Are electives necessary?
Cal Poly says they are

Ashley Ciullo
Managing Editor

Have you ever wondered why colleges require students to take elective courses to receive a degree? How well a class on the social construction of whiteness or a bowling elective help a student grow and succeed in the future?

A non-partisan nationwide network called Americans for Limited Government (ALG) said that eliminating some classes from course requirements will save taxpayers millions of dollars by shortening the time needed to graduate from California State University and University of California schools to two years.

The state university system demands a total of 180 units to graduate with a degree-approximately 60 general education units, 60 units in major-related courses and 60 elective units. Degree requirements vary because different majors have different courses to educate students in their area of study. Engineering, for example, has a substantial number of major courses, so electives are reduced in an effort to balance the 180-unit degree requirement.

Cal Poly President Robert Koob said general education courses are intended to give students a well-rounded education and the ability to see life from different perspectives.

"Brain research is showing that college years are when humans are most open to learning," he said.

"There are many ways of looking at the world and the way it fits together seems to change for us, so it's important to think like a mathematician, mathematician, scientist, historian and social scientist,"

He also wants to give students a way to experience multiple fields of study.

"Not everybody is always going to be the same thing forever; we give people an opportunity to explore different fields of study,"

Cal Poly says they are working on the infancy stage of a green fund that has the potential to generate hundreds of thousands of dollars for future student-led campus sustainability projects.

The fund, called The Green Initiative Fund (TGIF), would pool a $5 per-quarter student fee into a monetary reserve to be used for sustainability projects across the university, including internships and energy efficiency projects through the university's Sustainability Program.

Kramer said that the current plan is to draw the fee from the potential $100 to $300 increase in college based fees that is awaiting approval from the College Fee Advisory Committee this week.

"If the fees don't go through, then obviously TGIF will fail," he said. "But there are other avenues."

One of those "avenues" would be to try to pass the proposed fund as a referendum, requiring students to vote on the plan much in the same way the new recreation center was approved last spring.

ASI President Angela Kramer and Hartrich aren't taking any chances.

The duo has already begun drafting a proposal to be included in the upcoming March referendum as a precaution.

Kramer, who has been an ASI president administration to focus heavily on sustainability, said that she has seen interest at the university's administration level.

"President Baker is a huge supporter of sustainable programs especially when they're student-led projects," Kramer said. "He really sees this as great opportunity for students who have access to funds to actually put on events or build models or do research or anything that's appropriate to their field and I would 100 percent agree."

Hartrich estimated that TGIF could acquire closer to $300,000 per year if it passes, and if it is put into play at Cal Poly. Kramer said that students could apply to use the money for senior projects that plan to use a sustainability framework.

"It would be for projects that need money," he said.

Education chief: Calif. system 'precarious'

Juliet Williams
Associated Press

SACRAMENTO (AP) — Warning that its public schools are in a "precarious" state, California's top education official Tuesday called for more money even as lawmakers were considering billions of dollars in cuts to help address the state's massive budget deficit.

Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell said California's system of funding education, in which money is directed at dozens of specialized programs enshrined over decades, isn't working.

"The state of public education in California is precarious," he said during his annual state of education address. "Beyond the immediate crisis, and even more alarming to me, is the long-term future of our common education system."

California spends about $48 billion a year on K-12 education, almost half its general fund, but its students fare poorly when compared to their peers in other states on standardized tests. The state's schools also have a persistent gap in achievement rates: white, Asian and wealthier students far outperform students who are black, Hispanic and poor.

O'Connell said without more money, California will ensure a two-tiered education system for its students.

"Families who struggle financially will be left with a substandard system, one that cannot possibly prepare their children to be able to compete in a changing global economy," he said.

His comments came as Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and legislative leaders are struggling with a budget deficit.
students have dreamed of but have had to wait until after graduation to get their hands on," Kramer said.

UC Santa Barbara paused a similar referendum in the spring of 2006. A vote for TGIF at that school was approved by 74 percent of the undergraduate student vote and 82 percent of the graduate student vote. UCSB utilizes a $2.60 per-quarter fee to generate money for its TGIF and a grant making committee evaluates proposals and then approves or rejects funding for particular projects.

Since TGIF won over votes in 2006, UCSB has awarded almost $300,000 to 21 sustainability-based projects. "It generates about $150,000 a year," said Jill Richardson, UCSB's TGIF grants manager and sustainability coordinator. "(Funding) can be (used) for any kind of projects that helps UCSB reduce in environmental impact."

UCSB, which is entering its third funding cycle, saw a 60 percent increase in applications during the current cycle, according to Richardson. The applications were due last week.

"The total requests were just under a million dollars, so we're going to have to whittle that down over the next few weeks," she said.

**Electives continued from page 1**

Hartrich’s goal is to have 3,000 petitions for TGIF but as of Tuesday, only 132 petitions had been filled out. "We started the petition set in the fall but it was delayed for a while," Hartrich said. "We just started it (again) last week so we still have a lot to do." Of the 132 petitions filled out, 103 people said that Cal Poly was not doing enough to promote sustainability on campus. In addition, 91 reported that they would be willing to pay quarterly fees in support of a sustainability program and 71 said yes, depending on the amount.

"So far we have some pretty good results and it’s a good depiction of what students want," Hartrich said.

**Education continued from page 1**

SACRAMENTO has in a sense put the shackles on schools in California.

—State Sen. Gloria Romero

Education interest groups are at odds over what programs should be given a lower priority.

Sacramento has in a sense put the shackles on schools in California," said the Los Angeles Democrat, a likely candidate for school superintendent in 2010.
Jet lands safely after bird hits engine

In this picture provided by airline passenger Frank Crowe, workers inspect the blades of an engine on a United Airlines

**Dan Elliott**

**ASSOCIATE PRESS**

A United Airlines jet returned safely to the Denver airport Tuesday after a bird was sucked into one of its engines shortly after takeoff.

