Steamy Deliciousness
Sakshi Gopal Das, a 42-year-old Hare Krishna, prepares masala dosa, an Indian dish served with chutney, Saturday during the Gainesville VegFest at Depot Park. Das works at the Alachua chapter of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. VegFest had over 100 tents and tables set up around the park, and the majority of the food vendors offered vegan and vegetarian dishes to customers.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS VOTING GUIDE

Election Dates
8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Tuesday and Wednesday

Here are the candidates running for SG’s executive branch:

Student Body President
Michael Murphy, Impact Party
Zachariah Chou, Inspire Party

Student Body Vice President
Sarah Abraham, Impact Party
Gouthami Gadamsetty, Inspire Party

Student Body Treasurer
Mackintosh Joachim, Inspire Party
Santiago Gutierrez, Impact Party

See pages 8 and 9 for our candidate profiles.

Senate:
Students will vote for 41 contested Senate seats determined by either college or year. These seats include the Agriculture and Life Sciences, Architecture, Business, Dentistry, Engineering, Fine Arts, Graduate, Health and Human Performance, Public Health and Health Professions, Journalism and Communications, Law, Liberal Arts and Sciences, Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy and Sophomore.

Students need a UFID in order to vote. Here’s where you can cast a ballot:
- Beaty Commons TV-Recreation Room
- Broward Hall, Recreation Room
- Health Science Center, Biomedical Information Teaching Space C1-121
- Heavener Hall, Room 202
- Levin College of Law, Bruton-Geer Hall Student Commons
- Marston Computer Lab, Second Floor
- Murphree Hall, Conference Room
- Norman Hall, Education Library
- Reitz Union, Lower Level, SG Print Lab
- Southwest Recreation Center, Social Lounge
- Springs Area Office, Room C202

Richard Murphy wanted to make students aware of the Impact Party executive candidates’ controversial Facebook posts. So he made a meme.

The meme, posted on the Swampy UF memes for top ten public teens Facebook group, is a picture of Kermit the Frog wearing a UF hat while sipping tea.

The meme, which was created after an Alligator story revealed Impact Party’s UF Student Body executive candidates had racially insensitive and homophobic posts, received more than 350 likes. Most of the posts that were found were on Student Body Presidential Candidate Michael Murphy’s Facebook account.

The meme reads “Wants us to ignore homophobic posts and focus on what he did in college. Allowed and liked the blatantly racist post on profile from 2016 during his time in college.”

“…a lot of times things are brushed over and they’re not addressed in the moment,” the 21-year-old UF entomology and nematology senior said. “It’s really time that we look at what’s going on.”

Richard Murphy said if the candidate claims UF should look at what he’s done in college rather than in middle school, than it’s important to discuss his 2016 posts.

He said the posts raise the question as to why parties do not vet their candidates before selecting them.

As a Hispanic student on campus, Richard Murphy said he felt disappointed by reading the posts from the candidates.

“It makes you question whether or not you know the party has good morals or what’s going on because they’re the ones who put these candidates up.”

One of the racially insensitive posts was written by another person on his timeline and Murphy liked it. It read: “Truth is… I don’t really know you but you are white so I know I can trust you :D,” in 2011.

Also in 2011, Murphy made a post reading, “Repost this if you are a beautiful strong black woman who don’t need no man.”

In 2016, while Murphy was at UF, a picture was shared by another person on his timeline of a black individual wearing a bikini with the caption “happy birthday I got you a stripper,” which Murphy liked.

The Alligator contacted Student Body President Ian Green, who has identified as black. He declined to comment.

Multiple organizations and Students and organizations react to candidates’ controversial posts

One of the candidates will meet with the Pride Student Union president

By Kelly Hayes
Alligator Staff Writer

Multiple organizations and students and organizations react to candidates’ controversial Facebook posts.

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Multiple organizations and SEE REACTIONS, PAGE 4
Today's Weather

HIGH 83° LOW 59°

LOCAL EVENTS / News in Brief

UPCOMING EVENTS

TUESDAY

Student Government Elections
When: 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Tuesday and Wednesday
Where: Beatty Commons TV-Recreation Room, Broward Hall Recreation Room, Health Science Center BITS C1-121, Heavener Hall Room 202, Levin College of Law BGH Student Commons, Marston Computer Lab Second Floor, Murphy Hall Conference Room, Norman Hall Education Library, Retz Union Lower Level
SG Printing Lab, Southwest Recreation Center Social Lounge, Springs Area Office Room C202
What: UF students can vote in the SG election. Candidates for the Student Body president, vice president and treasurer and 50 senators by college and grade level are on the ballot.

REAL Talk: Becoming Allies
When: 6-8 p.m. Tuesday
Where: Ustler Hall
What: REAL Talk celebrates awareness of the multiple identities people may have. This workshop is designed to help people think about their own identities and become more aware of different perspectives and experiences of others.

WEDNESDAY

Wine Class - Spain, Italy and Australia
When: 6:30-8:30 p.m. Wednesday
Where: Downtown Wine and Cheese, at 113 N. Main St.
What: This is the first wine class of the year. The class is taught by wine expert Hollie Pique and features wines from Spain, Italy and Australia. Classes are $25 per person and it includes cheeses for wine pairing, an informational packet, discounts on the featured bottles of wine and a coupon for a free Thursday night wine tasting. Potential attendees can call the business to reserve a spot or buy tickets online at downtownwineandcheese.com.

An Ode to Black Women
When: 7 p.m. Wednesday
Where: Ustler Hall
What: The Women’s Student Association is hosting a night to celebrate culture, feminism and the history of black women. There will be a live performance, food and a discussion on the impact of black women in society.

FRIDAY

Gay Movie Night
When: 7:30 p.m. Friday
Where: The Pride Community Center, at 311 NW 13th St.
What: The movie “Beautiful Something” will be shown. Brian crashes and burns with each guy he meets, but does not understand why. Jim is not afraid to break hearts except when it comes to his older lover, a renowned sculptor. Drew is more focused on his latest masterpiece than Jim. Bob looks for hustlers in his white limo and searches for the thrill of lost love. They look for connections in the City of Brotherly Love, but often settle for the quick and dirty. Then, they cross paths with each other. Gay Movie Night is on the last Friday of each month.

Museum & Cultural Center
What: The museum will hold a lecture with author Tara T. Green, a University of North Carolina at Greensboro African American and African diaspora studies professor.

MORE

Santa Fe adjunct professors will speak about their union campaign
When: 6 p.m. Feb. 26
Where: Emmanuel Memnonite Church, located at 1236 NW 18th Ave.
What: Santa Fe College adjunct professors will speak about their unionization campaign at Santa Fe at the Alachua County Labor Coalition monthly general meeting. Professors will talk about their almost two-year push for living wages, better working conditions and a union. Refreshments will be provided.

Television Trivia Fundraiser
When: 6-9 p.m. Saturday
Where: The Hippodrome State Theatre, located at 25 SE Second Place in downtown Gainesville
What: A theater-themed trivia night for Y-Not Theatre’s second annual fundraiser from 6-9 p.m. Feb. 23. The local nonprofit supports playwrights and actors across north central Florida. Tickets are $25 before Feb. 8, after that, tickets will be $35. Sababa, a Mediterranean restaurant, will serve a buffet.

