Senate votes in favor of new constitution

The changes that were proposed to amend the current student body constitution, a Student Government process that has taken approximately a month to complete, was put to a vote and passed by the SG Senate in a unanimous vote Wednesday, Jan. 27.

"I am of the belief that this is the best constitution the school has ever seen," Christian Haas, senator for the College of Arts and Sciences, said at the meeting.

The proposed constitution, known as Bill 10-003, includes changes to the language of the text. Changes to the current constitution were rationalized in the proposed draft because some officials felt that the constitution was "vague, ambiguous and inconsistent in both its structure and language." Some of the changes in the proposed constitution deal with language that will re-construct the government.

For example, the current constitution under Article III Section III lists the duties of the student body treasurer, whereas the proposed constitution does not include a treasurer. If the proposed constitution is approved, there will be no specific position for treasurer.

According to former treasurer John Osborne, "the new constitution will give the SG president the additional power of appropriations." He also said that "the SG president will appoint the budget committee and control their actions. Bill 10-001 was passed to give the president power to approve the treasurer’s appointed members of the budget committee." Osborne believes that the idea behind this bill stems from the disagreements between him and the budget committee over the paid positions that SG President Jon Ellington and Vice President Reuben Pressman want to appoint.

"The creators of the proposed constitution will argue that the senate will make the ultimate approval of spending of funds; however, [in] my opinion this action will create the opportunity for funds to be spent with less accountability and with a bias for certain clubs and organizations; this depends on the level of pressure the president puts on the senate," Osborne said.

The current constitution specifies that the treasurer, as head of the budget committee, holds authority over the allocation of Activity and Service fees. In the proposed constitution, Article III Section IX, the duty of allocating Activities and Service fees is assigned to the Senate, which shall approve these expenditures by a majority vote.

Another change to the constitution includes an overhaul of the statutes. With a new constitution, there must be statutes that support the language of the constitution. The proposed statutes that SG were intended to amend are known as Bill 10-005, however they were not discussed in the Feb. 3 meeting.

"I would’ve expected all the senators to have read the document by now even if they haven’t thoroughly analyzed it," Senate President Sarah Henry said. The statutes must be voted on and passed by the senate before the Feb. 17 and 18 special election.

SG has also addressed some newer issues in the proposed constitution, such as the election process. Article V Section I of the proposed constitution deals with the election process and voter rights; a topic the current constitution does not address.

In the proposed version, "any student has the right to call for a university-wide initiative/referendum election provided that a petition signed by at least 30 percent of the number of students that voted in the most recent general election is submitted as specified by the statutes."

The section goes on to say that each student has the right to ask for a senatorial recall election if 10 percent of the student body that voted signs a petition requesting a recall. A student may also call for a university-wide presidential recall election under the same requirements.

The date of the special election is set for Feb. 17 and 18. According to Pressman, SG will engage in active campaigning to rally student support for the proposed constitution and statutes in the coming weeks. To enact the new constitution, a two-thirds majority of all students who cast their vote must be attained in favor of the proposal.

Significant Dates Concerning New Constitution:

January 27: Senate passes new constitution

February 10 at 4p.m. in Davis 130 (tentative): Senate will vote on new statutes

February 17 and 18: Special election-Student body votes on whether or not the new constitution will go into order

INDEX
Campus & Beyond ........ 2-4
Entertainment .............. 5
The Outlook ................. 6
Variety ....................... 7
Sports ....................... 8

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This Week Online...
Chris Dorney recaps the excitement at the Grammy Awards.

Preschoolers learn the importance of protecting wildlife.

The story of conflict told through photography.
We watch in awe as our country dedicates its attention to helping the people of Haiti. Everyone is pitching in, whether it is sending over money, participating in vigils or physically going to help in the laborious duties of cleaning up the destroyed country.

Students here at USF have gotten involved in donations, along with the Red Cross and other organizations. The Office of Multicultural Affairs is holding a campus wide bake sale to help in the laborious challenge set before us. We are "the band of the free and the home of the brave," ready to assist those who call for our help. But who helps us? If we fall, who comes to our rescue?

