Student lounge possible for UHD

The Student Lounge Committee (SLC) met with President Flores and four other officials on Friday, Aug. 27, to discuss the need for a student lounge, the items and activities that the committee believes to be necessary and an interim solution to the school’s need for additional student space.

The SLC believes the presence of a student lounge can act as an anchor for the student body to center around and identify with.

“We need a student lounge to establish student life outside of academia. Inside the words university & community you find the word uity. We need to unite and create a UHD community that will embrace the vision of what UHD should be,” said SLC member Nick Danger.

The project has been labeled the Gator Union Project: Students for Gator Union, and members have been meeting since 2008 to work out details and conduct research concerning why UHD needs a student lounge and where it could be built.

“We need a student lounge to establish student life outside of academia. Inside the words university & community you find the word uity. We need to unite and create a UHD community that will embrace the vision of what UHD should be.”

–Nick Danger
Student Lounge Committee

The point has been made that a student lounge would improve the students’ quality of life at UHD while creating a newer and more interactive space for school organizations to hold events and fundraisers. It is possible that the new space for the lounge will have student offices and meeting rooms for the various organizations and childcare, which would help students as well as faculty and administration.

The SLC suggested five locations for the site of a student lounge and parking: Allen’s Landing, the post office, the fields by White Oak Bayou, the Spaghetti Warehouse parking lot and Washington Street lot. These all involve steps of purchasing and developing the area to accommodate building on the site, especially since the fields by White Oak Bayou are considered flood zones.

“UHD is growing and it only makes sense to have more space for students to enjoy,” said UHD senior Natlie Reyes.

There is also the problem of class attendance. If a student has hours of downtime between classes, they are likely to leave without wanting to return for their last class. Having a student lounge may be an incentive to keep students on campus and near their classrooms.

The lounge would have late hours that would accommodate the majority of the student body who only have night classes and those students with a mix of day and night classes. There would also be food available later in the day, which is important to night students because the food services offered in the cafeteria close earlier in the day.

The final resolution made by the SLC and the officials in attendance is to rearrange the Student Activities and Events center in S204 so there is space for a temporary game room. The suggested date for its completion is the end of September, but none of the plans have been made official.
New law brings changes to financial aid, loans
More funding, less hassle makes loan process easier

AMANDA WHITE
Staff Writer

The Federal Government made changes to federal loan programs that went into effect this fall. This past spring, the U.S. Senate passed a new bill called the Student Aid & Fiscal Responsibility Act.

This law will change how federal loan programs function, how much students will pay for loans, and the amount of money put towards the Pell Grant program. Before the bill passed, most students could only receive loans through the Family Education Loan Program (FELP). In the FELP program, banks would act as the middleman between the government and borrowers. Students and their families also paid higher interest rates and were not notified of exactly what types of loans that they were eligible for under the FELP program.

Now that the Student Aid & Fiscal Responsibility bill has passed, the FELP program will be discontinued and the Direct Loan Program will take its place. Under the Direct Loan Program, students can obtain their loan directly from the Department of Education. Students will also pay lower interest rates, more families will become eligible to receive loans, and lenders will be more straightforward with students regarding the types of loans that they are eligible for.

The Student Aid & Fiscal Responsibility law will also bring changes to the Income-Based Repayment Plan (IBR). The IBR program is a new program that was launched last year. The program is particularly useful to students who have high debt relative to their income, students who are in a financial hardship, and married students. Most people in the IBR program will use less than ten percent of their gross income to make monthly payments towards their loans for as long as twenty-five years. Any debt that is left after twenty-five years is forgiven.

Since the IBR program is new, there are some mishaps in its functioning. Before the student loan bill was passed, the IBR program used a married couple’s joint income as a basis to assign monthly payment plans. Under the old IBR plan, married couples ended up paying twice as much as two single people. The old IBR program failed to consider the possibility that both spouses could have federal student debt. In other words, one person paid their loan and their spouse’s loan (if the other spouse had a loan). With the passage of the new bill, a couple’s joint income as well as both spouses federal debt, will be considered before calculating a monthly payment plan. By considering both spouses federal loan debt and their joint income, a couple ends up paying less, because each person will pay towards their own federal loan debt. Existing IBR members will have to contact their lender if they want to switch to the new IBR plan.

With the new student loan bill, there are many students who do not know about the bill and its procedures.

“Students should check their gatormail accounts regularly for updates from the university,” said UHD’s Executive Director of Financial Aid Robert Sheridan. “The financial aid office has been sending students information about financial aid and the new bill through Gator Mail for since March.”

