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NATIONAL

Cuts on the way for Pell Grant program

LAUREN ROVIRA
Staff Writer

Patrick O'Keefe wants students to join in on the fight against cuts to the Pell Grant program as the federal government is looking to cut it the coming fiscal year.

"Fill out or no more Pell Grant" yells the title of the latest Facebook note from the president of the Student Government Council at Modesto Maidique Campus. The note asks students to submit a pre-written letter with their name to their respective congressional representatives.

The letter is written in the form of a personal plea to Congress regarding the importance of the Pell Grant to the student sending it.

Two propositions are being debated in Congress on how to limit the Pell Grant.

The first, which would provide the federal government the largest savings, is to increase semester requirements for Pell Grant recipients from 12 credits to 15 credits per semester. This solution would save approximately \$2.6 billion annually.

The other would limit the number of semesters students would be eligible to receive aid from the current 18 semesters, or nine years, to 12 semesters, or six years, as Pell Grants are only applicable toward the fall and spring semesters.

When and if these cuts take place depends on when Congress finishes debating.

Pell Grants are grants from the federal government specifically for low-income students, unlike Bright Futures scholarships, which come from the state and are merit-based.

The Pell Grant fund has been unable to keep up with the number of students entering the program.

A total of \$34 billion would be necessary to maintain the Pell Grant at its current level of fund distribution, according to Sanjeev Udhani, vice president of SGC-MMC.

Last year \$23 billion went toward Pell Grants. If it were to be capped at that amount, nine million students, or 30 percent of students, who would otherwise receive the grants would not be able to.

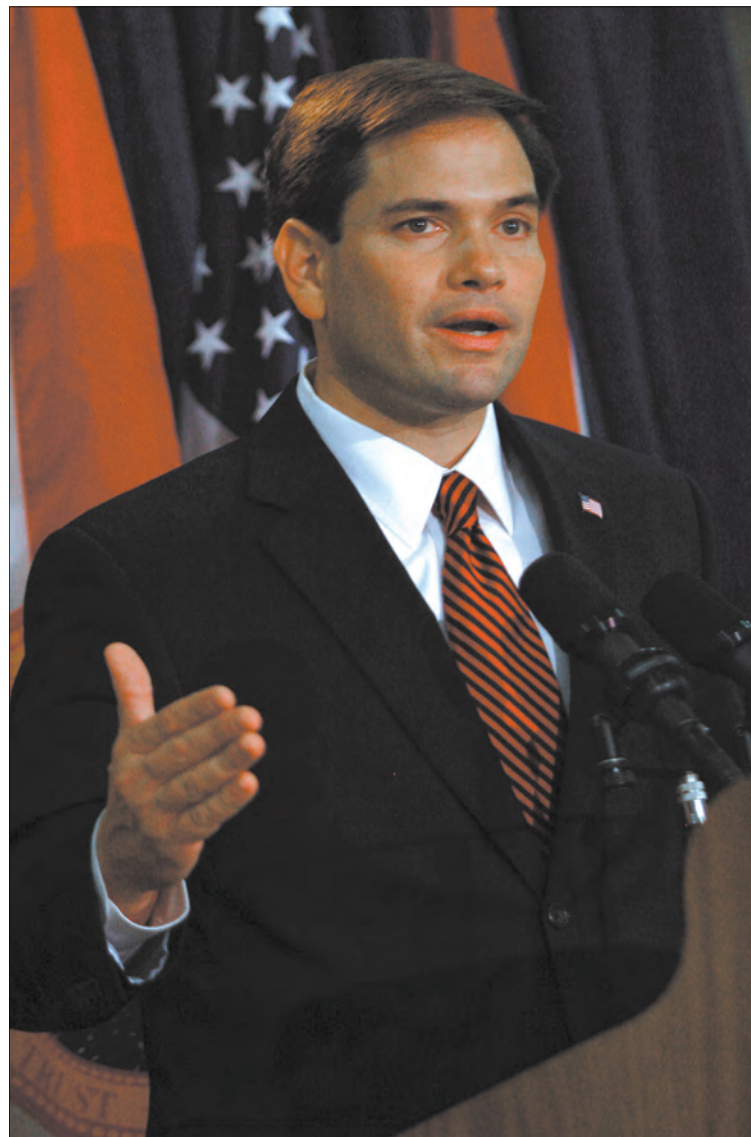
The proposed cuts have driven University President Mark Rosenberg to action.

Rosenberg traveled to Washington, D.C.

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SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Rubio represents, teaches students



JEFFREY BOAN/AP IMAGES

Sen. Marco Rubio is currently teaching "Florida Politics" during Summer C and will have classes each semester until Summer 2012.

KATRINA BRUNO
Staff Writer

University students are once again learning Florida politics from a Florida politician.

Sen. Marco Rubio is co-teaching a "Florida Politics" course this summer at the University in addition to his senatorial obligations.

Throughout the course, which meets on Mondays and Fridays during summer C, students learn about Florida politics from a young and respected republican leader with extensive experiences and political expertise to share with students.

Rodrigo Flores and David Ortega, senior political science majors and students in Rubio's class, believe his return to the classroom is a great opportunity and experience for students.

"He brings a lot to the classroom. Rubio is very educated and has a lot of knowledge on both Florida and national politics," said Flores. "He doesn't seem very biased."

"It makes the class more attractive in the sense that

you're learning politics from someone who has put it in to practice," Ortega said.

Rubio, who the University hired in May as a "senior fellow," will co-teach four courses at the School of International and Public Affairs alongside professors Dario Moreno and Nicol Rae, one with Rae in Spring 2012.

"I will be teaching the undergraduate political science class entitled 'Legislative Process with Senator Rubio'.... I am looking forward to the experience!"

While contracted, Rubio will assist with four classes and will be paid \$24,000 for the year.

Sen. Barbara Boxer, a democrat from California and head of the Senate Ethics Committee, approved the emolument.

Senators earn \$174,000 and are able to obtain outside compensation that does not exceed \$26,955, which is more than what Rubio will receive.

In the early 1970s his parents emigrated to

RUBIO, page 2

MISS FIU

Student represents school in positive light

ALFREDO APARICIO
Life! Editor

Ana Perez had only participated in one pageant before she came to FIU. Having fallen in love with college life, she entered the Miss FIU pageant in hopes of representing her school spirit in a positive light.

