



RUNNING BACKS PREVIEW
SMITH ADDS DEPTH TO A RELOADED BACKFIELD
WITH TOP THREE RUSHERS RETURNING **PAGE 3**

One of country's hunkiest stars is bringing his honky-tonk to campus
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WWW.KYKERNEL.COM **FRIDAY** AUGUST 24, 2007

KENTUCKY KERNEL

CELEBRATING 36 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE

UK security improvements include text messages

By Alice Haymond
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Getting a text message from a university administrator could mean it's going to be a bad day.

Text-messaging students about campus crises is one component of Wide Area Rapid Notification, the emergency notification system that UK signed a purchase order for on Monday. The system is the most recent in steps taken to improve safety and emergency response at UK.

"Obviously, the more resources we have for communication, the better chances we have for getting it to more people," said Christy Giles, the director

of UK's Office of Emergency Management. "So we don't want to limit it to one means of communication."

When the deadliest mass shooting in U.S. history hit Virginia Tech's campus in April, Giles — who had been researching notification systems for two and a half years — and other administrators quickly made a decision, she said, because they realized UK needed a system in place.

"When Virginia Tech happened, I was bombarded with phone calls from companies," Giles said. "We narrowed it down to three companies, and one just really stood out to us."

In the next few weeks, students will be able to sign up for the system, which

can notify them in a crisis situation through cell phones, text messages, voicemail, e-mail and fax machines. The administration will be sending e-mails to students, faculty and staff with instructions on how to provide contact information.

"Obviously, we would like everyone to opt into it," Giles said. "The more people in the system the better we can get the word out quickly."

Universities with similar systems have not seen high participation on campus. The University of Maryland at College Park, which has about 34,000 students enrolled, began its system four months ago; about one-fifth of students have signed up.

"The only flaw is that people have to register for it, and only about 7,000 opted in," said UM spokesman Paul Dillon. "We would love to get 100 percent of cell-phone users, but is that realistic? It would be helpful if we had 80 or 90 percent."

The University of Florida, which has been using a text-messaging system for three years, has a little over 11,000 subscribers. While that is only about a third of student enrollment, UF representative Steve Orlando said it should be enough.

"If we send an alert that there's an armed gunman and one person in a classroom gets that message, it's done its job," Orlando said.

Giles chose the WARN system because it was the most interactive and allowed for student feedback, she said.

"It was very user-friendly, and in an emergency situation you want something quick and easy to navigate," she said. "It's letting us know who's getting messages and when we send to wrong numbers. I can send out a notice that says classes are closed, and I can give options that say, 'Please respond with 1: 'I need help,' or 2: 'I'm OK.'"

The WARN system will complement other high-tech safety measures that UK has already implemented.

In an emergency, a red box pops up. See **Emergency** on page 2

New rules may change mining landscape

By Erica Mitchell
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A proposed federal revision of mountaintop-removal regulations that will be published today has ignited controversy as to whether the change will increase strip mining and harm mountain streams.

Mountaintop-removal mining, which is common in central Appalachia, involves blasting the tops of mountains and moving the remaining debris, called spoil, to surrounding valleys.

Currently miners must abide by buffer-zone regulations stating that no land within 100 feet of a flowing stream should be disturbed by surface mining activities, according to the Kentucky Department for Natural Resources.

But the proposed regulation change from the U.S. Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement is expected to strike the 100-foot buffer as long as miners follow current laws calling for creating minimal amounts of displaced spoil.

"Obviously there is a problem with

See **Mining** on page 2



Ten-year-old Neal Wilkins, right, of Frankfort plays in a fountain with his cousin Ayden Walker, 10, of Frankfort, in Henderson, Ky., on Tuesday. The Henderson Project is looking to add to the existing riverfront park by asking UK architecture students to brainstorm improvements.

Envisioning an unhindered future

Architecture students propose big changes for small town riverfront

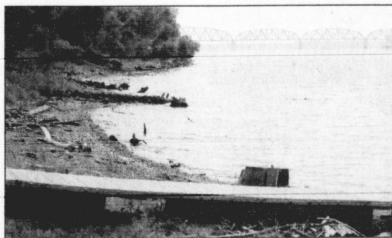
By Blair Thomas
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Tim Skinner stood at the edge of the water glancing back and forth between the river and the town at the top of the boat ramp behind him.

"Henderson is a community on the cusp," said Skinner, a UK graduate and president of an architecture firm in Henderson, Ky. "We know we want to see change, we know we want to look more like the river cities over there, but we're just not sure what we're ready for."

To explore Henderson's potential, Skinner took his vision — and his finances — to the UK School of Architecture.

