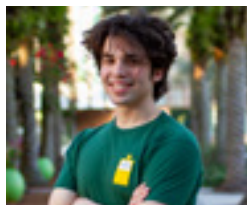


New SG position to be implemented, focuses on universitywide diversity efforts



Michael Mardones

STAFF WRITER

Student Body President Julia Cunningham made the executive order to remove the chief marketing officer position in favor of a federal diversity and inclusion coordinator.

The new position is intended to emulate the efforts of the Tampa campus' local diversity and inclusion coordinator's



The federal diversity and inclusion coordinator will oversee universitywide inclusion efforts, and build better connections with minority groups on all campuses. ORACLE PHOTO/LEDA ALVIM

job description, according to federal coordinator can be and inclusion, such as enhance Cunningham. However, the expected to advance diversity minority outreach initiatives,

at a federal level for all three campuses.

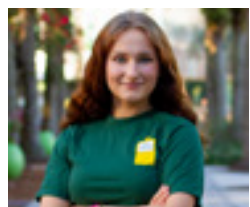
The removal of the chief marketing officer position comes from an effort to maximize the administration's efficiency by eliminating overlap in responsibilities between the seven cabinet members, according to Cunningham.

"If you already have a graphic design specialist and a multimedia design specialist, the need for a chief marketing officer becomes a little redundant," she said.

Between all three of the positions incorporating media production for Student

■ See SG DIVERSITY on PAGE 3

Esports Living Lab funding, opening delayed



Katherine Maily

STAFF WRITER

USF Esports' original plans of creating an in-person space, the Living Lab, has been delayed. The space is expected to be available by August, but this date remains uncertain due

to the amount of funding and construction process.

In September, Assistant Director of the Esports program Antonio Gonzalez said the extension of the Recreation and Wellness Center was initially expected to open in spring 2022.

"We wanted to be very cautious about hyping up the space until we knew that everything was in place and there was no chance of us disappointing students with false timelines or being unable to complete the project," Gonzalez said in a Sep. 21 Oracle article.

"This is as sure as we have ever been and we are excited to see this project come to fruition."

The setback has been attributed to the project's funding, provided by the Capital Improvement Trust Fund (CITF). The project initially applied for funding for the space in 2018 through the Tech Fee, but this was abandoned in summer 2021 when the project was approved for CITF.

"The funding from the state was delayed to a certain extent ... It takes time for that process to go

through, because of the fact that it wasn't an internally funded source," Gonzalez said.

The funding, currently an estimated \$368,000, will be used to organize 40 PCs in a space for casual and competitive gaming, watch parties and content creation. The 2,500-square-foot space will become part of the Rec.

To supplement the funds provided by the CITF, Gonzalez said it has been looking into sponsorships from other businesses, such as those

involved in gaming. This includes companies for software, hardware and the gaming community in Tampa as well as on an international level.

"We are keeping our options open and we're pursuing a myriad of different opportunities that may be able to assist with [funding the project]," he said.

Renderings of the space are currently being created, and will likely be available by March, according to Gonzalez. At this point, they will be able to move

■ See ESPORTS on PAGE 3

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News

New SG diversity
position

Esports lab delay
PAGE 3

Opinion

Closed
presidential
searches

Cryptocurrency
PAGE 6

Sports

WBB versus UCF

Drew Brucher
PAGE 8

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SG DIVERSITY

Continued from PAGE 1

Government (SG) and the implementation of marketing officers at the local level, the position at the federal level loses its delegated value.

Chief Marketing Officer Amanda Baxter said she agrees with the changes since the local levels have roles that satisfy the expectations of the terminated position.

“I act as a middleman [between the local and federal level] and do not actually have control over the local marketing team, so it is a challenge to fulfill what that title [chief marketing officer] suggests,” she said.

“I personally feel like our current structure does not support having a chief marketing officer due to the three local teams.”

Cunningham’s vision for the new position entails a student who is prepared with ideas and is ready to collaborate with diverse student organizations such as the Central American Student Alliance.

“This position is to have a person in the federal cabinet develop advocacy initiatives that support all marginalized identities on campus,” she said.

“Since no one person can embody the lived experience of every identity, this individual will have to work closely with other students, faculty and departments on all three campuses to provide impactful programs and events for the student body.”

Cunningham said once the 2022-23 budget is finalized, the diversity and inclusion coordinator will have set funding to construct initiatives.

The liberty the position will

have to implement initiatives is up to the next SG president, according to Cunningham.

“Each administration’s president has a different idea of how they want it run,” she said. “[The cabinet members] do not have to run every little thing that they do by me, but you might have a [more controlling] president one year.”

