Recommendations for non-tenure track faculty members pass in Faculty Senate

MILES KUOPPA & TINA NACERIAN   
Editor in Chief & Assistant News Editor

In light of a greater conversation in academia about the rights and roles of non-tenure track faculty, Rice University is reconsidering their titles, obligations and job security.

According to the Rice Faculty Handbook, “academic tenure protects faculty members from being dismissed for teaching, research or inquiring into areas that might be politically or commercially controversial.” However, NTTF faculty do not have tenure and are not on paths that potentially lead to tenure within the university.

The Faculty Senate approved the Task Force on Non-Tenure Track Faculty’s five recommendations to increase job stability and growth opportunities for non-tenure track faculty while more clearly defining their roles at its meeting on Oct. 1.

Paula Sanders, vice provost for academic affairs, and Stanislav Sarykin, senior faculty fellow in physics and astronomy, presented the five recommendations at the Student Association Senate meeting on Wednesday, Nov. 5. The task force’s primary recommendations were to create full-time NTTF teaching and research positions with the titles of Assistant, Associate and Full-Time Teaching/Research Professor. The other three recommendations were to clarify the titles and roles of lecturers and instructors, limit the use of the “Professor in the Practice” title and allow the Schools of Business, Music and Architecture to develop their own NTTF titles.

See TENURE, page 2
TRENDS IN NTT FACULTY

The recommendations come in the wake of a greater discussion in academia about the roles and treatment of NTT faculty, according to Sanders, a professor of history.

According to the Office of Institutional Research, in fall 2013, NTT faculty taught 38 percent of undergraduate courses at Rice compared to 45 percent TTT faculty and 15 percent other instructors. Additionally, in fall 2013, TTT faculty made up 75 percent of instructional faculty on a Full-Time Equivalency basis, compared to 29 percent NTT faculty.

The OIR calculates FTE by adding all the full time FTE TTT faculty to one-third of part time FTT faculty.

“Many universities have used more and more contingent faculty, meaning faculty who are part time, who have no benefits and have no job security, to carry out their undergraduate teaching mission,” Sanders said. “At Rice, the majority of our faculty continue to be tenured and tenured track faculty.”

Sanders said Rice also has a number of full-time faculty who are NTT and have served the university well for a long time and that Rice actively attempts to employ full-time NTT faculty whenever possible. She said there are organizations in higher education, like the AAUP, that have called for universities to take measures similar to those in the recommendations.

“There are lots of places where you have individuals who will piece together a living,” Sanders said. “They teach at three to five institutions, they teach a gauntlet courses, they get paid almost nothing, they have no benefits that’s a terrible situation, it’s a bad situation for those people, it’s a bad situation for a university.”

An NTT faculty member, who asked to be anonymous for their job protection, said one of the main concerns of NTT faculty nationwide is that their expiring contracts will not be renewed.

“One might expect that they will be renewed, the contract only need not be renewed,” the NTT faculty member said. “So that’s kind of the way the employment situation works for NTTs.”

The NTT faculty member said they think one of the arguments in favor of moving toward the sorts of recommendations the task force endeavors to is encourage academic freedom in teaching and research.

“I’m not suggesting that NTTs don’t have that, because I think that most NTTs function in their positions as if though they do have academic freedom,” the NTT faculty member said. “You’re at a university, you assume you have academic freedom. But one of the broader concerns that’s been expressed in the country by many organizations that are looking at these issues is academic freedom, in addition to the issue of employment security.”

The NTT faculty member said the task force’s recommendations will not only benefit NTTs but will benefit the campus at large, in particular students.

“If you look at countrywide trends, NTTs are an integral part of universities,” the NTT faculty member said. “I don’t see that changing, I don’t see that landscape changing. NTTs are people, basically, who have dedicated their careers to either doing teaching or research, but not both. The fact that Rice put together this task force and recommendations a year in the making, shows that Rice is acknowledging the role that NTTs play in the overall academic experience at Rice.”

Sanders said the new policies will make Rice more competitive for hiring the best NTT faculty and retain them.

“We ... wanted to ensure that we are able to hire and retain the highest quality faculty for everything we do at Rice, from our [tenured and tenure track] positions where tenure-track faculty have the responsibilities for research, teaching and service, all the way through the whole range of faculty who teach full time or even part time mostly for our undergraduates,” Sanders said. “If we want to recruit and retain the best faculty, we have to have jobs that are appealing for people.”

Implementation

According to Sanders, the task force decided to put management, planning and implementation issues in separate document that the Faculty Senate did not vote on, but serves as a record of issues that have been raised for consideration and discussion by the administration. She said her highest priority is the full implementation of the recommendations by June 30, 2016.

“We decided that we would put a lot of other things that are not really governance issues, but management and planning and implementation issues, in a separate document so that they would be there, so that they would be on the record of things that people wanted to have considered,” Sanders said. Sanders said the task force did not discuss compensation.

“There are compensation questions that our committee did not address,” Sanders said. “And those are things that are going to have to be addressed down the road.”

According to Sanders, issues such as whether or not NTT faculty will be eligible to serve as department chair, said NTT faculty should be considered in the promotion and renewal process “is problematic given the definition of NTT teaching roles.”

“The task force felt it was reasonable to say that scholars could be part of the total assessment of NTT faculty, but it was not required, and that the goal is to create a career track for NTT faculty.”

In an email, Sanders said the conversation with Wolf was centered on making sure that all the requirements and criteria for evaluation and promotion would be included in the job description. She said the conversation was not a definitive discussion of the issue, and the task force’s feeling that it was reasonable to say scholarship could be part of NTT faculty’s total assessment was not a position that she personally espoused.