Skinner asked UK architecture professor and Henderson native Dru-ra Parrish to direct the Henderson Project and find a group of architecture students who wanted a chance to reinvigorate a Kentucky commu-



The community wants to restructure Hays Boat Ramp, one of only two access points for boats along the river in Henderson.

nity. "Small towns are architecture's greatest laboratory," Parrish said. "It allows us to test our ideas instead of just teaching."

Parrish took 16 UK students and a small group from the Southern California Institute of Architecture in Los Angeles to his hometown in June and asked them to transform

the waterfront.

"We didn't tell them what to do, we didn't give them any guidelines, I just asked them to look at the community, talk to the people and decide what they could improve," Parrish said.

Skinner, president of Skinner Design Associates and one of the project's financiers, said his community on the Ohio River is one of the "dying small towns in America."

"We're unique, but we're small," he said. "There is so much potential for growth and economic impact, but it seems that no one really knows how to go about change."

Skinner's inspiration to lead the project came from his mentor.

Henderson architect Jim Bethel wanted to revive the town's waterfront, and after his death in 2004, Skinner and Bethel's son Mark, also a UK graduate, decided to fulfill that goal.

See **Henderson** on page 2

UK employee charged with soliciting a minor

By Keith Smiley
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A College of Education employee resigned Wednesday after he was arrested and charged with using a computer to solicit a minor for sex, according to court documents.

William Eric Pittman, an information specialist for the college, attempted to arrange a meeting for sex with a 14-year-old girl in a chat room on May 17, according to a police report. He resigned from the university following his arrest, said UK spokesman Jay Blanton.

Pittman pleaded not guilty to his arraignment in Fayette County District Court yesterday.

The 35-year-old was a communications officer for the College of Education and started working at UK in January, Blanton said. The job was mostly administrative, and Blanton did not know if it involved contact with students.

According to the police report, Pittman used a Yahoo chat room to contact Det. William Lindon of the Kentucky State Police Electronic Crimes Branch and "maintained conversation about meeting for sex."

Court documents do not say what computer Pittman was using at the time, and Blanton did not know whether UK would investigate Pittman's use of UK computers.

Pittman is scheduled to appear in court again on Sept. 28 at 8:30 a.m.

First issue free. Subsequent issues 25 cents.

City to honor victims of last year's Flight 5191 crash

By Ali Cicerechi
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On Monday, it will be one year since Larry Turner, a former UK associate dean of agricultural extension, boarded Comair Flight 5191.

Turner, 52, was on his way to a conference, while Jon Hooker, 27, a former UK baseball player was on the flight with his new wife, Scarlett Parsley Hooker, 23, starting their honeymoon the morning after their wedding.

A city remembrance service will

be held Sunday at Southland Christian Church at 2:30 p.m. to remember those lives and the 47 others lost after Comair Flight 5191 crashed shortly after taking off from Blue Grass Airport in Lexington on Aug. 27, 2006.

Marianne Blodgett, aide to Mayor Jim Newberry, is planning the service.

"We want to remember those we lost in our community," Blodgett said. "So many people were touched directly and indirectly."

Sunday's service will remember the 49 victims as well as recognize

See Monday's Kernel for complete coverage of the one-year anniversary of the Comair Flight 5191 crash.

and thank the first responders who were at the scene, including local fire and police as well as medical examiners.

The Kentucky State University choir and at least three religious denominations will provide music. Newberry and Gov. Ernie Fletcher

er will both give remarks. WKYT news anchor Denny Trease will read the names of the victims. Turner's brother will speak and thank the first responders.

"It's really going to be a good service," Blodgett said.

All students are welcome and encouraged to attend. Southland Christian Church is located at 5001 Harrodsburg Road. Doors to the event open at 2:15 p.m.

Newsroom: 257-1915; Advertising: 257-2872

HENDERSON

Continued from page 1

"We didn't want to just put in fountains or plant some trees," Skinner said. "We wanted big changes, new ideas, and bringing in the architecture students really achieved that."

The students developed ideas that would bring economic, recreational and design benefits to the town that sits across the river from Evansville, Ind., he said.

Proposals included a waterfront facelift that would add walking trails, running paths, gardens and fountains to parking lots and areas that are overgrown and unkempt. Wildlife conservation, wetland expansion and urban growth were also concerns the students had to address without hurting Henderson's small-town feel.

Nick Kinney, an architecture senior, developed a plan for converting Henderson's power plant into a wildlife sanctuary.

"I wanted to take this community that is built off of industry and not environmentally friendly and show them they can be," Kinney said.

Kinney's plan included building a footbridge over the river, installing ki-

netic-energy river turbines, which use the run of the river for power with minimal environmental impact, and shutting down the current plan to use the area as a conservation site.

Students presented their projects to community members and local businesses on June 15 and again on Aug. 2 and received positive feedback.