The reality is, we have been falling for years now, and the only ones who can save us are ourselves.

This is a time when unemployment rates are at 10 percent, according to Bureau of Labor of Statistics, and the lines to soup kitchens around our country are getting longer and longer. The same energy directed towards Haiti should be used to help the needy right here in America.

Throughout the past couple of weeks people in this country have shown just how generous they can be; yet it should not take a natural disaster to stir compassion in us. Why are we so willing to send thousands of dollars to Haiti, when we do not even know if it will actually make it there, and we refuse to hand a dollar to a homeless person we are staring straight in the eyes?

Walk down Central Avenue. No one can deny that there is poverty in this country, right here in our back yards. People are peddling for money along our freeways with their signs, and sleeping on park benches during these winter nights.

There are children hungry in their homes because their parents are laid off and cancer patients who can not receive treatment because they can no longer afford it.

We have the ability to work together as a country and fix this. In fact, we have a responsibility to. What happened to Haiti is devastating. It is on our news channels every day, and they are crying out for our help.

What is not on our news channels everyday is the poverty right here.

Why? Because it is no longer news. It is simply a part of American life.
CAMPUS & BEYOND

Fellow bull charges for Olympic glory

By Robert Crowley
Staff Writer
rcrowley@mail.usf.edu

As the 2010 Winter Olympics approaches, some of us may be excited to tune in and watch the athletes represent their countries and show off a lifetime's worth of training, with hopes of Olympic glory. One of the most notable sports of the winter games is figure skating. Figure skating is known for its beauty, drama and occasional scandals. This year, some Olympic athletes are training just on the other side of the Sunshine Skyway Bridge in Ellenton, Fla.

Four Florida figure skaters recently qualified for the U.S. Olympic team. The two pair teams consist of Caydee Denney, 16, and Jeremy Barrett, 25, along with Amanda Evora, 25, and Mark Ladwig, 29. Both pairs earned the top two spots on the podium at the recent U.S. Championships, and more importantly, earned the only two spots in pairs skating for the U.S. Olympic team.

The skaters surprised many spectators nationwide. Not only do the country's two best pair skating teams train in the Sunshine State and under the same roof in Ellenton, but they also have the same coaches. What could have been a fierce rivalry between the two teams has instead been an environment of motivation and support, which has greatly benefited all four skaters.

As if this news was not "note-a-bull" enough, Evora is also a fellow Bull enrolled at the USF Sarasota-Manatee campus. Unlike many athletes who focus solely on training, Evora has continued to work toward a degree in business administration. "Skating has always been my first priority," she said, "but I've always wanted a second plan. I always planned to go to college and finish it, but on my timeline. I didn't want to lose the classroom skills from high school."

Although balancing her studies with training can be challenging, Evora has enjoyed her experience with USF throughout the process. "I like getting away from the rink, where I train and work," she said. "It's nice to connect with people who have nothing to do with skating, and with people outside of my comfort zone." She added said that she has found the discipline, time management and communication skills she has learned in college to be valuable assets in her training.

Evora and Ladwig, her skating partner, have been training together for eight years – one of the longest partnerships in competitive pairs skating. While their highest finish at the U.S. Championships prior to this year had been fourth, they knew that living the Olympic dream was a realistic goal.

Evora said she saw a breakthrough in their skating abilities about two years ago when they placed fourth. She knew at that point that their skating would eventually be worthy of placing in the top two.

At the end of their Olympic-qualifying performance, both Evora and Ladwig were clearly pleased with their effort, ending with wide smiles toward the judges as the audience cheered. "I was happy, relieved and so thankful to God," Evora said. "I knew that in that moment, I had skated my best."

The double duo of local skaters will compete in the Olympics in Vancouver on Feb. 14 and 15. NBC will televise the events.

Photo courtesy of the Evora and Ladwig Website: url: http://www.evora-ladwig.com/

Amanda Evora and partner Mark Ladwig skating at the U.S. Figure Skating Championships in Spokane, WA, where they won the silver medal, qualifying for the U.S. Olympic Team.

Photo courtesy of Evora and Ladwig Website
Evora and Ladwig after winning silver medals at U.S. Figure Skating Championship.

