

THE MINARET

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All Hands On Deck

New Semester, Familiar Invasion – Gasparilla Edition



Boats crowd Hillborough Bay and celebrate Gasparilla on the water each year. Photo courtesy of Christopher Hollis, Public Domain, via Wikimedia Commons.

How UTampa Students Are Preparing For Gasparilla This Year

By Gloria Falach

Tampa's annual holiday, Gasparilla, rolled into town this year on Jan. 31. For many students, participating in Gasparilla has become a yearly tradition. Some students at the University of Tampa like to join in the fun of dressing like a pirate, watching the parade that starts on Bayshore and ends in downtown Tampa, and collecting beads.

The Gasparilla forecast this year showed a high of 57 degrees with a low of 31 degrees at night.

According to the Tampa Bay Times, due to this year's cold weather, there was a chance of "Gulf effect" snow in some areas of Tampa Bay on Saturday night and Sunday morning. This caused many students to adjust their Gasparilla plans this past weekend.

Many students participate in Gasparilla by dressing up in theme and walking around

the city of Tampa. Due to weather concerns, many female students have had to put the miniskirts away and make other wardrobe arrangements to stay warm.

Lanie Hall, a junior at UTampa, has perfected her preparation plans for Gasparilla since she was a freshman. She makes sure she is aware of which roads are closed and determines which routes will be the fastest on foot the night before.

Hall planned on wearing a long skirt with lots of upper body layers to stay warm, but also be able to take it off if she gets too crowded. In locations like Bayshore Boulevard, where a large number of people are squished together watching the parade, students can get hot easily.

"I want my layers to be thin enough that it's easy to take them off if I get too hot," Hall said.

Nathalie Yencle-Torres, a sophomore, was born and raised in Tampa and had to make additions to her outfit to stay warm while trying to stay in the pirate theme.

"I'm wearing my original outfit, and then I'm adding thermal leggings and a snow jacket," Yencle-Torres said.

Since Yencle-Torres is not used to colder weather, she also planned on stopping by DICKS Sporting Goods to purchase hand warmers. She said she considered changing her outfit a dozen times to try to stay warm.

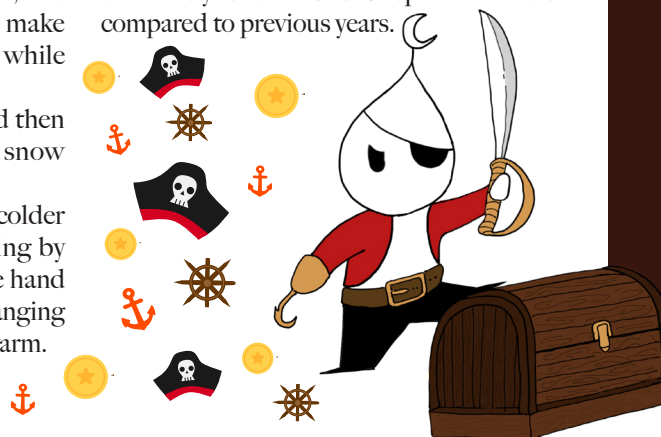
The struggle to find new and warmer outfits for Gasparilla has become popular on social media due to the cold front in Florida.

"I've seen a lot of people on TikTok planning to wear long skirts or long sleeve dresses with a lot of layers, which is smart because I think everyone this year is going for warmth rather than the original Pirate outfits," said Yencle-Torres.

Many UTampa students are from the North and are used to colder weather. Rebecca Tow, a junior, is from Maryland and has only planned to add a jacket to her pirate outfit.

"I think I am just going to try to brave the elements," said Tow. "I have been in colder weather in this type of outfit before."

Regardless of whether or not UTampa students are used to the cold, many students had to adapt and prepare themselves differently for the 2026 Gasparilla invasion compared to previous years.



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Tampa Mayor Approaches Final Year in Office

By Jacob Tomaneng



Mayor Jane Castor's second term will finish on May 1, 2027, marking the end of her eight years as Tampa's mayor. Mayoral terms last four years with a two term limit.

Castor is notably the first openly LGBTQ mayor of Tampa, a member of the democrat party and a University of Tampa Alumni.

Castor attended UTampa as a dual-sport athlete in basketball and volleyball. She graduated from the UTampa with a Bachelor of Science in Criminology and eventually served as Tampa's Chief of Police.

Castor's strategic goals that were set after being elected in 2019 included strengthening resident services, enhancing workplace development, increasing housing affordability, improving infrastructure and mobility, and establishing sustainability and resilience.

In 2019, Castor started the Housing Affordability Advisory Team with the goal to

recommend approaches to address housing affordability in Tampa. Since then, over 25 million dollars have been invested in this initiative. However, in a 2023 to 2024 report by the U.S Bureau for Labor Statistics, the average Tampa household spends 4.8% more of their annual income on housing than the average U.S household.

For some Tampa voters, this could be the first voting ballot without Castor listed as the mayor or as a candidate. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the city's population was estimated to be 335,709 in 2010 compared to 414,547 in 2024.

While Castor's last year in office approaches, some candidates for the 2027 election have already filed paperwork to declare that they are running for mayor.

One candidate that has started campaigning is Alan Henderson, 23. The Hillsborough Community College Alumni

is the youngest candidate and pairs his technology based background with an innovative campaign. He is a Tampa native that would be the city's first Black mayor if elected.

Julie Magill, also a Tampa native, is another candidate who highlights problems with city roads, storm drainage, and homelessness. Additionally, Magill ran for a position onto the Hillsborough County School Board in 2024.

Since any registered voter living in the city of Tampa for a year prior to taking office can run for mayor, Tampa voters should keep an eye out for other candidates starting to campaign. The next election will begin on Mar. 2, 2027.

Photo courtesy of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff from Washington D.C, United States, CC by 2.0.



Recent Bills Passed During the 2026 Florida Legislative Session

By Nicole Droeger Stephens

The 2026 Florida Legislative Session started its 60-day session on Jan. 13. State lawmakers convene to vote on new laws. Recent bills the legislature has passed include topics of firearm accessibility and artificial intelligence.

House Bill 133 lowers the minimum age to purchase a firearm from 21 to 18. An analysis from the Judiciary Committee states that citizens 18 and older will be able to purchase long guns, such as shotguns and rifles, from a federal firearms licensee (FFL), but may only purchase handguns from private sellers. The FFL will require the minimum age of 21 to purchase a handgun.

Jack Labolle, a senior communication and speech studies major at The University of Tampa, believes the new age requirement is appropriate.

"If a young man or woman can serve their country, learn how to operate it [a firearm] and take proper classes, I think it's completely fine."

Artificial intelligence faces an overhaul in legislation. Senate Bill 482 will expand consumer protection when interacting with AI chatbots. According to a written statement provided by the Committee on Commerce and Tourism, safeguards will be implemented to prohibit minors from interacting with chatbots unless permission is granted by a parent or guardian.

The bill will also require chatbot companies to provide disclosure statements and reminders to consumers that it is not human. Finally, personal data and information collected by chatbot software cannot be shared without the consumer's knowledge or approval.

