Proposed Senate bill would allow guns on campus

**BY AARON MARTINEZ**

A proposed bill in the Texas Legislature could allow students to carry concealed handguns on university property. The Texas Senate has proposed a bill (SB 354) that will allow concealed weapons on Texas college campuses. SB 354 is now before the Criminal Justice committee of the Senate, where it will be up for a hearing.

"It would allow people, who are licensed to carry concealed weapons in Texas, to go into classroom buildings at Texas public universities," said Texas State Senator Jeff Wentworth, R-San Antonio, who is the sponsor of the bill. "To be licensed to carry a concealed gun you have to be at least 21 years, so we are not talking about freshmen or sophomores, we are talking about staff, faculty, graduate students and some seniors. So it gives them the right to defend themselves, and either their students or classmates in class, against a deranged person with the intent of committing suicide and taking as many people with him."

Recent incidents involving gunmen on college campuses prompted Wentworth to try and get the law passed in 2009. Wentworth said the bill would allow students to be able to defend themselves if another incident occurred like in 2007 at Virginia Tech, where gunman Seung-Hui Cho killed 32 people.

"At Virginia Tech, the man that went into that classroom shot several dorm kids. He shot several innocent students who had no way of protecting themselves," Wentworth said. "He just picked them off like sitting ducks. He murdered 35 or 36 and I just never want that to happen in Texas."

Texas Senator José Rodríguez, D-El Paso, is strongly opposed to the bill arguing that allowing any individuals to carry weapons onto university property will cause more violence on campuses.

"I think it is a bad policy to allow handguns to be carried in schools and other public places," Rodríguez said. "There is too much of a danger and there are high consequences to allow proliferations of guns on campus. I know the intended purpose behind it is to give students more protection, but the unintended consequence is that it is going to give them less protection."

He also said it could lead to more confusion in a situation with a gunman on campus, where faculty and students would already be scrambling to avoid the perpetrator.

"There are about 22,000 students at UTEP, if half of them or even a third of them go around carrying handguns that will not make for a safe environment in my view," Rodríguez said. "If a gunman is attacking and another student pulls out his gun, how will students and even the police officers know which one is which? This is just another example of the problems with having handguns on campus."

Rodríguez used the Jan. shooting at a rally in Arizona for State Representative Gabrielle Giffords, D-Arizona, as an example of the confusion that is caused when an individual opens fire in a crowded location.

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**Campus**

**Faculty Senate rules no make-up days**

Part 2 of series examining financial and academic problems due to the winter storm

**BY NICOLE CHÁVEZ**

The UTEP Faculty Senate recently confirmed that no further changes would be made to the academic calendar due to the weather-related closures the university experienced earlier this month. The decision means that students will not have to attend additional days of classes to make up for the classes missed during the four days the university was closed.

"Some people were talking about having classes on Good Friday, Dead Day or spring break. Now I know for a fact that’s not going to happen," said Charles Leinberger, associate professor of music and member of the Faculty Senate. The Faculty Senate decided in their last meeting to not make any more changes to the academic calendar.

"In our second meeting (of the year), we decided to take back the days (Cesar Chavez Day and Spring Study Day) and to not make any more changes," said Carl Lieb, president of the Faculty Senate. "It was easier and more practical for everyone."

Lieb also said that faculty members should communicate with their students about any further changes to their particular course schedule.

"The senate is not requiring colleges to change the calendar," Lieb said. "We are asking them to make adjustments to maintain the quality of the courses."

"Students in particular fields of study such as education have expressed concern about how the university was planning to make up the lost days since some of their courses have specific time requirements."

"We are supposed to complete 30 observation hours (in public schools) in order to pass and get into the internship class," said Lilliana Acosta, junior mathematics major and secondary education minor. "They haven’t said anything, but at this time, if we do not complete the hours we are going to fail the class."

Some education students were also worried about not completing a 60-day internship, which is required to receive their teaching education certification. According to Arturo Olivarez, chair of the Department of Teaching Education, UTEP requires students to complete a total of 72 days per semester, 12 days more than the state requirement.

Olivarez also said the Provost’s Office was asking every college dean to present a plan of suggested adjustments to help students regarding the cancelled classes.

Although Gary Edens, dean of students and adviser to the Student Government Association, confirmed to members of the SGA that the university would not modify the academic calendar, Alejandra Valles, SGA Senator and senior Spanish major, said that she thought the state law required the university to recover the missed days.

"There was, to my knowledge, talk that administrators would add five minutes to every class period or add an extra week of classes," Valles said. "There is a state rule that says students need to spend a certain amount of time in the classroom to get credit."

Lieb said the Faculty Senate was dealing with a difficult situation, whereby a decision had to be made.

