

Cunningham, Wilson to undergo student body vote of confidence during midterm elections



Clinton Engelberger

STAFF WRITER

Student Body President and Vice President Julia Cunningham and Jillian Wilson are headed back to the polls as a vote of confidence (VOC) will take place to either secure or remove them from their positions after being elected to their roles in the spring semester as a selection of last resort.

With the VOC, students will vote either “yes” or “no” on whether they want to keep Cunningham and Wilson in their positions. Students will get to cast their vote on the midterm election ballot from Oct. 12 at 8 a.m. to Oct. 13 at 11:59 p.m.

Both Cunningham and Wilson took over their respective roles May 10 when the ticket that received the most votes in the general election was disqualified from the presidential race and lost their title. They were found guilty of a major grievance for a social media giveaway which rewarded students a \$25 gift card if they tagged a friend, shared the post and followed their campaign Instagram account.

As stated in statute 707.7.3, the

student body president and vice president selected by last resort will be subjected to a VOC in the following midterm election.

No other candidates will be competing against them. If they aren't selected to retain their roles, the Senate president is next in line to take over. SG Supervisor of Elections Savannah Carr said

lightly,” Carr said. “They’re going to go out there, continue doing their work as vice president and president and keep doing their jobs. They will also go out and start mingling with students a little bit more to start their campaigns again.”

In order for both candidates to remain in their roles, they must



Current USF Student Body President and Vice President Julia Cunningham (left) and Jillian Wilson (right) must be elected in this vote in order to maintain their positions after previously being selected as a last resort. SPECIAL TO THE ORACLE

both candidates are beginning to campaign for themselves again in order to make a positive impression on USF students.

“They are essentially campaigning again, however, I use the term campaigning

receive a majority, or 51%, of “yes” votes from students, similar to most election standards.

While the president and vice president positions are a key result to watch in the election,

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Student orgs customize COVID-19 event policies



Angela Cordoba Perez

ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

This semester in-person events were brought back to interact more with their members, but after over a year of student organizations connecting with students online, some have had to modify the way they host activities.

Since the start of the pandemic, student organizations were not allowed to have any type of in-person events, even if they were off campus. However, the restrictions were lifted at the start of the fall semester as in-person classes and activities returned.

Dean of Students Danielle McDonald sent a letter to student organizations with recommendations to mitigate risks of spreading the virus, including moving the events outside, delaying crowded indoor events, offering some virtual or hybrid events and not offering food if it's not crucial for the event.

“As we look forward to being back on campus in a few weeks

and returning to traditional campus life, we also need to be cognizant that the pandemic is not over and in fact we are in the middle of a fourth wave,” McDonald said in the letter.

Student organizations have adapted their events to align with the recommendations. Some have tried booking larger rooms to ensure social distancing, others have opted not to have food or to offer it outside the rooms so students don't have to take the mask off inside.

Augusta Major, president of the Association for Computing Machinery Student Chapter (ACM), said it has had four events so far with about 30-60 attendees. Two of those were also streamed online so that students who were not comfortable being in person could still be part of it.

“We also wanted to keep the online format, since a lot of people wouldn't be able to make it on time,” Major said. “Or a lot of people who were concerned about COVID-19, they would want that option to still be there.”

Unlike the university, student organizations are allowed to require face coverings for all attendees regardless of vaccination status and they were advised to do so in the letter. If organizations decided not to enforce masks, they were asked

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THE UNIVERSITY OF
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NEWSPAPER SINCE 1966

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The Oracle is published on Mondays during the fall, spring and summer semesters

The Oracle allocates one free issue to each student. Additional copies are \$.50 each and available at The Oracle office (SVC 0002).

BY PHONE

Editor	974-5190
News	974-1888
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CORRECTIONS
The Oracle will correct or clarify factual errors. Contact Editor in Chief Leda Alvim at 974-5190.



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they won't be the only candidates students will be voting for on the ballot.