While students can expect to receive more money through the Pell Grant, students should also be aware that UHD is changing the Pell Grant eligibility criteria this year.

“Starting this year, the Pell Grant will be awarded year round,” said Sheridan. This means that students can receive money during the fall, spring, and summer semesters. In the past, a student only received money during the fall and spring. To receive money in the summer however, students must earn a minimum total of twenty-four hours during the fall and spring semesters. Sheridan also stated that Pell Grant awards would be limited to five years. This rule was enforced to improve Texas graduation rates.
Legislation would give necessary muscle to FDA

-- Uwire

Last week, more than 500 million eggs were recalled from Iowa because of severe scare that the eggs may have carried salmonella. As a result, an outbreak of more than 1,500 cases of salmonella poisoning has been reported.

This outbreak may have been prevented if the Senate had passed a food safety bill passed by the House in July 2009.

A Senate bipartisan group released a compromise amendment to the bill on Aug. 12 — the day before Wright County Egg, one of the two egg farms involved in the recent salmonella scare, announced its first recall.

The bill would impose stricter rules on inspections, increase the frequency of inspections and grant the Food and Drug Administration the power to authorize recalls and allow access to company records.

What regulators need are "more tools, and probably better tools, to prevent these events from happening," said Craig Hedburg, a professor at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health, who thinks the legislation would provide just that, Fortune Magazine reports.

The current law, which has been in force for more than 70 years, does not allow the FDA to authorize recalls.

This means that the FDA can only ask those responsible to remove the products, but the responsible party does not have to obey the request.

Thus, the recall does not always come in a timely manner because the company is afraid of losing profits as a result of the recall.

That delay results in more people being affected by the problem associated with the recall.

If the proposed legislation passes, the FDA would be able to quickly issue a recall, forcing the responsible party to withdraw the product without first worrying about how the recall would affect the company.

An FDA report initiated after the contamination found that Wright County Egg and Hillandale Farms were filthy and had poor sanitation in the areas where the hens were kept.

The report even detailed instances of rodents, wild birds and hens escaping from their cages, which could have contributed to the salmonella.

At Hillandale Farms, laboratory tests confirmed there was salmonella in water used to wash eggs before they were packaged.

A report on Wright County Egg described pits that had chicken manure piled 4 to 8 feet high.

According to The Washington Post, the FDA had never previously inspected the two farms.

One of the more obvious solutions to this problem is to enhance and increase the oversight powers of the FDA.

If the proposed legislation passes, the FDA would impose stricter rules on inspections so that problems could be caught well before more than 1,500 people in the country suffer.

Furthermore, if a problem were discovered, the FDA would be able to access company records and issue a quick recall, if necessary.

The proposed legislation should be passed when the Senate returns this month. With the new legislation, the FDA would have more power to avoid another salmonella poisoning episode.
On Campus

Chemistry student will stay in Poland

Summer research program gives UHD student a chance to continue studies through 2011

TANU UPPAL
Managing Editor

Melissa Chan, who participated in the Poland Summer Research program last year, returned to Poland this summer to continue her biochemistry research. She plans on staying in at the Technical University of Lodz for the next year as part of a student-exchange collaboration, funded by a National Security Education Program (NSEP) David L. Boren Scholarship.

“I participated in the 2009 summer research program in Poland on a recommendation from my research mentor, Dr. Mian Jiang,” wrote Chan via web interview. “More than anything, I wanted a chance to experience full-time research work, to be certain of the career choice I am making.”

“It’s easy for Americans to make Polish friends because young Polish people are so warm and curious about us.”

–Melissa Chan

Dr. Jiang is an Assistant Professor of Chemistry at the University of Houston Downtown.

Chan’s trip to Poland last summer was not her first study-abroad experience. She also participated as a high school exchange student in Russia and worked in Germany as part of a Fulbright scholarship.

“Not only did I leave Poland last year convinced that a career in research lay in my future, but I was also impressed at the rigorous approach to the STEM [Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics] fields offered by my host university, the Technical University of Lodz. I didn’t just benefit from a cultural exchange in Poland; there was a real exchange of knowledge,” wrote Chan.

After her trip last year, Chan applied for the competitive Boren Scholarship, funded through the NSEP. The scholarship provides up to $20,000 to undergraduate students who express a desire to learn about the language and culture of less commonly studied areas of the world. She will conduct research at the Technical University of Lodz from June 2010 until July 2011. She was selected for this scholarship due to her academic performance in addition to her research experience.

According to Chan, “applicants typically show strong academic performance, have foreign language experience and experience living abroad, and must be able to show how their program of choice can contribute to American national security, in a broadly defined sense.”