Jeffrey Neely, associate professor of journalism at UTampa, who is also a parent, believes the legislation barring minors is unnecessary.



A diorama of the State Capitol found at LEGOLAND, located in Winter Haven. Photo courtesy of Todd Fowler, CC BY-SA 2.0, via Flickr.

"Educate about media literacy, how to work with AI, and how it can be useful," Neely said. "I do think there needs to be government policy applied to tech companies, but I don't think trying to wall off the consumer is the right way to go."

He approves of the legislation on AI data sharing.

"Our data is shared, and we are complicit in that when we agree to the user license, but more transparency would be good; anything to help rein in the sharing of data."



Photo courtesy of Chris Gent, via Flickr.

The 2026 Florida Legislative Session will continue until March 13. Bills that pass through the legislature go into effect on July 1. For more information, visit the official Florida Legislature website at leg.state.fl.us.



How "Sinners" is Redefining Black Horror at the Academy Awards

By Alyssa Cortes

On Jan. 22 at 8 a.m., the academy hosted a livestream with actors Danielle Brooks, a past Academy Award nominee, and Lewis Pullman to reveal the nominees for the 98th Academy Awards this March.

Among those nominated were One Battle After Another with 13 total nominations, including best picture and four acting nominations. Frankenstein, Marty Supreme, and Sentimental Value received nine nominations each.

With the most nominations this year, Sinners made history, becoming the most nominated film in Oscars history with a total of 16 nominations, including best picture, directing, and three acting nominations. Sinners beat the previous record of 14 total nominations, once a three-way tie between All about Eve (1950), Titanic (1997), and La La Land (2016).

Ruth E. Carter made history with her nomination for Sinners, becoming the most-nominated Black woman in the Oscars' almost centennial history, with five nominations.

"That number (five nominations) seems a little small, especially since the most nominated white woman has seven times that, with 35 nominations," said Gabriela Amador, a senior psychology major at The University of Tampa.

Amador is referencing Edith Head, a costume designer for films such as All About Eve (1950), Roman Holiday (1953), and The Sting (1973). She holds the record as the most-nominated woman in Oscar history with 35 nominations and eight wins.

Amador points to the lack of opportunities given to people of color, "that lessens the opportunity for nominations."

"Carter's nomination is nothing short of a step in the right direction," said Jay Davis, a sophomore, an allied health major and film and media arts minor at UTampa. "I believe her representation shows that, as Ke Huy Quan said after winning an Oscar at the 95th annual Oscars, 'This is the American Dream.'"

The love for films like Sinners, Frankenstein, and Weapons shocked many horror fans who are used to these films being overlooked.

Davis said they believe Sinner's success is due to the originality of mixing genres, allowing audiences of all kinds to enjoy the film. They hope to see storytellers take this mindset to their future films.

"(Sinners) was easily my favorite film among this year's nominees," said Taylor Quinn, a UTampa alumna. "In a time when many films rely on familiar themes and storylines, Sinners felt refreshing, bringing new ideas to the table and presenting them in a way that was very compelling for a horror film."

One of the many genres Sinners uses is musicals. Quinn said the film's music is one of its best strengths.



In Nov. 2025, Taylor Quinn is pictured alongside Buddy Guy, who played Sammie in the film's finale. "I got to talk with him about his music and the movie, and even met his son, who was really kind," said Quinn. Photo Courtesy of Taylor Quinn.

"Rather than just supporting the story, the music carries the film from beginning to end," said Quinn.

She mentions the film's music montage scene, where the character Sammie performs: "I Lied to You." According to Screenrant, it is a "triumph in filmmaking."

"This sequence captures what makes the film so unique and memorable," said Quinn.



Buddy Guy is a legendary guitarist and owner of Buddy Guy's Legends, a bar with live music and blues in Chicago, Illinois. Photo Courtesy of Taylor Quinn.

"By traveling through time in this single sequence, intertwining multiple generations through sound and movement, Sinners highlights the lasting impact of Black music on storytelling and cinema."

With the highs must also come the lows, and this year, many films that fans expected to be recognized weren't.

A shock to many fans, Wicked: For Good (2025) received zero nominations this year, despite the film earning 30% more domestically than its predecessor, Wicked (2024).

The film received multiple nominations at this year's Critics' Choice and the Golden Globes. Yet the film was not recognized by the Academy for costume and production design, which were the categories Wicked won last year.

Snubs that upset UTampa students were Superman (2025) for editing or visual effects, Guillermo del Toro for directing Frankenstein (2025), Lost in Starlight (2025) for animated film, Ethan Hawke and Andrew Scott for Blue Moon (2025), and No Other Choice (2025) in the foreign film category.

Taylor Curry, associate professor of film, animation, and new media at UTampa, hasn't seen any of the films nominated this year.

"If I decide to go to the theater and watch a film, I know my teeny tiny little ticket is adding to your film," said Curry. "I'm very conscious of what I see, (and) what I fund."

"There is a lot of authority and power in choosing to purchase a ticket and put your butt in that seat," said Curry. She asks herself, "How it's made, how it's funded, how I feel."

In 2023, Angela Bassett was nominated for her role in Black Panther: Wakanda Forever, but lost to her white counterpart, Jamie Lee

Curtis, for her role in Everything Everywhere All at Once.

Are you rewarding their body of work or the individual role? Does it change person to person?

The following year, Bassett received an honorary Oscar at the Governor's Award. Two years prior, Samuel L. Jackson was honored at the same ceremony.

Black creators don't deserve an ornamental award, said Curry in reference to Bassett's snub and subsequent honorary award. She earned it, honor that, but there seems to be a resistance against the idea, and has been since the beginning.

In 1940, Hattie McDaniel became the first black person to win an Academy Award for her role in Gone With the Wind (1939). To accept the award, she had to walk from the back of the room past her castmates seated together at the front of the room, up to the stage.

"Patty McDaniel was an actress in the early 20th century who was always typecast into roles like the nanny or the maid," said Brenton Boyd, the director of Black studies and assistant professor of English and writing at UTampa. "She didn't write that (role) for herself. She didn't want to be in that role, but that's what she won for."

Hollywood has a history of only wanting to see black people in certain roles, said Boyd, and he thinks Sinners is a good direction away from that.

The 98th Academy Awards is the first year that academy voters will be required to watch all nominated films. The academy previously held an honor system, meaning it was not required to watch the films before voting. This new rule was established in April 2025.

"If you take anything from people who study African American history and culture, we don't want things to be in our favor; we just want it to be equal and fair," said Boyd. "If this takes us a step forward to being fair, that's what I think is the win."



The red carpet for the 81st Academy Awards in 2009, 17 years later, the 88th Academy Awards is just a month away. Photo by Greg Hernandez courtesy of Wikimedia Commons, CC by 2.0.

Why UTampa's Transfer Issue Is More Complicated Than TikTok Makes It Seem.

By Tiffany Bobadilla

The University of Tampa has recently gained a new nickname due to its high rate of students transferring out last fall semester. UTransfer is now what many students across campus and social media are calling UTampa.