Susan McIntosh, Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum chair, said NTT faculty bring diverse expertise in teaching and research to the undergraduate student body.

“The NTT initiative serves to ensure fair treatment of our valuable NTT faculty, creating career tracks in those cases where their teaching skills contribute to the undergraduate program on a long-term basis,” McIntosh said. “Rice is not a single, monolithic category and can’t really be discussed as such. NTT faculty bring a wide variety of qualities and benefits to our undergraduate curriculum.”

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Paula Sanders
Vice Provost for Academic Affairs

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Humans, not squirrels, compose Homecoming court

In 2011, Saint Arnold Centenari-Ale was crowned Homecoming King, while in 2008, Hurricane Ike took the honors. More recently in 2013, Rocky and Bushy the squirrels were placed on the ballot following an active Facebook campaign. Bushy ultimately won the title of Homecoming Queen.

Melissa Copeland, Chair of the Homecoming Committee and a Homecoming nominee, said she has been working with students and faculty to establish Homecoming as a Rice tradition.

Copeland, a Wiess College junior, said she thinks students enjoy having a voice in nominating the Homecoming Court instead of treating the tradition humorously. “Putting the face of actual students, instead of objects or faculty, can make an impact in establishing Homecoming as a tradition at Rice,” Copeland said. “Since students have friends actually participating in the Homecoming Court, I think the election will allow them to be more notified of what is happening around campus and will encourage more participation in the Homecoming events.

Sid Richardson Senior Michael Gwede was nominated for Homecoming Court but said he prefers the old tradition of choosing silly objects or animals.

“I think that type of lightheartedness is what makes Rice a fun place to go to school,” Gwede said. “Luckily all of the nominees took a lighthearted approach to the competition, so it was still a fun experience. However, I see this could change resulting in more serious Homecoming King/Queen races in the future, which would be pretty lame in my opinion.”

Gwede and Jennifer Alvario, who was nominated for Homecoming Court last year but ultimately won the title of Homecoming Queen, said she has been working with the Contingency Committee and a Homecoming Court to make way for the construction of the Moody Center for the Arts. The 50,000 square foot space will serve as an interdisciplinary hub for the arts.

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Sara Tulsker News Editor

Rice Alumni in Medicine, a network of Rice University alumni in the medical field, recently connected with local medical students and alumni student mixer the day before Homecoming.

"RAM was formally launched this year just before homecoming but has been in the works for the past few years as we [re-credited] alumni for the initial leadership body," RAM President Freddy Nguyen said. Rice alumni in medicine and medical professions had expressed a desire to give back to the Rice community by helping Rice students interested in medicine. There was also a need for alumni to band together to support Rice's large body of pre-health professions students, leading to the creation of RAM, according to Nguyen.

Nguyen said RAM allows Rice alumni in medicine to support Rice pre-health students by mentoring students and hosting networking events, among other activities.

"Rice alumni already participate in a number of programs throughout campus on an individual basis," Nguyen said. Some of these programs include Rice Pre-Medical Society mock interviews for juniors preparing for interviews, as well as RPM's Big Owl, Little Owl program, where Rice pre-medical students learn about medical school and the medical field from medical students and physicians, according to Nguyen.

Freddy Nguyen RAM President

"RAM will look to further strengthen those programs in working with the Rice Pre-Medical Society," Nguyen said. "This allows for easier access to these opportunities for alumni and leads to more direct involvement in the future."

Some pre-medical students said they support the network for alumni in medicine.

"I believe RAM will be helpful because it is kind of like networking and will help the [pre-medical students] have connections even after graduating," Tamer Ghanyan, a Duncan College sophomore, said.

Other students had some ideas for how such a network could best help them.

"It will be great if each alum gets paired with one or two students and serves as their mentor," Machaela Li, a Sid Richard- son College sophomore, said. "Personally, I would love to have a designated mentor who’s there to give me advice when I need it and... it’s a more personal connection.

Nguyen said he views the network for alumni in medicine in essence, because even though Rice alumni in medicine have been involved on an individual basis, a network will allow for more alumni to support Rice pre-health students. Additionally, RAM would allow support of Rice pre-health students even after they graduate from Rice.

"RAM will provide an opportunity for Rice students in medicine to come together to network and support Rice students and alumni during not only their time at Rice, but also as they embark into their lifelong journey in medicine through medical school.

Undergrads present business plans at OEDK Elevator Pitch Competition

Alfredo Corchado, a well-known Mexican-American journalist and author, spoke at Rice University about drug-related violence and journalism in Mexico this Monday.

Corchado, who was born in Mexico, said his experience with journalism began after his family immigrated to the United States; when he was working on a farm in California at age 13, a reporter investigating immigrant labor asked him how old he was.

"It really marked me; it was like, wow, somebody really wants to tell my story," Corchado said. "What a noble profession... That’s its sense of giving voice that always inspires me."

Corchado said he later dropped out of high school and expected to become a hairdresser, but he ended up graduating from community college in Texas and then attending the University of Texas, El Paso and finally Harvard University. Corchado has worked for the Dallas Morning News since 1994, winning several journalism awards, and is now the Mexico bureau chief for the newspaper.

Earlier this year, Corchado also authored a book, Midnight in Mexico, which relates his experiences reporting in the dangerous conditions of present-day Mexico. According to Corchado, the book deals with the emotional side of his work and experiences much more than his reporting did.

"As reporters, something we do a pretty good job of is keeping our emotions to our own selves," Corchado said. "And then when you open the gates, it’s like a flood — the emotions take over. There were times [writing the book] when I couldn’t stop crying."

Corchado identified his split Mexican-American identity as one of his main sources of emotion.