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Weather change disrupts marine life

By Aimee Alexander
Contributing Writer
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Scores of dead fish have been spotted belly-up in lakes, beaches and ponds across Florida, threatening both freshwater and marine life ecosystems.

"Anytime there are drastic water temperature fluctuations, we see a higher incidence of fish kills," said Carli Segelson, spokesperson for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation’s Fish and Wildlife Research Institute.

As the mercury hovered near freezing temperatures in early January, extreme low-temperature records soared. In January 2009, the National Weather Service recorded 69.9 degrees as the maximum average daily temperature in St. Petersburg. This year’s maximum daily average reflected a chilly decline to 62.3 degrees.

Segelson said fish kills have been reported statewide, from the Florida Keys to the Panhandle and no body of water is discriminating.

"There are no particular areas where the fish kills are concentrated," Segelson said. "We have reports of dead fish accumulating on beaches, in lakes, canals and bays. The fish are multiple sizes and multiple species."

"Both freshwater fish, such as bass and carp and warm-water fish, such as jackfish, parrotfish, kingfish and snook, have been affected by cold stress," she said.

Larger sea creatures were also found dead along the waters, such as a near-15-pound tarpon in Bear Creek, dead manatees and endangered green sea turtles.

FWC cites several conditions that may contribute to large fish kills, such as red tides, pollution or toxic algae blooms; however, Segelson said the cause of the fish kills is most likely cold-related.

Fish living in shallow waters are especially vulnerable to the variations in water temperature and effects can be both immediate or fan out over time. Some fish may die, Segelson said, while others may survive by swimming to deeper waters with more stable temperatures. However, many succumb to the long-term effects of cold stress.

Although unusual, Segelson said large fish kills have occurred in the past, most recently in 1989, and it is a natural process. The issue of cleaning up the debris is also a natural process as hungry birds and animals can remedy this problem.

If large amounts of fish are mounting up, sometimes private organizations will step in and help out. But funding is tough to find for this type of event.

The FWC encourages people to report dead or dying fish to the Fish Kill Hotline at 1-800-636-0511 or go online to http://MyFWC.com/fishkill/submit.asp.

Facebook: the new coping device

By Andrew Silverstein
Staff Writer
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In an ongoing struggle against growing numbers of adult clinical depression cases in the United States, the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) just announced its endorsement of a new method to cope with this crippling disease: Facebook.

"Unorthodox, I know," NIMH President Bill Dawkins said. "Facebook is by no means a traditional method of coping, but our research has shown use there are some very positive results that simply can’t be ignored anymore."

NIMH Press Secretary Susan Young Dawkins continued, "we also see the social networking site as a significant vehicle for interpersonal comparison. Before utilizing Facebook little depressive Douglas would isolate himself in his room and just moan in his lonesome. He had no point of comparison. But now he can peer into the lives of 113 other ‘friends’ and see that he ‘hadn’t have it that bad, maybe see that he’s got a lot to be thankful for."

The Institute drew its findings from a year long psychological study on the issue. In the study 1,000 volunteers were selected from a randomized sample and required to withdraw from Facebook for an entire month.

Afterward, 500 of the research subjects were instructed to go about their daily routines as they normally would, but check their news feed for a minimum of five minutes of each waking hour. The control group consisting of the other 500 subjects was instructed to refrain from any access to Facebook for another month.

Psychological tests were administered at the start and end of the study to all research participants to gauge how they felt at both points in time.

"What we found was that the non-control group exhibited significant improvement in their overall mood and increased positive perceptions while the control group actually got kind of worse," Dawkins said.

So what does this mean?

According to Facebooking non-control group subject, Emily Haines, "It’s a nice escape from real life sometimes."

Other professionals in the mental health community are not so thankful for the NIMH’s findings. When reached for comment Dr. Phil McGraw stated, "You’re not ... serious, right?"
Apple unveils its new gadget

By Tom Chang
Contributing Writer
tmchang@mail.usj.edu

Tablet computers are nothing new. But given the way Apple introduces a new product, you would think that they keep re-inventing the wheel. The iPad is Apple's latest foray into the field in a long line of groundbreaking gadgets.