The engine that was struck continued to operate and the second engine wasn't affected, airline spokeswoman Megan McCarthy said. A passenger said the bird hit the right engine.

None of the 151 passengers and crew was injured.

The Boeing 757 had just left for San Francisco when the bird strike happened. McCarthy said the pilot's decision to return to the airport was a precaution.

A US Airways jet splashed landed in New York's Hudson River on Jan. 15 after a collision with a flock of birds knocked out both engines. All 185 passengers and crew were injured. **see Jet, page 4**

**International**

**PESHAWAR, Pakistan (AP)** — Militants blew up a bridge in northwest Pakistan on Tuesday, cutting the major supply line for US-led troops in Afghanistan with an explosion that turned the narrow span into a jagged metal "V."

It was the latest, and perhaps most serious, attempt to block supplies to the US-led mission against the Taliban.

The length of the slender metal bridge slanted to one side and was blocked by an overturned truck that spilled dozens of dusty bags into the pavement. Traffic from the bare hills continued on foot, with Afghans and Pakistanis, including women in burqas, hurrying their luggage over the dry riverbed.

**TORONTO (AP)** — Three Chinese detainees cleared for release from the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay have applied for political asylum in Canada, lawyers for the men and a group promoting them said Tuesday.

The men are among 17 Chinese Muslims called Uighurs (pronounced WEE'-gurz) at Guantanamo. The U.S. has cleared them for release but fears they could be mistreated or even tortured if they are turned over to China, which alleges they are terrorists who belong to an outlawed separatist group.

**TULSA, Okla. (AP)** — The Cherokee Nation wants a federal judge to decide whether descendents of the tribe's former black slaves, known as freedmen, have a federal right to citizenship in the tribe.

In the five-page complaint filed Tuesday in U.S. District Court in Tulsa, the nation argues that because the U.S. government's modification of an 1866 treaty it had with the tribe, descendants of freedmen are not entitled to federal citizenship rights. It names several freedmen descendents and the U.S. Department of the Interior, among others, as defendants.

**COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP)** — A black state senator is pushing a bill that would require South Carolina cities and counties to give their workers a paid day off for Confederate Memorial Day or lose millions in state funds.

Democratic Sen. Robert Ford's bill won initial approval from a Senate subcommittee Tuesday. It would force county and municipal governments to follow the schedule of holidays used by the state, which gives workers 12 paid days off, including May 19 to honor Confederate war dead. Mississippi and Alabama also recognize Confederate Memorial Day.

**SACRAMENTO (AP)** — The rest of California's economy was slumping, but the state remained a beacon to out-of-state businesses and tourists.

Investigators say they traced the calls that spilled dozens of dusty bags into the pavement. Traffic from the bare hills continued on foot, with Afghans and Pakistanis, including women in burqas, hurrying their luggage over the dry riverbed.

**“What would you do if you found a python in your backyard?”**

"Probably call animal control services and keep the door closed."

—Samantha Anderson, biology freshman

"I would probably flip out trying to figure out how it got there then go online to figure out if it's going to eat me, then maybe I'd pick it up."

—Samantha Anderson, biology freshman

"I would probably call the zoo or something, or National Geographic."

—Danielle Ruais, horticulture junior

**COMPiled and Photographed by Cassandra Keyse**

**REDWOOD CITY, Calif. (AP)** — A judge has sentenced a Canada man to six months in jail for allegedly threatening scientists who use animals for research.

Prosecutors say Justin Blagoev made several calls to two University of California, San Francisco researchers telling them they would die like they made the animals suffer.

Third pleaded no contest in December to a felony charge of threatening a government employee and a misdemeanor phone threat charge. Investigators say they traced the call to Thind's cell phone.

The 33-year-old faces similar charges in Marin County over additional calls to UCSF researchers.

The 33-year-old faces similar charges in Marin County over additional calls to UCSF researchers.

**Sacramento** man to six months in jail

**SACRAMENTO (AP)** — A judge has sentenced a Sacramento man to six months in jail for threatening scientists who use animals for research.

Prosecutors say Justin Blagoev made several calls to two University of California, San Francisco researchers telling them they would die like they made the animals suffer.

Third pleaded no contest in December to a felony charge of threatening a government employee and a misdemeanor phone threat charge. Investigators say they traced the call to Thind's cell phone.

The 33-year-old faces similar charges in Marin County over additional calls to UCSF researchers.
Iran sent in first domestically made satellite into orbit, the president announced Tuesday, a key step in its ambitious space program that worries the United States and other world powers because the same rocket technology used to launch satellites can also deliver warheads.

For nearly a decade, Iran has sought to develop a national space program, creating anxiety among international leaders already concerned about its nuclear and ballistic missile programs.
The telecommunications satellite — called Omid, or hope, in Farsi — was launched late Monday by President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad gave the order to proceed, according to a report on state radio. State television showed footage of what it said was the moment the rocket carrying the satellite at an unidentified location in Iran.

A U.S. counterproliferation official confirmed the launch and suggested the technology was not sophisticated. Speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss intelligence-gathering, the official said it appeared "not too far removed from Sputnik," the first Soviet orbiter launched in 1957.

The TV report praised the launch as part of festivities marking the 30th anniversary of the 1979 Islamic revolution that toppled the U.S.-backed Shah and brought hard-line clerics to power.

In a year in which Ahmadinejad faces a tough election battle to stay in power, the launch provided a symbol of national pride to hold up even as falling oil prices batter the economy and the hard-line leader's popularity. As it seeks to expand its influence in the Middle East, Iran tout such technological successes as signs it can advance despite U.S. and U.N. sanctions over its nuclear program.

The launch touched off concern in the United States, Europe and Israel about possible links between its satellite program and its work with missiles and nuclear technology.