"There are no official rules or a law about what has to be done," Lieb said. "Public schools (K-12) are obligated to make up the days—in higher education, we have more flexibility."
Proposed gun law could bring more danger to our campus

BY AARON MARTINEZ

The Prospector

The list of issues being discussed in Austin that could have a drastic impact on UTEP students just grew a little bit longer. The Texas Senate in the 82nd Texas Legislative Session submitted a proposal (SB 354) that would allow licensed faculty, staff and students to carry concealed handguns on campus.

The main argument that gun supporters, lobbyists and politicians have used to defend the proposed law is that it will give students a way to defend themselves if a gunman were to open fire on campus.

This argument is the crux of the debate. The opposition mostly comes from students, faculty and community members who believe it is unnecessary and not effective. The majority of these people believe that no one person would be able to handle a situation like the one presented on the Virginia Tech shooting in 2007.

As I wrote the story for this issue, I had an incredibly hard time finding any university administrator, faculty, staff or student who thought this proposed bill was a good idea. I tried to make the story balanced by getting both sides of this issue and it was almost impossible.

The city of El Paso is unlike any other in the state of Texas. While most of the state is made up of mainly Republicans, El Paso County is always the one of the few blue spots on the map of election results. While most of our campus — including gun-toting Governor Perry — is gun happy, most university officials across Texas have come out against the proposed bill.

As most people know, Chief Walsh and his department will face an attack on our campus a lot more difficult.

As a student, the fear that the person sitting next to me in class could be carrying a handgun is a very scary thought. I know, without a doubt, that I will not be the only student with that thought running through their head.

Texan Senator José Rodríguez, D-El Paso, who is strongly opposed to the proposed bill, offered some advice to students who are against the bill and want to make their voices heard.

Rodríguez suggested students call his office (512-463-0129), call Texas Governor Rick Perry (800-252-9601) and call Texas Senator Jeff Wentworth, R-San Antonio, (512-463-0123), who is the sponsor of the bill.

The role and challenges Chief Walsh and his department will face will no doubt be difficult and numerous. I am optimistic that they will make the necessary adjustments to keep our campus safe.

Either way, as a student, the fear that the person sitting next to me in class could be carrying a handgun is a very scary thought. I know, without a doubt, that I will not be the only student with that thought running through their head.

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Recibe UTEP recursos para apoyar a estudiantes mexicanos

El Instituto de Mexicanos en el Exterior (IME) otorgó a UTEP 20 mil dólares para apoyar a estudiantes mexicanos que eligieron a esta institución para continuar sus estudios superiores.

El proceso para recibir la beca es igual a cualquier otro, ya que el estudiante debe llenar una solicitud de beca y cumplir con los requisitos. Además de los requisitos impuestos por el Departamento de Becas de UTEP, los estudiantes deberán acatar ciertas reglas según la convocatoria del IME-Becas. Algunas de estas reglas son que el estudiante sea de escasos recursos y que mantenga un promedio GPA mínimo de 3.0 puntos. En caso de que el promedio del estudiante base, se le retirará la beca.

La convocatoria del IME también requiere que los becados hagan un pago, un apoyo. "Fue un largo proceso por el cual tuvimos que pasar, pero nos acaban de avisar que nos habían aprobado la beca", dijo Evelyn López, subdirectora del Departamento de Becas de UTEP. "La beca puede ser destinada a cualquier estudiante mexicano, sin importar la carrera que curse", dijo Evelyn López.

"Lo importante no es el contexto, lo importante son sus metas y a dónde quieren llegar", dijo Guillermo Reyes, cónsul adscrito de México en El Paso.

Desde la creación del programa de becas, el IME ha beneficiado a más de 22,000 personas, en más de 380 instituciones. Durante el ciclo 2009-2010 se destinaron un total de 22 mil dólares a la región del El Paso, repartidos entre El Paso Community College, Sacred Heart Church and Literacy Volunteers del condado de Dona Ana. "Aplicado cuando entramos a UTEP pero en la oficina me dijeron que no había becas para mexicanos, que si después había alguna, ellos nos llamaban", dijo Alexandra López.

"La beca puede ser destinada a cualquier estudiante mexicano, sin importar la carrera que curse", dijo Evelyn López. El proceso para recibir la beca es igual a cualquier otro, ya que el estudiante debe llenar una solicitud de beca y cumplir con los requisitos.
“In the recent shooting of Congresswoman Gifford, there was reporting in the media that there was a person on the scene with a gun, but he couldn't really tell who the shooter was and who were the ones around there trying to escape,” Rodriguez said. “His statement to the police was that he was glad he didn’t draw his gun because if he had he could have shot an innocent person. When there is a shooting like that there is just too much confusion and it lends itself to mistakenly shooting an innocent person.”

Irene Castañeda, senior art history major, said just the thought of individuals carrying guns on campus is a scary idea.