Chan’s project, a continuation of her work last year, combines aspects of biology, chemistry and physics.

“The motivation behind my return to Poland was my desire to take advantage of the tough courses offered at TUL, as well as the opportunity to work full-time on a research under the supervision of Professor Stanislaw Wysocki at the Biotechnology department of the university,” Chan said.

Chan also has the opportunity to be immersed in the Polish culture and learn the customs and language of an entirely different way of life. Apart from her research, she spends much of her free time outdoors, running, walking, and going for horseback riding lessons.

“While Poland is so centrally located in Europe, it’s surprisingly culturally isolated. So, any ‘exotic’ visitors to Poland will find themselves to be the center of attention, in a pleasant way,” Chan wrote. “It’s easy for Americans to make Polish friends because young Polish people are so warm and curious about us.”

After Chan returns to the United States, she plans on finishing her degree in Chemistry. Although she already holds a degree from City University New York, she believes that her degree from UHD will only help her in her future goals.

“By finishing this degree, I want to show my support for UHD’s STEM programs and the Scholars Academy, which make possible opportunities like this amazing research program in Poland,” Chan said.
Student Government Association holds first meeting for Fall 2010 and second Welcome Week

CHRISTINA RODRIGUEZ
Staff Writer

The Student Government Association (SGA) held their first meeting of the Fall 2010 semester on Friday, Aug. 27.

Few new items were on the agenda; however, a new advisor, Michelle Falcon, was introduced and the newly elected senators and chief justice were sworn in.

A suggestion to provide vending machines that dispenses basic school supplies in all UHD campus buildings was discussed at the meeting.

Vending machines would provide a solution for students in need of emergency supplies, such as scantrons and blue books, after bookstore hours. Students in the Shea and Commerce buildings would greatly benefit from the machines because they do not have easy access to the campus bookstore unless they are in the One Main or Academic buildings.

The SGA also held its own Welcome Week from Aug. 30 – Sept. 3, and President Ali Abedi stressed the importance of volunteer work for the week and discussed the various events and giveaways.

One scheduled event was a student survey to find out what students wanted in a proposed student lounge. Students who filled out the survey received promotional items and pizza at the Sept. 1 event.

SGA has spoken to as many as 80 incoming freshmen about joining SGA and participating in training courses to help them learn about what SGA does and how they operate. If you would like to join SGA, please contact the organization at sga@uhd.edu.
Crónicas

Directed by Sebastián Cordero
Starring John Leguizamo

Leguizamo stars as a television reporter who travels to Ecuador to cover the story of a serial rapist-killer known to the locals as the Monster of Babahoyo. But, Leguizamo’s thirst for glory to uncover the true killer carries tragic consequences.

Free showing Thur., Sept. 9, Room A-405 6:30-9:30 p.m.
CHRISTINA RODRIGUEZ
Staff Writer

The O’Kane Theatre presented a four-day run of the student-directed play “Oleanna: The Story of a Student and Professor Caught in a Compelling Drama of Power and Betrayal,” from Aug. 26-29, as part of the Welcome Week activities for the University of Houston-Downtown (UHD).

Director Miguel Roman, a recent alumnus of UHD, has been working on different forms of the play since last fall, although the woman who played the student has only been on board with the project since early July.

Every scene of the play is centered on a meeting in the professor’s office with one of his students. The point of the play is to watch how their relationship begins with polite indifference and professional attitudes and transforms throughout the three acts into a standoff in which the audience learns that the professor is being taken to court for attempted rape.

In the opening scene, student Carol (Whitney Cummings) is in a meeting with Professor John (Andrew Maddocks), who is busy taking incessant phone calls regarding the new home he is purchasing. The audience soon learns that John is up for tenure at the university where he teaches. Carol has come to the professor’s office because she is having trouble in his class and wants to speak to him about her grade, but is constantly interrupted by John’s conversations, which are conducted wonderfully considering there is not anyone on the phone.

Carol is portrayed as a girl who seems bright but cannot understand very broad concepts or complex words. She is meek and is even afraid when John tries to pat her shoulder to comfort her and assure her that he will work with her so that she will understand the class material.

In Act II, John is reading a report when Carol walks in. John has asked her to meet with him to discuss the report she has submitted to the tenure committee stating that he sexually harassed her and discussed sexist and pornographic topics. They both understand that if this report is not recanted, he will not attain tenure, and will lose the home he is trying to buy. Carol refuses to discuss the report until the tenure committee hearing.