"It’s the nostalgia of the immigrant," Corchado said. "It’s like you’re searching for your identity, you know, where do you belong? Do you belong in Mexico, do you belong in the United States? That’s the tears — it wasn’t just the bloodshed in Mexico, it was also this longing to belong to one country or the other.

Throughout the talk, Corchado emphasized the importance of being informed about events in Mexico. He pointed to the protests in the U.S. of South American apart- head when he was in school as an example of Americans becoming passionate about a foreign importation.

"I wonder whether that kind of outrage is here about Mexico," Corchado said. "I think what Mexicans want more than anything is for the outside world to share their pain."
The Rice Thresher, the official student newspaper at Rice University since 1916, is published each Wednesday during the school year, except during examination periods and holidays, by the students of Rice University.

Letters to the Editor must be received by 5 p.m. on Friday prior to publication and must be signed, including college and year if the writer is a Rice student. The Thresher reserves the right to edit letters for content and length and to place letters on its website.

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Dining authentically in a strip mall

WALDEN PEMANTLE
THESSERIE STAFF

Standing in a Third Ward strip mall, everything about Reggae Hut screams authentic. Whether it’s the dance hall music, the dreadlocked woman at the counter or the dingy but charming planter walks, patrons here seem never to question that they’re getting the “real” thing.

Since being revitalized by Breakfast Klub owner Marcus Davis in 2006, Reggae Hut has occupied an uncontested spot as Houston’s top Caribbean restaurant. The food is simple but unraveled. No-fuss favorites like the beef patties are well seasoned with cumin, cloves and nutmeg, and at only $3.15 make an excellent lunch or snack. The Hut’s house-made ginger beer, punch and sweet tea add to the menu’s charm. While some may find the punch too sweet, the strong cherry and pineapple flavors separate it from the usual Hi-C brew is exceptionally smooth while main courses, seasoned with cumin, cloves and nutmeg, and priced under a heaping serving of the house créole sauce, a tomato-based blend of stock and peppers not recommended for those averse to heat.

As many traditional Jamaican preparations include heavy use of hot peppers, those who prefer milder fare should be especially discerning when ordering. The curried dishes do carry some heat, but they are much milder than their jerk seasoned or creole counterparts. The jerk chicken sandwich allows diners to sample the jerk chicken between slices of doughy cocoa bread that negate some of its heat andacidity. In one course, the Jerk Hut may not be what some envision as “fine dining,” but it certainly satisfies. As an inexpensive stop with friendly service and the most authentic Caribbean food in town, it is well worth a visit.

RECOMMENDED DISHES AT REGGAE HUT

APPETIZER
Beef patties
Warm baked pastry filled with seasoned ground beef

ENTREES
Jerk chicken
Jamaica’s original spicy jerk chicken served with rice & peas and vegetable medley or potato salad

Creole snapper (seasonal)
Pan fried snapper sautéed in a tomato & pimento sauce

DRINK
Ginger beer

More expensive; all are listed as “Market Price,” but tend to run between $12 and $17 dollars. At its best, the seasonal seafood is the crown jewel of Reggae Hut’s menu. The pan-fried snapper for two has a wonderfully crisp layer of fried skin and the perfect amount of heat. The shrimp, however, tend to lose their delicate flavor under a heaping serving of the house créole sauce, a tomato-based blend of stock and peppers not recommended for those averse to heat.

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ROCKY HATTON

This past year’s Barclaycard Mercury prize winner was Dead, the February release and debut LP by Scottish-via-West Africa hip hop trio Young Fathers. A confident rap record blending heavy Altopop influences with topical, socially-relevant lyrics, the record is a forward-thinking departure from recent electronic and rock winners (James Blake, Alt-J) and further advances the globalization of music cultures and genres.

Young Fathers consists of Kayus Bankole, son of Nigerian immigrants, Liberian-born Atilloque Massanupi and Edinburgh housing project prod- uct G Hastings. From the beginning, the trio does not sound like a typical rap group. The exuberant and heav- ily-accented Massanupi begins the record with the line, “sitting in the parlour offerings of flour / milk plantain rice for the bridal shower,” a life worlds away from Drake’s or Kanye’s standard depictions of nightclubs and mansions.

Grosting up against the back- ground of civil war in Liberia, Massa- nupi’s lyrics are understandably filled with violent imagery. “Forgive them Lord you lost your child / gotta get them now,” he laments in “War,” be- fore falling into the haunting chorus of “This is war / C4.” Five songs into Dead, it’s baffling that this is indeed an album about death.

While those first few songs are ab- solutely dynamite, the album stalls a bit in its second half. “Hannigan” contains lyrics as scathing and direct as any on the album, but the empti- ness of the atmosphere and distant, echoing chorus create perhaps too passive an environment for the song’s content. The record ends on a bit of a low note with “I’ve Arrived,” a hush- ing song riddled by horns and over- production without a clear narrative.

Still, the strength of the major- ity of these tracks, alongside the frightening and all too real subject matter, make Dead a rap album not to be skipped. For many of us, it can be hard to face the realities of the de- veloping world, but when it is deliv- ered through a medium as exciting as Dead’s, the artist succeeds in at least raising awareness while the listener gets a jam of a hip hop record. And, above all else, Dead is indeed one hell of a jam.
You are what you wear, whether you like it or not

Kaylen Strench
A&E Editor

Let’s just say it — Rice University won’t be winning “best-dressed campus” anytime soon. Relative to other universities, there’s a startling lack of tailored shirts and well-fitting pants. It isn’t a demographics issue — my friends at other schools are equally surprised at Rice’s low fashion standards. Rather, the issue is philosophical. Many Rice students aren’t convinced that fashion, or even thinking about your appearance, is a priority.