The midterm election ballot will allow students to vote for 42 open seats in SG campus council and Senate across all campuses, according to Carr. By the end, there will be 44 Senate seats in Tampa, nine in St. Pete, seven in Sarasota-Manatee and nine campus council representatives

campus council, one for Senate and one for both.

In Tampa, students will only be able to vote online, but students at the St. Pete and Sarasota-Manatee campuses will be able to vote either online or at on-campus polling stations. If students vote in person, they will vote using their phones in order to minimize physical contact. Polling stations will be monitored so students only vote using one method.

With midterm elections



The midterm election ballots to vote for open Senate and campus council seats will also include the vote of confidence. ORACLE PHOTO/LEDA ALVIM

per campus.

Applications closed Sept. 17 as preparations are being made leading up to voting week. In total, Carr said 117 students applied at the Tampa campus, with 20 applications for campus council, 50 for Senate and 47 for both. For the St. Pete campus, 21 students applied with four applications for campus council, four for Senate and 13 for both. Seven students applied in total at Sarasota-Manatee, five for

quickly approaching, Carr said it's important for students to vote as this is their chance to have their voices heard.

"It's important that students go out there and vote because their voice matters," Carr said. "If they have any sort of concern about Julia and Jillian, they have the right to vote and have the right to vote for who they want in the Senate and campus council as well. It's very important that their voices are heard."

STUDENT ORGS

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to strongly recommend them for all attendees, especially in large and indoor events. McDonald said “several” organizations are requiring masks at their events.

“Panhellenic, during sorority recruitment, required everyone to wear masks,” McDonald said. “Student Government has been requiring masks for all of their meetings, and is doing social distancing and masks for Bulls Blitz buses to the football game.”

Women in Business Society is one of those, according to its President Eryka Extejt. She said they decided to require masks rather than return to online events only, where she said students were not as engaged and some felt isolated.

“We felt it important to follow these guidelines [from Dean McDonald] to the best of our abilities because in all honesty, it’s so important to get to have these in person events, especially in the business world,” Extejt said.

“Networking is an absolutely essential skill, and while some aspects of it can be replicated in a digital format, details like body language, tone and overall engagement are absent when events are hosted online.”

In practice, however, enforcing face coverings can be hard, according to Major. For ACM’s events, the organization has been highly encouraging the use of masks but they are not requiring it. About half of the people who have attended their events have been using it, Major said.

“We’re not sure how to enforce per se, but we try to encourage it whenever we can,” Major said. “And we tried to book larger

rooms than we used to so that people can space out a little bit more.”

Like ACM, the Asian Students in America organization has been recommending the use of masks but hasn’t enforced them. Tee Chulikavit, the president, said the organization preferred to ask people to put on their face coverings rather than kicking them out from their events.

“We could [kick someone out],

person. They opted to take other precautions such as taking attendance for contact tracing and serving food with gloves.

“But in terms of the Asian committee, we’ve all sort of discussed the weight specifically on our cultural events that whether or not we do get a positive case,” Chulikavit said.

“Mostly because we are an Asian student [organization], if we get a COVID positive case,



In the past two semesters student organizations were not allowed to have any type of in-person events, however, this restriction was lifted this semester as in-person classes and activities returned. [INSTAGRAM/@asia_at_usf](https://www.instagram.com/asia_at_usf)

but that’s mostly not what we’re about. We’re all about inclusion, whether or not they are wearing a mask,” Chulikavit said. “And it would be nice if they could wear masks, but pretty much the only thing we’ve agreed to do, not just me, us and other [organizations] of Asian committees, just try to encourage it, keep the pressure on them [attendees].”

So far, Asian Students in America have hosted two in-person events with 134 and 114 attendees, respectively. The majority of them were wearing masks, Chulikavit said, but in such large events sometimes it’s hard to pay attention to each

Asian hate crimes have happened in the past, and it’s not like we’re expecting one. But we’re, it’s a lot more weight on us, specifically. So we’re very careful. We’re very attentive to COVID precautions.”

Extejt said students are eager to have in-person events and interactions so there has been no trouble enforcing guidelines.