The physical aspect of this play had the most shock factor. The accusations that Carol brings to John are made by an oversensitive, even hallucinatory person, and are cause for a certain level of shock. The problem with this is that John can only respond calmly for so long. At the end of Act II he shakes Carol by the shoulders to try to keep her in his office to negotiate.

By act III, Carol has transformed into a woman able to not only speak her mind, but to stand up for her beliefs, which are shared with an anonymous ‘group’ that is often referred to. The first assumption is that this is a feminist group, and that the sexist remarks that John makes has led them to want to make an example out of him.

Carol’s self righteous attitude with regards to how John speaks to his wife, along with the accusations of attempted rape and the loss of his job, causes John to physically beat her and throw her on the ground. The play ends when John stops himself from throwing a desk chair at her, and realizes that this woman whose accusations were, to him, completely unfounded, has affected his entire life. At the same time, the play demonstrated the power shift from the professor to the once meek and timid female student.
Sept. 6-19, 2010
Dateline: Downtown
www.uhd.edu/dateline

**Moderately Confused** by Jeff Stahler

*WAIT? ARE YOU HIRING?*

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**Pearls Before Swine** by Stephan Pastis

*WHAT ARE YOU DOING OVER THERE?*

*OH, YEAH? WHERE YOU THROW THE BALL BETWEEN TWO BASES AND HAVE TO TAG THE RUNNERS?*

*No.*

**Dilbert** by Scott Adams

*I LOVE YOUR TIE-DYED OVERALLS. THAT’S A BOLD LOOK.*

*ACTUALLY, MY JOB IS CLEANING CRIME SCENES. I DIDN’T HAVE TIME TO CHANGE.*

*THE SINGLES SCENE IS ALL ABOUT HOW YOU LOOK.*

**SUDOKU**

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5 9 4 3 1
1 2 9 6 1 8
7 8
3 2
1 4
4 7 2
9 6 7
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**HOW TO PLAY:**
Each row, column and set of 3-by-3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 through 9 without repetition.

Look for the solution to the Aug. 23 Sudoku on the Back Page (12).
Today's Crossword

ACROSS
1. Notre Dame's city
6. Magistrate
11. Gentle exercise
15. Minnow kin
20. Horse-and-buggy users
21. Patrick or Ryan
22. Overflowing
24. Tattered
25. Beeping device
26. Sends forth
27. Far-out planet
28. As — — (usually)
29. Islands off Portugal
31. Barracuda habitat
33. Prepare for print
34. Fragrant wood
35. “— Of London”
37. Contrived
39. Dead heat
41. Hairpin curve
42. Fishtailed
43. Schusses
44. Genghis Khan's group
46. Not sad
50. Approved
51. Regretted deeply
52. Calf-length
53. Sweet cherry
59. Pantry item
60. Where ducks feed
61. Unexciting
62. Mean to
63. Spat
64. XL
65. Compass dir.
66. Punkies
67. Gigantic
68. Fingerprints and such
69. Defoe castaway
72. “Arabian Nights” bird
73. Mar a car
74. Musical symbols
75. Roy Orbison song
76. Stubborn stains (2 wds.)
79. Pumps, maybe
80. Light bulb filament
84. Numerical prefix
85. Wild disturbances
86. Flash of lightning
87. Absorbed, as costs
88. Big spreads
89. Wharves
91. Kirk’s helmsman
92. Hidden supply
93. Invoice no.
94. Reduce by 50%
95. Broken-down horse
96. Classified (2 wds.)
97. Urban haze
98. Arthur Conan — Relay-race parts
99. As — — (usually)
100. Iowa college town
101. shotgun caliber
102. Made top honors
103. Little kid
104. World-wariness
105. Vine produce
106. Misbehave (2 wds.)
107. And so
108. Mortgages
109. Cause havoc
110. Hwys.
111. Broke off glacier
112. Charity event
113. Charity event
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199. Charity event
200. Charity event

DOWN
1. Yellow fruit
2. Dazzle
3. Severity
4. River in France
5. Sour and sweet
6. Mole cousins
7. Impassive
8. Airport exits
9. Numerical prefix
10. Wild disturbances
11. Flash of lightning
12. Absorbed, as costs
13. Sound
14. spumante
15. Propped up
16. Uncommon
17. Recital piece
18. Paved the way
19. Combs projections
20. Japanese clog
21. Useful thing
22. Trunk possessors
23. And so
24. Mortgages
25. Rocket housings
26. Turns sharply
27. Paved the way
28. Combs projections
29. Japanese clog
30. Useful thing
31. Trunk possessors
32. And so
33. Mortgages
34. Rocket housings
35. Turns sharply
36. Paved the way
37. Combs projections
38. Japanese clog
39. Useful thing
40. Trunk possessors
41. And so
42. Mortgages
43. Rocket housings
44. Turns sharply
45. Paved the way
46. Combs projections
47. Japanese clog
48. Useful thing
49. Trunk possessors
50. And so
51. Mortgages
52. Rocket housings
53. Turns sharply
54. Paved the way
55. Combs projections
56. Japanese clog
57. Useful thing
58. Trunk possessors
59. And so
60. Mortgages
61. Rocket housings
62. Turns sharply
63. Paved the way
64. Combs projections
65. Japanese clog
66. Useful thing
67. Trunk possessors