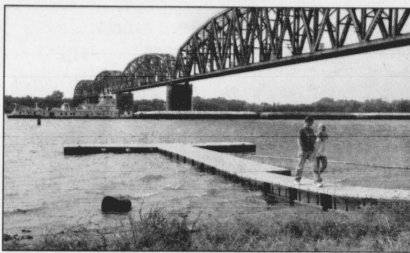
Henderson native Ethel Terrell, 64, said the students' ideas were encouraging for a town in need of more recreational opportunities.

"When the students first arrived, we didn't know what to think of them," Terrell said. "Who would think to put a movie screen on a grain silo? But when you really started talking to them, they made a lot more sense than any builder I've ever talked to."

Terrell was excited about the possibility of seeing changes made to the riverfront, she said.

"Oh, sure we've got some fountains and a playground for the kids," she said. "That's something that they just added a few years ago, but it's just a few benches in a park. There's only so many hours you can sit and just stare at the water."

The community was most receptive to the ideas of restructuring Hays



Henderson residents Chelsea Slomp, 19, and Chaz Buckman, 20, walk along a dock on the Ohio River on Tuesday.

Boat Ramp, one of the town's two access points for boats to the Ohio River, and the economic enhancements, such as waterfront hotels and artificial mangrove units that allow farmers to grow soybeans on the water's surface and catch catfish in the same area, Skinner said.

"At first I thought some of their ideas were kind of out there," Skinner said. "But some of the ones that I

thought were the strangest, like algae farming to produce power, have gotten serious bites from big-name industries."

Parrish said the project wasn't only about adding parks and marinas to the town but addressing a more important national issue.

"Kentucky is the perfect place to really visualize the crumbling small-town economy," Parrish said.

Skinner and Mark Bethel privately fund the Henderson Project, which will not use any of a \$10 million federal grant awarded earlier this year for improvements around the town.

Next, community focus groups will discuss which ideas they find most practical for Henderson. Project leaders will then present UK students with a more specific focus so they can develop a final plan for the town.

"Realistically, we're looking at eight years for this project to be complete," Parrish said. "But we will follow it through because the students want to see it happen, and because Henderson is a great canvas because it's beautifully gray — it isn't overly unique or distinctly benign, but some of these ideas could push it over that edge."

As long as the community believes the ideas are feasible and necessary, Kinney and Parrish said they are interested in returning to Henderson to see the project through.

"It's these students' small projects that will pave the way to create empty containers for future designs," Parrish said. "That is better than taking 25 students there with hammers and nails and demanding results."

EMERGENCY

Continued from page 1

on UK's Web site with a notification so that viewers can find information more easily, Giles said. UK used that feature once over the summer when there was an assault near campus on Scott Street.

Another Web site designed to communicate awareness to the campus community is the Emergency Management Web site (www.uky.edu/EM), which outlines a guide of what the community can do while response teams are working during a crisis.

An internally created system, UK Mobility, works similarly to the WARN system, but subscribers can choose whether they want to be contacted through e-mail, voicemail or text messaging. That system is ready to run and is simply waiting on sub-

scribers.

"It is going to be able to be a warning, alert system, but it's going to be a lot more than that — a communication exchange system," said Doyle Friskney, the associate vice president for information technology at UK.

Friskney hopes UK Mobility will evolve to have fixed groups in the system for professors and organizations to send out information, much like listservs, without a response feature. Users on campus or in the nearby community, such as medical staff, could subscribe.

"We're just providing another method for communication using next-generation technology," Friskney said.

To parallel the administration's efforts to improve communication, UK police took time during the summer to hone officers' emergency training. All officers completed their training and recertification for "active

shooter response" situations, where someone has opened fire in an unsecured area. This training will continue throughout the year, and in October two UK officers will become certified instructors.

UK police have also purchased laser simulators, which allow officers to be trained on different scenarios from school shootings to traffic stops, Maj. Joe Monroe said. The simulators help train their judgment on appropriate use of force.

The agency also sent seven members of the response team to New Mexico for a special session on how to identify explosive devices and what countermeasures to take to combat explosive threats.

The police are working on enhancing the 911 system on campus so that a call received from a campus phone or city building would automatically transfer call location information to the police database.

MINING

Continued from page 1

putting debris in the streams," said Brittany Zwickler, a communications disorders senior and co-coordinator of Greenthumb, a campus environmental group.

"They can reconstruct the streams to some extent, but by then all the organisms have been swept away," Zwickler said. "You can't replace that."

The current and proposed rule also states that no surface mining activity should cause significant detrimental effects on the water quality of the stream.

The regulation revision will be subject to a 60-day comment period. Under current regulations, miners have to receive exemptions to deposit debris into debatable areas, such as dry ditches.

Kentucky Coal Association President Bill Caylor said dry ditches were never supposed to be treated as flowing streams, but because the law said they were, miners had to continuously receive exemptions for those areas.