“No one showed up without one or forgot one,” Extejt said. “Everyone came prepared, and I truly think this is a reflection of the fact that people are willing to take the extra step for safety if it means they are guaranteed an opportunity to connect and engage in person.”

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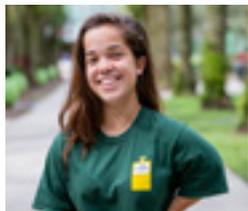
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Ejemplos de fortaleza: Maria Clara Novoa dedicates her life to service



Leda Alvim

EDITOR IN CHIEF

With just a backpack and a heart full of faith and courage, Maria Clara Novoa took a plane alongside her brother to Brazil to attend the 28th World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro — an experience that shaped her passion for service for years to come.

Novoa was only 14 years old by the time of the trip, but despite her age, she said it was one of the best experiences of her life.

“[The trip] helped me find what I’m passionate about, like my faith and serving others because we also had a missionary week,” Novoa said. “Being a leader, too, because over there we did our groups, and my brother and I were the ones who were helping out everyone else.

“Personally, I grew a lot as a person because being in another culture and [with] other people, we got more cultural awareness, and I just love Brazilian people.”

Her experiences in Brazil, as well as her roots from growing up in Bogotá, Colombia, helped Novoa, an alum from the USF St. Pete campus, develop her interest in service as well as her perseverance to pursue leadership roles in her

community.

Novoa moved to the U.S. in 2016 after graduating from high school to study English for six months. What was supposed to be a short stay ended up extending and providing her with new opportunities.

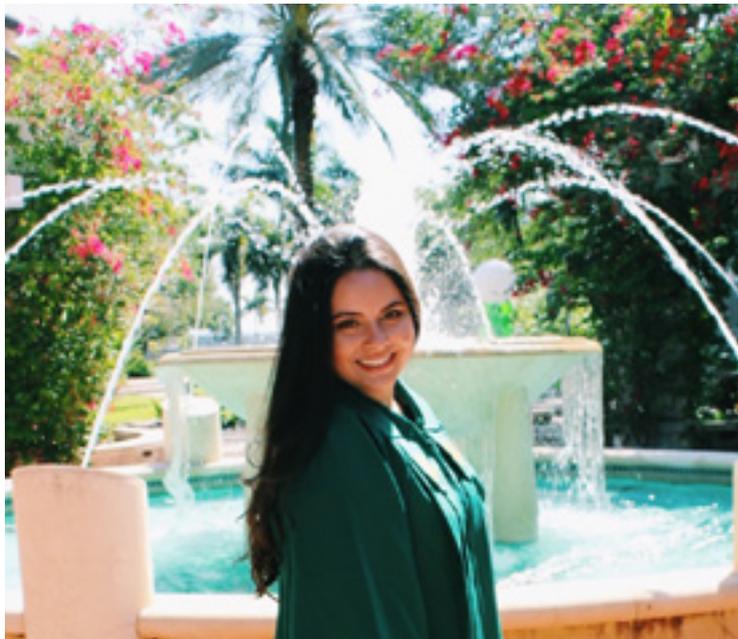
“I know opportunities started to come one by one and I had to take them, I didn’t want to lose so many opportunities [I’ve] been able to get here,” Novoa said. “So yeah, I’m still here for that reason.”

She decided to pursue her associate’s degree at St. Petersburg College (SPC) in 2016, where she enjoyed all the chances presented to leave her own mark and stand out among her peers. Among her achievements, she was named student of the year and the most engaged international student in spring 2018 and received the Global Citizen Commencement Medallion.

When her time at SPC was done, she started a psychology degree with a minor in leadership at USF St. Pete in 2019. After graduating in May, Novoa continued working as a registered behavioral technician providing behavioral therapy for children with autism.

Sebastián Amado, Novoa’s boyfriend, said her dedication to serving is mirrored by her family values.

“She works at a clinic doing therapy for autistic kids. It’s all about helping others, in one way or another,” Amado said. “The whole point of everything is her willingness or desire to build a



From Colombia to Florida, Maria Clara Novoa’s journey has been based on her passion to lead and serve in the community.