"There's almost always a link between satellite programs like this and military programs and there's almost always a link between satellites and nuclear weapons," it's the delivery vehicle," said James Lewis, an expert on defense technology at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington.

White House spokesman Robert Gibbs condemned the launch, saying: "This action does not convince us that Iran is acting responsibly to advance stability or security in the region."

State Department spokesman Robert A.Wood accused Iran of using the space-launch program as a technological stepping stone to develop long-range ballistic missiles.

Dearest Ashley,
the same rocket technology used in the program that worries the U.S.
Liver warheads.

among international leaders — called "Omid, or hope, in Farsi — was launched late Monday. It was launched late Monday by President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who gave the order to proceed, according to a report on state radio. State television showed footage of what it said was the moment the rocket carrying the satellite at an unidentified location in Iran.

A U.S. counterproliferation official confirmed the launch and suggested the technology was not sophisticated. Speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss intelligence-gathering, the official said it appeared "not too far removed from Sputnik," the first Soviet orbiter launched in 1957.

The TV report praised the launch as part of festivities marking the 30th anniversary of the 1979 Islamic revolution that toppled the U.S.-backed Shah and brought hard-line clerics to power.

In a year in which Ahmadinejad faces a tough election battle to stay in power, the launch provided a symbol of national pride to hold up even as falling oil prices batter the economy and the hard-line leader's popularity. As it seeks to expand its influence in the Middle East, Iran touts such technological successes as signs it can advance despite U.S. and U.N. sanctions over its nuclear program.

The launch touched off concern in the United States, Europe and Israel about possible links between its satellite program and its work with missiles and nuclear technology.

"There's almost always a link between satellite programs like this and military programs and there's almost always a link between satellites and nuclear weapons," it's the delivery vehicle," said James Lewis, an expert on defense technology at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington.

White House spokesman Robert Gibbs condemned the launch, saying: "This action does not convince us that Iran is acting responsibly to advance stability or security in the region."

State Department spokesman Robert A.Wood accused Iran of using the space-launch program as a technological stepping stone to develop long-range ballistic missiles.

“Definitely was but there wasn’t any issues after the bird strike.”

“We heard a large thump like we hit something, and the pitch of the engine changed dramatically to the point that it got real quiet,” Crowe said. There was a rattle, whirring noise,” Crowe said.

Crows said passengers applauded when the plane landed. He said that, from the airport concourse, he could see a dent on top of the engine when the plane landed. He said that he could see a dent on top of the engine when the plane landed.

The figures are equivalent to the federal bailout can receive more than double the amount of the compensation caps. Congress are weighing various proposals to restrict chief executives’ compensation as one of the conditions of receiving help under the $700 billion financial bailout fund. Obama did not reveal details of the administration’s compensation caps.

Administration and Congress work on pay restrictions

On Tuesday, Sen. Byron Dorgan, D-N.D., introduced amendments to the Senate’s economic stimulus legislation that would require firms that receive bailout funds to discard the bonuses they paid during the time they received government funds. The bonuses would be posted on the Internet and included in a report to Congress. Compensation experts in the private sector have warned that such intrusions into the internal decisions of financial institutions could discourage participation in the rescue program and slow down the financial sector’s recovery.

They also argue it could set a precedent for government regulations that undermined performance-based compensation.

"I really don’t want the government to take over these businesses and start telling them everything about what they can do," Sen. Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, the Republican leader, said this week. "Then you truly have nationalized the business." Obama, in an interview with CNN’s junior, stressed that the restrictions would not amount to excessive government intervention.

"There are mechanisms in place to make sure that institutions that are taking taxpayer money are not using that money for excessive executive compensation," Obama said. "By the government takeover. Private enterprise will always be taking place. But people will be able to share in the profits and to benefit.

"In ordinary situations where the taxpayers money is not involved, we shouldn’t set executive pay," said Sen. Richard Shelby of Alabama, the top Republican in the Senate Banking Committee.

"But where you’ve got federal money involved, taxpayers’ money involved, TARP money involved, and the way they have spent it, with no accountability is getting close to being criminal."
Kentucky Center to help struggling arts groups

Michael M. Kaiser, president of Kennedy Center, is shown in this courtesy photo from at the Al-Kasashe theatre and cinema-theque in Ramallah, West Bank, Palestine. Kaiser announced an unprecedented "Arts in Crisis" initiative on Tuesday to offer free assistance to managers of nonprofit performing arts organizations across the country.

Brett Zongker

WASHINGTON — With the nation's nonprofit arts organizations suffering in the current economic climate, the winning John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts is offering crisis consulting to see them through. The arts aren't at the top of many lawmakers' lists for a federal bailout. So Michael Kaiser, the Kennedy Center's president, announced an unprecedented "Arts in Crisis" initiative on Tuesday to offer free assistance to performing arts managers across the country.

He said his team could devote significant time and up to $50,000 in expenses to provide emergency planning for fundraising, budgeting, marketing or other strategies as box office revenues decline and donations and endowments run dry.

"I worry about many, many arts organizations disappearing," Kaiser said. "My concern is: Are they cut off? Are arts organizations disappearing, or are they going to cut salaries and will they do fewer performances this year? The Miami City Ballet is cutting eight dancers. The Baltimore Opera has declared bankruptcy. The nonprofit group Americans for the Arts estimates 10,000 arts organizations could disappear in 2009. In New York, the Dance Theatre of Harlem, which rebounded from a financial crisis that closed its doors in 2004, is cutting salaries for its entire staff by 10 percent to avoid layoffs and programming cuts.

"There's a silent erosion happening. That sort of makes the whole situation a little more daunting," said Lavern Niazi, executive director of the Harlem dance company co-founded by Arthur Mitchell. "When we look up after the dust has settled, I think that we are going to be sorry that we weren't more proactive sooner."