Have an event planned? Add it to the alligator’s online calendar:
alligator.org/calendar

Got something going on? Want to see it in this space? Send an email with “What’s Happening” in the subject line to mcmorales@alligator.org. To request publication in the next day’s newspaper, please submit entries before 5 p.m. Please model your submissions after the above events and keep them to 150 words or fewer. Improperly formatted “What’s Happening” submissions may not appear in the paper. Press releases will not appear in the paper.

The Alligator strives to be accurate and clear in its news reports and editorials. If you find an error, please call our newsroom at 352-376-4458 or email editor@alligator.org.
UF Hispanic-Latinx, Black communities leave mark on new campus homes

Two students signing the beam at the topping out ceremony on Friday.

TOPPING OUT CEREMONY
WAS HELD FRIDAY
By Mikayla Carroll
Alligator Staff Writer

Valerie Castaneda carefully wrote her signature in Sharpie on the final beam of the La Casita structure.

The Multicultural and Diversity Affairs department hosted a topping out ceremony at 11 a.m. Friday in honor of the final beam structure being finished at the Institute of Hispanic-Latino Cultures, known as La Casita, and the Institute of Black Culture.

Students could come and go as they pleased to sign the beams throughout the day on Thursday and Friday, either with their names, class years or the date, Castaneda said. Students were able to watch as the last beams of the structures were placed on each of the institutes.

“In the future, I could bring my children here and show them my college experience,” the 20-year-old UF communication sciences and disorders sophomore said. “I’ll be able to find that beam up there that I signed when it was first built.”

More than 50 members of the UF Latinx community and black community were in attendance for the ceremony, along with staff from the Multicultural and Diversity Affairs department, said Angelica Abrego, a cabinet member of the Hispanic Student Association. The construction company, Foresight Construction Group, was also present for the ceremony.

The 7-foot-long steel beams were painted in the respective colors of both institutions, said Lauren Armstrong, digital communications manager of Foresight Construction Group.

For the Institute of Black Culture, one beam was painted black, red and green. For La Casita, the beam was painted teal, red and white.

“We understand the importance of these facilities to the students and we really wanted to have their involvement and input,” Armstrong said.

Construction for the houses began last Fall and is due to be completed in August, Abrego said. She is looking forward to having a place to come together with members of the Hispanic Student Association.

“We can get away from everything and be with people from our community who understand us and know what we’ve been going through here,” the 19-year-old UF biology sophomore said. “This is our way of having our own space within the campus.”

Repurposing in Style
Sean McGee, owner of IrishGlass, wraps up a repurposed bottle for a customer Sunday afternoon at the Gainesville Flea Market. The event took place at the Palomino Pool Hall in downtown Gainesville. When asked why community markets meant so much to vendors, Laura Martin, the owner of the vintage boutique Everyday in Retrograde said, “It’s about connecting people. It’s about creating a community.”

Former ACSO deputy accused of kidnapping woman for six hours

He was given a $155,000 bond

By Katherine Wallace-Fernandez
Alligator Staff Writer

A former Alachua County Sheriff’s Office deputy was accused of kidnapping and choking a woman early Friday morning.

After an evening out on Valentine’s Day at White Buffalo, at 111 S. Main St., Joseph Clayton Sperring, 29, of Gainesville, and the woman returned to his apartment at about 2 a.m., according to a Gainesville Police sworn complaint affidavit.

Sperring accused her of cheating on him. He forced her outside the apartment while she tried getting dressed, the report said. She began walking away when Sperring chased after her and said, “You’re not f----- leaving.” He then carried her back inside.

Sperring pushed her against a wall and choked her, the report said. He took her phone and car keys and told her she couldn’t leave.

He forced her to lie in bed with him and when she tried to leave he blocked the door, threw her onto the bed and choked her, police said.

He also asked her to have sex with him and when she said no he said he would rape her, the report said. He unzipped her jeans but stopped when she told him he was making things worse.

She told police the incident lasted about six hours, the report said.

He let her leave when she gave him her mother’s address and phone number, the report said. He told her he would give her mother’s contact information to people who would kill her and her family if she told police.

The woman had bloody scratches inside her mouth on her upper lip, a bruise on her left hand, scratches on her left wrist and abrasions on her elbows, knees and right inner bicep, the report said.

Police arrested Sperring on a warrant Saturday, according to court records.

He resigned from the Alachua County Sheriff’s Office in 2017 before he could be fired after he was accused of aggravated assault earlier that year, said ACSO spokesperson Brett Rhodenizer. He was hired in 2014.

Sperring was charged with domestic battery by strangulation, simple battery, false imprisonment and delaying communication to law enforcement, according to the report.

Sperring could not be reached for comment.

He bonded out of the Alachua County Jail on a $155,000 bail Saturday.

kwallace-fernandez@alligator.org
Santa Fe College to reassess its campus diversity

THE NEW PLATES WILL FUND BEE HEALTH RESEARCH AT UF

By Danielle Ivanov
Alligator Contributing Writer

Traditional license plates may see a sweet change in the near future. A new “Save the Bees” specialty plate is being proposed by the Florida State Beekeepers Association, a non-profit organization that advocates and raises funds for state beekeepers and researchers like UF’s Honey Bee & Research Extension Lab scientists.

“Beekeeping is still fairly unknown,” said Jennifer Holmes, the association president. “We’re working really hard to be more involved.”

The survey opened for students on Feb. 5 and will close on March 19, said Santa Fe College Student Body President Alejandro Puga. The results of the survey will be available in Fall 2019.

The National Assessment of College Campus Climate Survey is anonymous and takes students about 15 minutes to complete, Calhoun said. The questions fall into six content areas: apraisals of institutional commitment, impact of external environments, mattering and affirmation, racial learning and identity, encounters with racial stress and cross-racial engagement.

Students are happy that the survey gives them a chance to anonymously give feedback to administrators, Puga said.

“We’re obviously not perfect,” Puga said. “We’re always looking for new opportunities to serve more students.”

Meet Santa Fe College’s Fulbright scholar

Santa Fe College made a national achievement at a local level.

On Friday, the college announced it is one of 26 associates/baccalaureate U.S. institutions to receive a 2019-20 Fulbright Scholar Program. The Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program is an international, educational exchange program active in over 125 countries throughout the world. Sasser said the program is funded by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs through an annual appropriation given by U.S. Congress.

One of Sasser’s first initiatives as president was to internationalize the college when he arrived at Santa Fe 17 years ago. He said it is the best international program for colleges to utilize because it provides funding while connecting cultures and informing participants of different religions, geographies and ways of living.

“We’d like to share what we know and love,” Sasser said. “There’s so much more to be done, but at least we’ve made the progress that we have.”

Rodkin received word about a year ago that he was chosen as a Fulbright Scholar.

Last April, he attended the Community College Administrators Seminar in Russia for two weeks through the program. He visited about a dozen different colleges in three Russian cities.

“Having the Fulbright experience gave us one more way to add value to our students’ lives and to better provide an international experience in the classroom,” Rodkin said.

UF student experiences the ‘suite’ life

HE’LL TRAVEL TO 11 COUNTRIES IN THREE AND A HALF MONTHS

By Karina Elwood
Alligator Staff Writer

Will is limited. Phone service is rare. Dining rooms are turned to classrooms, and students sometimes have to be excused for seasickness.