SPECIAL TO THE ORACLE

better community.”

While she has adapted to her life in the U.S. and has a job now, she experienced a culture shock after she visited Colombia, a year later from when she arrived in the U.S. The differences, however, made her miss her country and culture even more.

“I was not expecting myself to actually have a cultural shock until then, because it was right when I got to the airport, and my mom hugged me and I was like, ‘Wow, I haven’t felt hugged for a long time,’” Novoa said. “That was when I was like, ‘Wow, I understand that social interactions are completely different here.’”

As time went on, she noticed she was becoming more of an

independent person. Since her Colombian roots have always had a strong influence on her life, she said she started developing different traits based on her new life in the U.S.

“Now, after being here for this long enough after finishing college, I can tell myself when I go back that I am also starting to be different from my own people ... because I am very independent now.

“I’ve learned to be so independent ... because of the circumstances. But it was more by choice. ‘I want to leave my parents’ house’ kind of thing. But I have felt that I’m more independent. I feel like I’ve grown a lot as a person [and] learned to also get to know myself a lot, too.”

Lucero McChord, Novoa’s aunt, welcomed Novoa into her house in Brandon for three months after arriving from Colombia in 2016. McChord said Tata, Novoa’s nickname, has a contagious personality and is able to achieve anything she sets her mind to.

“She has been raised in a good Christian family, with a mother and father that encouraged her and helped her a lot,” McChord said. “So this girl gives you 100% on whatever she needs to do, to achieve what she wants [and] to help other people, too.

“Whatever you need, whatever you ask, she is right there, [going] the extra mile. Whatever it takes to help, she’s always there.”

Her passion and involvement to serve the community were cultivated in her school back in Colombia, where she was taught from a young age how to help others and serve her own community. During her time at school, Novoa said she and her classmates would help low-income families in Colombia through donations and service, an experience that helped her build her foundation for years to come.

She also often went on missions in small towns across the country to help the community through food drives and toy donations during Christmas time, among others.

Her motto, inspired by Saint Ignatius de Loyola, was to “be more to serve more” based on the values of love and service. She

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NOVOA

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said such values taught her the importance of giving back to her community in any way she can.

“[Interacting with kids] was so much fun, and your love for life just grows and grows more every time you do things like that. So I think that’s why I’m very passionate about it.”

Novoa said her service experience as a girl in Colombia helped her find new opportunities to engage and serve her local community in St. Petersburg. One of them was the Community Action Stops Abuse (CASA) center, a domestic violence center for women, children and men in Pinellas County.

Alongside a group of five classmates, Novoa developed a project to raise donations for CASA during the pandemic. The group collected over 100 items

ranging from hygiene products like shampoo, soap and hand sanitizers to clothing.

“We learned how to work in groups and what we could do in the future for the same objective,” Novoa said. “It was a really nice learning experience to work as a team and also make things work during a pandemic, [which] was the challenge.”

Novoa also worked at the Hispanic Outreach Center in Clearwater with undocumented and low-income families. There she played with kids and interacted with families while building a sense of community.

“Life really makes sense in those moments. I really appreciate older people coming together to do something for other people in older communities that need it, and I love that feeling,” Novoa said. “I love the passion. Those are the things that really stick with me when I volunteer.

“In general, when you have that energy, the community energy that you just see, there’s so much like that out there in the world. Everybody is serving for the same objective and the same purpose.”

Love for the community and faith made her treasure her roots and culture even more after she moved to the U.S.

“I always wanted to, and even today, I still want to do something for my country. If I ever get the chance to do a nonprofit, anything that could help [I’d love to,] because I know how my country struggles,” she said. “But I have always appreciated so much the people, our culture and how unique we all are in certain ways.”

One of the most impactful moments for Novoa when volunteering was in Colombia, when she met a young girl full of burns on her face. Despite

the pain she might have gone through, Novoa said the girl’s spirit and genuine heart made her realize the importance of valuing the small moments of light in life.