Kaiser charted an emergency financial restructuring for the Harlem group to reopen in 2004 and continues to consult with Niazi, a dancer who was new to arts management when he took over the company's administration.

see Kennedy, page 6

Multicultural Center to host poet Prentice Powell for "Another Type of Groove"

Ashley Ciullo

This month's "Another Type of Groove" will feature slam poet Prentice Powell, whose poetry focuses on issues like social justice and race. His performance will be among many campus events in honor of February's Black History Month. Powell was the 2007 Black Music Awards Spoken Word Artist of the Year and 2006 Oakland-San Francisco Grand Slam Champion. He was recommended by students to perform at the event, which is a time to remember, reflect and praise African-Americans who have changed the world.

Multicultural Center student coordinator Saba Alshahy said that she is excited to have Powell perform and is hopeful the performance will be among the best events the Multicultural Center has hosted.

"The Multicultural Center wants to keep students updated and aware by looking out for all up-and-coming artists and fresh faces. We are excited when the campus is enthusiastic; peer support gives us the energy and drive to host better events every time," she said.

The event will take place at 7:30 p.m. today in Chumash Auditorium and is free and open to the public.

Phoenix confirms he's walking the hip-hop line

Actor Joaquin Phoenix poses for a portrait in Beverly Hills Calif., on Tuesday.

David Germain

LOS ANGELES — Joaquin Phoenix says there's no hoax about it: He really has given up acting to become a hip-hop musician.

Phoenix has been spending his time laying down tracks for a rap album in the recording studio he built at his home, the two-time Academy Award nominee said Tuesday in an interview to promote what he claims is his final movie, "Two Lovers.

After video hit the Internet last month capturing part of Phoenix's debut rap performance at a Las Vegas club, speculation swirled that he was perpetrating an elaborate practical joke.

"I don't know where that comes from," Phoenix said. "It comes from people that I've had a falling out with, that are (ticked) off at me?"

The video shows Phoenix, in a long, scraggly beard, rapping nearly inaudibly and ends with him losing his footing and falling off the stage. It was an insipid start, but Phoenix was adamant that his hip-hop career is real.

"There's not a hoax," Phoenix said. "Might I be ridiculous? Might my career in music be laughable? Yeah, that's possible, but that's certainly not my intention.

Phoenix's friend and brother-in-law, Casey Affleck, was on hand with a camera crew as he did interviews for "Two Lovers." Affleck, who is shooting a documentary about Phoenix's transition to music, said his friend is completely serious.

Phoenix, 34, said he had not expected anyone to care when he made the surprise announcement last fall that he was quitting Hollywood for music. At the time, fans assumed he might build on the country-
The Fray stick to the script
with sophomore album

Matt Love
THE MONTREAL (C. MARVIN AND) 1997

Unlike most bands, The Fray's greatest flaw is widely known: The group works with a serious lack of variety. This seems to have been the most recurring criticism of the group's debut album, "How to Save a Life," and it is again the biggest problem on the band's self-titled sophomore effort.

"The Fray" should have been a redemptive album for a band with so much promise, but instead it plays down to just piano and vocals and practically no thematic contrast. There is practically no thematic contrast. There is practically no thematic contrast.

And it isn't just the physical sound that seems mechanical. "The Fray" also employs the same themes and lyrical style as "How to Save a Life." Lead singer Isaac Slade is still crooning about longing and friendship to the same breathy vocals and melancholic tone. When he sings, "Lost and insecure/ I found you/ You found me," he might as well be singing, "Everyone knows I'm in/ Over my head/ Over my head," or any other vague go-to phrase from a senseful hit. It really doesn't make a difference.

Perhaps it's because The Fray simply cannot strike up a tone other than bittersweet. Even the album's final song, ironically titled "Happiness," is melancholy. Slade sings, "Happiness feels a lot like sorrow/ Let it be, you can't make it come or go/ But you are gone, not for good, but for now/ And gone for now feels a lot like gone for good." Some happiness.

So The Fray have made very little progress since its debut, but this isn't the real tragedy. No, the problem comes in the lack of deviation from form throughout the album, save for a few rare moments.

In the slow, swinging "Ungodly Hour," The Fray abandons its obsession with the sentimental and creates a beautifully bare and honest song. Slade even loses his breathy whine for clear vocals, while drums roll smoothly in the background and the guitar lightly plucks out riffs. The song never builds and feels more natural than any of the album's previous power anthems. The effect is mesmerizing and reveals a band with a great potential for songwriting.

But this realization just makes the album's failure even more evident.

It really is hard to blame The Fray, though. The band has found its winning combination, which may be enough to capture American airwaves for a time — but it's not enough to sustain a full-length record.

Kennedy
continued from page 5

tion. Kaiser is also credited with rescuing London's Royal Opera House and the Alvin Ailey Dance Company in New York.

Kaiser's first piece of advice for struggling groups: Focus on generating revenue.

"Too often the nature of survival is to focus on cutting costs," he said. "The second is when we do have to cut costs, cut programming last, not first. I don't think that's what's happening now."

Cutting back on artistic innovations and programming makes it harder for a group to recover and compete for funding, he said and "You appear as less exciting organization" a mantra Kaiser repeats from lessons developed through the Kennedy Center's arts management institute.

The center's designation as a presidential memorial gives it some federal funding and stability, but the bulk of the center's $50 million annual budget must be raised privately. And yet, it's not immune to money troubles. In 1999, the center was suffering under a $35 million debt and $30 million in long-de­layed repairs and needed Congress to help dig it out. More recently, Kaiser began trimming the budget by 5 percent in early 2008, anticipating the recession.

Still, he found two donors to cover the cost of helping other struggling arts groups.

One arts group learned what it was like to suffer a crippling blow even before the recession took hold: The Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra, which lost its home in Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and had its musicians, who own the comp­any, scattered across the region.

But the New Orleans group rebuilt, with help from Kaiser, by becoming more mobile, playing in 22 different venues around seven parishes. Many times the group has played in Baptist churches instead of concert halls, reaching new audiences at the same time.