"Apple usually leads the pack with design and functionality when it comes to portable computers," said Debbie Wolfe, a mass communications adjunct professor at USF St. Petersburg. "I'm glad they're still pushing the limits with their forward-thinking R&D and investment strategies in new tech products that people will actually use."

The iPad is 9.36 inches by 7.47 inches, and weighs 1.5 pounds. It almost looks like a giant iPod Touch. It will be available in models ranging from $499 to $830.

AT&T will provide the 3G coverage. It will be available with subscription plans ranging from $15 to $30 a month: According to AT&T, the deals will not require a contract,

Despite relying heavily on the touch screen, the iPad retains the basic buttons carried over from the iPhone. There is a home key at the bottom of the device, a wake and sleep key at the top, a silencer toggle switch, a volume rocker switch, a headphone jack and a docking port similar to other Apple products. It can display photos and play video in high definition at 720p running at a resolution of 1024 x 768 pixel display. The only feature that it lacks, in comparison to the iPhone, is a camera. Will the iPad become as popular as its fellow iPod and iPhone? Only time will tell.

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February 8–14

**Monday**

February 8: Free Wii/WiiDS
3 p.m. to 5 p.m.
Health and Wellness Center
in honor of National Black History Month.

Wii/WiiDS Awareness Day.

Free Wii/WiiDS leasing.

Know your health:

A distinguished pianist and composer to announce the annual international competition commenoration of the distinguished lega

8 p.m.
Mahaffey Theater

The Fla

**Tuesday**

February 9: Free Wii/WiiDS
3 p.m. to 5 p.m.
Health and Wellness Center
in honor of National Black History Month.

Wii/WiiDS Awareness Day.

Free Wii/WiiDS leasing.

Know your health:

A distinguished pianist and composer to announce the annual international competition commenoration of the distinguished lega

8 p.m.
Mahaffey Theater

The Fla

**Wednesday**

February 10: Cafe on the Bar
7 p.m.
The Orchem in

Snoop Dogg

8 p.m.
The State Theatre

The State Theatre

The State Theatre

Oldies But Goodies

Gayle Bros.

4 p.m.
The State Theatre

The State Theatre

The State Theatre

Oldies But Goodies

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4 p.m.
The State Theatre

The State Theatre

The State Theatre

Oldies But Goodies

Gayle Bros.

4 p.m.
Harborside Activities Board presents:

Week of Love

Join us for a week of events from February 8th - 11th, all about love!
All events are free to students, so come out and have some fun!

MONDAY
Puppy Love & Caricatures
Create your own dog tags and get your portrait drawn!
February 8 from 11am - 3pm on the Harborside Lawn

TUESDAY
Speed Dating & NewlyWed Game
Gameshow night with prizes and tons of laughs!
February 9 from 8pm - 11pm in the Coquina Cafe

WEDNESDAY
Shihan
Come see this provocative spoken word artist perform!
February 10 from 8:30pm - 10:30pm in the Coquina Cafe

THURSDAY
Make Your Own Valentine & Fondue
Make a valentine for your sweetheart and enjoy chocolate fondue!
February 11 from 11am - 3pm on the Harborside Lawn

All events are FREE to students and are funded through A&S fees.
Programming provided by Harborside Activities Board.
King Crossword

ACROSS

DOWN

37. Skin opening... 38. Eternally... 39. Prepared to... 40. Peabody... 41. Impale... 42. Impale... 43. Down... 44. Sweet potato... 45. Plum... 46. Fracture... 47. Impale... 48. Down... 49. Summertime... 50. Sailors’ org... 51. Eyeing... 52. Jacob’s... 53. Baton Rouge... 54. Strict...

61. Discipline... 62. Horner’s imp... 63. Ice... 64. Bridge, in... 65. Brest... 66. Estate... 67. Recipient... 68. Skeeless... 69. Wine... 70. Mea... 71. Utah city... 72. Lucy’s... 73. Partner... 74. Repairs... 75. Brother... 76. Sniff... 77. Request...

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) Getting advice on your next business-related move is a good idea, but only if you’re the one benefiting. Get references that you can check out before you make any decisions.