“It’s incredible to know that the less these people have, the more happy they are too. [That moment for me is] just a constant reminder,” Novoa said.

Her positive outlook on life is also a reason Amado admires her. He said she has kept her head held high despite any setbacks.

“She’s such a positive person, no matter what she’s going through,” Amado said. “Anything, the circumstances, you will always see her with a smile on her face. I’ve seen her lows, and she still has the positive mentality, and not just with her but with the people around her.”

Novoa’s Latin roots and the values instilled in her since a young age have guided her

wherever she goes. She said the attributes of “guerrera,” which means fighter in Spanish, have given her the motivation and drive to fight for her goals and persevere through the challenges encountered along the way.

“Latinos don’t give up and we really work for what we want,” Novoa said. “We help each other in every way that we can. I love that we also understand each other. I feel like we do care and have been in other people’s shoes somehow and that has also helped us to be a community [in the U.S.]”

“I’m very proud to be Colombian too because of how joyful we are. ... We really take the best out of every situation, and I just love that. Whatever bad thing happens, we just laugh about it, find a solution and move on. That’s why I think I’m very proud to be Colombian [and] Latina.”



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New FAST testing is the future of K-12 student assessments

By Felicity DeGaetano
CORRESPONDENT

Florida plans to replace the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) with a different system to monitor student progress periodically, Gov. Ron DeSantis announced Sept. 14 at a press conference. This new test, the Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST), will periodically assess student performance throughout the school year.

FAST has the potential to let students and teachers alike focus more on valuable education and classroom time through periodic measurement compared to standardized testing at the end of a school year, which is a phenomenal improvement in monitoring and supporting K-12 students' educations.

FSA testing currently has students in grades three through 10 taking the English Language Arts FSA, with grades three to eight taking the Mathematics FSA. Testing will continue this year but will be completely tossed out in fall 2022.

These final examinations bring stress to students and teachers alike while also altering schedules and taking away time in the classroom.

The Florida Education Association (FEA), which represents 15,000 educators and is the largest teachers union in the state, supported the governor's decision in a statement Sept. 14.

"A student's future shouldn't hang on one high-stakes, make-or-break test, and one test shouldn't dominate weeks that

could otherwise be used for meaningful instruction," said FEA President Andrew Spar.

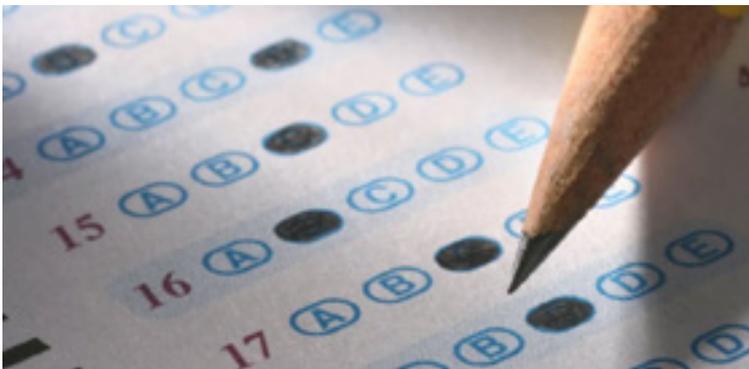
The new form of measurement will include recurring FAST tests in the fall, winter and spring, though it will have to pass through the Florida Legislature in March 2022.

Similarly structured assessment testing to FAST testing has been proven to work in a student's favor. Researchers

standardized testing at the end of the school year, according to the press release.

But the state tested FAST's efficacy at High Point Elementary School in Clearwater. The school, attended by many children from low-income households who produce low FSA test scores, went from a D to a C school last academic year with shorter and more frequent testing.

Though middle and high



A new form of testing to replace the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) has the potential to let teachers and students learn more and stress less. SPECIAL TO THE ORACLE/PXHERE

from Brigham Young University studied students' performances on nine exams over a period of five months, according to an April 2021 journal article. Shorter tests taken more frequently gave students higher scores on high-order questions, leading to a 15% increase in retention scores, equivalent to shifting from a D to a B-.