Last semester was a long series of unfortunate events, the raw chicken served at the Ultimate Dining Hall being on top of that list, scaring the freshman out of Vaughn, the registration and housing war, and the hour-long wait times to get your Chick-fil-A order.

Multiple TikToks made by UTampa students talking about the many reasons why they transferred have gone viral on social media, even making a big impact on the upcoming wave of students for the class of 2030.

Comments like "people are so cliquey," "immature trust fund kids," "fake friends" and "mean girls" fill the comment sections of these TikToks, such as "Best thing I have ever done" and "Why are y'all so mean here," making many people believe that UTampa is a bad environment for its students.

When talking specifically about UTampa, some would say it is extremely hard to make friends here. While this may seem true for a lot of students, this is an issue for a lot of other Universities as well.

Just like at every college, there will be mean girls and fake friends who have nothing to do with the university you are at. If you were to take a look at big SEC schools like the University of Alabama and the University of Mississippi, very often you will find groups of mean girls. Now, these girls may seem

like your friends, but in reality, they are not. Therefore, the problem isn't the institution but the people in it.

"As a transfer student, I didn't have many friends this past semester," said Kyle Robers, a senior at UTampa studying MIS. "You just have to put yourself out there. I made friends now, you just have to join clubs and get out of your comfort zone."

The payment plan at UTampa doesn't include friends; you have to step out of your comfort zone to make sure you find that group of people that shares the same interests you have and would be willing to do those things together. It is a part of life, you have to make your own friends, you can't just expect to have friends without trying to build these relationships.

Students this past fall all stormed into campus with a pre-painted picture of what the university was going to be like based on things that they've seen on social media. Everyone comes into this school thinking that everything here will be perfect due to the sunny days, a campus with palm trees all around its perimeter and an unlimited amount of things to do around the big city of Tampa.

All of these good things are going to be obviously highlighted on social media about the school. People don't want to highlight

their realistic day-to-day at the school but would rather show the media pictures of themselves smiling and going out every day with their friends.

"I don't see why you would transfer out," says Dylan Glener, a spring semester freshman at UTampa. "So far, the school seems very fun; there is a lot of stuff to do around campus."

UTampa is filled with many different things, including clubs, sports, and events in which students can participate and make their time at the school worthwhile.

Meanwhile, the nickname UTransfer may be trending on social media right now, but it only portrays a singular aspect of the school. This nickname only reflects the growing gap between the set expectations that come from social media about the school and the reality of living the actual college experience. Just like at any other college, the experience is solely based on what you are willing to put into it.



The walkway next to Grand Center, which includes the freshman dorms. Photo courtesy of Tiffany Bobadilla.



Photo courtesy of Laura Ockel via Unsplash License



As the season of lovers approaches, the saying “if he wanted to he would” is resurfacing on social media. This saying has been floating on social media for many years as the media is a prominent component of our world today.

According to Glamour magazines this popular saying’s definition is “the idea that if a man is interested or wants to be with you, he’ll figure a way to make it happen or to show a woman.” This saying is generalized

and believed by many on social media when in “talking stages” with guys.

Many use this saying in relation to how much a guy truly likes or is interested in them. Although this saying can be applied and believed in certain situations, generalizing it for every situation is unrealistic and unethical.

Although many people think that guys are able to do whatever they want whenever they want to show a girl they are interested, sometimes people cannot do things even if

The Truth About “If He Wanted To, He Would.”

By Carla Morales

they wanted to for whatever reason. This saying creates an unrealistic standard that can be hard for a guy to live up to. Additionally, this saying could possibly cause girls to mentally limit their options with guys as they may assume a lack of interest based on small actions.

Furthermore, the use of this quote depends on the status a girl has with a guy. If a girl and a guy are in the so-called “talking stage,” which is the time period before dating and getting to know each other on a deeper level, there should be no direct expectation for either party to do anything, as there is no official label.

According to The Good Men Project “if he wanted to, he would” it’s not always true. There’s a lot of reasons that guys just don’t do stuff, even though they want to.

Put this example into perspective, if you were a girl would you be bummed out if a guy you were talking to was not able to drive three hours to go see you for five minutes? Perhaps but it should also be understood that it is

extremely unrealistic and simply inconvenient for anyone to do this.

In relation, a digitally driven “relationship” one is actively building with someone (texting, snapchatting, or facetimeing) could and should be applied with the saying “if he wanted to he would.” This is because if a guy genuinely wanted to text you back, snapchat you back or call you back he one hundred percent would. As previously stated it gets more complicated when this saying is applied in physical situations.

What this ultimately demonstrates is that the phrase “if he wanted to he would” cannot be applied universally. While effort from guys matters, context equally matters.

Interest should be proved through communication and consistency instead of unrealistic expectations the media is coming up with. A more accurate and realistic saying that the media should adopt is “if he’s able to he would” as it allows more room for understanding and less for unrealistic standards.

Group Projects: Where Friendship Meets Frustration

By Genesis Aviles

Let’s be honest, most students (like me) do not like group projects. For Claire Manin, a UTampa sophomore, they’re downright frustrating.

“I genuinely despise them,” Manin said. “I’ve had times...where I was doing 99% of the work, and then my grade was being affected. I would rather do a project individually and have to only rely on myself to do that project.”

Madison Pulica, a UTampa alumna, feels the same.

“Sometimes with group projects, there’s a weird dynamic where either nobody wants to do it, or everyone wants to be in charge,” said Pulica. “For those reasons, I usually choose working alone over working in groups.”

These complaints are common: some people disappear, some take over and suddenly, what should have been a collaborative effort becomes stressful and unfair. Yet, despite all this, teachers still assign them. Of course, for a reason.

Professor Sarah Smith-Friggerio teaches advertising and public relations. She said group projects aren’t just busy work; they mirror what students will do in real life.

“It’s very common that communication professionals are going to be working on teams, putting together ad campaigns or public relations messaging,” Smith-Friggerio said. “In essence, what real life looks like is group work.”

Still, she knows the frustration is real and tries to make it better. Her classes use group contracts, in-class work time and confidential peer evaluations.

“Each group member does confidential peer evaluations of the other group members. I take all of that, review it, and average it out,” Smith-Friggerio said. “Then that average becomes your grade as a member of the group.”

Basically, if someone isn’t doing their part, the rest of the group isn’t punished unfairly, and everyone has a way to say what’s really happening.

However, sometimes even with these protections, group projects aren’t always easy. Manin points out how disagreements come up constantly.

“Everyone has different ideas about how to divide the work or what the project should even look like,” Manin said.



Photo courtesy of Annie Spratt via Unsplash.png

But group projects do teach things you can’t really learn on your own, like how to communicate, compromise, and manage a team. They also give students a chance to bounce ideas off others, experiment with different approaches, and even discover leadership skills.

Professor Smith-Friggerio said she sees the balance.

“I do like group projects because sometimes really good work can come out of students working together and bouncing ideas off each other,” Smith-Friggerio said. “But I also provide opportunities for both individual grades and group grades so students can show what they can do on their own.”

For students, the key is clear communication and structure. Roles, deadlines, and honest feedback make group projects less painful and actually teach skills that will matter in real life. Sure, no system is perfect, but when structured right by the professor and the team, group work can be more than just a headache; it can be a surprisingly valuable experience.