“If that were to happen how would you know which is which? And if a student starts shooting what about the innocent students that are in the way?” Castañeda said. “So you would have two people now with guns shooting. Also, how would the police know who is the gunman, would they ask in the middle of everything for an ID or concealed handgun license?”

UTEP President Diana Natalicio said she believes if individuals are allowed to carry concealed handguns on campus, the dangers that could be brought upon the UTEP community could bring more problems to the situation.

“I am deeply concerned about this situation. It makes it even harder for them, ” Natalicio said. “In analyses I’ve seen, the risks appear to greatly outweigh the potential benefits.”

Natalicio said the university’s response to the proposed bill will wait until the final version of the bill is up for vote. She also said that university officials have talked to other colleges in Texas to discuss what action will be taken to deal with the proposed legislation.

“We will be joining other universities across the state in expressing our concerns about the impact of this proposed measure on our campuses,” Natalicio said. “Our response will depend on the exact nature of the legislation. Since similar legislation was considered (but didn’t pass) during the last legislative session, I’ve had numerous opportunities to talk with the chief of the UTEP Police Department over the past couple of years about this issue.”

Robert Moss, assistant vice president of the Department of Environmental Health and Safety, said that over the course of his career in dealing with police officers, he knows how difficult it is for them to identify who are the suspects and who are bystanders. If the proposed gun law is passed, he believes it will make their jobs even tougher.

“I have worked with police officers over the years and it is complicated enough for them to identify who are the perpetrators, and when you start to introduce extra guns into the picture it makes it even harder for them,” Moss said. “When you have students using their weapons when there already is a dangerous situation on campus, it is going to make things more complicated. You don’t want to introduce more guns to an already hostile environment.”

Catherine McCurry, assistant vice president of student affairs, said that it is still too early to tell what the impact of the proposed bill will have on UTEP.

“Right now speculates really right now because it is still in the early processes. There are still many, many editions it (bill) is going to go through, so it is still too early to know what will come out of it and how it will look when it is all done,” McCurry said. “In passing, I have heard students talking about their concerns about this proposed gun law. They are concerned about what this could mean for them, but since it is still early in the legislative session, they really don’t know much about what it will mean for UTEP.”

Texas Governor Rick Perry has been vocal throughout his career about limiting gun control in the state of Texas. Perry has been a strong supporter of the proposed bill, and he believes that the current laws for getting a license for a concealed handgun will help diminish crime in the state. He does not want to lence at Texas universities due to the proposed bill.

“The governor believes that a person ought to be able to carry their weapon with them anywhere in the state if they are licensed and have gone through the proper training. He would be open to looking at any proposals lawmakers bring to the table regarding this issue,” said Deputy Press Secretary Lacy Nashed on behalf of the governor.

Castañeda said that if the bill were to pass and if a student in one of her classes had a gun with him/her, she would more than likely ask to be moved to another class.

“I don’t like guns. They scare me and you don’t know the type of people who would be carrying them around campus,” Castañeda said. “If I saw someone carry a gun to class every day, I would probably ask to be switched to a different class. I don’t want to be around any guns and I don’t know what a person with a gun at school is planning to do with it.”

Jane Martinez may be reached at prospectord@utep.com.


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The rise of social networking has been evident for years. The popularity of MySpace is quickly dwindling and Facebook is at its peak. The extra time that students gained back from abandoning Myspace, goes into their Facebook time.

Other students take Facebook with them anywhere they can.

“Technically I’m always on Facebook,” Estrada said. “I get updates to my phone and have a chat client synced with my Facebook account... Realistically, I check my Facebook once or twice a day, but I do send out a lot of links if I’m StumbleUpon-ing.”

Even though. Myspace continues to lose many of its account holders, Estrada said that it still brings valuable social networking features to the table.

“MySpace has become a marketing hub of the Internet,” Estrada said.

Above all, I spend more time on Facebook, because Myspace and Facebook, Myspace, Twitter, or YouTube, have become the new advertising hubs of the Internet,” Estrada said.

Betancourt, on the other hand, doesn’t use her Myspace very often because it seems to be less secure and more permissive.

“I think Facebook is simple, more adult-oriented,” Betancourt said. “On Myspace, you always see girls in revealing garments, which is very dis-tasteful. Random people don’t request you as much on Facebook.”

The extra time that students gained back from abandoning Myspace, goes into their Facebook time.

“I spend maybe an hour and a half on Facebook each day,” Betancourt said. “Just to see what people comment and express my mind when I’m not with someone.”

The rise of social networking has been evident for years. The popularity of MySpace is quickly dwindling and Facebook is at its peak.
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Basketball
Floyd used to winning the big game

BY WILLIAM VEGA
The Prospector

With such a lengthy and successful track-record like Tim Floyd’s, playing important games like the one against Memphis Feb. 26 has become an annual routine for the 57-year-old head coach.