"The only reason I first entered the Miss FIU pageant was because it was about FIU and that's my greatest love," recounts Perez. "I had absolutely no idea what I was in for, but I'm really glad at what it turned out to be because I've learned so much through the process."

Becoming Miss FIU out of the 13 girls who entered, Perez described the experi-

ence as "amazing."

"There aren't enough words to describe the experience," says Perez. "In just the past few months, I have grown so much as a person because it really makes you see your goals up close and for me, I really want to be the best person I can be in order to achieve them."

The support of her family has also kept Perez steady throughout the pageant, especially though the initial training period which consisted of many different components and some rituals. "I pray, a lot. To me, my faith is my luck, so I pray to God and some saints and family members who have passed."

Perez's mother has always been at the center of her

"The only reason I first entered the Miss FIU pageant was because it was about FIU and that is my greatest love."



Ana Perez
Miss FIU 2011

success by helping her do her make-up, practice her walk for the competition and supporting her financially. "My mother has always supported me no matter what. For her it's about me being happy and says as long as I'm doing the right thing to get there, she will always be proud."

Perez also participated in the Miss Florida Scholar-

ship Pageant 2011 that took place this past July 3-9 in St. Petersburg.

While the weeks consisted mostly of rehearsals and preliminaries, Perez got a chance to introduce herself to the city on camera, make an appearance at the Tampa Rays baseball game and tour the

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COMING UP | Sports

Check out Sports for an update on the men's soccer team as they begin preparations for the upcoming season.

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NEWS FLASH

LOCAL

Attorney: US Rep. Rivera facing federal probe

An attorney says his client is being interviewed by federal authorities investigating South Florida U.S. Rep. David Rivera over possible tax evasion.

Investigators are looking at whether taxes were paid on a secret million-dollar contract Rivera signed in 2006 to manage a campaign to expand gambling in Miami-Dade County.

Among those being interviewed by FBI and IRS agents is Lori Weems, an attorney who helped draw up the contract between the owners of a Miami casino and a company linked to Rivera. Her attorney, Andres Rivero, says at least five other people are being interviewed as witnesses.

NATIONAL

Most states likely to spurn gay-marriage bandwagon

As hundreds of gay couples became newlyweds in New York over the weekend, their well-wishers included many far-flung gays aware that their own states may never willingly allow same-sex marriage.

In all, 30 states have adopted constitutional amendments aimed at limiting marriage to one-man, one-woman unions.

In a few of them — California and Oregon, for example — activists hold out hope of repealing the bans. That outcome seems improbable, though, in many heartland and Southern states, and gay-rights leaders there are eying more modest short-term goals.

They'll soon get a boost from a leading national gay-rights group, the Human Rights Campaign.

— Compiled by Melissa Caceres

Rosenberg, SGA members address reps in response to Pell Grant cuts

PELL GRANTS, page 1

during the week of July 18 to protest the reduction of the grant program.

"Getting a quality college education these days is a costly enterprise," he said to members of Congress. "Most of our students work and support families. Most of our drop-outs are not failing they just don't have the financial wherewithal to continue."

Members of SGC at the Biscayne Bay Campus also travelled to relay the message of Pell Grants recipients to members of the state legislature.

Denise Halpin, Emilio Collyer and Kevin Gonzalez the president, vice president and comptroller, respectively, of SGC-BBC went to Tallahassee after collecting 300 testimonies from students who receive Pell Grants. SGC-BBC members also told state representatives the impact the cuts would have on them.

The members of SGC-BBC who travelled were not available for comment as of press time.

Across South Florida, Pell Grants comprises an essential part of funding for many students' education.

"Receiving the Pell Grant will help aid financially for the pricey costs of college; it may go towards classes or books that otherwise would be diffi-

cult for my parents to [pay] for," said Sonam Santdasani, an incoming freshman nursing major.

According to figures provided by Steve Sauls, the University's vice president of governmental relations, 48 percent of University students, or approximately 16,000 students, receive Pell Pell grants. Half of those, or 8,000, have an expected family contribution of zero, meaning these individuals are in the lowest income bracket and comprise the "neediest" in the university.

SGA is currently pushing different propositions for the changes to Pell Grant to relieve students that would otherwise see cuts and changes that may ultimately detract from their ability to graduate.

The point of contention for SGA is the first of the two propositions. O'Keefe and Udhvani have spoken about rallying for students' purposes, but note, "Rallying would be great, but without a strong proposal on our side it's just fluff."

They are currently working to remove the first proposition from the table and instead create a merit-based factor for the program. They plan to suggest that students who are not in good academic standing with the University, which is below a 2.0 GPA, be cut from Pell Grant.

"Students that are truly using the grant for school and trying to advance themselves would receive all that is coming to them" Udhvani assured.

SGA is in favor of the proposition, to limit the number of semesters one is eligible for the grant to 12 semesters rather than 18.

"Six years should be long enough for our students to get their undergraduate degree done," Udhvani said.

"There are no hard figures for how much the government will save by implementing the GPA floor," Udhvani said. "But ultimately we'd like to see it mirror Bright Futures, and make students more fiscally responsible."

Udhvani went on to say that what SGA would need now is to get the plan into legislator's hands.

"Marco Rubio is in favor of Pell, but he may be torn between his personal philosophy and his party affiliation," said Udhvani. "Democrats are on board for the most part, we're trying to get Republicans to side with students also."

"We understand what other students are going through because we've been there," said Udhvani ensuring that members of SGA are working their very hardest to avoid any drastic cuts.

CORRECTIONS

In Vol. 23, Issue 4 of The Beacon, the editorial titled "Fee for online courses should be reduced," incorrectly states that the University of Central Florida does not require any fees to take their online courses. UCF charges a distance learning course fee of \$18 per credit hour.

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

RUBIO, page 1

America in an attempt to escape Fidel Castro's regime.

When he was 8 years old, Rubio and his family moved to Las Vegas, Nevada where his father worked as a bartender and his mother worked as a

housekeeper.

Rubio said his father wished only that his son would be involved in a career where "...he could wear a suit to work," in an interview with Jonathan Karl, senior political correspondent for ABC News.

He graduated with a bachelor's degree in science from the University of Florida before and earned his juris doctorate, cum laude, in 1996 from the University of Miami.

He later served in the Florida House of Representatives from 2000-2008 for District 111.

In 2006 he was elected as speaker of the house. Once his term as speaker of the house ended in 2008, he began teaching at the University and continued to do so until 2010.

Despite his credentials, some students are opposed to University administration's decision to re-hire Rubio as a professor, such as Ludovico Pereira, president of the University's College Democrats.