“Group work reflects real-life collaboration,” Professor Smith-Friggerio said. “If we set safeguards, provide tools for accountability, and support students in their teamwork, it’s amazing what they can accomplish together.”

Photo courtesy of Genesis Muckle



UTampa Baseball Spring Preview

By Genesis Muckle

The spring athletic season is officially underway at the University of Tampa, and the Spartans are entering the sea

Coming off their 10th NCAA Division II championship, Tampa’s baseball team has cemented itself as the number one DII baseball program in the nation. This season, head coach Joe Urso and his team are chasing a new goal that will take the Spartans to another level: a three-peat.

“We’re bringing in 20-plus new guys, so it’s about building that family all over again, and trying to achieve something that no one has ever done before in Division II baseball, which is a three-peat,” said Urso.

For Urso, the milestone of winning a 10th championship and the legacy it represents hold great personal significance. Before becoming the head coach, Urso was a part of UTampa’s first national championship team in 1992. Since then, he has helped transform UTampa into a baseball powerhouse.

“It was always a big goal of mine,” said Urso. “Being the top Division II program in the country.”

Winning the program’s 10th championship solidified UTampa’s place at the top of Division II baseball history, but Urso emphasized that this success does not bring complacency.

“We made history last year, and the expectations don’t stop now,” he said. “The new goal is to become the first to three-peat and hopefully chase history once again.”



Photo courtesy of Genesis Muckle

Despite the pressure that comes with sustained excellence, Urso said the most exciting part of each season is starting fresh.

“We lost a lot of great personalities, a lot of great players, and now we have to develop it all over again, and that’s the fun of this job,” said Urso.

However, with a roster full of new faces, the Spartans face a new challenge: “We lost our whole starting rotation last year on the mound. Our number one, two, and three starters,” said Urso.

One of the greatest challenges the Spartans are facing this season is replacing their pitching staff. UTampa lost its entire starting rotation.

“That rotation was really the backbone of our team,” said Urso.

This season, Robert Satin will step into the ace role, and with him, John Luke Glanton and B.J. Bailey will round out the top three arms.

“I’m excited to see them develop and take over this rotation,” Urso added.

While the Spartans have seen many new faces, Tampa has several returning players ready to take on major roles for the team. One of these key players is Brayden Woodburn,

who was one of the team’s top hitters last year and has been a crucial player in UTampa’s back-to-back national championships.

“Brayden has been a part of both titles and played a big role in both,” said Urso.

Joining Woodburn as a veteran leader is Maddox King, a third-year centerfielder as well as the team’s catcher. Jhoander Irigoyen in his second season. Both are expected to help guide the new roster and reinforce the program’s culture.

“These guys relied on a lot for their leadership,” said Urso. Hopefully, the new guys can fall in line and start to understand the culture of Tampa baseball.”

UTampa also brings in a strong group of newcomers, including junior college athletes and Division I transfers.

One name that stands out is Jack Martinez, who is expected to start at third base and shortstop. Martinez carries a familiar name within the program as he is the nephew of UTampa legend Tino Martinez.

“The Martinez family has meant so much to this program,” Urso stated. “To have Tino Martinez’s nephew here and continue the family tradition is really special.”

With a strong roster and high expectations, balancing that competition and chemistry is a major challenge for this fabulous student this season.

“Competition is very healthy,” Urso stated. “Once the lineup is written on Friday night, it’s about how the backup guys respond and accept their roles.”

Urso highlights that building a championship team requires more than just the nine starters; it requires every player.



Photo courtesy of Genesis Muckle

“It’s my job to develop roles for other guys, not just the starters, so that chemistry continues to be positive,” he stated.

When off the field, the coaching staff has priorities: teaching and reinforcing UTampa’s culture, especially for players new to the program.

“A lot of guys have never been in a program this successful,” Urso stated. “So from a coaching standpoint, it’s slowing down a little bit and doing a little bit more teaching.”

Team-building activities such as Topgolf, clay shooting, and lake days have helped foster a sense of unity and family within the team.

Urso’s expectations for this year remain clear. “The goal is always to win a championship.”

The Spartans will open up the season on the road in Georgia, facing early challenges in cold conditions before returning for a three-week homestand. Fans can also look forward to the unveiling of the 25th championship ball and brand new scoreboard, donated by Fred Pollock and Jeanette Pollock.

With great ambition, experienced leadership, and exciting talent, the UTampa basketball team gives students plenty to look forward to in the Spring 2025-2026 season.



Men's Basketball Drops Rivalry Matchup to Florida Southern

By Hannah Walls

The University of Tampa Men's basketball team dropped a game to their rivals, Florida Southern 76-84 at home on Wednesday, Jan. 21. The Spartans fell to 10-7 overall and 4-6 in conference play, placing them 7th in the Sunshine State Conference.





Spartans Secure Rivalry Win at Home

By Hannah Walls

The University of Tampa Women's basketball team defeated their rivals, Florida Southern 64-55 at home on Wednesday, Jan. 21. The Spartans improved to 11-8 overall and 6-4 in conference play, placing them 5th in the Sunshine State Conference.



Inside UTampa's Struggle for Reproductive Rights

By Jaide Edwards



Photo Courtesy Jaide Edwards

On Oct. 28, 2025, Planned Parenthood Generation Action (PPGA) had a tabling event in UTampa's Vaughn Center. They gave out sexual resources to students in need.

Inside the Vaughn Center, tables line the main walkway — one draped with a bright pink tablecloth and the bold black lettering of Planned Parenthood Generation Action (PPGA). Behind it, Paige Horton, the club's president, carefully arranges a row of pastel-colored goodie bags beside her teammate, Sofia Lenton-Childs, from Student Government. The two moved with calm determination, their voices low but steady, as students walked by.

Each Halloween, the club hands out decorated goodie bags containing a mix of condoms, candy, stickers, and a PPGA card — a small but intentional act of advocacy.

Across from their table sits the UTampa Republican Club. The two groups have shared this space before, but not without tension. Horton said that in past semesters, scheduling conflicts and strained interactions have made these setups "complicated." But she has a job to do.

At first, most students walk by on their phones. A few talk to their friends after looking at the Planned Parenthood table, while others glance at the condoms before turning away. Only one male student stops, curious enough to ask what PPGA stands for and scan the QR code taped to the table.

Then, unexpectedly, the atmosphere begins to shift. A group of campus dining staff — the familiar lunch ladies from the cafeteria — approach the table, smiling. "I need this, it's my birthday!" one of them laughs as she grabs a bag, her coworkers laughing with her. Their warmth breaks the cloud of tension.

Slowly, more students begin to stop — some shyly taking a goodie bag, others scanning the club's Instagram QR code.

By noon, the table is now surrounded by chatter, questions, and laughter. Horton smiles as she watches the people come by — the shift from hesitation to curiosity — proof that even in the face of criticism and restrictions, conversations about sexual health and education still have a place on campus.

For PPGA, the mission has always been clear: to empower young people to advocate for reproductive rights, comprehensive sexual education, and accessible health resources. As a student-led branch of Planned Parenthood, PPGA chapters across the nation give college students a voice in issues once thought to be too controversial for campus life — from abortion rights to gender equity to safe sex awareness.