Even from his earlier years as an assistant with the Miners, Floyd helped former UTEP head coach Don Haskins prepare their players for important games. El Paso’s Chapin High School head coach Thomas Shukitt was a member of two NCAA tournament teams from 1985-87 and was well acquainted with Floyd’s impact.

“Floyd was so much into the (Haskin’s) ear giving him information, (Floyd) would let him talk and give us instructions on what needs to be adjusted on that particular part of the game. He used him as his right-hand man and he used him a lot.”

During the 1985-86 season, Floyd’s last season and Shukitt’s first at UTEP, the Miners faced a flurry of top-notch teams in El Paso. “During games he was in coach (Haskins) ear giving him information. (Floyd) was so much into the game that no matter what, he was going to give us information,” Shukitt said. “In a timeout, information was given to coach Haskins from Floyd. Even in some of the timeouts, coach (Haskins) would let him talk and give us instructions on what needs to be adjusted on that particular part of the game. He used him as his right-hand man and he used him a lot.”

When game time rolled around, Floyd was ready to take the wheel from Haskins, no matter the implications. “Even though Haskins did not always take his advice, Shukitt remembered Floyd being a resilient assistant. “It was almost as if at that time he had the head-coaching ability to run the whole practice.”

When it came to his intensity, it was almost as if at that time he had the head-coaching ability to run the whole practice.

“During games he was in coach (Haskins) ear giving him information. (Floyd) was so much into the game that no matter what, he was going to give us information,” Shukitt said. “In a timeout, information was given to coach Haskins from Floyd. Even in some of the timeouts, coach (Haskins) would let him talk and give us instructions on what needs to be adjusted on that particular part of the game. He used him as his right-hand man and he used him a lot.”

Basketball
Gut check time for Miners

BY WILLIAM VEGA
The Prospector

Culpepper will suit up with fellow Memphis natives Jeremy Williams and Gabriel McCulley as the Miners (21-7, 9-4 Conference-USA) take on the Tigers (21-7, 9-4 C-USA) Feb. 26, hoping to beat Memphis for the first time in El Paso.

With that being my hometown team and knowing a couple of guys that play for Memphis, we’re just ready for them to come out here,” Culpepper said. “Hopefully we’ll beat them and get them out of the way.”

Senior guard Randy Culpepper remembers the last time he played Memphis and so do his hometown fans. “I’ve got a couple of threats on Facebook from Memphis fans saying ‘why is UTEP so overrated and to be afraid when Memphis comes (to El Paso),’” Culpepper said. “But I’m not paying them any attention because I know when they come here we’ll just have to face it up and show how we do it on the court.”

The game will be a rematch from Jan. 20, 2010 when UTEP stepped the Tigers’ NCAA record-tying, conference-winning streak at 64.

Culpepper was a key factor in last year’s game, finishing with 13 points and one steal, but it was that one take that put him over the top.

MajestyUserId: 0

Track
Miners head to C-USA Indoor Championship

BY KRYSTOPHER RIVERA
The Prospector

The UTEP track and field team is anxiously training and preparing for the Conference USA Indoor Championships Feb. 25-26 at the Yeo- man Fieldhouse in Houston.

At last year’s C-USA Indoor Championships, the women clinched first place and the men made their way to third place. Top performers included men’s thrower Dimitrios Fylladitakis, men’s sprinter Anderson Mutegi and women’s sprinter Endurance Abi- nuwa, all of whom will be returning to help the Miners make their mark at this season’s C-USA Indoor Championships.

Preparing for the championship includes conditioning, weight training and getting ready to run on a different track at the Yeoman Fieldhouse.

“The facility doesn’t set up very well for running races around the curve, it’s a 200-meter, flat track, very difficult to run on, very difficult to compete on,” Fylladitakis said. “I like to have competition, but I’m doing my thing, I don’t care about others.”

“Preparation has better competitors, Fylladitakis keeps a steady balance between himself and his competitor.

But straight away events and field events are okay.”

Veteran and two time All-American Dimitrios Fylladitakis keeps calm and humble. He claimed the top spot at both the Lobos Open and UNM Invitational.

“I want to improve my PR, and I hope I will help the team as much as I can,” Fylladitakis said. “I like to have competition, but I’m doing my thing, I don’t care about others.”

Deliberate to the tension of his competitors Fylladitakis keeps a steady balance between himself and his competitor.

“But I want to have good competition, I think it helps, and you compete better. I hope that every competitor has better competitors.”

Fylladitakis understands the pressure and strain on the team, but he waits patiently until the day of competition.

Junior sprinter Endurance Abi- nuwa has been performing well at previous meets this season, taking first place in the 60-meter dash at the Lobos open and the UNM Invitational and second place in the 300-meter hurdles.

SEE FLOYD on page 8

SEE C-USA on page 8
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