SCORPIO (September 23 to November 21) Getting a boost in your self-esteem is one benefit that comes with a job well done. There are other phases as well, including being noticed by all the right people. Good luck.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) All that fiery and bracing shouldn’t affect any decision you have to make. Keep your focus on the facts and ignore all the hyperbole, especially if it gets uncomfortably personal.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Your Bowine instincts are on the mark about that "favor" you’re being asked to do. Agree to nothing unless you get a full explanation — which you would check out first, of course.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) A somewhat unsettling recent period should give way to a smoother time going through the week. Use this quieter time to catch up on matters you might have had to let slide.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) Feeling a little confused is understandable with all these mixed messages. Take time to list the questions you have, then present them and insist on answers that make sense.

LEO (July 23 to August 22) Cupid can be very helpful for Leos seeking a love connection. The chubby cherub also brings warm and fuzzy feelings to paired Leos and Leanas who already share a special love line.

VIRGO (August 23 to September 22) Travel is favored this week, whether you’ll be globe-trotting or taking a trip to a nearby getaway. You might be surprised (or maybe not) by who wants to be your traveling companion.

The Spats

When you married me you hit the jackpot

I want to know why that JACQUES or CRAGGOT
No Tiger means greener pastures for golfers

By Greg Lindberg
Section Editor

We all know the Tiger Woods story by now. We have heard every detail about his bizarre, middle-of-the-night scuffle with his wife last November. We have heard the Cheetah jokes. We have heard the mistresses' salacious stories, whether they are true or just for attention.

After officially declaring a leave of absence from the PGA Tour, it is time to let Tiger get his life back in order. We do not know how long it will take. He might not know either. But he deserves as much time as he needs.

So what exactly does it mean to professional golf that Tiger is taking an indefinite departure from the sport he has dominated for so long?

The answer is simple. Professional golfers should be glad that Woods will be off the leaderboards for now. His absence gives every aspiring pro a golden opportunity to make a name for themselves. Whenever Tiger is on TV, the cameras are on him, the announcers are talking about him, and everyone is watching because of him. Now some of the other players can earn some time in the spotlight.

To the right and bottom are a few potential golfers with an opportunity to do some big things without Tiger on tour:

2010 PGA Tour's four majors:

The Masters
April 11

The U.S. Open
June 20

The British Open
July 18

The PGA Championship
August 15

Rory McIlroy
Age: 20
Pro titles: 1

McIlroy is considered one of the top up-and-coming stars on tour. He finished third at last year's PGA Championship. The Irishman's lone professional title came on the European Tour, but he is already starting to turn some heads here.

Phil Mickelson
Age: 39
Pro titles: 45 (37 on PGA Tour)
Majors: 3

Mickelson, a.k.a. "Lefty," has been the next-best golfer on tour behind Tiger over the last several years. He gets enough attention to be known to fans, but he now has an opportunity to become the poster child of golf. If he can string together some victories in Tiger's absence, he will solidify himself as the best golfer on tour—at least until Tiger returns.

Martin Kaymer
Age: 25
Pro titles: 13

Kaymer, a German-born golfer, has had great success as a youngster on the European Tour. He finished tied for sixth at the 2009 PGA Championship and has the potential to do more big things in PGA tournaments this year.

Ernie Els
Age: 40
Pro titles: 60 (16 on PGA Tour)
Majors: 3

Although Els has not won quite as many titles on American soil, "The Big Easy" has performed well in majors. But he is still looking for that elusive green jacket. Could this be the year for him to win at Augusta? His chances could not be better.

Vijay Singh
Age: 46
Pro titles: 58 (34 on PGA Tour)
Majors: 3

Singh, known as "The Big Fijian," has won 22 tournaments in hisforties. He also won The Masters and captured two PGA Championship titles. If getting older means getting better, he will have a few more trophies on his shelf by the end of 2010.

Steve Stricker
Age: 42
Pro titles: 15 (7 on PGA Tour)

Still looking for his first major title, Stricker has finished in the top 10 in all four majors on the PGA Tour. He is known for his exceptional putting and should put it to good use in this year's big events.