NCAA East Regional.

The UCF women's rowing team finished the season as the second-best team in the nation, just behind Harvard, and will be looking to avenge their loss this year when they compete in the NCAA Championships later this month.
Junior colleges prove helpful for recruitment

As an assistant coach at Stetson, Schneider helped lead the Hatters to a school-best 22 wins in 2000-01. Schneider also worked with recruiting at the University of South Florida, where he helped the recent Bulls recruiting class receive national recognition.

The Knights won the 2002-03 regular season A-Sun title.

Major-league dreams for UCF players

Looking to join the likes of last year's Justin Pope and Jason Arnold, three UCF graduates are anticipating their selection in Tuesday's Major League Baseball draft.

Pitchers Mark Michael and Van David Shorttzbach and right fielder Ryan Bear have made the top 100 in Baseball America's Top Prospect List for Florida.

Despite inconsistent run support, Michael had a relatively successful season. As one half of the Saturday doubleheader tandem, the right-hander led the Knights' pitching staff with a 3.13 ERA in 2003. With a 5-0 record in 2002, Michael brings his career record to 14-10. The workhorse, who was chosen as the No. 66 player in Florida, also threw five complete games this past season.

Shorttzbach will enter the draft as the Knights' starting player in Florida. Despite splitting time between the bullpen and the starting role, Shorttzbach averaged close to seven innings pitched per start. Shorttzbach's off-performance in 2003 is understandable, given his abilities, as recognized by Baseball America. He finished his career ranked fifth all-time at UCF in strikeouts with 201.

Bear's hot streak of awards could get even better as Baseball America ranked him 86th in the state. Bear was the Knights' most reliable starter during the season, evidenced by his 8.75 game hitting streak. Having to split time between his natural position in right field and first base, Bear turned in a respectable .883 fielding percentage to prove that he was no slouch with the leather as well.

Should these three be drafted, they would join the 10 current or former Knights in Major League Baseball, including Arnold with the Toronto Blue Jays, Pope with the St. Louis Cardinals, and Mike Mashur with the Detroit Tigers.
8 Days a week

Ride away in new wheels

One student's journey to find a dependable used car

Trina Priore
Contributing Writer

Junior Laura Thompson does not have time to analyze why her current car keeps breaking down. All she knows is that she needs a new car, and fast. Her mission — to buy an affordable, reliable automobile within two weeks.

"I do not have a specific car in mind," Thompson, 21, said, "I would just like one that is dependable and doesn't give me too many problems." Thompson is like many college students, in desperate need of a new car but unsure how to purchase one. She intends on selling her 1999 Dodge privately and will use the money as a down payment on her new car.

While Thompson may receive the highest possible price for her used car by selling it herself, she is also accountable for the expenses and responsibilities in preparation for the car sale. She has to assess the vehicle's current condition and find out the cost of the repairs she needs to make.

By looking for cars that are similar to hers in make, model, age and mileage in the local classifieds, Thompson learns how much a car comparable to hers sells for and can put a realistic price tag on her vehicle.

She also researches the Kelley Blue Book homepage, www.kbb.com, which provides both the trade-in and suggested retail values for all vehicles. Once she decides the vehicle's worth, she can advertise it on Internet sites, such as Carmax.com and Autotrader.com, as well as in newspaper classifieds and trucker magazines.

The more places she advertises her vehicle, the quicker it is likely to sell.

"I'm trying to wait until I find a car that I'm extremely interested in before I advertise mine," she said, "I don't want to sell mine before I buy one and be without a car." Once the used car is sold, it is important to set aside some time each day to return phone calls and arrange appointments to show the car. After she finally negotiates a deal with a buyer and has the cash in hand, the final step is to transfer the vehicle's title and registration to the new owner and cancel the insurance on her old vehicle.

Thompson is still liable for any accidents or tickets that her old automobile is involved in while her name is on the vehicle's registration.