Selection for the first federal diversity and inclusion coordinator will transpire as soon as the president-elect is declared following the upcoming general election. The new president will host interviews for the position and choose who to appoint.

The anticipated cabinet member will then appear before the Senate Ethics Committee, who will determine if the student breaches any ethical criteria, such as having a conflict of interest. Assuming the candidate gets the committee’s stamp of approval, the SG Senate must reach a simple majority in favor of confirmation for the appointment to be official.

Although Cunningham will not be leading the new position she has curated, she invites students with ideas on how to make an impact to seek out the office.

“I [would] want somebody who has an open mind and is coming in already with ideas with how they see that they can improve student life on campus,” she said.

“I don’t want someone to come in thinking that they’ll figure it out as they go, I think that would be more harmful to the student body.”



Originally set to open in spring 2022, the opening of the Esports Living Lab was delayed as funding for the project awaits approval. SPECIAL TO THE ORACLE

ESPORTS

Continued from PAGE 1

ahead with creating the final plans for the space, which will depend on the final amount of funding that they are able to obtain.

Gonzalez said there was some dismay on behalf of the students due to the delay, since some may not be able to access the space once they graduate.

“Some students have been around for a while that were hoping to see the space online,” he said. “I know students that are graduating this semester that really wish they could see the space.”

“I think it’s something that they wanted to see come to fruition because as the program was built during COVID, and as we were coming back to campus, a lot of students were excited to have a physical space to come to and it’s just taken a little bit longer than we would have wanted or anticipated.”

In preparation for the anticipated opening of the location, Esports has been hosting certain events to attract new students, such as an in-person

workshop Feb. 26 in the North Gym in the Rec. At the workshop, three clubs for three different video games — DOTA 2, Valorant and League of Legends — will teach students how to play their respective games on PCs.

This is to introduce students who are already part of the gaming community to new games, or to teach the basics to those who have never gamed before.

Hassan Najam, freshmen computer science major and president of the Halo Club, conveyed his excitement for the opening, and the opportunities it offers.

“I’m sure that for all the Esports Clubs and fans of different game franchises, having an in-person place on campus will foster an environment that allows people to discover new interests,” Najam said.

“Whether that be competing in certain games or discovering new games for the first time.”

To access as many students as possible, Gonzalez said the Esports program has been reaching out to other student organizations that are commonly associated with gaming, such as

cosplay groups.

“We’re looking for students who are just trying to learn more about the community,” Gonzalez said. “[We’re] just reaching out to some of these other areas where there are definitely overlaps with gaming communities.”

The Esports program will also be hosting an in-person local area network event, also in the North Gym. This event will be similar to an in-person tournament, where any student can play the available games

“[Students can] compete for possibly cool merch of USF and bragging rights. This also ties in getting the space ready for in person tournaments, and possibly hosting and broadcasting the games on our USF channel,” Esports Supervisor for the space Kevin Castillo said.

The Lab represents part of the program’s progression toward fame in the Esports community, including on the collegiate level.

“We want USF to be one of the best colleges in the state to play for,” Castillo said. “We are miles away from that happening but this space will be a huge step into making that dream happen.”



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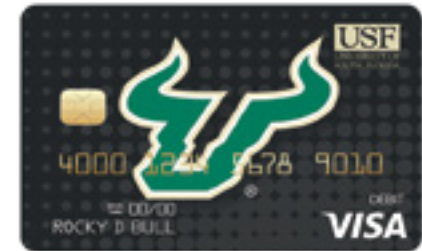


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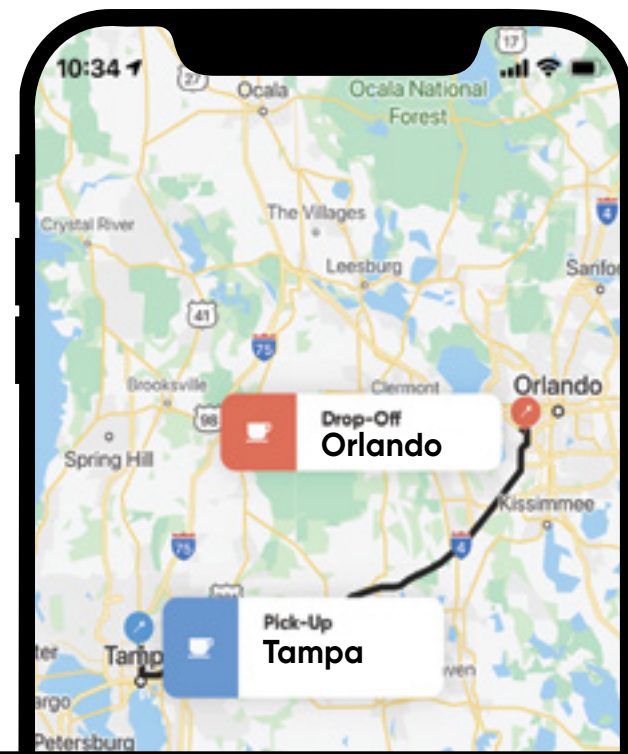
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Senate Bill 520 enables university corruption