But for The University of Tampa's (UTampa) chapter, that mission has become more complicated in recent months. Following heightened political tensions and restrictions surrounding conversations about abortion on campus, PPGA leaders have had to reimagine what advocacy looks like. Instead of focusing solely on abortion rights — a topic that has led to pushbacks, harassment, and even a student restraining order — the group is shifting its energy toward being a resourceful and educational presence. Their recent tabling event reflects this change: less about protest, more about providing.

This new chapter unfolds against a national backdrop still reckoning with the 2022 Supreme Court decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, the landmark 1973 ruling that had protected the constitutional right to abortion for nearly 50 years.

Founded in 1939, the Planned Parenthood Federation of America has grown from a small, rebellious clinic to become the largest provider of sexual and reproductive health care and education in the country.

Student-led chapters like PPGA, which carry on the tradition of campaigning, education, and community support in the face of new legal and political difficulties, are set against the backdrop of Planned Parenthood's long history of increasing access to contraceptive and reproductive health services.

Since its reversal, conversations about reproductive health have grown increasingly polarized, particularly on college campuses. In many ways, PPGA's evolving identity at UTampa mirrors a broader generational response — one where advocacy meets adaptation, and education becomes its own form of resistance.

PPGA's mission has never drifted from abortion advocacy, but during the election season of 2024, that advocacy drew attention that Horton and her members weren't prepared for. The Yes on 4 campaign, which urged Floridians to vote on an amendment that would reverse the state's six-week abortion ban, put a spotlight on the PPGA. Horton learned that visibility comes with a cost.

"We definitely find that we get the most pushback when we talk about abortion," said Horton. "Our campus is heavily conservative. We've had people come up and make fun of us or try to trick us into saying something. We've even had to have campus safety on call for events."

Students played a part in the tension, but other times, it came from organization chapters on campus, like the UTampa Turning Point USA chapter, whose members continuously questioned PPGA's statements or crowded near their tables.

"People would walk by whispering, staring, or laughing," said Horton. "It wasn't always aggressive, but it was constant."

But the most serious situation arrived early in the semester.

They hosted their educational event — "Myths and Realities," led by founder Ally Schutz — which was meant to dispel misinformation about abortion using scientific evidence.

Instead, a female student aggressively challenged the presentation and escalated into hostility that left members visibly shaken. After arguing with Schutz and several others, she wrote notes filled with insults directed at the group and its mission.

Schutz, a senior political science student, founded PPGA on UTampa's campus in the fall of 2022 following a period of thought about her role in politics and activism.

"I started this organization in 2022, fall semester, after a lot of self-reflection, and I found my way in abortion and reproductive politics," said Schutz.

The idea to create the organization developed after she observed a "trans rights matter" sticker on her advisor's office door and felt driven to act.

"It was originally just me, and I was like, I need members... I'm gonna throw the first event by myself," said Schutz.

She made announcements, hosted the first call-out meeting alone, and provided her personal email and phone number to promote participation.

"I made the mistake of putting my email and my personal phone number on those flyers... I had people telling me... 'you're killing babies, you should kill yourself,'" said Schutz.

Despite the harassment, the effort brought her to Horton, the first interested member who contributed to the group's growth and eventually assumed leadership before Schutz graduated.

For Schutz, the work became tied to her personal identity and the values she refuses to hide.

"I believe that the personal is political, so I can't hide my politics," said Schutz.

Her visibility put her in conflict with anti-abortion organizations on campus, including Young Americans for Freedom (YAF). After seeing a YAF display showing an image of a baby's foot, she challenged the messaging publicly.

"I posted on my Instagram story, 'Come join our first meeting, because this is terrible rhetoric. This is misinformation,'" said Schutz.

The YAF member later appeared at a PPGA event and confronted her with statements she found extreme and inaccurate.

Schutz said the pattern of repeated appearances by the student at PPGA's events felt like stalking, something she believed the university minimized by framing the situation as a free-speech issue.

"I feel like the school will do anything to protect Republicans and pro-life people... when this girl was high-key stalking me, like coming to every single tabling event... I felt like the school kind of was just like, 'freedom of speech,'" said Schutz.

The situation caused significant emotional strain.

"I'm calling my mom crying, I'm like, 'I don't want this girl following me.' And my mom's like, 'Well, that's politics.' I'm like, 'that's not politics, Mom,'" said Schutz.

As a young organizer, she struggled with the intensity of the backlash and the limited institutional support.

"She graduated. Never saw her again. But they just keep doing the same. There's always a new one," said Schutz.

Schutz said she remains proud of what she built but acknowledges the emotional toll. She emphasized that the fight over reproductive justice on campus continues.

PPGA had to make the tough but

necessary decision to move away from abortion-centered advocacy in the aftermath of the election season and amid increasing hostility on campus. The group decided that while statewide advocacy mattered deeply to them, UTampa's environment wasn't the safest or most productive venue for that kind of political activity.

"Campus wasn't the place for that," said Horton. "We realized that our main work now is providing resources. We give out free Plan B anytime — no questions asked. That's what we're known for."

The organization's identity was altered by the pivot. Instead of protests, petitions, and myth-busting presentations, PPGA began focusing on approachable, inclusive programming founded in sexual education and student support. The focus of their events moved to providing students with useful supplies, such as condoms, emergency contraception, stickers, and instructional cards, in addition to social activities meant to soothe their anxiety.

Most planning begins informally, Horton said. Members suggest themes, discuss ideas in a group chat, and then plan events that resemble community get-togethers rather than lectures. "Sweet treat socials," "craft nights," and tabling sessions with candy or conversation starters have become their most successful events.

PPGA has established a solid base of partnerships that support its goal, which contributes to the success of this more relaxed, resource-centered approach. Their biggest sponsor is still Planned Parenthood.

"They send us all of the merch that we give out — all of the stickers, buttons, pins, magnets, bookmarks, like everything that we have to give out directly comes from Planned Parenthood," said Horton. "They are our biggest supporter and our biggest funder."

Other collaborations formed more naturally. Following a fundraiser where students created period bouquet arrangements in exchange for a \$5 donation, they started working with Tampa Bay Period Pantry. Because of the high attendance, the pantry immediately contacted PPGA to request a partnership for future events. That cooperation now extends into resource drives, cooperative tabling, and co-hosted programs.

But redefining action has also meant negotiating difficulties — including reresistance from UTampa's Dickey Health Center over PPGA's Plan B distribution. Like any other resource, members distributed emergency contraception at tables for months. Then they were reported.

The health center issued a severe mandate after a long Zoom meeting: PPGA could keep providing Plan B, but not in public. The club's Instagram was no longer DM-able by students. All queries have to be routed confidentially through Horton herself.

Despite the limits, PPGA has refused to back down. "We've been very firm on that," said Horton. "No matter what they try to

do, we're not going to let them stop us from providing resources."