While Thompson is willing to put in the extra work and time involved in selling her own car, trusting in an old car is a more convenient and attractive option for most college students.

"First time buyers may want to trade in their vehicles rather than sell them on their own," Ford Car

Web site offers summer travel tips

CollegeSAFE.com provides resource for travel safety

Katrina Hammer
Staff Writer

Summertime is finally here and thousands of college students are looking forward to a well-deserved vacation. Many students decide to travel and depending on their destination, certain safety issues must be considered, especially when vacationing abroad.

After the attacks of Sept. 11 and the continuing hostilities in the Middle East, American students must be especially careful.

To make planning and vacationing a rewarding and safe experience, CollegeSAFE.com provides students with an excellent resource for general travel safety tips. The Web site offers a link to its "Student Travel Safety Guide," which lists information about safe driving trips, safe beach trips and other generalized travel precautions.

Main Street Safety, the parent company of CollegeSAFE.com, is located in Orlando and can provide students with safety tips or resources, self-defense training and safety products. Tamara Bahich, a representative for Main Street Safety, recommends four priorities to consider before and during a trip away from home.

First, students should alert friends and family about where they are going and where they are staying. Travelers should also check in with friends and family periodically to keep them updated on their travel plans.

Second, always research the destination so as to avoid certain neighborhoods and areas if necessary. Third, stay close to a trusted friend, especially at night. Lastly, and most importantly, be alert at all times.

The vacation destination must also be considered when planning for a safe trip. The U.S. Department of State has issued a Worldwide Caution that advises Americans to be careful while overseas. The public announcement is being issued to remind U.S. citizens of the continuing threat of terrorist actions, particularly from tensions remaining from the events in Iraq.


The State Department also maintains a Web database that can help travelers.

Check out these important links for information on safe travel:

www.collegesafe.com: Travel: provides a travel guide with information on safety during a variety of trips and how to prepare for and have a safe vacation.

travel.state.gov/travel/warnings.html: To find information about any country in the world and to also read travel warnings and public announcements that pertain to the country.

travel.state.gov/studentsafety.html: Provides information about student travel and a safety kit for overseas travel.

www.journeywoman.com/us/defaulthtml: Informe women what to wear in different countries to avoid harassment, scams and molestation.
Classes starting soon!

LSAT: Classes begin Sunday, July 13, 2003
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GRE: Classes begin Tuesday, August 26, 2003
MCAT: Classes begin Wednesday, October 8, 2003
DAT: Classes begin Tuesday, August 26, 2003

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Research reliability and pricing online and in magazines before buying or selling

FROM PAGE 14

Salman, James Faircloth said, "Sometimes more money can come out of it, but other way it's more comfortable than selling to strangers.

Students are not forced to repeat advertise or arrange test drives if they trade in old vehicles. Ultimately, the trade-in value is deducted from the price of the new car the student plans to purchase.

Now all of Thomson's research revolves around which type of vehicle she wishes to buy and where she intends to buy it.

Ron Johnson, director of e-sides for Holler Honda Orlando, said that while cars can be cheaper at roadside lots, the safety hazards outweigh the cost difference. "Cars at the dealership are required to go through safety inspections," he said.

Students researching used cars can check annual automotive guides and ratings in Consumer Reports magazines, as well as looking at the Kelley Blue Book's homepage to determine pricing before visiting each car.

"[A] benefit of getting a used car through a dealership is all cars come with a warranty of some kind," Johnson said. "Certified cars generally provide longer warranties than if you were to purchase them elsewhere.

Faircloth agreed that buying a certified pre-owned vehicle allows extended warranties and gives the buyer a peace of mind for the fraction of the price of a brand new vehicle.

Thomson compares the prices and warranty values for a used Honda Civic at several dealerships to determine pricing before visiting each car.

Prices can change drastically from dealership to dealership; so research and check all possible prices are necessary for a safe and honest car buying experience.