"We didn't have a lot to lose. We had everything to gain," said Bobby Moller, the orchestra's manager-director. Now the group is branching out for tough times in 2009. "We talk about the second hurricane taking place with the economic scene," he said.

Congress included $50 million in its economic stimulus package for the National Endowment for the Arts, which arts advocates say could save more than 14,000 jobs in local arts groups. The money was removed, though, from a Senate version of the bill and it became a target for those who want to cut wasteful spending, making any boost to arts funding a political feat. "I've never seen it as bad as this," Kaiser said. Some groups have done better. But it's not enough to save for cash reserves, but others need help, he said. "If too many get hit, it's bad for the entire arts world."

Phoenix
continued from page 5

Phoenix

rooks he laid down playing John­ny Cash in "Walk the Line," for which he learned to play guitar and did his own singing.

His new rap persona added to the confusion, but Phoenix said he is a longtime fan of hip-hop, speaking fervently about Public Enemy, Ice Cube and other artists he admires.

Phoenix has no intention of returning to film after "Two Lovers," a romantic drama co-starring Gwyneth Paltrow and reuniting him with James Gray, his director on "The Yard" and "We Own the Night." The movie opens Feb. 13.

While Phoenix regrets that his coming-out party as a rapper came through poor-quality video footage, he said people would realize no matter how good his debut was.

"It sucks that, yeah, the foot­age is out there like this incred­ibly bad sound, and you literally can't hear what's happening," said Phoenix, who still has his bushy beard. "It was much better in the club, and I don't know who said that people were booing ... because I didn't even notice."

"Unless, of course, it's a pretty bad place, and maybe it was hap­pening now."

"It was like to suffer a crippling blow even before the recession took hold: The Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra, which lost its home in Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and had its musicians, who own the company, scattered across the region."

But the New Orleans group rebuilt, with help from Kaiser, by becoming more mobile, playing in 22 different venues around seven parishes. Many times the group has played in Baptist churches instead of concert halls, reaching new audiences at the same time.

"We didn't have a lot to lose. We had everything to gain," said Bobby Moller, the orchestra's manager-director. Now the group is branching out for tough times in 2009. "We talk about the second hurricane taking place with the economic scene," he said.

Congress included $50 million in its economic stimulus package for the National Endowment for the Arts, which arts advocates say could save more than 14,000 jobs in local arts groups. The money was removed, though, from a Senate version of the bill and it became a target for those who want to cut wasteful spending, making any boost to arts funding a political feat. "I've never seen it as bad as this," Kaiser said. Some groups have done better. But it's not enough to save for cash reserves, but others need help, he said. "If too many get hit, it's bad for the entire arts world."

Phoenix has no intention of returning to film after "Two Lovers," a romantic drama co-starring Gwyneth Paltrow and reuniting him with James Gray, his director on "The Yard" and "We Own the Night." The movie opens Feb. 13.

While Phoenix regrets that his coming-out party as a rapper came through poor-quality video footage, he said people would realize no matter how good his debut was.

"It sucks that, yeah, the footage is out there like this incredibly bad sound, and you literally can't hear what's happening," said Phoenix, who still has his bushy beard. "It was much better in the club, and I don't know who said that people were booing ... because I didn't even notice."

"Unless, of course, it's a pretty bad place, and maybe it was happening now."

"It was like to suffer a crippling blow even before the recession took hold: The Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra, which lost its home in Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and had its musicians, who own the company, scattered across the region."

But the New Orleans group rebuilt, with help from Kaiser, by becoming more mobile, playing in 22 different venues around seven parishes. Many times the group has played in Baptist churches instead of concert halls, reaching new audiences at the same time.

"We didn't have a lot to lose. We had everything to gain," said Bobby Moller, the orchestra's manager-director. Now the group is branching out for tough times in 2009. "We talk about the second hurricane taking place with the economic scene," he said.

Congress included $50 million in its economic stimulus package for the National Endowment for the Arts, which arts advocates say could save more than 14,000 jobs in local arts groups. The money was removed, though, from a Senate version of the bill and it became a target for those who want to cut wasteful spending, making any boost to arts funding a political feat. "I've never seen it as bad as this," Kaiser said. Some groups have done better. But it's not enough to save for cash reserves, but others need help, he said. "If too many get hit, it's bad for the entire arts world."

Phoenix has no intention of returning to film after "Two Lovers," a romantic drama co-starring Gwyneth Paltrow and reuniting him with James Gray, his director on "The Yard" and "We Own the Night." The movie opens Feb. 13.

While Phoenix regrets that his coming-out party as a rapper came through poor-quality video Footnote: If the page contains any footnotes, they should be included here.
Let me warn you: this story is not only going to be a complete nerd fest but also will expose quite a few spoilers about Grant Morrison's recent work of "Batman R.I.P."

I am a huge fan of Batman. He is one of those iconic characters that has been around for almost 70 years but new artists and writers have been able to still make interesting. I mean, just look at how well "The Dark Knight" did last summer. Besides the praise, though, I was sorely disappointed with Morrison's recent take on Batman. Apparently, "Batman R.I.P." has it in the works for a few years now and is meant to be the end of Batman as we know him. Basically it deals with Batman encountering the Black Glove organization, led by a mysterious Dr. Hurt, who attempts to destroy Batman both physically and mentally. For those of you who may not know, Batman is a little paranoid, led by a mysterious Dr. Hurt, who attempts to destroy Batman both physically and mentally. According to "Batman R.I.P.," Batman created an infallible system for himself in the case of going insane. The system was that of Batman Zur-En-Arh, a more primitive form of Batman that would take over in case he lost his identity. Batman Zur-En-Arh is actually a throwback to an old Batman story, which is kind of cool, but the allusion doesn't really go anywhere. Also, Batman dies in issue 681, but is alluded to have lived in the final panels. This crap can't get much worse. Throughout the story there are many allusions to Dr. Hurt actually being Thomas Wayne, Bruce Wayne's father. At the end of the last issue, 681, in Batman's final confrontation with Dr. Hurt, Hurt explains to Batman that he planned the murder of Martha and Bruce Wayne, but Joe Chill, the hired killer, lost his nerve, and Thomas Wayne faked his own death. This, of course, and thankfully, ended up not being true. If that had been true, it would have been单-handedly destroyed the past 70 years of why Bruce Wayne became Batman. Batman's entire motivation for deciding to fight crime, to prevent anything like that happening again, would have been destroyed. That would have been akin to somehow Uncle Ben not dying and Spiderman was just fighting crime for the hell of it. Honestly, you have no idea how ticked off I was. It would have been if that were the case.