Partnerships continue to feed that determination. They work with Happy Tails UTampa because they are aware that students frequently come for the dogs but leave with knowledge of PPGA. Together with USF's Generation Action chapter, they are organizing an inclusive prom. They also intend to strengthen their partnerships with UTampa Pride, the Black Student Union, and potentially women's shelters and crisis centers.

For Horton, the emotional weight of the situation was heavier than she first expected.

"We were just trying to educate," said Horton. "And suddenly we had to worry about our safety."

The backlash, the conservative pressure, and the student harassment incident created a turning point for the organization. What was once a passionate political movement on campus now had to be reevaluated. Members weren't just exhausted — they were unsure how to keep advocating without putting themselves at risk or alienating students who viewed the group as "too political."

Instead of doubling down, PPGA made a strategic shift. They stepped back from direct abortion advocacy and began focusing more on sexual health resources, inclusive education, and fun, community-centered events — a softer, safer point of entry for students who still cared about reproductive rights but didn't want to be caught in the culture war surrounding them.

The new PPGA is still rooted in advocacy — but it's advocacy built on accessibility, safety, and community. And for Horton, redefining activism hasn't meant doing less. It has meant finding a way to do what matters most.

As PPGA president, Horton has established herself as the backbone of the organization, keeping meetings on schedule,



Photo Courtesy Jaide Edwards (left) and Caitlin Carpenter (right)

PPGA at UTampa held its last event on Dec. 2 in Grand Center. This event was merely to have fun, engage, and come together as a community.

paperwork done, and events from collapsing due to college regulations. Her everyday life is a combination of problem-solving, emotional support, and negotiating rigid university limits, even though the group's aim is centered on reproductive justice.

Horton defines her work as a combination of crisis management, mentoring, and administration. She plans tabling events, schedules meetings, maintains statistics for student participation reports, and makes sure the group abides by institutional guidelines about what may and cannot be publicly advocated.

"As president, my job is to make sure everything runs smoothly," said Horton. "We're a small executive board, so I wear a lot of hats — data manager, planner, and sometimes therapist."

"It's a constant mental checklist," she said. "But I do it because this community matters." Additionally, Horton's leadership has influenced the club's changing identity. She has led the group toward education-first programming, focusing on resource sharing,

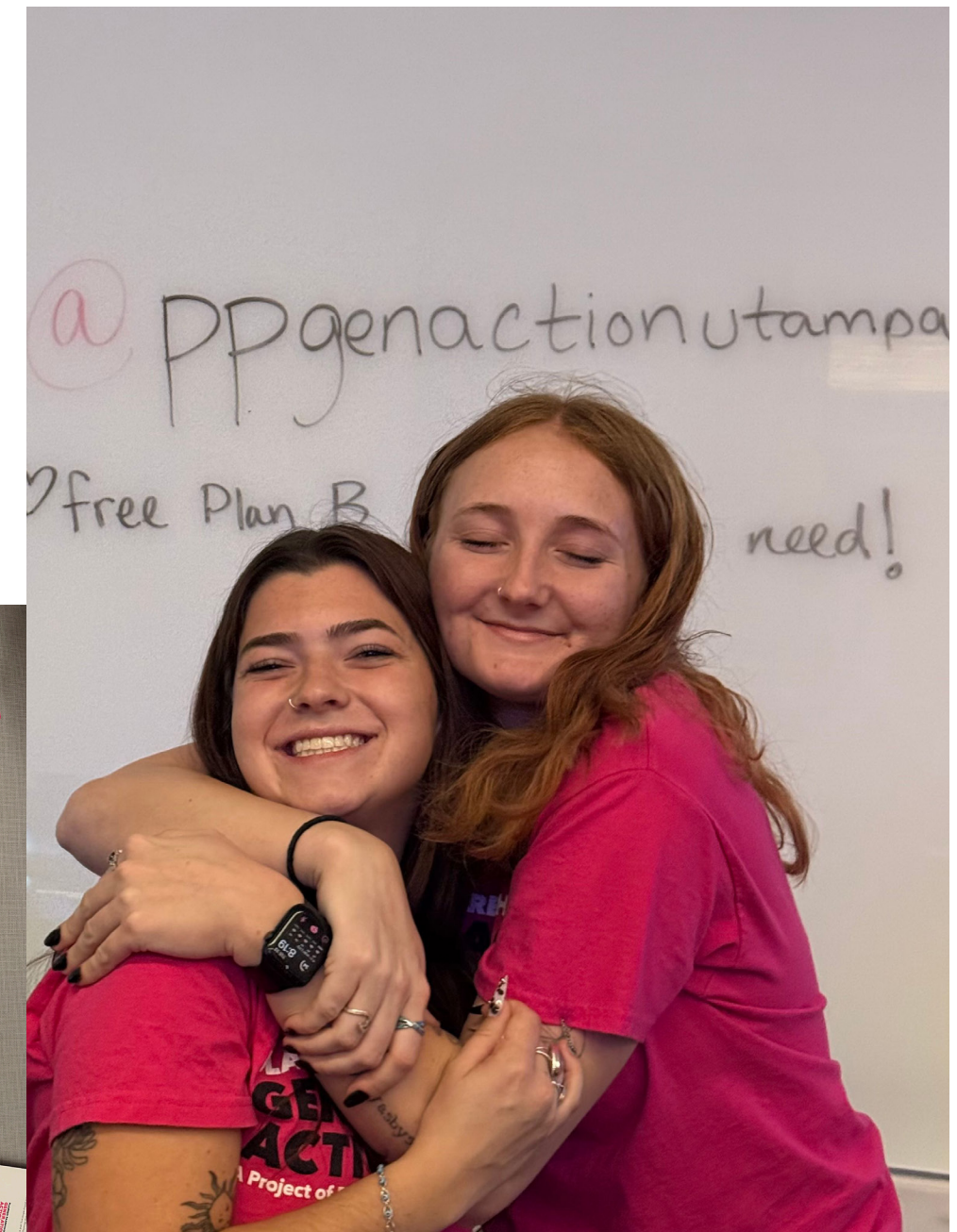
safer-sex information, and student-centered workshops, as they are restricted in how they can discuss abortion on campus. Her intention is to create an environment where students feel encouraged rather than lectured.

PPGA's social media manager, Caitlin Clark, a senior English major at UTampa, expressed admiration for Horton's ability to sustain the organization in the face of persistent obstacles and opposition from the college.

"She stepped in when everything felt unstable," said Clark. "Paige really became the person holding the group together when we weren't sure if we could even keep advocating."

Clark said that despite limitations, members have remained motivated thanks to Horton's consistent enthusiasm and dedication.

"She never lets us forget why PPGA matters," said Clark. "Even when it gets tough, she keeps reminding us that someone on this campus needs what we offer."



College Students Are Building Businesses While Still in School

By Alyssa Cortes

TAMPA, Fla. — In Jenkins Hall, Kaylee Priest, a freshman business information technology major at The University of Tampa, is painting her third set of nails in three days. Her makeshift nail station takes up the majority of the living space. The room smells of nail polish remover, and a soft hum of a UV light fills the air as dust flies. Priest, with her pink gloves, expertly drills away layer after layer of polish from her client's nail bed: one of her roommates and her best friend, Sydnie O'Connor, a sophomore allied health major at U'Tampa.