Joshua Greenspan, a 22-year-old UF business administration senior, is spending three and a half months on a ship studying around the world. Greenspan is the only UF student out of 590 who boarded the M.S. World Odyssey on Jan. 5 from four to six days in each country, he said.

“I have such a desire and hunger to learn world, Sasser said. The program is funded by the building of a new facility, the Honey Bee Research and Extension Lab, at 1881 Natural Area Drive.

The lab was built in August 2018, cost $2 million of state funding, $1 million of university funding and $1.5 million of funding from state beekeepers themselves, she said.

Because of this program, UF is able to run three main honey bee programs: teaching, extension and research, she said. Teaching allows students to take beekeeping classes while extension and research help local beekeepers learn to better care for and understand bees.

The license plate funds will help further develop these programs, she said.

“This is a big issue for beekeepers,” Hammer said.

PSU released a statement

“IT is undeniable that white students of economically privileged backgrounds are ushered into power through means of Greek life and other elite campus organizations,” the post read.

The organization could not be reached for comment.

In the statement, the group was critical of “forgiveness of past transgressions against marginalized communities.”

Austin Buholtz, a 19-year-old UF biology sophomore, found out about the posts through friends and the Swampy UF memes for top ten public teens Facebook group. He said while opposing candidates are obviously trying to find dirt on each other, if it’s on social media, it’s fair game.

In the end, he believes this won’t have an effect on voters, and Impact will win the majority of the votes in Student Government any way.

“I think most people are either going to vote for the person they want or not,” he said. “I don’t think that’s going to really change their minds.”
‘Woman Up’: WSA’s 32nd annual Women’s Leadership Conference

By Edysmar Diaz-Cruz

Simone Boyce doesn’t take no for an answer.

Instead, she uses it to invigorate herself to do better.

On Sunday, Boyce, who is a host for the streaming digital news network NBC News Signal and UF alumna, was a keynote speaker at the 32nd Women’s Leadership Conference, hosted by the Women’s Student Association at UF in the Reitz Union Grand Ballroom. About 70 people attended the talk.

By Karina Elwood

After overhauling how it affects change in Gainesville, the Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency will discuss projects coming to Gainesville.

Redevelopment agency will discuss projects coming to Gainesville

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By Karina Elwood

After overhauling how it affects change in Gainesville, the Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency will meet to talk about what it will do in the community.

At 3 p.m. today, the agency, which builds community areas and creates grants to help businesses, will meet to review development projects it is working on at the City Hall Auditorium, at 200 E. University Ave.

The meeting will review the status of current projects, like Heartwood, an affordable housing project, and improvements to South Main Street, said City Commissioner David Arreola. The agency will also discuss residential paint vouchers program, which helps put money toward painting residential houses.

The project update comes after the city and Alachua County commissions agreed to combine the agency’s four districts into one on Feb. 11. Those districts are College Park and University Heights; 5th Avenue and Pleasant Street; Eastside; and Downtown.

Mayor Lauren Poe said he wants to see the districts combined so that the CRA can help bring development to Eastside.

“How do we bring life back to communities that have seen historic neglect and disadvantagement by the private sector?” Poe said. “You remove those barriers and suddenly you can see a focus on dollars and investment.”

The decision came after discussions between the city and county. The city voted on the combination on Nov. 1 but needed county approval to restructure because it provides two thirds of the agency’s funding.

The combination of the four districts allows money to be allocated to whichever district needs it. Previously, money raised in one district could only be used in that district.

Due to the previous system, areas that raised the least amount were not able to develop as much, such as Eastside, Ward said. This caused an area with a lot of need to have little funding.

“Our current model keeps one of the four existing districts essentially stagnant,” he said.

Eastside only generates and receives 8 percent of revenue, compared to the College Park and University Heights district which receives 55 percent of revenue, Ward said.

“Communities across the nation face the problem of rejuvenation and re-establishing neighborhoods, long abandoned by private investment,” Ward said.

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kelwood@alligator.org
Editorial

A human meme or a past of bad posts

Editor’s Note: The Alligator’s editorial board met with representatives from the Impact and Inspire parties on Friday night and Sunday afternoon. We discussed their party platforms and each candidate’s goals if they were to be elected. Our endorsement resulted from these meetings.

This UF Student Government election cycle has been riddled with controversy from both parties. SG elections are Tuesday and Wednesday, and students will vote for the Student Body president, Student Body vice president, Student Body treasurer and Senate candidates.

We, the editorial board, met with each party’s executive candidates. Both Impact and Inspire’s platforms include addressing mental health, expanding resources for Asian American students and giving more to resources for sexual assault survivors.

However, neither party seemed to have an answer about how much their platform endeavors would cost the Student Body. This is a major concern for us at The Alligator, considering these line items would come directly from students’ pockets.

The editorial board has decided to, once again, endorse Inspire’s candidates, but we cannot enthusiastically support them. It’s a lesser of two evils, if you will.

Not to mention, our choice for Student Body president is between a human meme and a man with a doodge Facebook past.

Inspire had the most concrete ideas concerning what it wanted to achieve if it were to be elected. For example, Inspire was able to convey to us a clearer plan in terms of budgeting the nearly $21 million given to SG and how they would help to reduce the stigma surrounding sexual assault.

We say we reluctantly support Inspire because we have serious concerns about how this ticket will be able to handle SG’s highest positions given their little experience. Zachariah Chou, 21, the Inspire Student Body presidential candidate, has the most experience from the entire ticket having served on Senate. He meets with the administration, SG officials and students regularly. He also addresses students through memes in the Facebook group called “Swampy UF memes for top ten public people.”

However, Gouthami Gadamsetty, 20, Inspire’s Student Body vice presidential candidate, has served in a past of bad posts. One of my favorite shirts, which I wear regularly, is a past of bad posts baby card for your friend who just had a baby, you will never read and will never see the overtly gendered, overpriced baby card. Oh wait, maybe that’s a good thing. And don’t even get me started on gender reveal parties.

Too late. I just started. Inviting people over to celebrate the arbitrariness of your child’s gender boggles my mind. The cakes are often decorated with trucks, guns, bows and jewelry. All of which are hyper-gendered objects that evoke obvious feminine or masculine feelings. But why? Why shouldn’t a boy like hair bows and guns? Or why can’t a girl love wearing jewelry while driving her monster truck around town? These are silly examples, but it raises a serious question: Why are certain objects and colors so heavily gendered? The parents who threw their baby boy a blue, sports-themed gender reveal party may someday learn that he prefers the color purple and dislikes all sports. Hopefully they are just as ecstatic to learn about who he is now as they were when they speculated about who he would be before he was born. Gender reveal parties should be replaced with something else. Please invite me to your “My baby is healthy and loved, regardless of his or her gender” party. I will be there in a heartbeat.

One of my favorite shirts, which I wear regularly, reads in big block letters across the front, “Raise boys and girls the same way.” People often ask me, “Why?” I always answer, “Because that’s what this means.” It’s quite simple: Let’s let our kids decide what toys they want to play with, what their favorite color is and what their passions are without telling them what they are expected to be interested in. Let’s let kids be kids first and allow them to pursue their own interests.