"It is [our] belief that it is ethically wrong for professors to influence the student's ideology or political views..." Pereira said. "As a senator and a professor his students openly know his stance on every political and ideological subject, so whether done by persuasive

manners or by being a role model he is influencing his students. That is something we do not support."

However, the College Republicans' president disagrees. Jonathan De La Torre, current president of College Republicans at the University and a previous student of the senator in 2009, said Rubio's return to teach at the University is positive.

"Having someone with his experience in state and federal policies is a huge plus in any political science class, especially in a Florida Politics class," De La Torre said. "I gained perspective and knowledge from that class that I would not have otherwise gained were he not to have been there. I think it is a very good idea for Rubio to continue teaching at FIU, both for the students and the University."

Other students have mixed feelings about the

opportunity.

Freddy Juarez, senior psychology major, commends the University for hiring professors who have real experience in regards to what they are teaching, but does worry if the senator does not remain unbiased it may cause a "crutch" in the students ability to understand the full range of Florida politics.

"Colleges have traditionally been known as a place of liberal thinking, with this in mind, it doesn't make sense to add someone who has consistently shown to vote for and support conservative legislature, which in my opinion, is counterproductive to a worlds ahead institution and nation," Juarez said.

Rubio was unable to be reached as of press time. Look for updates on on fiusm.com in the near future.

Sen. to teach until Summer 2012

THE BEACON

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RUBIO'S CLASSES

- Florida Politics in Summer 2011
- Political Parties in Fall 2011
- Legislative Politics in Spring 2012
- Advanced Legislative Politics in Summer 2012

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Golden Panthers to start season against George Mason

JACKSON WOLEK
Staff Writer

In Isiah Thomas' first two years as head coach for the FIU men's basketball team, he has scheduled at least one team from a big conference to play against.

In his first year they played at North Carolina for their first game of the season, and in his second year they took on Florida State at home and Louisville on the road.

This year, the team will start out in the annual 2011 Dick's Sporting Goods NIT Season Tip-Off starting Nov. 14.

This is the second time that the Golden Panthers will participate in the tournament, the other time coming in the 1998-1999 season.

Their first opponent will be George Mason on the Virginia Tech campus. They have faced off against George Mason twice before, the last time coming in 2007 at the U.S. Century Bank Arena where FIU lost 86-68.

If the Golden Panthers can get past the first round, they will then play the winner of Virginia Tech and Monmouth in the elite eight.

There are 16 teams in all, the top seeded teams being Syracuse, Virginia Tech, Stanford and Oklahoma State.

The final four and championship game will be held in Madison Square Garden, as well as the consolation game.

There will also be third and fourth round games for the teams that do not make it to the final four from Nov. 21 to 22 at the campuses of the three highest remaining seeds.

However, no team will be able to play each other twice and the games will be assigned according to location.

This will be yet another great chance for FIU to make themselves more nationally known because ESPN will broadcast on ESPN, ESPN2, ESPNU and ESPN3.com. Last year, the team had only one game on ESPN3 against Louisville.

It will be a tough match-up for FIU as they face a George Mason team who went 27-7 overall and won the Colonial Conference with a 16-2 record.

They also made it to the third round of the NCAA tournament before being bounced by Ohio State.

On the other hand, FIU finished with a 11-19 record, 5-11 in the Sun Belt conference, and lost 73-38 in the second round of their conference tournament to Middle Tennessee.

The losses of Marvin

Roberts, Phil Gary and Eric Frederick will be tough to overcome, but gaining 6 foot 10 inch Joey De La Rosa and 7 foot Gilles Dierickx will mean that they will now have four players who are 6 feet 9 inches and above.

This will give them the ability to interchange lineups much more than last year, as well as increase their rebounds and not have to worry so much about foul trouble (an issue that plagued the team last season).

The added size and depth, plus the fact that they will be able to play with their complete roster against George Mason, unlike last year when they had to wait for players to be eligible, should make for an interesting game to start the new season.

The rest of the 2011-2012 schedule will be released in early Sept.



BEACON FILE PHOTO

DeJuan Right [#14] and the rest of the Golden Panthers squad will take part in the NIT Season Tip-Off tournament beginning on Nov. 14.

NIT SEASON TIP-OFF

FIU vs. George Mason

- Time: TBA
- When: Nov. 14-16
- Where: Virginia Tech

FOOTBALL

Greatest challenge for FIU football: themselves

Being at the top of the hill is not always the most glamorous place to be.

And the Golden Panthers are on top of a hill called the Sun Belt Conference. Although it is far from the largest hill in the college football landscape, it is the first time that this decade-old program has garnered this much respect from their peers.

After years of toil and scraping along in the depths of the Sun Belt standings, the team broke through last year and was rewarded in the most recent preseason coaches poll.

Fall practice begins in less than two weeks and for the first time, the Golden Panthers will have the pressure of fighting from an elevated position. It will also be the first time the program will have to defend something with any kind of worth: a championship.

Those raised expectations pose a number of different hurdles and obstacles for this team to overcome when Sept. rolls around. And the biggest one that can knock the Golden Panthers from their newfound perch is not the teams that will be lining up against them on game days, and it won't be the schedule, which is considerably less



BEACON FILE PHOTO

Raised expectations come a whole new array of obstacles and challenges for this season's squad as they defend a championship.

daunting than it was in past years.

The largest potential pitfall that could set this team backwards instead of forward might just revolve around themselves.

AVOIDING LETDOWN

Much like after the Golden Panthers over performed in 2008, it is very possible for the team to suffer a relapse into mediocrity.

But this team is much more prepared for the demands of newfound success than their 2009 counterparts, with a majority of

key starters returning on both sides of the football and a team that will be yearning to relive the exhilarating thrills of the bowl season this upcoming winter.

But in order to get there, they have to deal with new realities, the most important one being that this is not a team that is going to sneak up on anybody.

For Sun Belt teams, FIU is the crown prize. They will be looking to take down the top cats for their own satisfaction and bragging rights. Taking down the confer-

ence champs could be a potential turning point for anyone in this conference (look at the jolt last year's team got when shocking the then-defending champion Troy Trojans on their own home turf).