I can relate. I’ve had plenty of weeks in the last three years where I have slept in until ten minutes before class and thrown on sweats without checking the mirror. I had nice clothes and twenty minutes to spare — I just honestly didn’t care. People should like me for who I am, right? As a friend of mine once noted with pride, “I don’t give a f**k what you think of my T-shirt.”

The thing is, despite the fact that no one showed any reaction to my appearance, I felt terrible. I was more shy, less confident and even participated less in class. Even though no one seemed to care how I looked, it seemed to mattered anyway.

The problem, I realized, is while it doesn’t always matter how attractive you look, it may matter how you think you look to other people. Our identities are not formed in isolation — they stem directly from how we think we are perceived by the rest of the world. This isn’t because we’re vain, it’s just a necessary response. Since you can’t look at yourself walking around everyday, you have to use someone else’s lens. I kept imagining how they were seeing me and I didn’t like that person. Frankly, she seemed pretty lazy.

The point is, what you decide to wear affects how you perceive yourself as a person, and if that’s not someone you like much, well, your self-esteem might take a hit. On the flip side, it means that taking the time to make thoughtful decisions about how you look is extremely empowering. It may or may not impress anyone on the outside, but it can change your self-esteem and entire self-concept. To those who haven’t tried it, I can attest that dressing edgy makes you feel edgy. Dressing like a slob makes you feel like a slob. It’s not a complicated relationship, but it’s one we often take for granted.

The other component of this is more controversial, but needs to be said: How you dress is always meaningful. It doesn’t necessarily impact how attractive other people will find you — that’s very subjective and based on other intangible factors, such as personality. However, it is intrinsically intentional. It involves making a choice between allocating time to dressing well or just grabbing clothes blindly out of the drawer. What you decide conveys a message about who you are and how you see yourself, and you don’t necessarily get to decide how that message is interpreted. When you dress sloppily, you’re telling everyone you encounter that you look isn’t a priority. Hopefully, people would draw the conclusion that you’re busy or in a rush. But, like it or not, others, particularly professors or other authority figures, may interpret your choice as a larger statement about apathy or laziness. You shouldn’t carry too much anxiety about things you can’t control, like height, weight or health conditions, but when it comes to the things that you can affect, there may be an argument for making a change.

So please, Rice, set your alarms 15 minutes earlier this week and buy a shirt that you did not acquire at a Rice-sponsored event. I don’t say this because I want a more aesthetically pleasing campus — you’re all gorgeous. I say it because I want all of y’all to experience the confidence boost that only a good outfit can provide. You deserve it.
Haunting fiction for every American Horror Story fanatic

Bailey Tulloch  
For The Thresher

FX’s hit series American Horror Story recently began its fourth season, which features a disturbing, nightmarish carnival setting with the tagline “We are all freaks.” AHS is one of those rare programs that both entertains and educates its viewers, in addition to its creepy twists and turns, the series is filled with cultural and social symbolism. AHS has become a media and literary phenomenon. Even though Halloweentown is over, we got into the horror story spirit and try out some of these great novels – all of which are just as eerie, profound and addicting as AHS.

Sharp Objects by Gillian Flynn

You’ve probably heard of Gillian Flynn — her hit Gone Girl dominated best-seller lists for over a year and was recently adapted into a film of the same name. Sharp Objects, however, is much darker and creepier, making it a perfect match for any reader who loves AHS. The novel is centered around Camille, a young journalist with an eerie story about Dan, a boy who goes to boarding school over the summer where he learns that his dorm was once a highly controversial insane asylum. Mysterious things start happening: Dan sees visions at night, old photos appear scattered throughout his room and his professor start looking familiar. The only way to save Dan is to figure out what’s really happening — is to go down into the depths of the asylum.

The Night Circus by Erin Morgenstern

This delightful book is less creepy than your typical AHS episode, but is equally intriguing. Morgenstern tells the story of a darkly enchanting and mystical asylum. Mysterious things start happening: Dan sees visions at night, old photos appear scattered throughout his room and his professor start looking familiar. The only way to save Dan is to figure out what’s really happening — is to go down into the depths of the asylum.

Miss Peregrine’s Home for Peculiar Children by Ransom Riggs

A young adult novel accompanied by stunning black-and-white photography, Miss Peregrine’s Home for Peculiar Children takes grotesque to the next level. Sixteen-year-old Jacob is an unusual boy who has the ability to see things no one else can. After his grandfather is killed, Jacob’s visions start to get worse. Upon his psychiatrist’s advice, he vacations with his grandparents on a small island off the coast of Wales. There, Jacob happens upon an abandoned home, which he discovers housed insane children with freakish deformities and abilities. As he uncovers its history, he realizes that it may not really be abandoned after all.

Asylum by Madeleine Roux

Asylum is another haunting young adult novel that showcases a similar style of photography as Miss Peregrine’s Home for Peculiar Children. Old portraits of psychiatric patients intermingle with an eerie story about Dan, a boy who goes to boarding school over the summer where he learns that his dorm was once a highly controversial insane asylum. Mysterious things start happening: Dan sees visions at night, old photos appear scattered throughout his room and his professors start looking familiar. The only way for Dan to figure out what’s really happening is to go down into the depths of the asylum.

The Perfect Blend of Gothic Romance and Horror

While these novels may be more to her past than even she knows, Camille, a young journalist, reluctantly returns to her small hometown to track down the killer, she realizes that there may be more to her past than even she knows.

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This biopic tells the incredible story of the lives of famed theoretical physicist Stephen Hawking (Eddie Redmayne, Les Misérables) and his supportive wife, Jane (Felicity Jones, The Amazing Spiderman 2). Both leading performances have earned substantial Academy Awards buzz since the film’s premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival. PG-13, 123 minutes.