She claimed a roommate's desk to use as her station. Between classes, work, and deadlines, Priest has built a profitable nail business out of her dorm. She's not alone.

According to data from Companies House, the United Kingdom's official registrar of companies, the number of companies registered by students in the U.S. aged 18 to 25 jumped from under one hundred to over four thousand between 2021 and 2022. This trend implies that today's students are starting businesses sooner and more frequently than previous generations.

According to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM), 25 to 44-year-olds were among the highest rate of entrepreneurs from 1999 to 2021. The average age of entrepreneurs is dropping, and Generation Z, ages 18 to 24, is taking the lead.

According to a 2020 survey for Junior Achievement (JA), two-thirds of teens between the ages of 13 and 17 said they were likely to start a business or become an entrepreneur as an adult. A GEM 2023/2024 report found that nearly one-fourth of 18 to 24-year-olds are currently entrepreneurs, with over 20% intending to start a business in the next few years.

A student-run business can look like Priest's: a beauty empire in the making, but it can be anything from a local merchandise line or a wellness brand selling vitamins.

For Rowen Heeter, a junior marketing major at U'Tampa and the founder of health and wellness brand Vine Nutrition, creating a business is the combination of opportunity, resources, and a desire to build something lasting.

"The moment I realized Vine Nutrition had real potential was when we started getting repeat customers and over 1,000 positive reviews on Amazon from people I didn't know personally," said Heeter, who launched Vine Nutrition during his sophomore year at U'Tampa. "That was the turning point, I knew it wasn't just a 'student side hustle' anymore, it was a real brand and company making a difference."

Heeter was inspired to create Vine Nutrition due to a lack of transparency and

personality in supplement brands on the market.

For Heeter, the mentorship and competitions offered by U'Tampa's entrepreneurship program pushed him to create his business. Like many universities, U'Tampa provides students access to entrepreneurship centers, pitch competitions, and mentors who help guide them through the early stages of their businesses. Heeter said his experience highlights a crucial factor in the rise of student entrepreneurship: the availability of resources.

"I treat Vine Nutrition like a classroom; every challenge is a lesson that helps me grow both as a business owner and as a student of marketing," Heeter said.

Heeter's business, which started with a single health supplement, has grown into a reputable brand with thousands of sales on Amazon.

Heeter isn't the only student benefiting from U'Tampa's entrepreneurship center resources; Macey Breedlove, a senior entrepreneurship major, received financial aid from the University to help kickstart her company, HeyMacey!, an in-development makeup brand selling cosmetics aimed at tweens aged 10 to 15.

"Since before I can remember, whenever someone asked me what I wanted to do when I grew up, my answer was to start my own makeup company," said Breedlove.

HeyMacey! uses affirmations and positive language to teach young girls how to speak kindly to themselves while learning how to use makeup.

"I love makeup, but I definitely think the beauty industry has negativity woven in it... and if I could, I don't want any girl to grow up hating herself or feeling the way I did," said Breedlove.

Anna Vu, a senior entrepreneurship major at U'Tampa, has two businesses in the works: a podcast and a merch line.

Vu was inspired to create her podcast, Mindset On Trial, by her own healing journey and the self-help podcasts she benefited from. She wants to spread the message that you're not alone.

Vu started her merch line, Premium Prints Tampa, by painting and embroidering bags and selling those when she could. She plans to focus on making merch for Greek life, student clubs, and small local businesses. Her businesses are now startups. She's hoping to make them a profitable reality rather than a side hustle.

As an entrepreneurship major at U'Tampa, Vu came in with the mindset of starting a business while still in school. She said the university pushes the idea and provides access to the tools to start a business.

Vu said she's observed people becoming more driven, especially as they hear the job market is getting tougher. According to GEM, more than 60% of people said job scarcity plays a big role in their pivot to entrepreneurship. Vu said she believes people her age don't want to get stuck in the traditional 9-to-5 corporate routine. Starting a business is a way to break free.

"They have ideas, they have creativity, and they just want to be their own boss," said Vu.

For Priest, it wasn't the need for extra income that played a big role in her decision to start her own business, but a need to express creativity.

"Ever since I was a kid, I've been starting little small businesses here and there, making crafts," said Priest, alluding to her days in elementary school selling duct tape wallets.

She saw a problem — spending a lot of money to get her nails done and being unhappy with the final product — and decided to solve it.

"I've always done that my entire life, so it wasn't really a thought to me that I should start doing this," said Priest. "It was kind of just a next step."

She started doing nails at her house, first experimenting on herself and O'Connor.

Priest didn't originally intend for this cost-saving solution to become more than that.

Then it took off.

"People in my classes [would say] 'Oh my god, I love your nails.' And because I'm like, 'oh, yeah, I do them myself.' [They would respond,] 'Oh my god, can you do mine?'" she said.

Stories spread by word of mouth about the student who could paint intricate designs and 3-D effects on acrylics. Then, last spring, she found herself working out of her room at The Barrymore Hotel. She would move her desk and set up chairs, disinfecting everything and creating a cozy setup. Then, she would go down to the lobby to collect her clients and bring them up to her room.

"I look back at [that experience] like, wow, it's kind of amateur, but you gotta do what you gotta do," said Priest. "I've grown a lot since then with my work."

This summer, Priest became a licensed nail technician and opened an at-home office. After returning to U'Tampa, she got a job at a local salon called Frenchies, but she occasionally still does nails in her dorm. She's become her friends and family's go-to nail lady.

"I went to a regular [nail] spot beforehand, and I was always nervous to ask for dramatic nails," said O'Connor, while Priest files her nails. "What I love is now that I have her, I can be like, 'okay, can I do this crazy thing?'"

Priest doesn't intend to do nails after graduating from university; instead, she plans to work in project management for tech companies, although her dream would be to work on nails for celebrities and on red carpets. Yet, she enjoys what she's doing now and knows she will always have some type of creative outlet and potential side hustle in the future.

Priest sighs from her makeshift setup in her dorm's common area, her tone playfully sad as she talks to O'Connor about her nail design that's far simpler than what she usually requests.

"I need something that's going to match both my costumes," said O'Connor, referencing Halloween, which is two days away. She's planning to go as a princess and a showgirl.

"Don't move," Priest instructed, then laughed. "I'm not as mean to my regular clients."

"It's just to me," said O'Connor, laughing with Priest as she settles comfortably into the chair, just as she has every three weeks for nearly a year, as her roommate puts her skills to work.

Kaylee Priest is pictured in her at-home office, where she took clients from her house last summer. Photo courtesy of Kaylee Priest.



UTampa Announces the Science Center, A Building Bringing Students Closer to STEM

By Hayden Randolph

TAMPA, Fla. — The University of Tampa recently announced the Science Center, a building to promote scientific research on campus.

The 153,000 square-foot building will include 25 teaching laboratories, 23 research laboratories, 73 faculty offices, three microscopy rooms, four aquarium research laboratories, and more STEM resources, according to a press release from The University of Tampa.

The Science Center will include several laboratories for faculty and students. (Photo Courtesy of The University of Tampa.)