Teams like Troy, North Texas and even lowly Florida Atlantic, which seem to hold some kind of secret method to defeating the Golden Panthers on any given year, will be coming in to FIU Stadium looking to make

WOMEN'S SOCCER

Chestnutt: "Players want to win SBC, be Top 25 team"

ANTHONY GUIVAS
Contributing Writer

When Thomas Chestnutt took over the helm as coach for the women's soccer program in 2007, there had been immediate success. The Golden Panthers have had two consecutive 11-win seasons and made it as far as the semi-finals in the Sun Belt Tournament last season, only to suffer a tough loss against Denver.

But with a new season only a month away, it seems as if this year's team is primed to have a year to remember with the core of the team returning on to the pitch.

This year's team is not only filled with talent, but is also filled with experience, with nine starters from last season returning.

Along with the added experience comes a new batch of young raw players, arguably the best recruitment class in the time Chestnutt has been in FIU.

This year's recruiting class is filled with not only homegrown talent in Caroline Hernandez, Scarlet Montoya and Kelley Struyf, but they have also filled their recruitment list with two international players in Shante Correia and Sara Stewart.

With so much talent from returning players and newly recruited players, it has caused a ton of competition in a number of different positions.

"I think this year will be interesting because we will have



BEACON FILE PHOTO

Head Coach Thomas Chestnutt believes the Golden Panthers can finally win the conference and be among the best teams in the country.

competition in every position on the field," Chestnutt said. "One or two players, if they do what they do, their positions are safe, but besides those two players all the other positions are up for grabs. The competition is only going to be good for our team."

One of those secure players is senior Victoria Miliucci, who is coming off a year in which she was an all-Sun Belt Conference Second Team honoree.

With expectations being so high last season and falling short

of winning the conference tournament, it places added pressure for a team on the rise. But the Golden Panthers are looking to turn this pressure into motivation.

"The players are so hungry to be better ... they want to win the conference and be a Top 25 team in the country," Chestnutt said. "All it does is fuel the fire."

But just as this team has improved, so have the other teams in Sun Belt. Still, Chestnutt expects his team to stack up well against in-conference rivals.

And the ultimate goal has not changed.

"We expect to be challenging for the conference title every year and this year is no different," Chestnutt said.

Along with these expectations comes a hint of desperation for some of the players, as this will be the final year for nine players who are entering their senior year.

This season may also be a historic one for FIU, because if they win 10 or more games this

season, it would be the first time FIU has had three consecutive double-digit winning seasons.

On the whole, this year's team is attempting to reach new heights starting Aug. 19, when the Golden Panthers travel to Stetson for their season opener.

"The expectations this year after being ranked top 10 in the region for the last two seasons is that the goal of being a Top 25 team in the country is more in the forefront this year," Chestnutt said.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Nissen named to Women's Basketball Hall Of Fame

RICO ALBARRACIN
Asst. Sports Director

After a successful career on the hardwood and on the bench, helping Head Coach Cindy Russo lead the women's basketball throughout the years, one of FIU's assistant coaches is getting her due.

Inge Nissen was named to the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame Class of 2012, announced on Saturday, July 23 during the WNBA All-Star Game in San Antonio, Texas. Nissen, who is entering her 23rd season with FIU, is part of six-women inductee class that consists of former players and coaches.

"It's a great honor and it's some very great company to be in," said Nissen.

Before becoming a coach, Nissen was a remarkable player at both the collegiate and professional level, helping her teams win five national championships throughout Europe. It was in 1976 that Nissen would be united with Russo at Old Dominion University, where Russo was an assistant coach.

Nissen was named a four-time All American, as well as the Outstanding Female Athlete of the Year in 1980, while leading the Lady Monarchs to the 1978 WNIT championship and the AIAW National Championship in 1979 and 1980. Nissen scored 2,647 points and grabbed 1,459 rebounds, including her record-setting 28 rebounds in a game, which put her at second all-time in the ODU record books.

Nissen was inducted into the Old Dominion Hall of Fame in 1985, where her number 42 was

“It's a great honor and it's some very great company to be in.”

Inge Nissen,
Women's Basketball Assistant Coach

retired. Nissen was also honored by ESPN.com as one of the 25 greatest players to play before the NCAA era.

"I firmly feel that it's probably a reflection of my playing days at Old Dominion," said Nissen. "Some people get the honors and get their names on a banner, but this honor really is a reflection on that whole team which won two national championships. I want to share this with my former teammates."

After her playing career, Nissen once again reunited with Russo in 1989 to help FIU become a top basketball program. Since joining the University, Nissen has helped Russo to a 357-206 record, with six NCAA tournaments and five Women's NIT appearances. Both Russo and Nissen will look to add more wins and tournament appearances to, already, impressive careers.

Nissen, along with the rest of the Class of 2012 will be formally introduced at the 2011 State Farm Tip-Off Classic, with details being revealed at a later date.

Returning starters should prevent potential relapse

EXPECTATIONS, page 3

a statement and a little bit of payback.

GOOD EXPERIENCE

One thing the Golden Panthers do have going for them, to prevent the kind of lapse that fans are hoping never happens, is valuable experience.

A majority of the starters on offense and on defense are juniors and seniors, players that have been a part of the system for the last couple of years and are in no need of a learning curve.

Wesley Carroll returns as quarterback and now has two bowl wins under his belt and will be looking for his third. Wide receiver T.Y. Hilton is back for his senior year and the "Hilton4Heisman" hype has already begun.

Yeah, it's farfetched but if he can put up serious numbers, it will go a long way in helping FIU play an extra game in Dec. and increase his draft stock.

The defense is slightly younger with some question marks on the defensive line and defensive back, but there should be

enough talent there to repeat the kind of success they had last season.

THE RIGHT MENTALITY

But the challenge will be keeping that underdog mentality that helped this team overcome their perception as an afterthought in a lower-tier conference before last year.

Staying motivated week in and week out, winning the games that they are expected to win, and shocking a couple of Bowl Championship Series teams along the way should be the goals and they are more than attainable for this team.

They still have a lot to prove in order to show they are more than a one-hit wonder and more critics to win over.

That's the price of being respected and being at the top of the hill. The target is always a little larger and the heat and pressure is always a little higher.

But that's where the Golden Panthers want to be. And how long they last there depends on how they can handle it.

If they handle it right, "conference powerhouse" might not be very far off.



studentmedia
at florida international university

MUGGLE MANIA

“Harry Potter” website convention bewitches fan “family”



PHOTOS BY KATHY PAZ/THE BEACON

[Left] Cast members of “Harry Potter” hold an interactive panel discussion at LeakyCon 2011. [Above] Team Starkid performances songs from the online sensation, “A Very Potter Musical” and its sequel, “A Very Potter Sequel.”