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The Owls pose with the Conference USA championship trophy after defeating the University of North Texas 2-0. The Owls swept the Conference USA postseason tournament winning all three games and will face the University of Texas, Austin in the first round of the NCAA Tournament.

Soccer wins Conference USA trophy

The Rice University soccer team entered the Conference USA tournament as the No. 2 overall seed while riding a four-game winning streak. With three consecutive wins in tournament play, the Owls stretched their winning streak to a season-best seven games and were crowned the 2014 C-USA champions.

The Owls clinched the conference’s automatic bid for the NCAA tournament and will play in the opening round of games this upcoming Friday. This marks the second time in program history the Owls have won the CUSA tournament and the third time Rice has earned a trip to the NCAA tournament.

Rice opened up the C-USA tournament on Wednesday afternoon against No. 7 seed Western Kentucky University. In the 96th minute of the match, junior forward and CUSA Offensive Player of the Year Lauren Hughes slipped the ball past the WKU goalkeeper to put Rice up 1-0. Hughes extended her Rice school record by scoring in her sixth consecutive game, proving to be the game winner as the defense earned their ninth shutout of the season and Rice advanced to the second round of the tournament.

On Friday afternoon, the Owls played No. 6 seed Louisiana Tech University, who had upset No. 1 seed and regular season champions Rice in the previous tournament game. In the 16th minute of the match, Rice opened up the C-USA tournament on an offensive goal, but the score remained 0-0 at halftime. In the 64th minute of the match, Rice added a goal to double their lead entering halftime.

“Our very tough non-conference schedule we played this year has prepared us for this tournament,” Adams said. “We are going to give them all we have.”

Czyz, a defensive captain and four-year starter at goalkeeper, said she commands her teammates for the way they played together as a team during the tournament.

“In whole, it was a complete effort with [Iribarne] scoring twice in the final, [Hughes] scoring in the other games and our defense shutting them out,” Czyz said. “We had a team goal of staying the whole week [for the tournament] and not [coming] back to Rice without the trophy.”

According to Czyz, the victory in the conference final was especially meaningful to the senior class.

“For us in the senior class, I don’t think we could have written our last year any better,” Czyz said. “As for our program, it’s been awesome. This is the first time we’ve won the tournament in almost a decade, and I can’t wait to see where Rice soccer is headed in the next couple of years.”

Iribarne, named the tournament’s Most Valuable Offensive Player, said the team’s success this year is due to the its work ethic and chemistry.

“This year has been so special; it’s hard to describe,” Iribarne said. “We’ve all been getting so many accolades and awards that are truly a testament to all our hard work this year and our commitment to playing for each other.”

The Owls will face the University of Texas, Austin in the opening round of the NCAA tournament in Austin. Rice will be looking to win their first ever NCAA tournament match on the road against in-state rival Texas Longhorns. The game is scheduled for Friday, Nov. 14, at 5 p.m.
Freshmen prepare for IM flag playoffs

JUAN SALDANA
THE THresher Staff

As fall intramural sports come to a close, the College Freshman Flag Football season enters the playoffs stage. Six colleges are left seeking the Freshman Flag Championship and President’s Cup points. Will Rice College and Hanszen College, historically top colleg- es at freshman flag, once again lead the pack this year — both completed perfect regular seasons and earned a bye in the first round of the six-team playoffs. This is the first year that freshman flag is using a six-team play- offs system, a change from the traditional four-team bracket used in the past.

Outscoring their opponents by over 100 points on their way to a 5-0 record, Will Rice has put up points behind the play of quar- terback Ben Herndon-Miller. En route to their No. 1 playoff seed, the freshmen shut out three of their five opponents, including two mercy rule victories to open the season against Lovett College and Marcell College.

Will Rice coach John Robertson said the winning culture at Will Rice is due to the team’s dedication and performance.

“We’ve got a really close-knit group of guys who all take a lot of enjoyment in play- ing with each other and representing Will Rice,” Robertson, a senior, said. “The level of enthusiasm we play with is simply not matched by any other team out there, espe- cially in our relentless flag-pulling. Going into the playoffs, our level of confidence is very high, and we expect to finish off the sea- son the way we want to. We know we have a target on us with Will Ricers, but we wouldn’t have it any other way.”

Wiess College finished off the season with a 3-2 record, with losses against Will Rice and Sid Richardson College. Wiess sports a strong offense, which is focused around speedy quarterback Abhijit Brahme. This year, the Wiessmen improved from their one-win sea- son last year and will be the No. 5 seed in the playoffs.

Baker College, coming off a wireless fresh- man flag season in 2003, managed to secure the fourth seed in the playoff with a 3-1 record. Characterized by an explosive offense that re- corded the largest single game point total of any team with a 35-0 victory over Brown Col- lege, the Baketers’ only loss came against Hanszen in the final week of the season.

Team Captain Lucas Jayne said he is look- ing forward to the team’s upcoming games and is looking for the team to show improvement.

“We haven’t been playing to the best of our capabilities,” Jayne said. “But we’re starting to practice and gain chemistry as a team.”

Hanszen has picked up right where they left off last year to clinch a No. 2 seed with 12 points. After losing their undefeated regular season record. Lead- ing the league in defense by allowing only 13 points all year, Hanszen’s defense has been a force in their 4-0 regular season.

After losing their opener 34-0 last season and forfeiting their remaining games, Sid Rich has rebounded this season. Sid Rich began the season with a perfect 4-0 record that ended with a shutout loss to Will Rice. Regardless, the team earned the third seed in the playoffs.