The revision would not change the amount of mining that is currently occurring; it would simply adjust the rule to eliminate routine exemptions, Cay-

lor said.

"This new change is intended to codify existing practices that have been occurring for the past 30 years," Caylor said. "This does not mean that we will be doing more surface mining as a result of the change. It will be business as usual."

Some environmental activists say revising the rule may result in greater damage to streams in Appalachia.

"This is a terrible thing to happen to the state of Kentucky," said Erik Reece, who teaches English and writing at UK and has written a book on the effects of mountaintop removal in Appalachia.

Reece said the revision of the laws would result in an increase of mountaintop removal mining.

"They will continue — no question — at a quicker pace," he said.

"The Bush administration has loaded the (Department of the Interior) with people who used to be in the coal industry," he said.

According to an environmental report from the Office of Surface Mining, 724 miles of streams have been directly impacted by excess spoil from 1985 to 2001. If that continues at its current rate, another 724 miles of streams would be buried by 2018.

Deadline to replace student IDs today

Today is the last day for returning students to replace their student ID cards for free. The new card, WildCard v2.0, will be the only valid student ID beginning Monday. IDs made past the deadline will cost \$20. Replacements are made in room 107 of the Student Center.

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POSITION PREVIEW: RUNNING BACKS

Fewer injuries mean more depth for UK backfield

By Eric Lindsey
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At times last year, the UK football team would have settled for a single healthy running back.

The Cats' top two running backs, senior Rafael Little and junior Tony Dixon, battled injuries throughout UK's breakout season. But with expectations rising and the stakes higher than ever in the perilous Southeastern Conference, the UK football team will need more than just one healthy running back this year if it is to improve its running attack.

That's where sophomore tailback Alfonso Smith comes into play.

With Little, the team's starter, and Dixon battling nagging injuries for much of the 2006 campaign, Smith emerged as a capable option at running back by accounting for 250 yards and two touchdowns.

"We are three deep now because Alfonso has earned the right to get reps when the game is on the line," offensive coordinator Joker Phillips said. "And not just as a fill-in because he did a really good job in the spring and we need to find time to get him the ball."

The combination of Smith with a healthy Little and Dixon

Coming up
Monday: Offensive Line
Tuesday: Linebackers

gives the Cats' backfield three running backs who are all capable of starting this year. New running backs coach Larry Brinson believes the trio makes up one of the best ground attacks in the SEC.

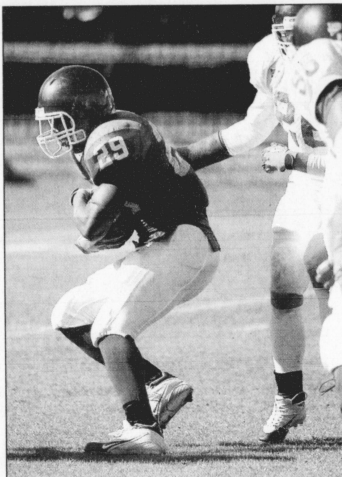
"I've coached some really good running backs in my 23 years of coaching and these guys rank right up there with the best running backs I've ever coached," Brinson said. "I expect a lot from these guys."

Having three running backs who are all capable of starting is a huge advantage for the Cats when enduring the daily nicks and bruises that come with playing in the SEC, Smith said.

"If one of us goes down or gets tired after a long run, coach (Rich) Brooks can switch another one of us in there and we're still up to speed," Smith said.

Brinson, who joins UK's staff after previous stints at Air Force, Arkansas, Clemson and Rice, is extremely pleased with Smith's breakaway speed and big-play ability.

"Alfonso is a guy that is just lightning," Brinson said. "He See **Running Backs** on page 6



Running back Alfonso Smith breaks a tackle during a spring scrimmage. The sophomore averaged 4.2 yards on 60 attempts last season.

ED MATTHEWS | STAFF

Collins gives season high Marks

By James Pennington
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When the men's soccer team opens its regular season on Aug. 31 against Cornell, head coach Ian Collins may finally be able to put last season's NCAA Tournament snub behind him.

"Last year is over," Collins said. "We've always tried to concentrate on each day, work as hard as we can and that's what we'll do."

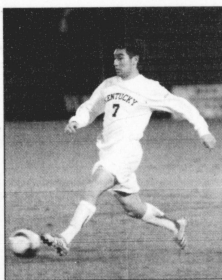
The Cats finished last season 14-5-2 and ranked No. 13 in the National Soccer Coaches Association of America poll. Despite a strong season in which UK finished as the runner-up in both the Conference USA regular season standings and the C-USA tournament, the team was not selected as an at-large bid to the NCAA Tournament.

In both the regular season standings and the conference tournament, the Cats finished runner-up to Southern Methodist University, which spent the majority of last season as the No. 1 team in the country.