KATHY PAZ
Staff Writer

A decade has come and gone, full of invested time and devotion all leading up to the final frame of what many consider to be the end of their childhood. At least they didn't have to do it alone, thanks to the fan site, “The Leaky Cauldron.”

The website hosted the LeakyCon 2011 Harry Potter Conference in Orlando from July 13-17 to celebrate the release of the eighth and final film, “Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 2,” based on the series of books by J.K. Rowling.

Melissa Anelli, webmistress of the fan site and author of the book, “Harry, A History” and her staff worked hard to ensure that the “Harry Potter” era went out with a powerful spell, raising

over \$120,000 for charity in the process.

“I chose to attend LeakyCon because I'm a hardcore Harry Potter fan! The fact that it took place during the week of the final film's release was also a major contributing factor,” said Sama Askari, a senior and information technology major. “To me, that meant that this would be the last time the entire fandom could feel this level excitement and anticipation at once, together.”

LeakyCon 2011 was held at the Royal Pacific Hotel, but from the moment you walked in through the doors leading to the Pacifica Ballrooms you were transported, as if by Floo Powder or Portkey, to an extraordinary world. Like a scene from the books, wearing robes and having duels became the norm, offering the perfect balance between the Wizarding and Muggle worlds.

Over 3,000 people from across the globe took part in the five day event that featured special main stage performances with formal and informal programming. Highlights included an interactive panel with actors from the film: Scarlett Byrne (Pansy Parkinson), Evanna Lynch (Luna Lovegood) and Chris Rankin (Percy Weasley); two nights of Wrock musicians, a term used to describe music that draws influence from elements based on the “Harry Potter” series, Harry and the Potters and The Remus Lupins; a performance from Team Starkid, the creators of the online sensations, “A Very Potter Musical” and “A Very Potter Sequel” and the Harry Potter Puppet Pals.

Saul Perez, a senior, information technology major, said, “My favorite part of the conference was when Evanna Lynch picked up the guitar

and rocked out with Harry and the Potters on stage during Wizard Rock Night.”

Savannah Currier, a sophomore, English major also enjoyed the live music at LeakyCon 2011.

“I met the first Wizard Rock band that I have ever listened to. I got to talk to people I had never dreamed I would meet [and now] it is now my favorite genre of music,” said Currier.

For those in attendance, the word “family” was one that many people used to describe the intricate community of “Harry Potter” fans. “It amazes me how quickly I made great friends within the fandom,” Askari said.

“Though the movies are done and the books have long since been finished and read, the magic of this series will continue to burn just as strongly until all who know of it are gone,” says Currier.

REEL TO REEL

“When Captain America throws his mighty shield...”

In the middle of the summer movie season, there is always one particular type of movie I am looking forward to—superhero movies. I love seeing the characters from the comic books that I read portrayed on the big screen.

The storylines that directors Jon Favreau, Bryan Singer and Christopher Nolan bring to the silver screen sparks excitement in audiences.

Director Joe Johnston has put himself into that group with films such as “Indiana Jones” and one of his own films, “The Rocketeer,” to bring to life one of Marvel Comics' most beloved characters.

“Captain America” follows Steve Rogers, a 90-pound asthmatic trying to join the military during World War II.

None of the armed services will take him for being too frail and weak to fight until a German scientist by the name of Dr. Abraham Erskine passes Rogers through the medical exam and puts him through a top secret project that turns Rogers into a superhuman.

At first, the military is skeptical of Rogers' experiment, so he is used as a promotional figure to get Americans to contribute to the war effort. Rogers joins the fight when, while overseas, he sees the war effort first-hand.

When Rogers encounters the evil Nazi scientist Johann Schmidt, otherwise known as Red Skull, he takes matters into his own



PHOTO COURTESY OF MARVEL.COM

Chris Evans plays Captain America, the first avenger.

hands and becomes Captain America.

When Chris Evans was

cast as the title character, I was worried because of his past role as the Human

Torch in the Fantastic Four franchise. The fact that he has already played another character in the Marvel universe had me thinking that I would be distracted watching Evans perform as Rogers.

While watching “Captain America,” I completely forgot that Evans ever portrayed the Human Torch. Evans as Rogers is much more likable and genuine than he ever was as the Human Torch.

Evans plays Captain America with a likable, won't-give-up spunk that captures the American attitude of an idealistic war hero— a complete change from the joking and terribly acted Human Torch. Evans is a genuinely good-hearted guy that I liked as the main character.

Hugo Weaving is menacing as the Red Skull.

However, it does not feel like he has control of any part of the story. I preferred seeing Schmidt the character, as opposed to Red Skull.

While Red Skull matches Captain America in strength and presence, it is Rogers' drive to succeed, despite being the underdog, that pushes him to be greater.

As for the rest of the cast, actress Hayley Atwell plays Peggy Carter, a strong-minded woman plays Rogers' love interest. The two share a pleasant chemistry that grows throughout the film. Atwell's lukewarm performance as the leading lady is forgettable, which is a shame since the character is well written.

Tommy Lee Jones plays the one-dimensional Colonel Chester Phillips, but with not much screen-

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COVER TO COVER

LIFE AFTER DEATH

“The Last Lecture” an appropriate testament for valued professor



KAYLIN BOWERS/AP IMAGES

Randy Pausch gives his last lecture to a room full of 400 students and colleagues at Carnegie Mellon in 2007.

COLUMNIST

KELLY MALAMBRI

Many professors regard their last lectures as last testaments—a way to transmit their last, most important bits of wisdom. However, Computer Science Professor Randy Pausch delivered his last lecture in a way no other professor ever has.



KELLY MALAMBRI

His nonfiction narrative “The Last Lecture,” is a book full of advice about school, careers, family, having fun and life in general.

The book, co-written by journalist Jeffery Zaslow, is an elaboration of Pausch’s last lecture, which he gave in front of an audience of 400 students and colleagues at Carnegie Mellon University on September 18, 2007.

The book dives further into life lessons that Pausch drew upon from his lecture, “Really Achieving Your Childhood Dreams,” which he delivered at the age of 46 shortly after learning he had pancreatic cancer.

Pausch started off his speech by dropping to the floor and did push-ups to prove his disease had not made him the weak man everyone expected to see.