Sid Rich Captain Sameer Allahabadi, a wide receiver and safety, said the team’s unity and chemistry was essential to their season.

“This season has been a blast,” Allahaba- di said. “We came in as a whole bunch of stu- dents just looking to get some exercise but have become brothers off and on the field. We are excited about the playoffs. We are going to go far.”

Jones College joins the playoff picture as the sixth and final seed and the only north college in a playoff bracket consisting of five south colleges. After an 0-2 start, Jones won their remaining two games and got the final spot in the playoffs.

Playoffs are set to begin Saturday, Nov. 14, at 12:30 p.m. when Baker will take on Wiess for a spot in the semifinal against Will Rice. At 3:30 p.m., Sid Rich and Jones will face off for a chance to match up against Hanszen in the other semifinal. Both semifinal games will then be played on Sunday at 12:30 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. For students wishing to support their colleges, all games will take place at IM Field 5, located behind the Rec Center.
FOOTBALL
FROM PAGE 9

Rice will next face undefeated Marshall (9-0, 5-0 C-USA), who is currently the Associated Press No. 21 ranked team in the nation. Marshall owns sole possession of first place in the Conference USA East Division and will look to earn their 10th victory of the season against the Owls. Marshall’s offense is also headed by senior quarterback Rakeem Cato, who has 2,316 yards passing and 22 touchdowns on the year. Marshall has the seventh-ranked rushing offense in the country at 295 yards per game, the second-ranked scoring offense at 42.8 points per game and the sixth-ranked scoring defense, surrendering just 16.6 points per game to opponents.

According to Bailiff, stopping Cato will be a challenge due to the quarterback’s athleticism. “There’s really no weakness in [Cato’s] game,” Bailiff said. “He’s great when you keep in the pocket. When he breaks contain, though, that’s when he’s at his absolute best. There’s times where it looks like he’s surrounded and still somehow comes out. He just has a command of what he’s doing with that offense.”

Redshirt sophomore linebacker Alex Lyons said stopping Cato will be the focus of the defense due to his ability to extend plays. “As Coach Bailiff said, there really is no weakness in his game,” Lyons said. “We’re going to execute what the coaches give us and do what we do.”

Despite defeating Marshall 41-24 in last year’s Conference USA title game, the team says it is focusing on the present. According to Bailiff, this season features two completely different teams. “We’re such a different team than we were a year ago,” Bailiff said. “This will be a different game for us. This is going to be a great Conference USA game.”

Rice’s game against Marshall will kick off at 1:30 p.m. in Huntington, West Virginia and will be broadcasted nationally on Fox Sports Network.

Basketball wins exhibition game

Evan Neustater
SPORTS EDITOR

The Rice University men’s basketball team defeated LeTourneau University in an exhibition game 82-64 on Saturday, Head Coach Mike Rhoades’ first game leading the program.

Rice held control of the game for much of the match, leading by as many as 29 points in the first half, culminating in a 47-25 lead for the Owls entering halftime. The lead expanded at times in the second half, as Rice held as much as a 35-point advantage midway through the half. Rice gave 15 team members playing time in the game.

Rhoades’ full-court defensive attack helped Rice record eight steals and hold LeTourneau to 32.8 percent shooting in the game.

The Owls shot 42.7 percent from the field and converted three-pointers at a 33.3 percent clip. The Owls scored 26 points in the paint and converted 18 LeTourneau turnovers into 21 offensive points under the fast-paced offense Rhoades implemented.

Rice shot 42 percent from the foul line as well, converting 23 of 58 attempts.

Sophomore guard Marcus Jackson led all players in scoring, recording 19 points on 5-for-10 shooting, including three of six from beyond the arc in 24 minutes. Senior forward Seth Gearhart, who played all 40 minutes, recorded 12 points, eight rebounds and five blocks on the night. Junior guard Max Guercy and sophomore center Andrew Drane also posted double-figure scor- ing, with each recording 12 points in the game.

Freshmen Maurice Rivers, Nate Pollard, Oliver Xu and Bishop Mency all received playing time during the game. Rivers led the freshmen in scoring with eight points and five rebounds. Pollard and Xu added five points each, and Mency scored three points and three assists.

Rice will officially open the season on Fri- day, Nov. 14, at Oregon State University. The game is slated for a 9 p.m. tipoff in Corvallis, Or- egon. Rice will host its official home opener on Wednesday, Nov. 19, against Prairie View A&M University in Tudor Fieldhouse.

Junior quarterback Driphus Jackson runs for a nine-yard touchdown during a 17-7 victory over the University of Texas, San Antonio on Nov. 1. Rice has now won six consecutive games and is bowl eligible for the third consecutive season for the first time in school history.
BASKETBALL PREVIEW
2014-2015 SEASON
**SEASON PREVIEW**

Following the 2013-14 season that saw the Rice University men’s basketball team finish with a 7-23 overall record and a 2-14 record in Conference USA, Rice hired new Head Coach Mike Rhoades to help turn the team into a conference contender. Rhoades, one of the leading assistant coaches that guided Virginia Commonwealth University to its run of NCAA Tournament appearances, including its Final Four appearance in 2011, comes to Rice after recording a 137-46 record at VCU. Prior to VCU, Rhoades gained head coaching experience at Randolph-Macon College, where he finished with an overall record of 197-76 as a head coach in ten years, leading his team to four NCAA Tournament appearances, including trips to the Sweet 16 in 2002 and 2003.

While coaching at VCU, the Rams utilized an offense dubbed the “HAVOC” system, characterized by fast-paced play and full-court pressure defense. This season, Rice hopes to use the system to help Rice compete against bigger, faster teams. According to Rhoades, however, the system will take time to implement.