The views expressed here are not necessarily those of The Alligator.

Columns

Gender is a social construct, and here’s why

The views expressed here are not necessarily those of The Alligator.

The Alligator encourages comments from readers. Letters to the editor should not exceed 150 words (about one letter-sized page). They must be typed, double-spaced and must include the author’s name, classification and phone number. Names will be withheld if the writer shows just cause. We reserve the right to edit for length, grammar, style and libel. Send letters to opinions@alligator.org, bring them to 2700 SW 13th St., or send them to P.O. Box 14257, Gainesville, FL 32604-2257.

Columns of about 450 words about original topics and editorial cartoons are also welcome. Questions? Call 352-376-4458.
Forget Marston and West, the Reitz Union is the best study space on campus

understand this will come as a shock to many of you; the evidence is overwhelm-
ingly clear. Of all the study spaces on campus where Gators can plant them-
selves to work on homework the Reitz Union is the most legitimate.

It’s easy to dismiss the notion that the other libraries or study spaces, whatever one may call them to, are worthy of your time compared to the ultimate experience of study-
ing in the Reitz, the premise remains intact:

Let’s start withMarston Science Library. The average naive STEM freshman believes Marston is the ideal study space, which would allow them to blithely through hours of studying chemistry on the average Tuesday evening. It’s a shame the only unique perk is the noise level decreases as the height above ground increas-
es because that is also a notable feature of the Reitz Union. Have you ever been to the Reitz third floor? It is dead silent. Marston is a place where students go to feel better about their in-
ability to study. Oh, you have a calculus exam worth 30 percent of your grade tomorrow, and you don’t know the difference between an integral and a derivative? No prob, that’s cool, just go ahead and waste another three hours with your “study group” talking about how cool that last episode of “The Joe Rogan Experience” was. I’m sure the calculus will work itself out.

Next, we have Library West: the roof of Marston, and the habitat of students posturing as intellectuals. Library West has the benefit of a beautiful lawn and a breathtaking silhouette. Staring at Library West from the foot of the Plaza of the Americas is an experience every student attending this university should have. When you look at the library, you feel connect-
ed with all of the knowledge that has been and will be developed here on campus. It’s won-
derful. However, the sight of Library West is a main drag for me because I’m a Marston girl, through and through.

The main appeal of Library West is that it also offers the quieter-with-height system. There’s also a certain “feel-
ing” associated with the library. This feeling at-
tracts kids with MacBooks, eager to appear as if they are getting that bread.” Library West is the perfect location for that engineer-

ing sophomore who doesn’t feel like going to Midtown on Friday night but who doesn’t want to ad-
it. The solution? They can go to Library West with some home-
work, and probably won’t work on much) and post to their Snapchat about how “the grind never stops.”

Marston is the ideal study space, which would make you miserable. Don’t be scared to make sure the Reitz truly is the only legit-
imate library on campus.

Kyle Cunningham is a UF English fresh-
man. His columns appear on Mondays.

Column

A look at the lies from my freshman year, from the perspective of my senior self

still remember every detail from the day I moved into my freshman dorm.

On Aug. 15, 2015. As I got out of my mom’s over-
packed Jeep, the Gainesville air was hot and humid. I immedi-
tely observed the other stu-
dents I would later get to know better on my dad grabbed the mini fridge from the back of my mom’s car and lifted it up with ease before he sprinted up the stairs with it. He still likes to brag about how he was in better shape than all of the other parents.

As I took in the scene, it all felt surreal. College seemed just the way I imagined it.

The next few weeks continued to meet all of my preconceived notions of what my UF college experience would look like. I went through sorority rush, found my “home,” and I even ventured into my first hangover breakfast at Bagels and Noodles. I decided on a favorite library (I’m a Marston girl, through and through) and I made a big group of friends I did everything with. I remember thinking to myself, this is what it would be like for the next four years — exactly like I planned.

While I relished in the glamour of fresh-
man life, I realized they weren’t good for

me. I tried the party scene and

found out I much prefer being in

bed by 11 p.m. I dropped out of

my sorority after I came to the

heartbreaking realization that I hated just about everything Greek life actually stood for. I dated a few boys I swore were “the one,” only to get bored and change my mind weeks later. I changed my major a few times and drove my parents insane when I called them every few weeks with a new career path I was “sure about this time.” A lot of things changed and a lot of things didn’t go the way I wanted them to. But, each step I took off of my ideal path helped.

So, here I am: three months away from graduation and my life is nothing like what I thought it would be.

Abigail Miller

opinions@alligator.org

Column

Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico in 2017, but recovery efforts are still ongoing

there’s a topic you probably haven’t heard about a little while: Puerto Rico. As many of you know, this U.S. territory was hit by the devastat-
ing category 5 Hurricane Maria in September 2017. Despite over a year passing since Maria made landfall, the island is still deal-
ing with the effects of the storm and the muddled response to the crisis.

When Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico, the damage was on an enormous scale. Nearly the entire island was without power with 95 percent of the island’s cell sites being knocked out. While some neighborhoods were almost com-
pletely destroyed, rebuilding and providing aid after Maria was always going to be a challenge. The island’s mountainous terrain makes trans-
poration and power line maintenance difficult. Government agencies like its state-owned pow-
er company have long faced financial difficul-
ties leading to poor service. The Puerto Rican government faced extreme monetary woes before Maria hit, and as President Donald Trump himself pointed out, Puerto Rico “is an island surrounded by water, big water, ocean water,” making it harder to go about its daily business.

That said, things started poorly. The Trump administration was accused of not providing enough aid for Puerto Rico. After Maria hit, Puerto Rico’s governor, Ricardo Rosselló, and San Juan’s mayor, Carmen Yulín Cruz, pub-
licly asked for more federal assistance. Trump instead announced that Hurricane Maria was just another in a long line of disasters facing Puerto Rico, trying to redirect disaster relief funds away from Puerto Rico, raising even more concerns about the Trump administration’s handling of the whole affair.

Last Thursday, Brock Long, the FEMA Direc-
tor who oversaw Hurricane Maria relief efforts, resigned. While Long’s departure was due to a federal investigation finding improper use of government vehicles rather than his handling of Hurricane Maria, this still means new lead-
ership at FEMA. Hopefully this new leadership can learn from the mistakes of Maria and en-
sure that no state or territory suffers as much as Puerto Rico did ever again. However, that does not mean the story of Hurricane Maria comes to Hurricane Maria, and Congressional Democrats (who took control of the House after the 2018 midterms) pledged to investigate the Trump administration’s handling of the Hurri-

The solution? They can go

to the freshmen out there, please let go

of your expectations. There are more im-
portant things to accomplish during your
time at UF than trying to keep up with plans

for borrowing relationships just because you

want to graduate next to your freshman year besties. Don’t stick with a major that makes you miserable. You’re expected to change your mind about something you thought you loved. And most important-
antly, don’t believe the lies you told yourself about what your college experience would look like. These next four years will give you exactly what you need, even if you don’t know what that is yet.

Abigail Miller is a UF political science and journalism senior. Her column appears on Mondays.

Kyle Cunningham is a UF English fresh-
man. His columns appear on Mondays.