There's still hesitancy with the replacement and how long it might take for real change to occur within Florida schools. The FAST plan will also be the first of its kind in the U.S. to utilize progress monitoring over

school students haven't experienced FAST testing yet, it will undoubtedly appeal to them as they look to join higher level Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate courses and want to chart their progress over the academic year before joining these rigorous programs.

FAST has the potential to better measure student performance while also giving them room each year to learn and grow.

Felicity DeGaetano is a junior majoring in marketing.

USF should offer prisoners second chance at college

By Brielle Lopez
CORRESPONDENT

The Second Chance Pell Experimental Sites Initiative, conducted by the Department of Education (DOE), is open for colleges to apply until Oct. 28. The initiative provides college access to incarcerated students and leaves an opportunity for USF to join the program, better the community and offer accessible education to inmates.

The initiative, which studies outcomes of providing Pell Grants to incarcerated students, has garnered over 22,000 participants since it began in 2015, as outlined on the DOE's website. It's expanded this year to include more colleges from more states for the 2022-23 school year.

Due to the 1994 Crime Bill, Pell Grants had previously been banned from being distributed to inmates, but the program was able to support student access to 67 programs via waivers and expanded to 67 more after the ban was officially lifted by Congress in December 2020. Inmates who are otherwise eligible for USF's Pell Grants and won't be incarcerated within the next five years can be selected.

To apply, USF administration only has to decide which academic programs will be offered and how many students it will accept into them.

If selected, however, it will have to monitor who is chosen and offer academic and financial information to inmates if they're released early from prison and want to continue their education. The program will come at no

direct cost to the university.

Providing education in prison has been proven to improve inmates' lives after release, according to a 2021 report conducted by the Vera Institute of Justice. The institute found correctional education lessens an inmate's chance of returning to prison by 48%. Taxpayers can also save \$4-5 each annually in reduced incarceration costs.

Odds of getting employed post-release also increased by 13% for inmates who participated in correctional education, according to RAND, a nonprofit research organization. If USF were to participate in the initiative, the results could greatly benefit the economies of Hillsborough, Pinellas and Sarasota counties.

Florida Gateway College (FGC) in Lake City is the only state college that joined this experiment in 2017, allowing up to 50 student participants from the Florida Department of Corrections in their first year.

This first class graduated in May 2019, with an average GPA of 3.89, according to FGC's 2019 Fact Book. From 2016-2020, FGC enrolled 254 unique participants into the program, according to the Vera Institute.

USF should follow in FGC's footsteps and send an application to the DOE. This would be a huge step toward reforming students in local prisons, saving taxpayers money and introducing intelligent members into the community's workforce.

Brielle Lopez is a senior majoring in English.

FAMU

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found its guy.

Leading up to the game against FAMU, Scott was very noncommittal on who would start at quarterback for his team. Just before kickoff, however, McClain was announced as the game's starter on the jumbotron.

"There's times tonight where he made some really nice plays, and [other times] where he looked like a freshman," Scott said of McClain after the game. "That's part of it, I've coached freshman quarterbacks before and this is the first time he's ever started a game.

"I think he definitely does some things that can help us offensively. ... The exciting part about him is he's got a lot of room to grow."

Although Scott didn't say whether or not McClain will start next week against BYU, his play against the Rattlers was impressive. Aside from an early fumble, the freshman was 12-of-23 for 163 passing yards and a touchdown. He also ran for 53 yards on 14 attempts.

Running backs have strong performance

The USF offense didn't disappoint against the Rattlers, posting 38 points with sophomore running back Brian Battie and junior running back Jaren Mangham showing out.

Battie rushed for 110 yards on 10 carries, bringing his total number of rushing yards on the season to 151, almost half of his production last season through just three games.

As for Mangham, he served as the muscle for USF and secured three red zone touchdowns for the Bulls. A transfer from the University of Colorado, Mangham already has five

touchdowns on the season.