“Sorry to disappoint you,” Pausch said to those who were expecting frailty. Pausch chose to be strong through his struggles and he suggests we all do the same. This introductory anecdote captures the reader’s attention from the very beginning and the book just goes up from there.

The professor and creator of the widely used virtual reality teaching program, ALICE, is a self-admitted lover of clichés.

He writes: “As I see it, the reason clichés are repeated so often is because they’re so often right on the money.” Throughout his book, the professor refers to such clichés as “the truth will set you free” and “don’t complain, just work harder.”

Although such advice may be nothing new, Pausch delivered it through tales of personal experience that all readers can relate to—like being denied acceptance into the college of one’s dreams.

Pausch felt that we should “not tell people how to live their lives. Just tell them stories and they will figure out how those stories apply to them.”

By keeping this mindset and saying things like, “we’re not

going to talk about spirituality and religion although I will tell you that I have experienced a deathbed conversion,” Pausch’s words inspire, mostly due to their light and undemanding qualities in the midst of his ailing health.

According to National Public Radio, after Pausch lost his battle to cancer in 2008, Zaslow said, “I knew he was going to move the world.” Pausch has done just that. Named ABC News’ “Person of the Week,” Pausch has accumulated over three million views on the video of his lecture while his book has become a phenomenon and one of the most influential of the last decade, attracting the interest of talk show mogul, Oprah.

The professor’s profound words, “I’m dying and I’m having fun” and “I’m going to keep having fun every day, because there’s no other way to play it,” have kept the attention of viewers and readers for threesome years, and will continue to inspire for years to come.

Cover to Cover is a biweekly book review column. Look for it every other Wednesday this summer.

REEL TO REEL

“Captain America”: A refreshing take on a beloved hero

CAPTAIN, page 5

time, which is perfectly acceptable.

The special effects are sharp and help push the second act of the movie which relies on a lame action montage with cartoon-like explosions and Red Skull’s cosmetic makeup that looks fake.

There are moments in the 2-D version of the film that were meant for 3-D, like when

Captain America throws the shield towards the camera, but you miss nothing if you watch it in 2-D.

The film has the feel of “The Rocketeer—” both have a retro setting with a futuristic flair. Johnston’s vision of the WWII era is stylish and shows the audience what people living in the 1940s envisioned as the future.

Viewers may notice that the last five minutes of the film felt tacked on to serve the

mere purpose of ending the movie on a happy note and get comic book enthusiasts excited for the upcoming film, “The Avengers,” which we get a sneak peek of after the credits.

The colors are muted for a vintage look and a glow comes off of the characters, almost like “Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow,” but not as annoying or bright.

With an American-style score that is commanding but never overwhelming,

“Captain America” hits the right notes of emotion and humor at the right times. The action is fun, the characters feel genuine, and the unusual setting for a superhero film makes “Captain America” a refreshing summer film that continues Marvel’s current success streak.

Reel to Reel is a weekly movie column. Look for it every Wednesday this summer.

Miss FIU: “Everything will fall into place soon”

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Dali Museum.

On Sunday, after the competition had ended, Perez had brunch with her princess—a girl she is responsible for mentoring throughout the year—and their families.

Although Perez did not place within the top 10, she still welcomed the experience, the friendships she had made and the opportunity she had received to showcase her talent on stage.

“I thought I was going to be more devastated,” confessed Perez, “but the experience was so new and exciting that just being there was enough. It also showed me to have confidence in myself and not to compare myself to anyone because at the end of the day, I still have my goals.”

“The girl who won, Kristina

Janolo, had been competing for various years and this year she won, but it took dedication,” said Perez. “It showed me power of perseverance.”

For now, Perez will continue the year as Miss FIU, executing her platform and promoting awareness of the Children’s Miracle Network, Alternative Breaks and the Miss Florida Organization. “My platform consists of implementing Alternative Breaks in high schools. Alternative Breaks is an organization that helps find a community service project—based on a social issue of their choice—and work on it during their breaks in winter and summer.”

Alternative Breaks also encourages students to participate in team building and self-esteem training.

“High school is the time when people are looking to

find their way,” said Perez. “It’s all academic and I feel that this program will introduce them to a new type of learning and teach them valuable skills.”

In the future, Perez will continue to pursue higher education and eventually attain a Ph. D in English to become a professor. “The future is so close but so blurry to me,” says Perez. “I have so many interests but I am confident everything will fall into place soon.”

Perez also has dreams of joining Teach for America or a similar organization, write a book or two, produce documentaries and become a motivational speaker.

“I don’t know what I will do first or what I will do for the rest of my life, but I do know that wherever life takes me, I will be helping people. After all, that is the basis of everything I want to do,” Perez said.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ELIZABETH K. SANCHEZ

Ana Perez introduces herself to the city of St. Petersburg during the Miss Florida 2011 Scholarship Pageant.

BORDERLESS WITH BROOKLYN

Reinstated law a global danger to women

The Global Gag Rule not only imperils women's health internationally, but it compromises freedom of speech. On July 21, the House Foreign Affairs Committee voted to reinstate this bill – this time with even more radical wording. The Mexico City Policy, as proponents of the bill call it, commands for a total barring of funds to any foreign reproductive health organization that provides, refers or discusses abortion as an reproductive health option.



BROOKLYN MIDDLETON

An important point of clarification is that even if funds from the United States are not being allocated specifically for abortion services, the mere fact that the organization discusses, provides or refers abortion is enough to make it wholly ineligible for aid. The problematic nature of this legislation is three-fold. It leaves international

organizations without crucial money that enables them to provide reproductive health options counseling, HIV/AIDS testing, STI testing, and other crucial forms of preventative health and treatment.

Secondly, it creates a dangerous precedent of health care providers being censored from discussing certain aspects of women's health, preventing them from being able to properly do their job. This leads to the catastrophe of women not being fully informed of their reproductive options.

Lastly, and perhaps most troublesome, it is a form of censorship that the U.S. would not dare to attempt to inflict domestically. Thus, the notion that it is acceptable to gag other countries' citizens, while holding critical funds hostage, emanates a false and inflated sense of cultural superiority. For a country that sure loves to spread democracy, this type of censorship is an utmost demonstration of hypocrisy.

Representative Howard Berman of California expressed his disgust with the

bill. "In the name of 'right to life,' Republicans are cutting off funds that are literally saving hundreds of thousands of lives. This extreme version of the Global Gag Rule is the height of hypocrisy... The last thing we should be doing is limiting access to health care for women in poor countries around the globe."