I'm a little curious to see where Batman goes from here, but whatever happens, it's not going to be good. My suggestion, if you are hankering for some Batman action, is to stick with "Batman R.I.P."

Jon Montefith is a history senior and Mustang Daily comic book reviewer.
Dear Representative,

The following words are written on behalf of the remaining men and women of our country that believe in the sanctity of law and the God-given rights enumerated to all in the U.S. Constitution. Though you have undoubtedly received letters in previous years requesting handouts, favors and preferential treatment from your constituents, this letter is different, this letter is unique, this letter is just. Within it is a request that can be fulfilled without the grievances of fellow citizens, without the labor of other workers and without a version of the rule of law.

On behalf of my fellow Americans, I humbly request to be excluded from the financing of the so-called stimulus package. It is not because we do not wish for our economy to be stimulated or that we object to the trillions in spending ready to come from a Cal Poly e-mail account. Do not send letters as an attachment. Please send them in the body of the e-mail.

By e-mail:
send us a copy of your open letter to congress with your thoughts on the stimulus bill
m Mustang Daily opinions@gmail.com

An open letter to a congressman

Until now you have chosen how much we spend, you have chosen who receives the monies we earned, and you have chosen to neglect the voices of the people footing your bill, we the people.

We wish to choose as well. We wish to voice our opinions, not just with our calls and letters, but with our pocketbooks, at our own will. We do not wish for you to judge on our behalf and at our expense the best course of action — we wish to judge for ourselves.

You should need no reminding that the U.S. government is in need of a stimulus greater than all the failing businesses combined. It is you and your esteemed colleagues that have run this great ship aground with your recklessness spending on requests of handouts and favors from your constituents. It is you that was too spineless to say "no." It is you that has lived beyond your means to the point of crippling our country with debt. If spending was actually a solution to this problem, then the problem would never have begun in the first place; we cannot spend our way out of debt, and we cannot print our way into prosperity.

I might not have seen the debate between James Fell and John McCalde, but Fell’s words ring true like the ding after walking, through the door at a 7-Eleven. According to his clearly tedious research, two major results of cutting the alcohol consumption by those under 21, and a reduction in drinking and driving related fatal crashes by those under 21, showing he spent his time and money well. I also heard that raising the driving age to 18 might reduce the risk of 16-year-olds falling asleep behind the wheel, but I’ll leave the “facts” to him.

Mike Eichermoeller
Response to “Video: 18 or 21? The great drinking age debate”

NOTE: The Mustang Daily features select comments that are written in response to articles posted online. Though not all the responses are printed, the Mustang Daily prints comments that are coherent and foster intelligent discussion on a given subject.
Let all smokers be judged equally, famous or not

Oh, how we like to bring our heroes down to earth. Forget his eight gold medals in Beijing, forget the fact that just five months ago we were parading him around as a national icon, a superhuman athlete and an Olympic story for the history books. In the eyes of the righteous, all of that glory is now overshadowed by the looming image of our hero taking a bong hit.

Oh my. With all the bromhaha surrounding the photo of Michael Phelps smoking pot, you'd think he actually harmed someone.

He didn't. Phelps smoked a little weed at a college party; and the media wouldn't have been the wiser except for some goofy-two-shoes with a camera phone.

He's never tried to dispute the legitimacy of the photo and quickly issued a brief apology admitting that it was bad judgment on his part. “I'm 23 years old and despite the successes I've had in the pool, I acted in a youthful and inappropriate way, not in a manner people have come to expect from me. For this, I am sorry. I promise my fans and the public it will not happen again.”

With marijuana now essentially ingrained in pop culture, and with an estimated 83 million Americans having consumed cannabis at some point in their lives, there are comedies about it — although they're never any good — ranging from the most recent “Pineapple Express” to the slightly more classic Harold and Kumar movies. According to the wise Wikipedia.com, “humans have been consuming cannabis since prehistory,” and the even wiser National Household Survey on Drug Abuse reports that 37 percent of Americans age 12 and older have tried marijuana at least once.

If the answer to the Phelps' pot commotion is that we hold Olympian athletes at a different moral standard than ourselves, I have to wonder about the morality of an ethical standard that doesn't pass the universality test. Phelps is a young man, and albeit his extraordinary swimming abilities, he never asked for preferential treatment beyond his status as an Olympian. To condemn him for smoking pot while college students his age across the country do it every day is plain hypocritical.

Of course, we must not forget that marijuana is illegal, at least in the eyes of the federal government. Now, whether a law governing what an individual may freely choose to consume is constitutional... well, that's another matter and another column altogether.

There is already talk that many of Phelps' corporate sponsors may not renew their contracts with him, and that's certainly understandable. After all, no sensible business wants to be seen as condoning illegal or controversial behavior.

But the condemnation of Phelps is even more ironic given the great many celebrities and even politicians that partake in socially-questions behavior. Our newly inaugurated president admitted to having done cocaine during his youth, and now resorted to lighting up a cigarette when the urge hit him — a substance that is arguably more harmful than marijuana but just so happens to be legal. Who really even knows what George W. Bush did during his youthful rebellious college days? And then of course there's Bill Clinton who "didn't inhale" and John Kerry who "didn't like it." Let's not even get into some of the more music-industry-backed pot smokers — the most famous of which I think would wisely say, "Let it be."