While media coverage of Puerto Rico’s recovery events has died down, the island’s struggles were far from over. According to CNN, by late January 2018, 450,000 peo-
ple (out of a population of 3.4 mil-

lion) were still without power, the shutdown of IV bag manufacturing in Puerto Rico led to a long-term shortage across the United States, and some experts suggested that the drastically increased incidence of the bacterial disease leptospirosis after Maria constituted an epidemic. However, it wasn’t until April 2018 that we got a full account of Hurricane Maria’s impact, with a George Washington University study calculat-
ing the death toll at 2,975. The number of fa-
talities alone warrant questions and concerns about the recovery effort. Just last month, The Washington Post reported that Trump illegally tried to redirect disaster relief funds away from Puerto Rico, raising even more concerns about the Trump administration’s handling of the whole affair.

Jason Zappulla

opinions@alligator.org

Jason Zappulla is a UF history junior. His columns appear on Mondays.
Il you need to know about Zachariah Chou is his Relish order: a salmon patty with garlic mayo and crispy onions on both buns with extra sauce on the side.

“ You know I’m a man of the people when I call it garlic mayo instead of garlic aioli,” Chou said.

Relish, a hamburger restaurant on University Avenue, is home base for the 21-year-old after long days spent on campus, even when it’s not campaign season.

Where in the world is Zachariah Chou? He said his friends would say “everywhere.”

One Wednesday, he pinballed from a Career Connections Center event at Infinity Hall to a Graduate Student Council meeting to Pugh Hall to a Caribbean Students Association meeting to open mic night at Wing Zone to an Inspire Party meeting.

If Chou wins, he would be the first Asian American Student Body president at UF.

“Sometimes in life, you have to work twice as hard but will get half as far, but that doesn’t win elections,” Chou said. “If you want to win you have to work four times as hard just to win.”

Chou has been involved with Student Government since seventh grade. He served as the first senator for Infinity Hall for one year and the senator for Murphree Hall for two years.

He says he fought for Infinity Hall street lights, increased access to menstrual products and on-campus mental health resources.

The UF junior still has to complete his homework for his journalism and political science courses when finished on the Senate floor, though.

Chou’s mentor Kevin Baron of the Bob Graham Center said Chou should slow down.

“He has never taken my advice, but he has shown a resiliency and fortitude that deeply speaks to the quality of person he is,” Baron said.

The salmon burger is more than fuel for Chou’s schedule. It’s reminiscent of home. Chou’s Taiwanese immigrant parents, Richard and Grace, bought fish in bulk regularly to feed Chou and his older sister, Gabrielle.

“They fed me and I brought home awards,” Chou said. Richard described Zach as a model son who never talked back or had a rebellious streak. Richard called his son at 2 a.m. when Zach has a spare moment.

Richard applied to UF for graduate school when he immigrated but did not get in.

“He’s proved me wrong so many times,” Richard said.

Much like his time, Chou likes to give away his stuffed animals. “He’s won many of them from claw machines.”

So it’s off to another meeting, but first he must finish the salmon burger.

Gouthami Gadamssetty hated her name.

No one could pronounce it, and a gym coach in sixth grade recommended she just go by “Gigi.”

“Gigi” followed her until she came to UF. She decided to reclaim a name she had grown to hate when she came to UF. She decided to go by “Gigi.”

Gadamssetty used to hate her name, but she is really pretty. Why don’t you hear only at home.

“People said, ‘Your name is really pretty. Why don’t you go by that more often?’” said Vibhor Nayar’s favorite memory of Gadamssetty.

“People are drawn to Abraham’s rapid fire mind,” said Briana Bazail, a UF senior.

“People are drawn to Abraham’s rapid fire mind,” said Briana Bazail, a UF senior.

Gadamssetty is the president of the UF Engineering Leadership Circle and an ambassador of the Involvement Team, a consultation service to connect students with extracurricular activities. She has also performed in two UF dance teams.

Joining Student Government was natural for Gadamssetty, even though Indian stereotypes confined her to classroom achievements.

“It gives me pride to break expectations,” Gadamssetty said.

Gadamssetty said she’s spent her life balancing cultures. Her parents, Vani and Chandra, emigrated from India to Canada, where she was born.

Gadamssetty said she was proud of how she was raised, though her parents were relatively strict. She said they’ve worked hard to make a life for themselves.

She began taking traditional Indian dance classes in the Bharatnatyam style when she was 3 years old.

While most of her family was thousands of miles away, Gadamssetty would dance with her cousin, Sahana Kamisetty. “Dance is all about cooperation with other people,” said Kamisetty, a 21-year-old University of Miami neuroscience senior.

Kamisetty said Gadamssetty’s dance background influenced her leadership style to learn to share the stage with everyone.

Vibhor Nayar’s favorite memory of Gadamssetty was UF’s Holi in Spring 2017. As director, Nayar watched Gadamssetty volunteer with the event, threw colored powder with her friends and then thank all the directors.

“She’s not the type of person who runs through the motions,” said the 24-year-old UF mechanical engineering senior.

Gadamssetty used to hate her name, but she looks forward to when it’s called as the first Indian American Student Body vice president.

The clock strikes 11:11. Sarah Abraham makes a wish. She doesn’t set an alarm, but catches both the morning and night occurrence whenever possible.

“I think my body just kinda knows,” said the 21-year-old UF information systems and operations management junior.

Even her home in West Palm Beach starts with a wish. But Abraham doesn’t base her achievements on wishes. She is the president of the Indian Student Association, and a two-term senator for the business school.

If she wins, she would be the first Indian American UF Student Body vice president.

Sarah’s parents taught her to prioritize service to others. Sarah sees her role in Student Government as being a voice to students.

Kishan Patel, former 2016 Student Body treasurer, sees Sarah’s power as a leader in her ability to connect with people. He was the first to talk to Sarah about SG.

In the Indian Student Association, Patel said Abraham uplifted cliques to work together. At a recent showcase for GatoRaas, an Indian UF student dance team, Patel was astounded to see not only people from the organization but also from across campus in the audience.

“She calls almost everyone her friends, and truly they are her best friends,” said the 23-year-old UF electrical engineering senior.

Abraham wants her legal co-op to be a permanent dance space for the Indian Student Association’s six dance teams and any other troupe. She said there aren’t many spaces on campus that can hold such large groups. Teams like GatoRaas practice on top of UF parking garages until sunrise.

“One of my biggest jobs is to make people aware of our community,” Abraham said.

People are drawn to Abraham’s rapid fire humor. She got her start in comedy when her older sister Naomi placed coached her to say knock-knock jokes when she was little.

Shachi Pandya, one of Abraham’s best friends, has known her since freshman year and now serves alongside her in the Indian Student Association as vice president.

“I know her in all these ways, and she’s the exact way in every context,” the 21-year-old UF statistics junior said.

Win or lose, Sarah Abraham will still be ready with a smile and a pun.
Franceline Amissant.

Joachim met one of his best friends, every student can feel welcome and safe,”

ter UF for his kids one day.

ham Area.

dent Government as a senator for the Gra-

doors,” Joachim said.

worst UF experience: the arrival of white

Graham Hall fl oor had an open door poli-

cepted into UF.