Both leasing and financing require a student to make monthly payments, but the two are very different. Leasing is like renting—your payments are made, but when the lease is up, the car is taken back to the dealership. If something on the car is damaged, there are penalties.

Financing is almost the same as borrowing a loan to pay for a car over time. But the car is paid off, the interest has driven the cost higher than if the car was purchased in full.

"College students are better off purchasing or financing a car then leasing," Johnson said. "It may seem like you are paying more money, but you will eventually have an end to the cycle. When you lease, the payment cycle is never ending."

More and more auto manufacturers are offering college student incentives like Thomson discount incentives and rebates programs to ease the overwhelming expense of purchasing a car for the first time.

Toyota offers a College Graduate Rebate Program with $400 cash back, no money down financing, a 90-day deferred payment when financing, a waived security deposit and free one-year roadside assistance.

Honda, and Acura offers a program that offers affordable credit terms on all new and manufacturer-certified used vehicles. Ford gives a $400 cash bonus to students toward new cars or sports utility vehicles and a 90-day deferred payment.

- With many different warranty and financing options for choosing from, Thomson said he will spend a few days making a tough decision that should bring her years of worry-free driving.

"This experience has been such a long, tiresome process. There's so much time, effort and research that goes into looking for a car," Thomson said.

How to deal with a car dealer

Negotiating is essential, or you'll pay more than you really need to. And then you'll pay interest on that higher price.

If you don't see exactly what you want on a new car lot, consider ordering it. This may take time, but at least you'll be paying for what you want and not paying for extras the salesperson talked you into.

Negotiate for a price, not a monthly payment. Price first, then payments.

Don't pay for things you don't have to pay for such delivery, protection, handling, sales or floor charges, turn down fancy extras like seat covers and auto painting. They're expensive and you don't need them.

A warranty is an important part of what you are about to buy, a significant factor in assessing the total cost and total price of the deal. Warranties are billed separately, so they cannot be built into monthly bank loans.

Source: bankrate.com
Avo~d the Department of State Department.

Students who travel to the Middle East should avoid travel warnings and should be aware of the Department of Homeland Security working overtime on safety issues.

Morgan Quinto rates the cities based on crime statistics, San Jose, Calif., is the safest city listed in the Middle East, and-ranked in the top ten. Three cities in Texas were listed, including San Antonio.

The most dangerous cities with populations of 200,000 or more included Philadelphia, Nashville, and Washington, D.C. The most dangerous cities with populations of 500,000 or more included San Diego also ranked in the top ten. Three cities in Texas were listed, including San Antonio.

The U.S. has some excellent spots for students to vacation in, as well as some that should be avoided. According to Morgan Quinto, a research firm that studies crime statistics, San Jose, Calif., is the safest city listed in the United States. Morgan Quinto ranks the cities based on crime statistics from six specific crimes: murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, and motor vehicle theft.

To avoid these crimes, wherever the destination, CollegeSAFETY.com recommends securing all valuables that are going to be left at home. Also, leave a lamp or radio on to make the home appear occupied. Have a friend pick up mail, and move the post office stop delivery. If traveling to a foreign country, make copies of all important personal documentation and leave them in an envelope with a family member or trusted friend. Include passport, credit card, and travel insurance papers in your luggage.

Avoid traveling to the Middle East, Colombia or China this summer.

The best bets are theme parks and cities in Texas were listed, including San Antonio.

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To avoid these crimes, wherever the destination, CollegeSAFETY.com recommends securing all valuables that are going to be left at home. Also, leave a lamp or radio on to make the home appear occupied. Have a friend pick up mail, and move the post office stop delivery. If traveling to a foreign country, make copies of all important personal documentation and leave them in an envelope with a family member or trusted friend. Include passport, credit card, and travel insurance papers in your luggage.

Avoid traveling to the Middle East, Colombia or China this summer.

The best bets are theme parks and cities in Texas were listed, including San Antonio.

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