Despite falling short of a conference title, Collins was pleased with last year's results.

"It's a sport where you just have to concentrate on doing the right things," he said. "If you can get the process correct most or all of the time, results will follow."

Two players from last year's team now play professional soccer in Europe. Riley O'Neill, who set a school single-season record last year with 17 goals, plays in Germany while Michael D'Agostino plays in England.



Masumi Turnbull dribbles in UK's 3-1 win against Memphis on October 28. Turnbull was fourth on the team in points last season.

ELLIOTT HESS | STAFF

Although both O'Neill and D'Agostino were big contributors to UK's offense last year, Collins feels the young roster has an opportunity to pick up where last year's scorers left off.

"We've got some really good attacking players that were young last year," Collins said.

He also said he was confident in the team's experienced defense.

"We lost a lot of goals but I think in terms of getting beat, this is going to be a

difficult team," Collins said. "But putting the ball in the back of the net is the name of the game, so we'll see."

Senior Nathan Marks, one of UK's returning defensive players, was recently named preseason C-USA Defensive Player of the Year. As a junior last year, Marks was named to the second team all-league.

"We've got a solid squad with a lot of returning players," Marks said. "Especially in the back."

Collins thinks highly of Marks, a Louisville native.

"In my mind, he may be the best player to come out of this state when he's done," Collins said. "We have some athletes for sure and we've got some quickness."

Collins said this year's team will be physically imposing.

"All the players are very fit," he said. "We've got a good group of guys — good mentality and tough together," he said. "I think that's a good starting place."

The team travels to Morgantown, W.Va. tomorrow for an exhibition against West Virginia.

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But the sports world is not perfect. It has crooked zebras, illegal dogfights and countless more acts that would find the confines of the Circus Maximus in Rome more cozy than the locker rooms of modern arenas.

Such devious events in sports leave some feeling like

they've been robbed, literally. Just ask the UK men's soccer team.

It was ranked five consecutive weeks to conclude last season but instead of a hot plate for their hard work, the then-ranked No. 22 Cats received the cold shoulder from the NCAA soccer selection committee.

UK was not selected as one of the 48 teams to compete for a national championship after being ranked for most of the season in competitive Conference USA.

The aftertaste of not making the tournament is still evident with senior Nathan Marks.

"We felt like we got cheated," Marks said.

This year he's looking forward to something different. Marks said that this year "the team is playing with a chip on their shoulders."

"We're going to prove people wrong and take that out of people's hands," Marks said.

The "that" Marks was talking about is wins and respect, and that's something the Cats are

getting used to. The team's 14 wins in 2006 more than doubled the number of wins the year prior, which points the team in the direction head coach Ian Collins has desired for the last 11 years.

He's fixed on making last season a distant memory and is looking forward to moving full-speed ahead into the upcoming season.

"We have to make sure that we understand that last year is over," Collins said. "However disappointing it was and how things didn't shape up in our direction, we have to take care of business."

"Last year is gone and buried. We've got to move on and focus on what we have to deal with now."

In moving forward, the Cats' biggest challenge is filling the colossal shoes Riley O'Neill left behind.

Before last year's senior leader left, he went on a tear, leading C-USA in shots (69), goals (17) and points (38). Collins will need more than one player to

step up this year though.

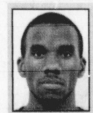
Junior Masumi Turnbull, who was fourth on the team in points, will have to lead a young offense and the team's newcomers will have to contribute.

Collins is banking on Dayton transfer Aaron Swanson and Jirjooas Kanth, a freshman from Vanta, Finland, to help get balls past opposing goalies.

At practice yesterday, Collins addressed the team, which is heading into an exhibition tomorrow against West Virginia, by telling them to do everything the "UK way to win, even if you have to kick the ball over the trees for 80 minutes and 50 seconds. Just do what you have to do to win."

Such sparks from the fiery English coach could ignite a flame that even the selection committee can't deny.

Kernel asst. sports editor J.D. Williams is a journalism senior. His columns will run on Fridays. E-mail jwilliams@kykernel.com



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KERNEL EDITORIAL

Take the ranking decline seriously

UK's 10-spot tumble in the nation's most prominent college rankings is a stark reminder that the school cannot afford to be complacent in its push to become a top-20 public research university by 2020. UK fell from 112th last year to 122nd this year among public and private universities in the U.S. News and World Report rankings; among only public universities, UK fell from 54th to 61st.

Normally, we would be reluctant to overstate the value of the U.S. News rankings — the educational worth of an institution as complex as a research university cannot be reduced to a single numeric measure.

But rising in the rankings has been UK's main institutional goal since the state legislature passed House Bill 1, which mandated the top-20 push, in 1997. In fact, the Top 20 Business Plan that President Lee Todd unveiled in December 2005 has guided the university's funding requests and budget decisions over the past two years.