By Rachel Beird
CORRESPONDENT

Unfortunately, Senate Bill 520 was approved by the Florida Senate last Thursday. This bill states that Florida's university presidents should be selected in a closed process, meaning none of the records or information are open to the public.

Senate Bill 520 is a gateway to corruption in Florida universities and shouldn't have been passed.

It states that information about university president applicants and the selection process will be kept secret until the pool of candidates is narrowed down to three finalists.

If this were to become law, these searches would be exempt from Florida's Sunshine Law, which ensures that any official business conducted by a state agency, including a university, is public record.

This law ensures the public is informed on what is happening in their state government, and there is no reason university presidential elections should be the exception to this.

Senate Bill 520 will open the door to political corruption within universities. In fact, this type of corruption has already been seen in the recent selection process of the next FSU president. Florida Education Commissioner Richard Corcoran's application for the position can be found online.

While Corcoran wasn't the only applicant with a political



New bill closes the university president selection process and allows more opportunity for corruption. FLICKR/STEVEN MARTIN

background, his candidacy was particularly concerning as he has a voting position in the Florida Board of Governors (BOG). The BOG is in charge of confirming the new president.

His candidacy was a conflict of interest and he should've never been in the running. It was only after harsh criticism from the public and the accreditation board that Corcoran was removed from the pool of candidates.

If this happened in full view of the public, then it is not a stretch to say the corruption would likely get much worse if this process were kept secret.

It is best to allow the public to see the entire process so there is little chance of this in the first place. This is the best way to keep legislators accountable and honest.

Supporters of this bill believe it will allow for a broader pool of applicants, according to a Jan. 27

Florida Senate Rules Committee meeting. Allegedly, it will attract candidates who would not apply otherwise out of fear they might lose their current job if their employer found out.

There's no proof this has been a significant issue, and it is absurd to believe a closed election will suddenly bring out the best, most qualified candidates. Even if a couple potential applicants are hesitant, that is certainly not worth compromising the integrity and transparency of the selection process.

Senate Bill 520 places the comfort of potential future candidates above the well-being of actual university students and staff and completely disregards one of Florida's most important statutes.

Rachel Beird is a sophomore studying mass communication.

Invest in the Earth, not cryptocurrency

By Brielle Lopez
OPINION CO-EDITOR

Between the popularity of NFTs and Bitcoin, cryptocurrency has been skyrocketing over the past couple of years. This development isn't serving the environment well, and accelerates climate change.

The power required to "mine" cryptocurrency is staggering, and the mining process is harmful to the environment. Cryptocurrency can be mined in more sustainable ways, and it should be regulated to ensure as little damage as possible.

Mining for cryptocurrency is defined by Fair Planet as "the process of creating, or 'winning,' new Bitcoins by solving increasingly difficult mathematical puzzles." Which doesn't sound too damaging, until you look at the energy required for the process.

There are different forms of cryptocurrency, some pulling more energy than others. Bitcoin is notably the most popular, and most harmful, form.

Bitcoin mining racks up 96 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions yearly, according to Fair Planet. That's equal to what some smaller countries — like Thailand — generate, according to cryptocurrency analytics site Digiconomist.

Many Bitcoin mining farms rely on fossil fuels to operate, but relying on renewable energy would prove to lessen the effects of cryptocurrency on climate change. They could diversify their power sources with hydropower,

wind, solar or nuclear energies.

In February 2021, the crypto market was at 106 million users, according to Crypto.com's 2021 study. Now, one year later, statistics show there are 300 million users, as stated by Earthweb's 2022 report.

That's a user increase of about 283%, which will only accelerate the rate at which cryptocurrency harms the Earth. This is alarming for cities that are already in a bad position environmentally, like Tampa.

Climate change can bring about more natural disasters through the increased heat it produces, which makes for droughts and more intense storms. This is because as water is evaporated into the atmosphere, it can further develop powerful storms, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

A more heated atmosphere and ocean surface only leads to increased wind speeds in tropical storms. The rising sea level will subject higher-located cities to the erosive forces of waves and currents. Tampa is one of those projected cities, according to a study conducted in 2021 by the City of Tampa.