But yes, by all means, let's crucify America's most extraordinary athlete over a little weed. Anything to preserve the status quo, right?

Michelle Hipps
Independent Florida Alligator (E. of Florida)

Facebook “25 things about me” serves as selfish cry for attention

Michelle Hipps

This “25 things about me” list has taken over Facebook with everyone and their mother writing about themselves and tagging me. Do these people think I want to know if they are addicted to www.canbushbeerberger.com? Wonder no more, I didn't.

Why do people feel the need to share things about themselves? Are they looking for admiration, a pat on the back, what? I refuse to relent simply because they feel like they need a spotlight. Don't tag me if you're looking for an audience.

The whole idea is egotistical. I've been told that interesting people don't have to advertise that they're interesting, and even politicians that partake in socially-questionable behavior. Our newly inaugurated president admitted to having done cocaine during his youth, and now resorts to lighting up a cigarette when the urge hit him — a substance that is arguably more harmful than marijuana but just so happens to be legal. Who really even knows what George W. Bush did during his youthful rebellious college days? And then of course there's Bill Clinton who "didn't inhale" and John Kerry who "didn't like it." Let's not even get into some of the more music-industry-backed pot smokers — the most famous of which I think would wisely say, "Let it be."

But yes, by all means, let's crucify America's most extraordinary athlete over a little weed. Anything to preserve the status quo, right?

Michelle Hipps is a contributor to the Independent Florida Alligator at University of Florida.
When the Joker Takes His Anti-Psychotic Meds

When the Joker Takes His Anti-Psychotic Meds

Pop Culture Shock Therapy by Doug Bratton

HI BATMAN! I'M ON MY WAY TO MAKE BALLOON ANIMALS FOR KIDS IN GOTHAM GENERAL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL. I LIKE TO GIVE THEM SOMETHING TO SMILE ABOUT!

Write a letter to the editor!

Send your letter, in 250 words or less, to mustangdailypo@gmail.com. Or submit it at mustangdaily.com

Pop Culture Shock Therapy by Doug Bratton

HI BATMAN! I'M ON MY WAY TO MAKE BALLOON ANIMALS FOR KIDS IN GOTHAM GENERAL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL. I LIKE TO GIVE THEM SOMETHING TO SMILE ABOUT!

Write a letter to the editor!

Send your letter, in 250 words or less, to mustangdailypo@gmail.com. Or submit it at mustangdaily.com

Pop Culture Shock Therapy by Doug Bratton

HI BATMAN! I'M ON MY WAY TO MAKE BALLOON ANIMALS FOR KIDS IN GOTHAM GENERAL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL. I LIKE TO GIVE THEM SOMETHING TO SMILE ABOUT!

Write a letter to the editor!

Send your letter, in 250 words or less, to mustangdailypo@gmail.com. Or submit it at mustangdaily.com

Pop Culture Shock Therapy by Doug Bratton

HI BATMAN! I'M ON MY WAY TO MAKE BALLOON ANIMALS FOR KIDS IN GOTHAM GENERAL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL. I LIKE TO GIVE THEM SOMETHING TO SMILE ABOUT!

Write a letter to the editor!

Send your letter, in 250 words or less, to mustangdailypo@gmail.com. Or submit it at mustangdaily.com


We’re securing the arcs of need and hopefully put ourselves in a better position,” Cashman said. “We’re not planning on any major league free agents or other non-tender invites.” The length of the deal seems to be the sticking point between the Dodgers and Ramirez, who created a buzz upon arriving in Los Angeles from Boston on the July 31 trade deadline.

Ramirez hit .396 with 19 home runs, 51 RBIs, 36 runs scored, 74 hits and 33 walks in 53 regular-season games, leading the Dodgers to the NL West title.

He was even more potent in the postseason, hitting .320 with four home runs, 10 RBIs, nine runs scored and 11 walks in 18 playoff games.

Ramirez made a huge impact on the Dodgers’ bottom line, with a big boost in attendance and souvenir sales, including No. 99 jerseys and fake dreadlocks.

But the latest rejection seems to signal that Ramirez remains intent on locking up a long-term deal that would take him through age 40.

“What is this I would call a ‘liberal market,’” Boris said Tuesday. “There’s players ending up with marquee deals. Ramirez is even getting job-hunting help from Albert Pujols.

The St. Louis slugger passed along Ramirez’s telephone number to Cardinals manager Tony La Russa.

“I speak with Manny every three days and he tells me, ‘Man, no one wants to sign me,’” Pujols said last week in the Dominican Republic. “I’m not an agent or general manager, but I can’t understand how Manny hasn’t signed.”

—Associated Press Baseball Writers Ronald Blum and Mike Fitzpatrick and Sports Writer Rick Federman contributed to this report.

Los Angeles manager Joe Torre and some of the Dodgers players have said they want Ramirez back.

The latest rejection “doesn’t mean he’s not coming back. They’re still talking and that’s what negotiations are all about,” Torre said at a signing for his new book in New York.

“I’ve talked to him a couple of times. He enjoyed his experience. He’d like to come back, but again, this is the business part of it. Hopefully things can get worked out.” Ramirez is even getting job-hunting help from Albert Pujols.

The article ends with a description of the Dodgers’ interest in Ramirez and their desire to re-sign him.
SPORTS

MUSTANG DAILY

Wednesday, February 4, 2009

Shotwell to roam sidelines again

I’m going to keep my eyes open to the characteristics that I saw in myself.