Todd needs to act quickly to reverse course, lest the rankings obsession of the past 10 years appear to have been for nothing.

UK administrators have responded to the drop by saying U.S. News isn't comprehensive enough — its measures deal only with undergraduates, whereas UK's internal ranking system takes graduate students and faculty into account.

"Undergraduate education constitutes just one-fourth of the top-20 composite score ranking model that we are using to evaluate the business plan," said Roger Sugarman, UK's director of institutional research. "Therefore, comparisons between the two ranking systems are not justified."

It is disconcerting, to say the least, that university administrators see the U.S. News rankings' focus on undergraduate education as a reason to write them off. Undergraduates should be one of UK's top priorities, not a mere afterthought.

There is a simple way to increase UK's standing while genuinely improving the quality of education here: The university needs to make teaching ability a major factor in faculty hiring decisions.

When faculty members put little effort into teaching, students can easily slip through the cracks and end up performing poorly or feeling disengaged. Such students are at a particularly high risk to drop out — and thus lower UK's graduation rate, a major component of the U.S. News rankings — when they don't feel like they're getting their money's worth from the university.

UK should be careful to hire professors who are willing to give students personal attention in order to reduce such losses.

The burden of raising UK's rank also falls in part to state legislators. Annual tuition hikes make UK unaffordable for some students, forcing them to choose between dropping out or incurring even more debt.

If the General Assembly is serious about the top-20 goal, it needs to give UK the high levels of funding requested in the Top 20 Business Plan to keep tuition increases from harming graduation rates.

The rankings stumble is a clear sign that UK needs to modify its top-20 strategy, especially in regard to undergraduate education. The imperfection of U.S. News' system is no excuse for Todd and other administrators to neglect the warning.

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CHRISTO SMITH, Kernel cartoonist

New Chargers sure are pretty, but they're not just for joyriding

Students may be jealous of the new Dodge Chargers at the UK Police Department, but the cruisers bring new technology that justifies their cost.

UK police have purchased four Dodge Chargers to be used by patrol division supervisors. UK police hope to add four more to that number by 2008, replacing aging cars still in use that are as old as nine years.

The Dodge Charger received the highest rankings in a recent test for police vehicles. At a university that has recognized its long-standing issues with campus safety, the acquisition of highly ranked vehicles is one

KERNEL EDITORIAL

step towards improving the security of UK students on and around campus.

But the upgrade in make and model are not the sole benefits of the purchase. Students who interact with UK police can expect a speedier transaction when receiving tickets thanks to the mobile data system that will be installed in the new cruisers starting Aug. 31. Faster encounters with students should mean more time for officers to patrol campus and focus on safety.

The fact that the Chargers happen to be "nice-looking cars," as Capt. Kevin Franklin said in yesterday's Kernel, is not a hindrance to the performance of UK police, but aesthetics should not take precedence over the efficiency of the vehicles. The police department rightly seems to be spending money on technology rather than aesthetics, judging from the decision to forego creating a new deal, which the department could not afford.

Hopefully, UK will continue to make decisions that improve campus safety, and UK police will continue spending wisely.

First-week problems highlight UK's neglect of undergraduates

Surprise, surprise — UK fell 10 spots in the national college rankings.

Don't get me wrong: I have plenty of school spirit, but it seems like I am more disappointed with my collegiate experience every semester.

My second class this semester didn't have enough desks for the enrolled students, and it was in the Funkhouser Building basement — which, in my opinion, seems less than conducive to undergraduate learning. My third classroom was double-booked, meaning that two classes were scheduled to take place there at the same time. Although I had never been a witness to this type of catastrophe in my UK career, I hear it's been going on a lot in the past couple of days.

I want to make sure I convey how unpleasant the experience was: There were at least 60 people in a room designed to hold 25 people, and I could smell whether each of my peers had walked to class or driven, and whether or not they had skipped the onions on their lunch sandwiches. Very unpleasant.

My class was moved to the hallway and later to a conference room in the Administration Building — the Lexmark Public Room, to be specific. I completely missed the syllabus overview, though, due in large part to the distraction that the two twelve-foot tall Corinthian columns in the front of the room created. I

couldn't help but compare the room, also adorned with oil paintings of the past ten presidents of UK, to the dungeon-like classrooms of the Funkhouser Building, and I began to wonder seriously about UK's priorities.

The Administration Building is arguably the nicest building on campus. It is conveniently home to the administration, of course, and visitors to the university. I'm sure visitors won't be seeing the Reynolds Building (art) or the Thomas Poe Cooper Building (forestry), buildings that, along with the Funkhouser Building, have been neglected for far too long.