“I’m realistic, we can’t play that way right now with the personnel we have,” Rhoades said. “We are going to play fast, and we’re going to try to play very aggressively. But I’m also realistic this year, there are certain things our team can do and certain things they can’t do; I’m not sure we can run up and down every single possession and throw it up there and just get it, so we have to have a level of team play and execution.”

As the off-season winds down and the regular season begins, Rice’s notorious off-season workouts and practices come to a close. Practice feature grueling workouts that, according to Rhoades, will help the team react to any situation that may be presented this season.

“We want to get to a point where we make our guys very quickly uncomfortable so they understand that that’s where they’re going to be a lot.” Rhoades said. “They might as well be comfortable being uncomfortable. Let’s make practices and workouts so hard that you’re so excited to play a game because they’re so much easier.”

This season, Rice returns three out of last year’s five starters, including senior forward Seth Gearhart, senior guard Dan Porra and junior guard Max Guercy, who is the leading returning scorer on the team with 9.3 points per game last season. Although Rice lost its top two scorers from last season in Sean Obi and Austin Ramlak, Guercy, Porra and Gearhart bring a combined 199 games of playing experience to the table. Additionally, sophomore guard Marcus Jackson returns to the team after leading all freshmen in C-USA in steals last season and leading the Owls in assists in 11 games.

Rhoades said the leadership of the older, more experienced players will pay dividends this season, especially under a new coach and system.

“Our program is going to be led by Max [Guercy], Marcus [Jackson] and Seth [Gearhart], those three guys for sure,” Rhoades said. “I’m very happy with their attitudes and their approach. They’ve been really good with the young guys.”

Guercy said despite having to transition to a new coaching staff and system, the players have bought into the work ethic the coaches have been preaching.

“First day [Rhoades] got here, he wanted to instill in us that we were going to be one of the hardest working teams in the country,” Guercy said. “I think he’s been doing a great job of that ever since he got here.”

Guercy also said the “HAVOC” style of offense is both entertaining and will work in Rice’s favor due to the team’s lack of height and physical size.

“We’re not a big team, so [the fast-paced offense] will work to our advantage,” Guercy said. “This style of play is fun and exciting, and I love it. It’s hard; it’s definitely hard to play. You’re going to have to have a lot of responsibilities, but you’re also going to have a lot of freedom.”

According to sophomore center Andrew Drone, who had a 53.5 percent field goal percentage in 30 games off the bench last season, adjusting to the new system and coaching staff required starting right from the beginning again.

“I had to take the mindset of almost being a freshman again,” Drone said. “While I came in and did a lot of work last year, I just had to completely start over the whole process; it was a new system, [and] there were new coaches I had to learn from.”

Gearhart said he knows the new offense will be challenging to run, and the team needs to continue to train and practice in order to execute it effectively.

“Really I just have to just buy into the system, because it’s nothing like we’ve done the past few years here at all,” Gearhart said. “One thing is we all need to get into better shape. No one was in the right shape for this offense coming in, so we just need to buy in to what [Rhoades] wants to do and how he wants to do it.

With only seven lettermen returning and eight newcomers arriving into the program, the Owls will have to turn to young talent to play early and often in the season. According to Rhoades, some freshmen will receive substantial playing time and will be expected to play at a high level despite their inexperience.

“Bishop Mency, Maurice Rivers, Jordan Reed; those three guys are those other freshmen who are going to play a lot of minutes,” Rhoades said. “They have to step up. I think [Mency] and [Rivers] have done a great job. They’re athletic enough to hold their own at this level as freshmen. Our freshmen have been very coachable … these young guys have really stepped up.”

With the season about to begin, all players and coaches have agreed that Rice has worked hard this offseason to improve on their seven-win campaign from last season and climb the ranks in the C-USA. Rhoades said while the team is coming off a relatively poor season, the team has bought into the program and is ready to take the next step.

“Sometimes, when you’re a new coach in a new program, there are older guys and some younger guys that will fight you a little bit, but these guys have jumped in since day one and I’m very proud of them for that,” Rhoades said. “We’ve really improved; we still have a long way to go to where we want to get to, but I’ve been really excited about their approach, how much Focus they’ve put into their game, how much time they’ve put into the weight room and their bodies and doing things on and off the court the way I expect them to.”

The Owls open the regular season on Friday, Nov. 12, at Oregon State University. Rice will then have its first home game against Prairie View A&M University on Wednesday, Nov. 19, in Tudor Fieldhouse.
The Rice University women’s basketball team begins a new season this Friday, Nov. 14, opening at home against Prairie View A&M University. After the loss of Jessica Kuster, the all-time leading scorer in both Rice men’s and women’s basketball history after scoring 2,085 career points, the team is shifting to a more collective mindset.

According to senior guard Reem Moussa, this year’s team will focus more on sharing the ball and getting more players involved.

“This year is different [from] every other year I’ve been here because we’re very team-oriented,” Moussa said. “It hasn’t been that way for a while. Before, it was just find Kuster, but now I feel like that’s going to be spread out onto all of us — all 15 people on the team.”

With Kuster being the lead scorer in 28 out of 30 games in the 2013-14 season, the ball will have to be passed on to new hands this year. The question of whose hands those will be has yet to be determined. Head Coach Greg Williams said that as of now, there is no one person he is expecting to dominate the scoreboard.

“Time will tell, once we start playing games, which players are going to be able to take advantage of that opportunity to step up,” Williams said. “We don’t know who that’s going to be, and quite honestly it’s probably going to be multiple players from game to game … I really think we’ll be a team where we’ll need to play nine or ten players a game to try to see which players are being productive on that particular night.”