"The building was benchmarked against some of the best STEM facilities in the country," Paul Greenwood, dean of the College of Natural and Health Sciences said. "The architectural firm and the many faculty working with them have done a remarkable job making the building uniquely suited to the needs and personality of the University of Tampa."

The Science Center will include a Riverside Garden, Entrance Plaza, and Northeast Quadrangle, according to a press release from the University of Tampa. These outdoor spaces will be available for use to students.

"The part of the building that faces the river is almost all for students, including all the teaching labs and all the student gathering spaces," Greenwood said. "Besides popping over to the Grand Center for a bite to eat or a cup of coffee, it will be possible for some students to spend their entire day in the Science Center."

The construction of the Science Center is being partly supported by the Dickey family who previously were honored in the title of Dickey's Health and Wellness Center, according to a press release from the University of Tampa.

The Science Center was announced less than two years after the Grand Center opened in August 2024. The Grand Center offers student housing, faculty offices, and a parking garage.

"Our current situation has so many parts of both departments in different buildings, that the 'accidental intellectual collisions' that can rapidly advance STEM fields don't happen," Greenwood said. "Having all these sciences in one building will foster intellectual interactions across disciplines."

Greenwood said the work being done by faculty and students displayed the need for the Science Center.

"While some of our newest renovations and the Science Research Laboratories on Kennedy Boulevard are excellent,"

Greenwood said, "a tour of most of the science spaces on campus reveals that the excellent work being done by faculty and students calls for more exceptional facilities and equipment."

The Science Center includes several faculty offices (Photo Courtesy of The University of Tampa).

Lilliana Giddens, junior marine biology and environmental studies student at The University of Tampa, said a native plant garden should be included in the Science Center's landscaping.

"I'm a part of U'Tampa Plant Club. I'm really talking with professors and faculty to get this on the ground," said Giddens. "We're also talking with an organization called Little Red Wagon to help sponsor this native plant garden on campus."

Avery Saper, freshman pre-nursing major, said the Science Center is needed.

"Last semester, I took microbiology, but we could not have a lab," Saper said. "Our professor would always talk about how we should have a lab, but there was no space."

The Science Center is set to open in Spring 2029. Greenwood said the Science Center makes The University of Tampa more attractive to prospective students.

"Now, more science students, and likely students in general, will want to come here to be a part of this exciting university commitment to the students."



Photo Courtesy The University of Tampa



Photo Courtesy The University of Tampa
The Science Center includes several faculty offices.



Photo Courtesy The University of Tampa
The Science Center will include several laboratories for faculty and students.

BULLETIN BOARD

The Minaret

Join The Minaret, UTampa's student newspaper! Weekly meetings are on Mondays at 6:30 pm plus office hours in the Vaughn Center, 2nd floor, Room 211. These meetings are a chance to pitch article ideas, share updates, review upcoming deadlines, celebrate wins, and keep everyone on the same page as we work to put out the next edition of the newspaper. Follow us on Instagram (@theminaret) and email alyssa.cortes@spartans.ut.edu for more information. Everyone is welcome!

Sykes College of Business

The Sykes College of Business invites you to the 2026 Leadership Summit on Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2026! Attendees are able to connect with local business leaders, gain leadership insight and advice, and learn about hot topics in leadership. Amanda Silver is the Keynote speaker with a leadership panel featuring Bob Buckhorn, Valerie Lavin and Ora Tanner.

University of Tampa Athletics

Dear UTampa students, We are so glad you are back on campus for another great semester! Please study hard, have fun, and come to many Spartan athletic events! Check out when we play at tampaspartans.com. Have a great spring and Go Spartans!

Graduate Admissions

Stay at UTampa for Grad School! With UTampa2UTampa, current students and alumni can seamlessly continue to earn a master's degree right here at UTampa. Learn more at our Graduate Open House: Thursday, April 16, 5:30 pm, Jenkins Skyview Room. No RSVP required!

Macdonald-Kelce Library

Come join the library for the Spring 2026 UTWrites lecture series! All events take place in the library room #203, AV2. Discussion of current scholarship on memory with Sara Festini, Psychology, on Wednesday, March 4, at 4 pm. Reading from his new book Other Shane Hintons with Shane Hinton, English & Writing, on Wednesday, March 11, at 4 pm.

UTIV

UTampa TV: Student Television is in full swing this spring semester! Follow us on Instagram and YouTube @uttvspartannews and stay tuned for new content.

UTampa Law Review

Want to see your work published in an academic journal? Join Law Review on Wednesdays at 8:00 pm in Grand Center 151. Develop legal writing and research skills, strengthen your resume, and contribute to meaningful discussions on today's most pressing legal issues. The law affects us all—add your voice.

Roots & Shoots

Join Roots & Shoots! We host environmentally focused meetings biweekly on Mondays at 8 pm. We will be hosting a 2-day Environmental Youth Summit in Plant Hall on Feb. 27 and 28, 2026. Check out our Instagram @utrootsnshoots for more information!

Moroccan Yearbook

Did you know UTampa had a yearbook? Come write, edit, and design with us for the fall and spring semester! Staff will also learn the fundamentals of written copy and generating photogenic content. All majors are encouraged, with internship credit available for writing majors! For information, contact the editor-in-chief at kamilyah.mcmiller@spartans.ut.edu

Photography Club

The Photography Club is hosting a Valentine's scavenger hunt Tuesday, Feb. 10, from 3 to 5:30 p.m. in Bailey Arts Studio 116. Participants will explore campus and take photos from a provided list! Then, regroup to share their shots!!

STAFF SHOUTOUTS!

Welcome back, everyone! As we begin a new semester, I want to recognize some of the incredible members of our team, our section editors, who continue to make The Minaret what it is. Nicole Droeger Stephen, our News Editor, has done an amazing job adjusting to her new role during her final semester at UTampa, producing strong and impactful articles. Nicole is taking over for Faith Montalvo, who graduated this December and left the newsroom greatly missed after setting a high standard for what a news editor should be. Jaide Edwards, Arts & Entertainment Editor, truly thrives in her position, and her passion for her future career shines through in the effort she puts into her work. Emily McLaughlin, Opinion Editor, is in her third year as a section editor and is always eager to learn, grow, and take on new roles to support the paper. Terry Hunsicker, Sports Editor, has kept the team informed with clear explanations and strong attention to detail, transitioning into the role seamlessly. Gloria Falach, Campus Life Editor, consistently brings kindness, positivity, and reliability to everything she does. Kailey Aiken, Feature Editor, has written many standout articles and has a natural ability to connect with people, making her stories feel personal and lived-in. Leading our newest section, Hayden Randolph, Science & Technology Editor, consistently produces well-researched, engaging articles and brings fresh, thoughtful ideas to the paper. We're so grateful for you all and can't wait to see what you continue to do this semester!

-Alyssa Cortes, Editor-in-Chief

WANT TO BE FEATURED?

The bulletin board page will be a recurring feature in every print moving forward, which is released biweekly. Reach out to alyssa.cortes@spartans.ut.edu with any other announcements, shout-outs, or updates you'd like to share! Message needs to be 50 words or less.