As my time here at UK has progressed, I have felt more and more that the university's focus is on research, recruitment and prestige, and not on undergraduates, where it belongs. I agree that when UK is compared to other universities, graduate programs and faculty research should be considered, but it is also important to remember that undergraduates give UK a face and a heartbeat.

I fear that in UK's endeavor to break into the top 20 public universities, it will continue to make undergraduates feel as though we don't count as much as I know we do. If UK loses the faith of its undergraduates, it will face the fate of countless other public research institutions — scoffed at by valedictorians and star athletes alike and slowly forgotten by anyone hoping to obtain a valuable education.

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Submissions

Send a guest column or letter to the editor to Opinions Editor Chad Reese. Please limit letters to 350 words or fewer. Be sure to include your full name, class and major with all submissions.

E-mail opinions@kykernel.com

Become top-20 in diversity instead of U.S. News ranks

UK is striving to become a top-20 public research institution, but it is most likely going to be a while before this goal is reached — and pursuing it starts with diversifying the student body of the university.

Diversity is discussed everywhere on campus, but no one is really doing anything about it. Yes, last year's incoming class is the most diverse ever, but according to the UK registrar's office website, only about 18 percent of the student body is non-white, and only 5 percent of students are non-Hispanic blacks. These statistics are staggering.

One approach to solve the diversity situation is to make attending UK more affordable. Some students can't come to UK because of the high tuition rates and other school expenses. The thought of taking out student loans often causes potential students to back away from this otherwise attractive institution.

I think every student receiving an acceptance letter from UK should be able to attend it. UK gets a lot of money, and it give more to students who are qualified to go here but can't afford it.

In addition, UK should revise its admission procedure. ACT scores and grade-point average are weighted heavily in the current admission procedure. If an applicant underachieved in either category, there is a good chance that he or she will not get into UK.

I know of many students who were barely accepted to this university because of their grades in high school. In college, however, they far surpassed students who were admit-

ted without discussion. It is my belief that one's ACT or SAT test score can't fully relay the work ethic of a student. Though my own ACT score wasn't very high, my work ethic while at UK has led me to have a cumulative GPA over 3.0 for my first year at school. But if my ACT score or my GPA had been lower, would I be here right now?

If you look around the world today, the people in prominent positions don't look the way they used to. Dentists, professors, lawyers, judges, doctors and political leaders aren't all the same color anymore. Some of the best surgeons in our hospitals today are of Middle Eastern descent; one of the leading Democratic presidential candidates is a man of color. If the world around UK is changing, why can't it do the same?

Personally, I am honored to attend UK, but at the same time, I believe students who just missed the GPA or ACT cutoff should be given a chance. It's possible UK has already turned away a future president or leading lawyer in America.

Statistics are already changing at UK. The number of blacks and international students at this school has almost doubled in recent years. These changes should be applauded, but the push for diversity should not stop there.

There is no reason why it's possible for me to walk from the Classroom Building to my dorm and not see one African American. Why can I sit in a lecture class of over 300 students and not see another minority student?

I don't believe this university should lower its standards in any way, but the cost of admission is something that can be changed. Before UK becomes one of the top 20 public research universities in America, it should first strive to be one of the top 20 most diverse universities in America.

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SAB goes country for first concert

By Emily Coovert
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UK's Student Activities Board hopes that a large turnout will help country music star Keith Anderson "know when he gets here."

"Over the past few years we haven't brought a strong country act," said integrated strategic communications and business junior Josh Rupp, SAB's director of concerts. "(Anderson) hasn't been on the country music scene for a while, but his music is really great. Anderson will be performing at the Singletary Center for the Arts Center Hall tomorrow night at 8. Tickets are \$10 for students and faculty and \$20 for the general public.

Political science sophomore Colby Khoshreza, SAB's executive director for promotions said the tickets for Anderson's concert at UK are at a good price.



COURTESY OF SAB

Keith Anderson will share his country music hits at the Singletary Center on Saturday night.

so students should take advantage of them. He said prices for tickets to Anderson's concert could be sky-high after Anderson hits it big.

SAB found Anderson at the National Association for Campus Activities conference in Nashville last February, Khoshreza said.

"(Anderson) was one of the biggest acts and had one of the largest followings there," Khoshreza said. "We want to get (students) excited about SAB early, and we want to showcase early on that we are able to bring this caliber of artist to UK."

Anderson released his album "Three Chord Country and American Rock & Roll" in May 2005. Anderson was ranked as country's number one new male artist of 2005 by music trade's Billboard and Radio & Records and one of People magazine's "50 Hottest Bachelors" in the same year.

Anderson has performed at several colleges and played for state and county fairs across the country, with audiences ranging anywhere from 7,000 to 25,000 people Khoshreza said.

"A lot of people in Kentucky and the south love this kind of music," Khoshreza said.