Berman makes an important point in his statement about limiting access to health care. This kind of policy-making does nothing to promote women's health internationally; limiting women's options only leads to unsanitary and dangerous underground procedures.

It is shameful that American leaders are playing politics with women's health internationally. It is imperative that there be a continuation of pressure to not allow legislation that would be immediately ruled unconstitutional in our borders to be inflicted on other countries.

"Borderless with Brooklyn" is a biweekly column.

Tuition hike an undesired student burden

GIOVANNI GONZALEZ
Staff Writer

University students can expect to pay about 15 percent more in tuition starting in Fall 2011. As state legislators further reduce funding, the University is relying more than ever on student tuition. Starting this fall, students will be the majority shareholders of the University.

I am not happy with next semester's tuition bill, but the bright side is we are keeping our university operating at full capacity for another year.

For the next academic year, the University has formulated a milestone budget plan. University President Mark Rosenberg said in a town hall meeting held on May 19, 2011, "For the first time in history, the greater portion of the University's operating budget will come from tuition." Budget cuts will cost the

University almost \$16 million in the next academic year. While this is an astonishing cut to the University's budget, it is unfair that the burden should have to fall on the students.

"The imminent tuition boost will obviously not be a welcome expense to any student's wallet."

A 15 percent increase can cost an average full time student about \$150 to \$200 per semester, if not more. The imminent tuition boost will obviously

not be a welcome expense to any student's wallet, and in an economy where financial aid is being reduced, salaries slashed, and simple part time jobs are becoming increasingly hard to come by, many may see themselves having to put forth extra effort just to stay in school, including myself.

Jeannie Castro, a biology major, claims the tuition increase is "Outrageous! I already work two jobs to stay in school and the tuition hike will make my budget even tighter. " Further increases in tuition will make obtaining a degree almost impossible for many students and it is unfortunate that many continue to struggle.

According to an article in "Backlash Magazine," many institutions of higher learning are being forced to raise their tuition anywhere from 5 to 30 percent, such as the University

of Texas and the University of California, respectively. In the United Kingdom, some universities have increased their tuition by an outstanding 300 percent, resulting in riots and student uprisings.

I am glad there has yet to be any political unrest in the U.S. because of tuition hikes, but it will not be long before higher tuition, higher gas prices and even higher food prices make a college education simply unaffordable. If things do get worse, a call to action may be necessary, and we students have to exercise our right to free assembly when matters directly affect our futures.

Many of us are just too invested in our bachelor and graduate programs to quit. Students who are beginning their college careers in the fall, however, should be wary of future tuition hikes.

BEACON | Editorial

Bright Futures should raise standards to survive

Times are tough for Florida students, and getting tougher.

Students of the state's 11 public universities will experience another 15 percent tuition increase for the 2011-2012 school year. Bright Futures also faces cuts with the Academic Scholar Awards falling from \$3,750 to \$3,030. Bright Futures used to cover 75 or 100 percent of tuition and fees, but it was changed in 2009 to a fixed amount, subject to change every year. Additional cuts to the lottery funded scholarship program will go into effect in August.

State Senator Evelyn Lynn, chairwoman of the subcommittee on Higher Education Appropriations, said, "We have many more students qualifying than ever, and many students attending our state schools." For 1997-1998 school year, Bright Futures only disbursed \$69,566,969 to 42,319 students. For the 2009-2010, \$423,532,776 was disbursed to 177,612 students.

As more high school students become eligible for Bright Futures, the program is not able to award incoming or current students the same amount as in years past.

The Beacon believes instead of cutting the amounts Bright Futures awards students, the program should raise the GPA requirements to renew the scholarship.

We think the program should raise the requirements for its Florida Medallion and Academic Scholar Awards from 2.75 and 3.0, respectively, to 3.0 and 3.25. This lowers the number of students eligible, but would allow the program to increase the current amount awarded to each recipient.

This recommended change would only apply to first-time Bright Futures recipients. Students currently earning Bright Futures would be grandfathered in under the new requirements. We understand requiring students to raise their GPA after Bright Futures was promised to them is unreasonable.

Also, students are taking longer to graduate, which further strains the program's ability to provide the necessary awards. Using our own University as an example, according to the Office of Planning and Institutional Research students take longer than four years to graduate, six years in some cases. For a Bright Futures recipient who graduated high school in 2008-2009, the program provides scholarship funds for up to seven years after his or her high school graduation, 132 credit hours or the completion of their first bachelor's degree - whichever comes first.

We understand the consequences of this recommendation, however, we believe our recommendation will be better for students. It will make Bright Futures more capable of fulfilling the promise it originally made to pay 100 or 75 percent of the tuition of students who graduated between 2009 and 2014.

Most importantly, it encourages and rewards strong academic performance which is, after all, the scholarship program's goal: "to reward a Florida high school graduate who merits recognition of high academic achievement."

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Government debt, while unwanted, a necessity

A popular canard among advocates of a balanced budget amendment asserts that since households and businesses often "tighten their belts," then so should government. But this is a flawed analogy: no one buys a house, opens a business or invests in R&D with cold hard cash. Loans,

credits, and debt are everyday necessities for everyone in this system, including government.

Obviously government debt, as it stands, is unacceptable and must be addressed. But we must draw a distinction between debt in principle, which is a necessary staple

in our modern economy, and the extraordinary kind that is unsustainable. It seems that many people are conflating the two and believing that somehow government, unlike everyone else, should manage to run things without ever incurring debt at any point.

-Romney Manassa, FIU Alum



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SGC-BBC prepares for the fall semester

DEBORAH SOUVERAIN
Assistant News Director

A recent impeachment, an appointment and talks of renovating the Wolfe Center, the Student Government Association's Biscayne Bay Council is making changes and moving forward as the fall semester approaches.

A senator missing in action forced SGC-BBC to call for an impeachment.

Former senator of Hospitality and Tourism management, Xim Zheng, ran unopposed for office during the 2011 general elections and has been out of contact ever since.

"I have never met him personally," said Pablo Haspeo, speaker of the senate and currently a senior majoring in political science, international relations and economics. "He has never attended a senate meeting or a general meeting."

According to Haspeo, Zheng was also absent during the pre-election events while he was running for senator.

Several attempts to contact Zheng were made by Vice Presi-

dent of SGC-BBC, Emilio Collyer, as well as Haspeo; however, they went unanswered.

Zheng was successfully contacted once during the first meeting of the summer. It was then that he gave his council members brief insight on his whereabouts.