Although Mangham got the start and, along with Battie, headlined the show for the running back room this time around, junior Kelley Joiner and senior Darrian Felix will likely still be relevant pieces to the position and the team moving forward. It just comes down to how the reps are split up

"It's kind of how the rotation is and how it goes, obviously I rolled out first [today]," Mangham said. "Today I was lucky to get in [the end zone] three times"

Second-half defensive mistakes could cost USF in the future

The defense for the Bulls ultimately got the job done, but its performance in the second half wasn't ideal.

"Defensively, [in] the first half, I thought we did a good job," Scott said. "We held them to -7 yards rushing in the first half and they were 0-for-8 on third downs. Obviously we didn't finish the right way defensively. They were able to find a lot of points there in the second half [and] we've got to clean that up.

"We just don't have a lot of depth right now, those guys kind of got worn down there in the second half... We'll have to learn from that. Guys are going to have to be in shape [and] play four quarters if our depth is [where it's at now.]"

The Bulls barely touched FAMU's quarterback, only getting one sack, and allowed 271 second-half yards. While this worked Saturday, a performance like that may not be as successful against USF's future opponents.

Women's basketball

Continued from PAGE 8

the season, two spots higher than USF, and made it to the round of 32 in the NCAA tournament where they lost to Michigan.

UConn, neutral site Nov. 21

While this is only a potential matchup for the Bulls, given they



Reigning National Player of the Year Paige Bueckers (5) returns to UConn for her sophomore season, the Bulls will potentially face the Huskies Nov. 21 in the Battle 4 Atlantis Tournament. UCONN ATHLETICS PHOTO

beat Syracuse in their opening game of the Battle 4 Atlantis tournament in the Bahamas, the Huskies are still one of the toughest teams USF will probably face this year.

A consistent national title contender and long-time AAC rival, UConn is gearing up for yet another run to the Final Four and possibly its 12th national title with one of its most talented teams in recent memory.

Reigning national player of the year guard Paige Bueckers returns for her sophomore campaign and will be joined by one of the most highly touted freshmen ever in guard Azzi Fudd, who won the Gatorade Player of the Year

award for women's basketball as a sophomore, an unprecedented feat.

Along with those stars, the coach Geno Auriemma returns the nucleus of a team that went 28-2, finished third in the final coaches' poll, ranked sixth in the country in points per game (81.9) and opponents points per game (52.6) and made it to a record 21st final four appearance where they

over the program, reeling in three of the top five freshmen in the class of 2021 with Raven Johnson (No. 2), Saniya Rivers (No. 3) and Sania Feagin (No. 4) committing to the Gamecocks.

South Carolina is one of the few teams in the nation that can keep up with USF on the boards with Lisa Leslie Center of the Year award recipient Aliyah Boston leading the SEC with 11.5 rebounds per game.

Staley, Boston and the rest of the Gamecocks will look to one-up their finish from last season when they lost in heartbreaking fashion in the national semifinal against Stanford when Boston missed a put-back at the buzzer.

Stanford, neutral site Nov. 26

Before checking out from the Bahamas, USF will face the reigning champs in a one-off game for the Baha Mar Hoops Pink Flamingo Championship.

Boosting one of the best offenses in the country, Stanford ranked 14th in the nation in scoring offense averaging 77.7 points per game.

Tara VanDerveer, the all-time winningest coach in women's college hoops, brings back most of her title winning team, headlined by last year's Final Four Most Outstanding Player Haley Jones.

Jones lit up the Final Four scoring 24 points in Stanford's semifinal win over South Carolina and following that up with 17 against Arizona in the national title game. Also returning is standout freshman center Cameron Brink, guard Lexie Hull and guard Anna Wilson.

The Cardinals are once again one of the best teams in the country and have the type of talent that can help lead them to a second consecutive national title.

fell to Arizona in the national semifinal.

South Carolina, neutral site Nov. 22

Another national title favorite, if the Bulls play South Carolina, it would be on the final day of the Battle 4 Atlantis.

Fresh off of leading Team USA to its seventh-consecutive olympic gold medal, coach Dawn Staley is back in Columbia, ready to lead one of the most stacked rosters in the nation.