—Kyle Shotwell
Cal Poly assistant coach

SPORTS EDITOR:
Scott Silev
mustangdailysports@gmail.com

Former Colts linebacker Kyle Shotwell, left, sacks Bengals quarterback Ryan Fitzpatrick during a preseason game on Aug. 28, 2008.

Omar Sanchez
MUSTANG DAILY

Los Angeles — The Dodgers are still trying to bring back Manny Ramirez. Only the egomaniacal slugger doesn’t like their latest deal.

He rejected their third offer — for one year — that would have made him baseball’s second-highest paid player behind Alex Rodriguez.

That leaves Ramirez unsigned three months after deciding to test his value in the recession-plagued free agent market, with the Dodgers the only team to have confirmed making any offers.

“We have interest in signing Manny,” general manager Ned Colletti told The Associated Press in an e-mail Tuesday. “We don’t want to see those situations but can change in an instant and either side can change them in an instant.”

The Dodgers open spring training for the first time in Arizona on Feb. 14.

Team owner Frank McCourt said the team still wants Ramirez back, but “at some point, we have to move on,” he was quoted by MLB.com, from his big brother.

“IT’s not as big of a deal as people think it is,” Troy said. “Everybody thinks, at least for me, that he’s going to give me a hard time or be harder on me because he’s my brother, but he’s doing a good job of treating me the same as he treats anybody else.”

Troy is not alone when he said that his brother is doing a good job transitioning from player to coach.

“He knows Cal Poly, he knows what it takes, he knows the tradition of the football program and he’s been a tremendous help for us in our first 14 days here,” Walsh said.

Although Shotwell might not have see Shotwell, page 11

McCourt: Dodgers still want Ramirez

Beth Harris
ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES — The Dodgers are still trying to bring back Manny Ramirez. Only the egomaniacal slugger doesn’t like their latest deal.

He rejected their third offer — for one year — that would have made him baseball’s second-highest paid player behind Alex Rodriguez.

That leaves Ramirez unsigned three months after deciding to test his value in the recession-plagued free agent market, with the Dodgers the only team to have confirmed making any offers.

“We have interest in signing Manny,” general manager Ned Colletti told The Associated Press in an e-mail Tuesday. “We don’t want to see those situations but can change in an instant and either side can change them in an instant.”

The Dodgers open spring training for the first time in Arizona on Feb. 14.

Team owner Frank McCourt said the team still wants Ramirez back, but “at some point, we have to move on,” he was quoted by MLB.com, from his big brother.

“It’s not as big of a deal as people think it is,” Troy said. “Everybody thinks, at least for me, that he’s going to give me a hard time or be harder on me because he’s my brother, but he’s doing a good job of treating me the same as he treats anybody else.”

Troy is not alone when he said that his brother is doing a good job transitioning from player to coach.

“He knows Cal Poly, he knows what it takes, he knows the tradition of the football program and he’s been a tremendous help for us in our first 14 days here,” Walsh said.

Although Shotwell might not have

McCourt: Dodgers still want Ramirez

Beth Harris
ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES — The Dodgers are still trying to bring back Manny Ramirez. Only the egomaniacal slugger doesn’t like their latest deal.

He rejected their third offer — for one year — that would have made him baseball’s second-highest paid player behind Alex Rodriguez.

That leaves Ramirez unsigned three months after deciding to test his value in the recession-plagued free agent market, with the Dodgers the only team to have confirmed making any offers.

“We have interest in signing Manny,” general manager Ned Colletti told The Associated Press in an e-mail Tuesday. “We don’t want to see those situations but can change in an instant and either side can change them in an instant.”

The Dodgers open spring training for the first time in Arizona on Feb. 14.

Team owner Frank McCourt said the team still wants Ramirez back, but “at some point, we have to move on,” he was quoted by MLB.com, from his big brother.

“It’s not as big of a deal as people think it is,” Troy said. “Everybody thinks, at least for me, that he’s going to give me a hard time or be harder on me because he’s my brother, but he’s doing a good job of treating me the same as he treats anybody else.”

Troy is not alone when he said that his brother is doing a good job transitioning from player to coach.

“He knows Cal Poly, he knows what it takes, he knows the tradition of the football program and he’s been a tremendous help for us in our first 14 days here,” Walsh said.

Although Shotwell might not have

Raiders keeping Tom Cable as head coach

Greg Beacham
ASSOCIATED PRESS

OAKLAND, Calif.—The Oakland Raiders retained head coach Tom Cable on Tuesday, officially removing the interim designation from his title more than five weeks after their season ended.

Cable went 4-8 after replacing Lane Kiffin with the Raiders (3-11), who have lost at least 11 games in six consecutive years. Cable, Kiffin’s former offensive line coach, rallied Oakland to back-to-back victories to end last season.

Raiders owner Al Davis interviewed a handful of candidates for the job, but never seemed seriously inclined to replace Cable, valuing his organizational loyalty and leadership. Davis spoke to New York Giants offensive coordinator Kevin Gilbride and Green Bay assistant head coach Winston Moss before sticking with Cable, the former Idaho head coach who joined the Raiders in 2007.

Cable’s hiring, to be announced at a news conference on Wednesday, will bring some stability to a coaching staff that’s already undergoing wholesale changes even with Cable staying in charge. Cable, who represented Oakland at the Senior Bowl in Alabama last month, had argued that keeping him would bring stability to a club already on its fifth head coach since 2003.

But several key assistant coaches who finished the season under Cable’s leadership already have left the Raiders for new jobs, including defensive coordinator Bob Ryan (Cleveland), offensive coordinator Greg Knapp (Seattle), special teams coordinator Brian Schutt (San Francisco) and linebackers coach Don Martindale (Denver). Running backs coach Tom Rathman (San Francisco) and linebacks coach Don Martindale (Denver) were reportedly interviewing for the Raiders’ new staff.

While waiting to announce Cable’s hiring, Davis filled several positions on the Raiders’ new staff, hiring a few new assistants and rehiring several others. Oakland