He's the kindest person I've met on

During his freshman year campaign,

He’s the kindest person I’ve met on.

campus so far,” said Amissant, a 19-year-old UF

Amissant said

she has seen

Joachim run to the

aid of someone

having an asthma

attack and explain

the financial aid

process to a stu-

dent even when he

has work, classes

and organizations

to look after.

Venecia Street

said she some-
times has to bring

Joachim Chick-fil-A

when he works at the

Graham Area desk

because he forgets to eat.

“He'll be on campus from 8 to 11 at

night,” said Street, a 19-year-old UF health

education and behavior sophomore.

Joachim has plenty to do, but he re-

serves Sundays for cooking. He wants

to preserve the tradition he had with his

mom, who died from cancer in November.

“I want to feel closer to her still,”

Joachim said.

He remembers cooking with his mom

after church and getting up at 2 a.m. to

prepare Thanksgiving for the whole fam-

ily. Jerk chicken, seafood and a pork dish

called griot were in constant rotation.

When he announced he was running

for Student Body treasurer, the first per-

son he wanted to talk to was her.

Last year, he wanted to quit SG, but his

mom texted him, “When you start some-

thing, you never quit it.”

He reads those texts often. He believes

she would be proud.

Mackintosh Joachim

Santiago Gutierrez

I

f “Lloraras” by

Oscar D’León

is playing, you

can bet San-

tiago Gutierrez

is somewhere danc-

ing.

At a party, at

Felipe’s Mexican

Taqueria or at La

Casita, Gutier-

rez’s charisma is

expressed through

merengue, bachata,

cumbia and salsa.

Music has been

an ingredient in

Gutierrez’s life

since high school

when he played

percussion in the

concert and marching bands. He conduct-

ed part of the halftime show as one of the

drum majors his senior year.

The chaos of music has taught the

20-year-old UF international studies and

economics junior to find balance in his

leadership.

“No matter how stressful, no matter

how chaotic, you have to stay calm,” Gutie-

rez said.

Gutierrez has struck a balance in his

roles as the treasurer of the Hispanic Stu-

dent Association, and later, as the chief

of staff. The Hispanic Student Association

manages a budget of $120,000.

Brenda Villanueva, UF Hispanic Stu-

dent Association president, knew Gutier-

rez was going places when she fi rst met

him in a philosophy class his freshman

year. She said he was instrumental in ar-

ranging for Pitbull’s recent performance on

campus and revising the Hispanic Stu-

dent Association bylaws.

But the work Gutierrez completes isn’t

self-serving, the 20-year-old UF marketing

and economics senior said.

“At the end of the day, he’s do-

ing everything that he’s doing for his

family,” Villanueva said.

Gutierrez’s par-

ents emigrated

from Colombia be-

fore he was born.

He wears a yellow,

blue and red cord

bracelet on his left

arm every day to

remind him of his

heritage.

Per tradition,

the bracelet will

not leave Gutier-

rez’s arm until it

falls off. The brace-

let also inspires him to infuse more tradi-

tions into the UF experience.

“I think with all this talk of becoming a

big top fi ve school, we’re losing a little bit

of our identity as Gators,” Gutierrez said.

“Traditions are very important in affirm-

ing that love for the school.”

Isabella Oliver, the vice president of

operations for the UF Hispanic Student

Association said Gutierrez has helped her

professionally and personally.

Last semester, Gutierrez accompanied

Oliver to the Southwest Recreation Cen-

ter where they completed workouts Ol-

iver created from Instagram.

On the mats, Gutierrez challenged and motivated Oliver with positivity.

“I associated that time with him with a

time of self care,” the 21-year-old UF

political science and international studies

junior said.

On and off the dance fl oor, Santiago

Gutierrez wants to move himself and UF

forward.

“Calm down. Don’t freak out. Just feel

the rhythm,” Gutierrez said.

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“Calm down. Don’t freak out. Just feel

the rhythm,” Gutierrez said.
Man accused of robbing school, attempted pizzeria
His bond is $170,000

By Tien Le
Alligator Staff Writer

A college student asked an officer to “stop being a cop” for $25,000 after being accused of drunkenly driving into a light pole.

Daniel Michael Crowe, a 19-year-old Santa Fe College health sciences sophomore, crashed into a light pole near 2200 SW 38th Terrace at about 1:22 a.m., according to a Gainesville Police arrest report.

Crowe caused about $500 in damages, the report said. After the crash, two witnesses saw him drive into the Ridge at Gainesville apartment complex. When police talked to him, they said his eyes were glassy and watery, the report said. They couldn’t understand him because his speech was mumbled and slurred.

Crowe also couldn’t maintain his balance and kept swaying, the report said. His breath smelled like alcohol and he had dried mucus in his nose and around his mouth. He refused to give a breath sample, the report said.

While he was being taken to the police department, Crowe told the officer he was a millionaire and asked if they could “stop being a cop” and set him free for $25,000, the report said. The officer refused.

Crowe was charged with a DUI and damaging property and resisting an officer without violence and bribery, the report said.

He declined to comment.

Crowe was released from the Alachua County Jail on his own recognizance on Friday.

Santa Fe College student accused of drunk driving

HE CAUSED ABOUT $500 IN DAMAGES

By Katherine Wallace-Fernandez
Alligator Staff Writer

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Birthday Bash

Tophat (left) and Jewel (right), members of The Enforcers Motorcycle Club, prepare to ride off Saturday afternoon during the Harley-Davidson 26th Birthday Bash at the Gainesville Harley-Davidson and Buell dealership on 4125 NW 97th Blvd. Tophat and Jewel refused to give their real names because it would break their organization’s creed. Bikers came from all over the country for the celebration. “We all talk with each other like we’ve known each other for 20 years. We’re bonded by the motorcycles,” said Jerry Fletcher, a Gainesville resident who has attended the event for 18 years.
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Blueberries and red beans, just a few of the many foods rich in antioxidants, are powerful remedies in the fight against cancer. Research shows that fruits, vegetables, and other low-fat vegetarian foods may help prevent cancer and even improve survival rates. A healthy plant-based diet can lower your cholesterol, increase your energy, and help with weight loss and diabetes. Fill this prescription at your local market and don’t forget—you have unlimited refills!

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HOCUS-FOCUS
By Henry Boltonoff

Find at least six differences in details between panels.
Release Date: Monday, February 18, 2019

Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle
Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Nichols Lewis

ACROSS
1 Class-conscious go. 18 Matching cards (5)
2 Big name in underwear 19 18-letter word
9 Near-sighted Mr. 20 Kinky _
14 “de-sac” 21 Chat room
15 Conical home 22 Japanese computer giant
17 Extreme weather restriction, perhaps 24 18-letter
19 Dr. Scholl’s 25 Title bear of 10’s TV
20 Battery post 28 A list may bat one
24 Historical role 31 Mount McKinley, _
46 Coral relative 39 “Their Eyes Were Watching God”
51 Novel about a cop car 40 Arc lamp gas
52 Dr. Scholl’s 41 Lentil
56 Footnote abbr. 42 Legend
57 Cornfield sound _
58 Browning or Burns 49 Attached, as in an answer
59 Foil container 50 Maritime safety
65 Battery post 51 Sailboat setting
59 The Row 