"We spoke to him on first week of summer A. He said 'I'm going to Orlando,' we never heard from him again," said Collyer.

Without any explanation, Zheng's council members are left to wonder why he decided to abandon his position.

"We contacted him about three weeks in advance to let him know about the impeachment and he never responded. I'm assuming he got the email and just didn't care," said Collyer.

Filing a leave of absence with SGC-BBC could have avoided this impeachment process. The impeachment was held on July 20, 2011 and in a six to one vote, Zheng was removed from his post. The ground for impeachment in this case was "incompetence."

The impeachment was only one of a few matters that were discussed during the meeting.

SPLASH BASH



NED CHANDLER/THE BEACON

Students enjoy a night swim session as part of the BBC's "Summer Splash" event hosted by the Student Programming Council. The evening's entertainment also included dancing, food, and giveaways.

While one member was removed, the council appointed Jing Dong, a Hospitality Management student, to the Cabinet as marketing coordinator.

The council also discussed plans of placing a "Panther Statue" on campus as well as plans to renovate BBC's Wolfe Center.

The statue is likely to be placed at MMC's US Century Bank

Arena. Convocation is held for incoming freshmen at the Arena and graduation. Placing the statue where it's the first thing students see upon entering the last time on their departure from school only makes sense, said Collyer.

In regards to the renovations, engineering students will be brought in to create sculptures for the Wolfe Center, this will be the first time this is done at BBC.

"President Rosenberg is very happy that we have set forth to change the Wolfe Center and we have a vision for it," said Collyer.

As the summer comes to an end, SGC-BBC still looks to fill the seat that Zheng was removed from as well as several other seats that are still vacant.

Jonathan Szydlo contributed to this reporting.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Obama ends ban on homosexuals in armed forces

ERICA WERNER
LOLITA C. BALDOR
Associated Press

The ban on gays in the military has stood for nearly a century.

In 60 days, after decades of discharges, lawsuits and lobbying, that will change.

On Friday, President Barack Obama fulfilled a 2008 campaign pledge, formally ending the ban. After meeting with Defense Secretary Leon Panetta and Adm. Mike Mullen, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the president certified to Congress that repealing the ban would not jeopardize the military's ability to fight.

"As commander in chief, I have always been confident that our dedicated men and women in uniform would transition to a new policy in an orderly manner that preserves unit cohesion, recruitment, retention and military effectiveness," Obama said in a statement. "Service members will no longer be forced to hide who they are in order to serve our country."

Friday's milestone was expected to be reached under the repeal law Congress passed

in December. But homosexuality has been prohibited in the military since World War I, and for years recruits were screened and questioned about their sexual orientation.

Then-President Bill Clinton relaxed the law a bit in 1993, saying the military could not ask if service members were gay. Gay service members could be discharged only if their sexual orientation became known. That became known as "don't ask, don't tell."

Obama's action means that effective Sept. 20, gay service members will be able to openly acknowledge their sexual orientation. And it opens the door for those discharged over the past 17 years under Clinton's policy to re-apply to the military and possibly serve again.

Jeremy Johnson intends to do just that. The former sailor served for 10 years in the Navy before coming out to his commanding officer in 2007.

Johnson, who has been working with a recruiter for months to return to the service, said he was initially bitter about leaving the Navy. Now, he said, "I'm very excited.

I think it's going to benefit a lot of people ... It's been a full roller coaster ride for me."

For Zoe Dunning, Obama's decision was the culmination of a nearly two-decade struggle. The retired US Navy commander won a legal battle to stay in the service after coming out as a lesbian in January 1993. More than 13 years and two promotions later she retired in 2007.

"The day-to-day life of the military will not change," Dunning said in a phone interview from California on Friday. "However, it will change significantly for gay, lesbian and bisexual service members, who no longer have to live in fear that this day may be the day they get fired or investigated."

At Camp Pendleton, Calif., Marine Cpl. Jaime Rincon, 21, said, "No one has to be scared anymore of who they are. We can serve our country and not worry about repercussions."

Rincon, on active duty, said he was heading out with a group of military friends to celebrate.

Repeal of the ban got mixed reviews from Congress, which has been bitterly divided on the issue.

Senate Armed Services Chairman Carl Levin, D-Mich., hailed it as the end of a discriminatory policy.

"Gay and lesbian service members have fought and died for our country and are serving in our military now," said Levin, noting that the policy has required them to conceal their sexual orientation. "There is no way to justify a policy that requires our young men and women in uniform to lie about who they are in order to defend their fellow citizens."

But House Armed Services Committee Chairman Howard P. "Buck" McKeon, R-Calif., criticized the action as flawed and said his panel will vigorously oversee the process as it unfolds.

"I am disappointed the president hasn't properly addressed the concerns expressed by military service chiefs before certifying the repeal," said McKeon. "Their worry that the combat readiness of our force could be placed at risk, particularly those serving on the front lines in Afghanistan and Iraq, must be taken seriously."

Advocacy groups that fought for the change called

Friday's decision long-overdue, while opponents said it's a political payoff to left-leaning gay and lesbian activists.

Among military leaders there was initial reluctance from those who worried that repeal could cause a backlash and erode troop cohesion on the battlefield.

But two weeks ago, after reviewing the training of nearly 2 million troops, the chiefs of the military services told Panetta that ending the ban would not affect military readiness.

On Friday, officials said they will continue to monitor the process and makes changes as needed.

Pentagon officials said Friday that they will review military policies and benefits during the next 60 days to iron out legal and technical details, including how the repeal will affect housing, military transfers and other health and social benefits.

Clifford Stanley, undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, said "there will be zero tolerance for harassment, violence or discrimination of any kind."

In most cases, officials

said the guidelines require that gays and lesbians be treated like any other member of the military, and the Pentagon will not set up separate barracks or bathroom facilities based on sexual orientation.

There will be differences, however. Same sex partners will not get the same housing and other benefits as married couples. Instead, they are more likely to be treated like unmarried couples.

Service members may also designate their same-sex partners as beneficiaries for insurance and other benefits — something they may have avoided earlier for fear it would cause their dismissal.

One of the thornier issues is gay marriage.

An initial move by the Navy earlier this year to train chaplains about same-sex civil unions in states where they are legal was shelved after more than five dozen Congress members objected. The Pentagon says the issue is still under review.

Associated Press writers Amanda Barrett, Brian Witte, Julie Watson and Sagar Meghani in Washington, contributed to this report.