Turn to the Back Page (12) to find solutions to the puzzles from the Aug. 23 edition of Dateline : Downtown
Coach Rivas has high hopes for 2010 UHD soccer teams

TEKE MONO
Contributing Writer

Beginning his fourth year as the head coach for University of Houston (UHD) men’s and women’s soccer coach, Coach Josh Rivas is looking forward to another winner season for his teams.

Since his days as an outside midfielder on the Stephen F. Austin High School Varsity Soccer Team to his present-day desire to see soccer enter a bigger arena at UHD, Rivas’ passion for soccer shows in his career.

“It has been challenging at times, and truth be told, very rewarding and fulfilling,” he said.

After an 11-0 loss during his coaching debut, he made up his mind to be better, and after 16 years, he still aims for higher heights. Both teams started with losing streaks due to unfamiliarity between coaching schemes and new players; however, last year ended with the men almost leading their Houston Club Sports Conference by a goal difference of -1 in their standings.

This new season, his aspirations are even higher. He hopes his teams will lead both conferences, and hopes that the university will move into a Division I or II program where they could compete for state championships.

With the sudden surge of popularity from the World Cup, Coach Rivas wishes more UHD students will become interested in the sport. Soccer is the fastest growing sport in America, with over 20 million youths endeavoring to dribble like Ronaldo or Kaka, both of the Brazilian national team.

An offense-minded coach, Rivas seeks smart, fast, and team-oriented players who are consistent, trust-worthy and dependable. His lineup of (4,4,2) or (3,5,2) elaborates his reliance more on the tactics and ball-passing skills of the midfielders for victory.

A winning streak of 11 games since October 2008, and an overall record of 14-1-1 from 2008-2009, the men’s team proves the efficiency of his program over the long run, and leads Rivas into this new season with soaring hopes.

Rivas has coached the Houston Dynamo Youth Academy since 2006, coached the Houstonians Futbol Club from 1995 to 2008 and served as a state scout for the Olympiam Development Program from 2005 to 2006.

For more information on Coach Rivas and the UHD men’s and women’s soccer teams, visit the sports and fitness page at http://www.uhd.edu/sportsandfitness/clubsports.
MyPyramid Tracker

Healthy Workshop
Sept 8, 2010
12noon – 1pm
S998
Free to UHD Students, Faculty & Staff

Studies show that people who write down or log everything they eat are better at weight loss and maintenance than people who don’t keep such records. This workshop will introduce participants to the MyPyramid Tracker online nutritional and physical activity log that can analyze what they are eating and compare that to USDA recommendations as well as measure their fitness level. Workshop participants will create their own MyPyramid account and learn more about the benefits this service offers. This class has a maximum capacity of 15. Register now to hold your place!

Snacks and giveaways provided.
To reserve a spot for this seminar call 713-221-8481 or email schererr@uhd.edu.
Solutions to last edition’s puzzles

Last Edition’s Crossword

TWAS PROMOS FLORET VISE
BETA AURORA ALKALI ERAS
SITU ISABEL CARPET ROMP
PRUDENTLY ANIMA CHIMNEY
IVIES LAYLA STENO
SAO END AIMEE VPS UNCAP
TIMING MONET VEE LITANY
REEDS TIRED MINARET VOL
ELLA COSTS SATIRES NERO
ALE KOREA ALIASES SARAN
MOTOR CAR CRY MOD THINKS
POOH WOK FIN ZEAL
PATINA BANTAN KEEPSAKE
ARENA DEFICIT DONNE KIX
NINE TRAFFIC BEADY DIME
ASU BUSTLED HENNA GATOR
MERLOT EER WAITS PEDANT
ANEWARD ORD PRIGS MEA SOS
INDUS FRERE DOORS
MILDEWS GLENN LAMPSHADE
URAL ATEOUT ENAMEL OXEN
CATO RELENT THRONE PLAY
KNEW FRISKY SLANTS SERA

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