DOW N
1 Cut for an age 38 b - or - particle
2 Thanksgiving birds 39 Just a _
3 Fearful 40 Carry out, as a _
4 Fowl part 41 “I don’t believe _
5 Brazilian soccer legend 42 Ailing
6 Meg. for a cop car 43 Hotel room
7 Their Eyes (novel) 44 Amenity
8 Zora _ 45 It’s a law
9 Arc lamp gas 46 Opposite of pos.
10 Animal’s gullet 47 Cornfield sound
11 Flying _ 49 Comic Conway
12 Olympic _ 50 Deliverance
13 (Hanging) spoiled 51 “Our discontent with the status quo”
14 Like amebas 52 Back_ _
15 Worldmen’s ret. 53 Father
16 Wedding wear _
17 Inc., in Toronto 54 Was was
18 French salt 55 Mail call
20 White-sheet wearer, on Halloween 56 Mail call
21 Spanish words
22 Singer Times and soaps 25 White-sheet wearer, on
23 Famous _
24 Lentil
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ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE:
SALSA NTH CUP
ALC A MAIDEN
ASSA MRIST
BOBBING

Finders Keepers? If you find something, you can place a FREE FOUND AD in our lost & found section. Be kind to someone’s lost what you’ve found. Call 373-FIND.

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ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE:
SALSA NTH CUP
ALC A MAIDEN
ASSA MRIST
BOBBING
**BASEBALL**

**UF secures opening-series sweep behind strong outing from Leftwich**

**By Evan Lepak**
Sports Writer

A warm February afternoon in Gainesville featured some chilly bats.

Sophomore Jack Leftwich, UF's Sunday starter, made light work of LBSU's lineup, only allowing five hits and one earned run through six innings.

The Dirtbags got to the Orlando native early, however.

Aidan Malm homered out to deep left-center to give Long Beach State a 1-0 lead in the second inning.

Leftwich settled in nicely after that, not allowing another run to help lead UF to a 3-1 victory at McKethan Stadium.

Leftwich showcased a calm demeanor in his first start of 2019 to go along with impressive control. He struck out five batters while not giving up a single walk on the day.

"I felt really good right away today," Leftwich said. "I was just trying to attack and keep everything consistent."

Relief pitcher Hunter Ruth — returning from Tommy John surgery — made his first appearance as a Gator, replacing Leftwich in the top of the seventh.

He pitched two scoreless innings, retiring six of the seven batters he faced.

UF coach Kevin O'Sullivan was asked about his redshirt freshman's first appearance after the game.

"It was really good to get Hunter (Ruth) out there," O'Sullivan said. "I thought his stuff was darting...He's going to be a huge piece moving forward, for sure."

At the plate, Florida's bats mustered just enough juice to support the pitching staff, scoring three runs on six hits.

The Gators primarily got to LBSU freshman starter Alfredo Ruiz in the third and fourth innings.

UF loaded the bases with two outs to give freshman Jud Fabian an opportunity to get

**Florida finishes home golf tournament in second place**

The Gators men's golf team fell to No. 3 Vanderbilt by one stroke on the final hole of the Florida Gators Invitational. UF had four golfers place in the top 30: John Axelsen (+3, tied for fourth), Eugene Hong (+6, tied for 12th), Manuel Girona (+2, tied for 18th), and Chris Nido (+5, tied for 30th).

**Nothing But Nettuno / Opinion**

**What Florida needs to do to make the NCAA Tournament**

**Tyler Nettuno**
Twitter: @TylerNettuno

Six games remain in the regular season for the Gators' men's basketball team.

The idea that Florida still stands a chance of being one of those 68 programs eludes most UF fans. But in their 71-35 takedown of Alabama, a likely tournament team that beat now-No. 5 Kentucky on Jan. 5, the Gators showed that they are still very much in the mix.

Those types of shots allowed Florida to get more balance from its offense in the past couple of games, and that showed in its 71-53 win over Alabama on Saturday.

The Gators’ first six field goals of the game were from inside the three-point arc, and three of those shots were from Nembhard.

Nembhard’s short shot-taking mirrored the Gators’ offense against the Crimson Tide.

Florida is a team that averages 25.4 three-point attempts per game, but when the three pointers didn’t fall in the first half against Alabama — it went 4 of 12 for the period — Florida started working the ball to the interior. And despite shooting 33 percent from beyond the arc in the first half, the Gators made over half of their shots during that span.

They took fewer three-point shots (7) after the halftime break and shot 54.5 percent in the second half.

Guard KeVaughn Allen was 5 of 9 from the field with 13 points, and all but one of his baskets (a contested three-pointer in the first half) were either layups or mid-range jumpers.

Center KeVaughn Allen and forward Keyontae Johnson were also efficient in the post. Hayes scored six of his nine points in the paint, and Johnson notched a 14-point, 13-rebound double-double.

The Gators’ ability to both push in transition and attack the rim contributed to them outscoring the Tide 6-0 in fastbreak points and 36-24 in points in the paint.

The first UF transition score was just three minutes into the game.

Nembhard stole the ball from Alabama on Saturday.

Instead, Nembhard passed up the immediate chance to get the game tied with a steal and a fastbreak layup. Instead, he passed up the immediate chance to get the game tied with a steal and a fastbreak layup.

The UF guard had Alabama for four quick points on the play.

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SEE MEN'S BASKETBALL, PAGE 16
GYMNASTICS

The SEC may not have an answer for Florida after Tuscaloosa victory

By River Wells
Sports Writer

Normality.
It’s a principle that Florida gymnastics coach Jenny Rowland has drilled into her team from the very beginning of the year. Time and time again, UF’s gymnasts have attested that the key to their success is to go into the meet and do exactly what they have done in practice: be normal.

With their win in Tuscaloosa on Friday against No. 9 Alabama, every SEC team knows by now that the Gators’ “normal” is anything but.

UF’s average score across all of its meets so far this year is a 197.670. That score is higher than the best score from seven of the other top-10 teams in the nation, along with every other SEC team.

The Gators are undefeated in conference play thus far and have taken down two of the SEC’s three other top-10 squads in LSU and Alabama. With two more SEC meets to go, it isn’t just a possibility that the Gators will have, Georgia has lost to two teams that could be outclassed when they step into the competition for a better team.

“Luckily, we’re in one of the best conferences, and we get to compete against the best teams,” sophomore Alyssa Baumann said before the meet against Alabama. “Each time we go against an SEC team, it’s a big deal, and you want to come away with that win.”

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SOFTBALL

UF earns third run-rule win of weekend, stays undefeated

By Mark Stine
Sports Writer

First baseman Jordan Matthews measured up a 2-2 offering from Central Michigan pitcher Cloe Mallory and made explosive contact. The softball soared through the desert air and landed over the red fence.

The home run tacked two runs onto the board, giving the Florida softball team a critical eight-run lead heading into the fifth inning.

The margin was just enough to run-rule the Chippewas (4-6), as Matthews’ home run punctuated a 76-minute, four-and-a-half inning UF victory, 8-0.

The win completed an undefeated effort for Florida at the Littlewood Classic in Tempe, Arizona, which improved to 11-0 to start the 2019 campaign. It was the third run-rule victory by the Gators in two days.

The UF offense started with a lead-off blast by designated player Jordan Roberts in the bottom of the second inning and ended on the two-run homer. Matthews and Roberts led the team offensively with two hits, two RBIs and two runs apiece.