"He has a big country following, particularly in Kentucky and West Virginia."

Meg Allison, a recent top-ten finalist on Nashville Star, will be opening for Anderson.

"She's really empowering," Rupp said. "Her voice is amazing, and her music is awesome."

SAB also found Allison at the National Association for Campus Activities conference and booked her. She is not on tour with Keith Anderson.

Rupp said her "general acoustic" music makes her a "true artist."

He even encourages people who are not interested in country music to attend.

"He's a country artist, but his music crosses over a lot," Rupp said. "He's a great performer and interacts well with the crowd. I like some country. I'm not as into it as some others are, but I was really impressed."

UK Bookstore renovates under new management

By Britney McIntosh
news@kykernel.com

As the campus book rush continues, new management at University Bookstore is moving in with renovations.

Previously owned by Kennedy Bookstore, University Bookstore is now under the management of Follett Higher Education Group. The contract with Kennedy expired last year and Follett was chosen because of the company's interest in renovations.

After six weeks at UK, the Follett staff has instated changes in the store.

"We've hired all in new display fixtures that match so it looks like a regular retail shopping environment," said Sally Wiatrowski, the store manager. "We brought down the eye levels of all the merchandise. We made clear aisles and pathways to direct customers to the different departments. It's all clearly defined now."

Senior Lauren Sersexaur agreed.

"I can tell they've rearranged," she said. "It looks a lot less cluttered."

University Bookstore mer-

chandise clerk Sharman Martin said that many students have commented on the store's appearance.

The new arrangement and reorganization are the beginning of plans Follett has for the bookstore.

"We're adding on 8,500 square feet," Wiatrowski said. "There will be a new front entrance with a plaza and a glass tower so you can see inside from the street. We're getting all-new carpet and paint as well."

She also said she plans to add more seating to the store for students to come in and read or study.

Construction for the renovations and structure additions will begin in March 2008 and are expected to be complete by June, Wiatrowski said.

Carol Behr, the manager of Kennedy Bookstore, said Follett's take over of the University Bookstore has not hurt her business.

"I actually think that we've gained business," Behr said. "One advantage we have is staff experience. I have some people on staff that have been here 40 years and all of their employees have



Music major Jacob Cook, examines a book Thursday afternoon at the University Bookstore in the Student Center.

CHRISTINA LAYTON STAFF

only been together for six weeks."

The University Bookstore hired all new staff when Follett took control and thinks the new staff will help with business.

"It's very important that the staff represent what the store is about. First and foremost, our goal is good customer service," Wiatrowski said.

"We are a part of the UK family, so service is at the top of our list. We want to create a pleasant and friendly environment where everyone is greeted when they come in."

Wiatrowski also said the location of the bookstore works in their favor.

"We're at an advantage mostly because we're on campus," Wiatrowski said. "Our building is part of the university, but beyond that it's up to us and our service."

Even with the renovations and upcoming changes the University Bookstore is missing one thing in the eyes of Taylor Wehrle, a psychology sophomore.

"I think they need a rack in here for all these backpacks on the floor," Wehrle said of the pile of backpacks students had to leave when they entered the store. "I know they have to be making bank with all of the book sales, so there is no way they can't afford it."

RUNNING BACKS

Continued from page 3

can do it from anywhere on the field, from the one-yard-line all the way down to the other one-yard-line. He can just take it."

Although Smith showed he's capable of playing in the SEC, he will have to battle both Little and Dixon for carries. Despite missing four games last year, Little managed to lead the team with 673 yards on the ground after racking more than 1,000 rushing yards in 2005.

"I think I can put up better numbers than my 2005 year," Little said. "I know that if I can get better than that, then I can go somewhere."

Dixon, who helped carry the load while Little was out, was hampered by a hamstring strain for much of the year while running for 303 yards.

"The thing about Tony (Dixon) is he has very deceptive speed," Brinson said. "You don't think he's that type of guy that can go 80 (miles per hour), but when you put the ball in his hands he's a very fluid guy, a very agile guy. I really like the way he runs the ball."

With all three running backs healthy for the season opener against Eastern Kentucky, the Cats feel they have as much depth as any team in college football, Smith said.

"We all have our different styles," Smith said. "Rafael (Little) will make people miss,

Tony (Dixon) is real swift and I'm just pure speed."

Brooks said sophomore linebacker Micah Johnson could also be a factor in short-yardage situations after his surprise touchdown run in last year's Music City Bowl victory over Clemson. Freshmen Moncell Allen, Derrick Locke and Brandon Capshaw could also see some time at the tailback position.

No matter who is running the football this year, Phillips believes the Cats have to get the job done on the ground.

"The key to our success this year is how well we can run the football," Phillips said. "If we can run the football we'll be a really good offensive team."

Classifieds continued from page 5

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