Other than a torn ACL for sophomore Jasmine Goodwine, who made 14 starts at point guard as a freshman, and the loss of Kuster, the women’s basketball team has kept every other player on its roster. Five of those returning players are seniors, including guards Maya Adetula and Nakachi Maduka, power forward Christal Porter, forward Megan Shafier and Moussa. Maduka, Moussa and Porter were all consistent starters during their junior years.

Sophomore forward Jasmine Goodwine said the seniors have already taken up many leadership roles for this year’s squad. “(The seniors are) there in every aspect for us,” Goodwine said. “They step up as examples and show us what it takes to be good student-athletes and just good leaders in general.”

Goodwine made an appearance in every game last year as the top freshman scorer, with the fourth-highest number of points on the team, averaging 5.5 points per contest.

The women’s basketball team has also made three additions to its roster: Freshman Courtney Brown, Wendy Knight and Shani Rainey are all Texas recruits with experience playing women’s basketball at Rice University.

Regardless of who will be starting or playing in the first game on Friday, Nov. 14, Williams said the players are guaranteed to bring a lot of energy to the court.

“They’re going to play hard, I think they’re going to compete, I think they’re going to have a lot of energy and enthusiasm, and I think they’re going to be fun to watch,” Williams said.

The first game of the season will take place in Tudor Fieldhouse this Friday, Nov. 14, at 7 p.m.
This season, the Rice University men's basketball team gained an unconventional new guard. Graduate student Van Green is eligible to play for the Owls for the 2014-15 season because of an untimely end to his undergraduate basketball career at Columbia University. Due to an injury, Green was unable to play for the Lions during his junior and senior years at Columbia. According to NCAA rules, Green is still eligible to compete in a final season.

Green, a Birmingham, Alabama native, matriculated at Columbia in fall 2010 after graduating from Central Park Christian School as valedictorian. At Columbia, he earned a bachelor's degree and is pursuing a master's degree in education at Rice.

Green said he appreciates his experiences at Columbia and the opportunities Rice has to offer.

"It’s really a blessing to be able to graduate from Columbia," Green said. "To be able to come to a school like Rice, I'm trying to get the most out of it that I can."

Even after he hit his stride during his sophomore year, Green remained committed to basketball and continued to train with Carl Hartman, an associate head coach at Columbia. When Rice recruited Green during his senior year at Hartman prepared to join the Rice basketball staff as an associate head coach in April 2014, Green said Hartman’s influence contributed to his decision to join the Owls. According to Green, Hartman’s presence at Rice was an appealing prospect.

"I think the big key to Coach Hartman, we were really close when I was at Columbia, and he coached me every day," Green said. "On this opportunity opened up, we talked about it and I said [to Hartman], ‘I would love to be a part of it, and I would love to have another year to spend with you.’"

Green said, while playing at Rice is very demanding, the Owls are the closest team Green has joined.

"Practice is going really well," Green said. "We're really close, this is the closest team I've ever been a part of." While he isn’t going to be a constant member of the starting lineup, Head Coach Mike Rhoades said Green’s experience as a college student and athlete has had a positive influence on the younger players.

Green has made a big impact in our program," Rhoades said. "Not sure how many points he’s going to score or how many steals he’s going to make, but he’s already made a huge impact on our young guys. He’s in the gym every morning with Marcus [Jack- son] and Max [Guercy]; he’s leading by example for our younger guys."

Green said while his unique background benefited him with a wealth of knowledge about collegiate basketball, he is a newcomer to Rice’s program and can relate to his freshmen teammates.

"I am the older guy, so I’m kind of like the big brother on the team, but I’m also a freshman in the aspect that it’s my first year here, and I’m still learning the coaches and the program," Green said. "The things that the freshmen are going through are the same things I am, but I can also offer a different perspective. Being from Columbia, being an older guy on the team, I just try to give them the advice I have."

This season, Rice looks to earn a trip to the Conference USA Tournament in Birmingham, Alabama. For Green, the tournament being in his hometown provides even more motivation to perform well this season, especially because he hasn’t played in his home state since his high school years.

"I’ve never played in Birmingham, and I was never even close in my four years at Columbia," Green said. "So to be able to get back to Birmingham would be monumental. I have a lot of family that would love to attend. So yes, it’s very motivating to have the opportunity. For the older guys like myself we’re trying to wrap everything we have this year because we would love to get to the conference tournament."

Following the loss of Rice University’s all-time leading scorer and rebounder Jessicauster, senior forward Christal Porter looks to step up and become a senior leader on the Rice women’s basketball team.

After starting in 29 games last season, the Germantown, Tennessee native was second on the team in both scoring and rebounding, averaging seven points and 6.9 rebounds per game. Additionally, Porter was selected by players and coaches as the Rice Defensive Player of the Year and was named to the Conference USA Commissioner’s Honor Roll.

"My goal is to play hard and do my best every day. I want to be a leader for the team by being vocal and supportive," Porter said.

According to Porter, choosing to attend Rice was a combination of parental influence and her enthusiasm for the program and its athletes.

"I picked Rice because I really connected with the team that was here," Porter, a Lovett College senior, said. "My dad was really impressed with Rice’s beautiful campus, but I didn’t even realize I was going to enjoy my college experience so much...I think the values of a good leader," Porter said. "I want to be a leader for the team by being vocal and supportive."

On a team featuring five seniors, dubbed “The Fab Five” by players and coaches, Porter wants to spend her final season playing with the friends she has had in college for over two years. However, Porter said her primary goal is to leave a legacy that promotes leadership and support for the younger athletes on the team.

"The legacy I want to leave the team are the values of a good leader," Porter said. "I want to show them how to be [vocally] supportive and how to be a good teammate on and off the court."