Florida also reaped plenty of benefits from the Chippewas’ blunders. Each of Central Michigan’s three errors directly led to a run.

Second baseman Hannah Adams knocked a ground ball to Central Michigan second baseman Rachel Vieira, who let the ball squirt into the outfield and allowed Roberts to score from second.

Aggressive baserunning by pinch runner Amanda Beane caused two more errors in the fourth. The freshman stole second, advanced to third on a throwing error by the catcher and took home after a throw from center field flew into the Florida dugout.

The Chippewas were no match on offense for the pitching of senior Kelly Barnhill and sophomore Natalie Lugo. Barnhill started and improved to 6-0 on the season, while Lugo came in to close out the game.

Barnhill allowed one walk and one hit in four innings of action. The two-time All American struck out eight batters, two in each inning. She improved her earned-run average to 0.88 and her WHIP (walks and hits per innings pitched) to 0.56. Barnhill already has 54 strikeouts in 32 innings pitched.

Lugo allowed a single to start the fifth inning to Central Michigan’s Tala Dean, who made it to third on a wild pitch and stolen base. But the UF reliever fanned the next three batters. She has 24 strikeouts in 21.2 innings of work.

The scoreless inning dropped Lugo’s earned-run average under one (0.97), and her WHIP moved to 0.42, the lowest on the Gators’ pitching staff.

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WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Florida swept in season series against South Carolina

By Dylan Rudolph
Sports Writer

Cam Newbauer just looked down in the post-game press conference. The typically optimistic coach was quiet after his team gave up over 90 points for a second-straight game.

The offense clicked, but numerous times South Carolina rushed down the court and had wide-open shots while UF players still celebrated their points.

“Our defense has definitely got to get better,” Newbauer said. “It starts with transition defense. Have to get better in that area.”

No. 11 South Carolina used its fast-paced play to defeat the Florida women’s basketball team 96-77 Sunday at the O’Connell Center. The loss was UF’s seventh in its last eight games and the 10th straight against the Gamecocks.

South Carolina came into the matchup having won six of its last seven games, but Florida (6-19, 2-10 SEC) did not look intimidated. Donning their bright pink jerseys for the annual Play4Kay Pink Game, the Gators used strong drives and excellent passing to go on an 18-2 run in the opening quarter.

Guards Danielle Rainey and Kiara Smith led the way, combining for 13 points and three rebounds.

But once South Carolina settled in, the momentum began to shift.

The Gamecocks’ (19-6, 11-1 SEC) quickly stole the lead back in the second quarter. Florida’s transition defense was exposed when South Carolina began to effectively use its up-tempo offense. The consequence was a 16-2 South Carolina run and an eight-point deficit heading into the halftime break.

Guards Bianca Cuevas-Moore and Destanni Henderson commanded the offense, combining for 28 points (14 each) and four rebounds in the half.

South Carolina continued its surge in the second half when forward Alexis Jennings began to impose herself by using her huge, 6-foot-3 frame against Florida’s smaller interior defense. UF forward Zada Williams struggled to guard her in the post for much of the game and received little help defense from her teammates, allowing Jennings to bully her way to a 17-point third quarter and a 22-point game on 8-for-11 shooting.

“She’s a good player,” Williams said after the game. “She was closing hard, posting really deep. I have to give her credit. She really busted her tail to get the ball, and that’s what happened.”

Jennings’ performance broke the game open, and South Carolina extended its lead with seemingly every possession. The Gamecocks shot over 60 percent from the field in the second half, and five players finished with nine or more points.

Florida tried to match South Carolina shot for shot, but the Gamecocks’ defense adjusted well after giving up 25 points in the first quarter. The Gamecocks closed out well on the perimeter and contested every attempt.

The Gators had five players with 10 or more points but made just 39 percent of their shots after the opening quarter, including a dreadful 16 percent from three-point range.

“You being stagnant when they went to zone (defense) kind of hurt us,” Williams said. “Not really moving on weak sides. Not really finding open people. We have to work on our offense against that zone defense.”

Florida will need to find confidence on both sides of the ball before it travels to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, on Thursday to play LSU. Newbauer said he hopes that his players don’t get too discouraged after losing to one of the best teams in the SEC.

“We talk a lot about passion and purpose,” Newbauer said. “Losing is not fun. It steals your passion when you get beat up sometimes…I’m just proud that even though we didn’t get the outcome we wanted, they keep clawing and keep sticking together.”

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McConnell went 3 for 4 off two singles and an RBI double

BASEBALL, from pg 14

he team on the board.

Fabian stayed patient at the plate, getting the count to 3-2 before forcing a walk to allow sophomore shortstop Brady McConnell to trot in from third base.

The next at-bat, freshman Roberto Pena — making his first start as a Gator — hit a line drive to LBSU third baseman Tanner Carlson that he couldn’t gather, allowing designated hitter Nelson Maldonado to score from third.

The fourth inning featured doubles from both catcher Santino Miozzi and McConnell. McConnell’s shot down the left-field line scored Miozzi, giving the Gators a 3-1 lead.

He went 3 for 4 on the day, adding two singles to go along with his RBI double.

“Obviously it’s exciting to me,” McConnell said, referring to his five-hit series this weekend. “I’m just glad we’re winning ball games, that’s what’s most important. If it’s me that’s helping, then cool.”

The Gators sent out closer Nolan Crisp once again to secure his second save in as many tries.

The freshman gave up a leadoff double in the ninth but retired three-straight LBSU batters afterwards to complete the sweep for Florida.

The youth of this team was a worry of Florida coach Kevin O’Sullivan going into the season, but they showed an ability to stay composed on Sunday.

“You look out there late in the game, and

McConnell went 3 for 4 off two singles and an RBI double

you have a freshman at second, a redshirt freshman at short, you have a freshman at first, a high school senior at center, and a high school kid on the mound,” O’Sullivan said. “It wasn’t by design, but in a two-run game, they kept it together, and that was impressive.”

Florida coach Kevin O’Sullivan went with redshirt freshman Hunter Ruth, who returned from Tommy John surgery, in relief of Sunday starter Jack Leftwich.

The Gators scored 11 points off turnovers against Alabama

MEN’S BASKETBALL, from pg 14

bama guard Dazon Ingram and drove to the basket for an easy layup.

He followed that up midway through the first half with another transition layup. That time, Allen found Nembhard on the fastbreak after guard Jalen Hudson came up with the ball off an Alabama turnover.

There were several plays like that, where the Gators’ aggression on defense led to points on the offensive end (they scored 11 points off turnovers).

They would’ve normally pulled up from deep in those situations.

But in a game where its defense created numerous opportunities for its offense, Florida made the smart plays. And those plays ultimately allowed it to reach season high point total since Jan. 30, when it scored 90 in an overtime win over Ole Miss. Florida’s performance comes at a pivotal point in the year as postseason implications make each game more and more important.

NCAA Tournament projections have the Gators outside the top 68. But most bracketologists still give Florida a slight chance to make the tournament.

ESPN Bracketology expert Joe Lunardi has Florida as the top team in “First Four Out.”

But UF’s convincing win over Alabama, a team that is pegged to make the tournament, certainly helped its resume.

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