In addition to returning most of last year's squad, Staley recruited one of the best freshman classes since taking

Women's basketball

Women's basketball's four toughest matchups for 2021 season



Francisco Rosa

SPORTS CO-EDITOR

After seeing much of last year's nonconference schedule canceled due to COVID-19, coach Jose Fernandez and the USF women's basketball team are gearing up for perhaps its most challenging slate since he took over the program in November 2000.

Within the first few weeks of the season, the Bulls could potentially face off against three

teams that reached the Final Four in last year's NCAA tournament, including the reigning national champions Stanford.

"With the caliber of team we have returning, this type of schedule will not only prepare us for league play but will give us some great opportunities to bolster our [strength of schedule] and NET ranking," Fernandez said in a statement Sept. 17.

Here are the four toughest nonconference matchups for the Bulls this season.

Tennessee, away Nov. 15

The Bulls will head to Rocky Top to face the Lady Vols at Thompson-Boling Arena for the first matchup between the two teams in program history.

Tennessee has been one of women's hoops' perennial powers for decades winning eight national titles and appearing in 18 Final Fours, second only to UConn.



The USF women's basketball team is set to take one of its most difficult nonconference slates in program history that includes three teams that made the final four of last year's NCAA Tournament. USF ATHLETICS PHOTO

While the Lady Vols haven't been as dominant since the late, great coach Pat Summitt stepped down, not appearing in a Final Four since 2008, current coach Kellie Harper, a former player under Summitt, is trying to lift the program back to where it belongs.

Key returners for Harper's squad include Second Team All-SEC selection guard Rae Burrell, All-Freshman team member guard Marta Suárez and center Tamari Key, an All-Defensive team pick.

The Lady Vols, despite playing in perhaps the most stacked conference in the country, the SEC, still finished ranked No.16 in the coaches' poll at the end of

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FAMU takeaways

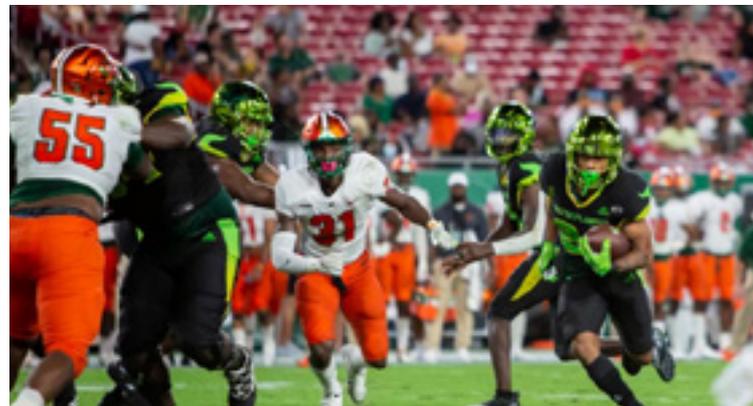
Takeaways: McClain possibly earns starting role, Battie and Mangham combine for big game against FAMU



Hannah Halili

CORRESPONDENT

Plenty of positives came out of USF's win over Florida A&M on Saturday, including the play of sophomore running back



Sophomore running back Brian Battie (center) ran for 110 yards in USF's 38-17 win over FAMU. ORACLE PHOTO/LEDA ALVIM

Brian Battie and the emergence of freshman quarterback Timmy McClain. That's not to say there aren't aspects the Bulls need to work on as well, however.

The Rattlers kept pace with the Bulls in the second half, with each team scoring 14 points, and outgained the Bulls 271-161 in total yardage over the final 30 minutes of the game.

Nevertheless, coach Jeff Scott said his team will enjoy the victory for 24 hours before eventually turning the page and

moving onto their next opponent, BYU. Here are some takeaways from USF's 38-17 win over FAMU.

Potential reason to quarterback questions

It was a constant carousel of quarterbacks for the Bulls last season, from Jordan McCloud to Noah Johnson and others, a starter just couldn't seem to be ironed out. Now, three games into a new season, USF may have

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