Cryptocurrency has the chance to use more sustainable forms of energy to mine for coins. With the increasing demand, crypto farms should be more aware of the methods they're using and avoid fossil fuels.

Brielle Lopez is a senior studying English.



Sophomore outfielder Drew Brucher hit a game-tying two-run homer during game two of the NCAA super regional at Texas on June 12. USF ATHLETICS PHOTO

BRUTCHER

Continued from PAGE 8

“Drew had a really mature approach even in [batting practice] and I thought, ‘OK, well, maybe we got something.’ And then in the fall, he struggled as most freshmen do. Then the lights came on in the spring and was like, ‘Man this guy’s pretty good.’”

Once baseball season began, Brucher stepped onto Red McEwen Field and was instantly explosive, especially in the batters’ box. Despite being a freshman, he produced at the level of a veteran.

In his 32 games played, Brucher sported a batting average of .294 with 35 hits, 17 RBI and 25 runs, numbers that earned him AAC Player of the Week in March as well as 2021 Perfect Game USA/Rawlings Freshman All-American.

Brucher also flexed his power at the plate with eight home runs, the majority of which came when USF needed them the most.

In a three-game series against

Stetson, he hit a homer in each matchup, culminating in a walk-off in the 12-inning series finale.

Unfortunately, after a hot start to the season, he had to take a short hiatus due to a hand injury. Brucher said this small setback allowed for a deeper connection with his teammates that he didn’t have before.

“I made a lot of good friends sitting in the dugout,” he said. “I’m always in the outfield playing so being with them honestly, I got more chemistry with the other guys. I loved it honestly.”

After missing two months of action, he made his comeback to the field just as USF was building momentum entering the Gainesville Regional.

After conquering the tournament, the Bulls moved on to the NCAA Super Regional for the first time in program history. In Austin, Texas the Bulls faced the then-No. 2 Texas in the Super Regional.

Brucher’s biggest moment of the season came in the first game against the Longhorns.

Down two runs in the ninth

inning, he tied the game with a two-run jack, silencing the Longhorn crowd and giving hope to the few USF faithful in the stands.

The Bulls ultimately lost in the bottom half of the inning on a Texas walk-off, but the moment still cemented Brucher as one of the young stars of USF’s run.

While he receives accolades and praise for his play on the diamond, Brucher has made a name for himself among Mohl and his teammates for the work and leadership he puts in behind the scenes.

“I still don’t think I have heard the kid speak 10 words since he’s been here,” Mohl said, “His team will tell you otherwise, but around us on the field, he just goes about his business, puts his work in, and you know he’s a lead by example.

“Not exactly a vocal leader but kind of lead by example. He has the chance to be a really special player for us.”

USF baseball will begin its season Feb. 18 at 6 p.m. against UCONN at the USF Baseball Stadium.

WAR ON I-4

Continued from PAGE 8

was played at UCF’s pace as the Knights looked to slow things down and get the Bulls out of their rhythm.

They forced USF into 17 turnovers and scored 20 points off those turnovers with their signature pressure and zone defense.

More importantly, the Bulls shooting woes continued for the third consecutive game as they shot just 28% from the field and 11% from three. Since the team’s Feb. 6 loss to Tulane, USF is 6-of-61 from beyond the arc over its last three games.

“We didn’t finish inside,” Fernandez said. “Because we weren’t shooting the ball [well] we got the ball inside, we got it to the high post and we didn’t finish and their guys did and that’s the difference. We can’t just say, ‘Hey, we played bad.’ We didn’t make shots.”

In the second half, the Bulls made multiple runs at the lead, cutting the deficit to as few as three points in the third quarter, but an inability to make stops down the stretch proved costly.

UCF went on an 8-0 run of its own to end the third and entered the final period with a 12-point lead that was too much for the Bulls to overcome. The Knights outscored USF 14-5 in the fourth and 27-12 in the second half.

“We won the first four minutes of the third quarter, right? We hit a three, it’s a two, three point game, but then they go on that run,” Fernandez said.

The Knights received contributions from all over their roster with the team being led in scoring by forward Brittney Smith, who comes off the bench. She scored 17 points in 25 minutes and was joined by forward Masseny Kaba in double-digit scoring.

Meanwhile, the Bulls didn’t have a single player with a

positive plus/minus, a stat which measures how well the team performed when an individual player is on the court. Sophomore guard Elena Tsineke was the lone USF player in double-digit scoring with 10 points.

Typically reliable players such as senior forwards Bethy Mununga, Dulcy Fankam Mendjiadeu and junior guards Sydni Harvey and Elisa Pinzan all had off nights. Mununga’s performance was especially uncharacteristic as she finished a minus-33.

She also grabbed a season-low two rebounds against the Knights. Mununga was ranked ninth in the NCAA in rebounding going into Sunday’s matchup averaging 11.8 boards per game.

“With her experience and her ability, we can’t afford for her to have these types of games,” Fernandez said.

In addition to likely missing out on the regular-season title, Sunday’s loss holds significant implications for the Bulls’ postseason hopes. Fernandez believes the team will have to win out for the rest of the regular season if they even want a chance to make it to the NCAA tournament.

“We got to come back and have a great practice,” Fernandez said. “We got [to play] Cincinnati, Wichita State twice, East Carolina and Houston. Now, only one of those teams is in the top 100, so you can’t afford to lose any of these games down the stretch.

“If not, guess what? You’re not going to the NCAA Tournament.”

The Bulls will play Cincinnati at the Yuengling Center on Wednesday at 7 p.m. The game will be streamed on ESPN+ and iHeartRadio Bulls Unlimited.

USF regular-season title hopes swept away after War on I-4 loss



Francisco Rosa

SPORTS EDITOR

USF women's basketball's quest for back-to-back AAC regular-season titles likely came to an end Sunday as the Bulls fell to UCF 54-33 at the Yuengling Center. The Knights swept the regular-season War on I-4 matchups.

With the loss, the Bulls (17-7, 7-3 AAC) fall another game behind the Knights in the conference standings (18-3, 10-1) with just a



Coach Jose Fernandez was frustrated during Sunday's loss to UCF as his team shot below 20% from three for the third consecutive game. ORACLE PHOTO/ALEXANDRA URBAN

handful of games remaining in the schedule.

After barely finishing

second to the Bulls in both the regular-season and tournament conference titles in 2021, UCF

looks poised to take home the trophy this season after two resounding wins against the

Bulls.

"They're really pissed off about last year about the regular-season title and the conference championship game and it shows," coach Jose Fernandez said. "We got to make a stand and bounce back."

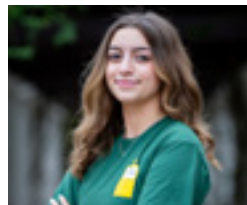
"They've been waiting all year to beat us and they've done it twice, convincingly."

The Bulls were held to their lowest point total of the season Sunday, 16 points less than their previous low which came in the team's 52-49 loss to Tennessee on Nov. 15. It was also their biggest loss of the season as they trailed UCF from tip-off.

Much like the team's Jan. 16 loss in Orlando, most of the game

■ See WAR ON I-4 on PAGE 7

Silent in the batter's box, shines on the diamond



Lanie De La Milera

STAFF WRITER

Growing up in a family of athletes, sophomore outfielder Drew Brutcher has been playing baseball since he was 3 years old, following his father and brother's lead.

"My dad got me into it, and just from there, my brothers always played baseball, my mom was always an athlete, so I always played baseball, following them," Brutcher said.

His older brother, Cole, played baseball in college and had offers from major programs such as Florida and Samford. Their father, Len, however, was the major baseball influence in Brutcher's life.

Len was drafted in the second round of the 1988 MLB Draft by the Chicago White Sox. He went

on to pitch for them and the San Diego Padres in his time in the Major Leagues.

Once his career ended, he became heavily involved with his sons' baseball journeys and coached them through high school.

"Definitely my dad and my brother [are my biggest motivation]," Brutcher said. "They both played sports when they were growing up. Just following my brother and him, pushing me hard and stuff I just kept playing with them."

When it came to picking where to play in college, Brutcher said it was easy to commit to USF since it's close to his hometown, Lakeland.

"I like when my parents can watch me," he said. "I like to go home every weekend to see them."

"That was the main thing and then I love the coaches and players here. It just felt like home when I came and visited."

Coach Billy Mohl also saw something in Brutcher during his recruitment and was eager to

have him on his team.

"Normally with tall kids like him, they show you the bat can be a challenge," Mohl said. "But with him, [Associate Head Coach Bo] Durkac checks on him was a loose easy swing."

It wasn't until fall 2020 that Mohl was able to see Brutcher for what he is beneath the surface, a mature player beyond his years.

"Obviously, I thought he was going to be a really good player. I didn't think he'd be what he is," Mohl said.

■ See BRUTCHER on PAGE 7