

OPINIONS

Technique • Friday, December 1, 2000

OUR VIEWS Consensus Opinion

Historically ugly

Hightower is an eyesore that needs to be demolished as quickly as possible—despite any supposed historical significance. The building has outlived its usefulness and, more importantly, the center of campus desperately needs additional green space.

Take a wrecking ball to it. Implode it. Hold a campus wide demolition party. Just so long as it's gone. It's the perfect, non-alcoholic activity to unite campus against ugly, dysfunctional buildings. GT SMART would love it. Please, we want green space—not a decrepit green building.

Housing inflation

Housing's recent decision to require an earlier and larger spring deposit for on-campus housing places a new burden on the student body, but its effects will not be entirely negative.

Requiring six hundred dollars in February for fall housing seems excessive. The timing of the inflated fee makes the idea even more absurd. Housing will slap students with this new fee before they fully recover from the sting of Spring tuition and fees. A waiver system needs to be put in place to alleviate the financial burden on students who lack six hundred dollars to commit to a residence that is, at best, uncertain.

Though the amount of the fee borders on the outrageous, starting the Housing process earlier makes perfect sense. By setting the process in motion in sooner, hopefully fewer students will receive phone calls in August telling them they have on-campus housing after they have already dedicated themselves to off-campus alternatives.

Our fridge is running

Thank, Coach Friedgen, for your many years of brilliant service to Tech football, and congratulations on moving up to a head coach position. Fortunately, Tech fans have nothing to fear by your departure. We have a great head coach in George O'Leary, a talented quarterback, and a team of strong athletes to carry us through another successful season. Why stop at three in a row when we can make it four?

Consensus editorials reflect the majority opinion of the Editorial Board, but not necessarily the opinions of individual editors.

UGA student speaks out: Tech Flagline does not deserve ridicule

I am a student at UGA and wish to write to the opinions section of your paper about the treatment of "flag boy."

As a member of the University of Georgia Flagline, I want to apologize for our fans' behavior at the game on Saturday as they ridiculed the young man dubbed "flag boy." I love flagline and consider it an art and form of self expression. This wonderful art form should be open to any gender. Some of the best flag spinners in the world are male. In fact, the current international marching band champion is an all male group called the Cavaliers. This state has made such great strides in tearing down gen-

der barriers; male cheerleader are accepted in society as well as female football players. I think the man on your flagline has more courage than all of the people that choose to make fun of him. I realize that this ridicule often occurs at Tech games and I can say nothing about that; however, I will say that for the first time, I was embarrassed to be a student here because of the derogatory comments, blatant bigotry, and outright ignorance of some Georgia fans. Congratulations, Tech Flagline, on being innovative and courageous.

Leigh Stanford
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Quote of the week:

"University politics are vicious precisely because the stakes are so small."

— Henry Kissinger



YOUR VIEWS Letters to the Editor

Thanks for the memories, Georgia Tech

Sweet memories are the paradise of the mind. Or so a fortune cookie once told me.

I don't think a thousand tears could adequately express my sorrow in leaving this place. It's funny. Some of us come here from far away, growing up not knowing anything about the school. Four years later, it's a part of our soul.

I would do it all over again a hundred times and then a hundred times more, but I wouldn't do anything differently. I wish I could go through and experience every moment again. Lucky for me it's all

captured in the still frames of my heart.

I'm so envious of the freshmen just starting on a journey so special. We all inherit this incredible legacy. We rest on the stones laid by those who have come before. We dream of leaving a little something for those who come after. And certainly we do. Ma Tech is forever shaped by all those who take the time to pause here—pause for the most exciting years of our lives.

I'll miss meeting so many people for the first time. The late night conversations about life and discov-

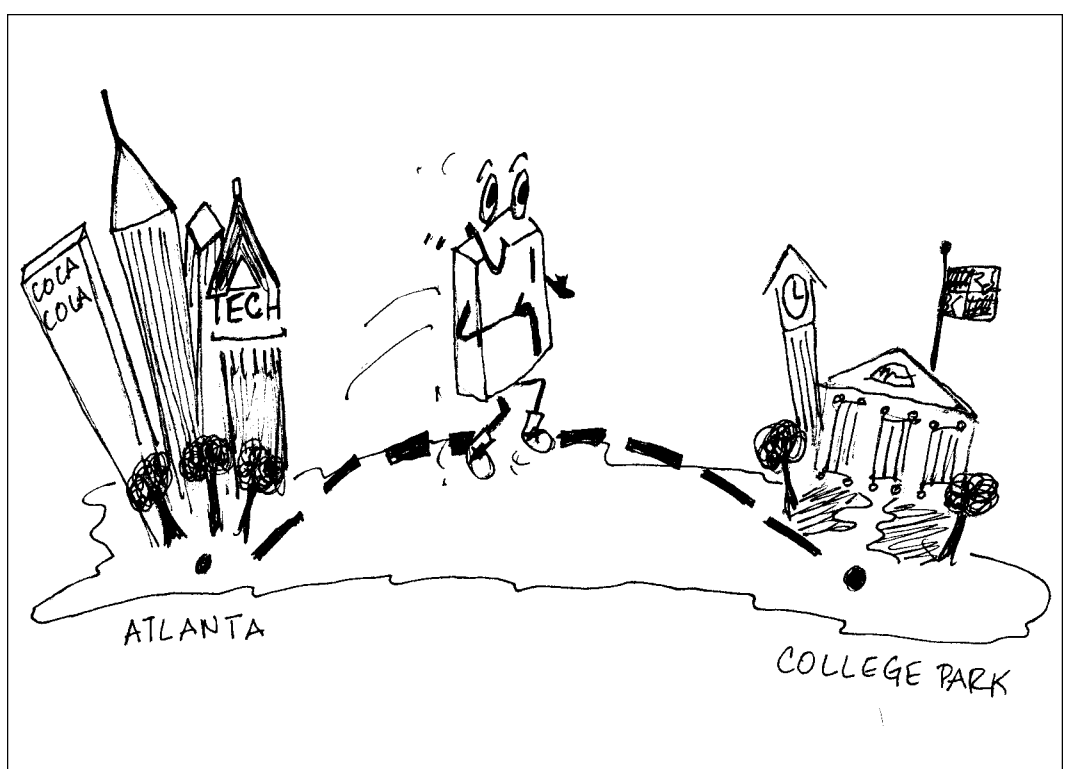
ering who people really are. The roaring crowd of Grant Field. The solitude of the library and the fight against final exams. The sound of breeze in Fall. The changing leaves and dropping temperature that point to a fastly approaching (and much needed) Winter break. Hearing UGA fans complain about another loss.

Exciting times. Amazing times. The best years of my life. I'll miss these.

I miss this place already.

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Cartoon Corner Editorial Art



By Jen Hinkel / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

“Pre-Olympic” Rob shares many, many years of advice

I first arrived on this campus as a freshman in August of 1995. That’s right, I’m pre-Olympic, and it’s time for my swan song.

I’m amazed at how circular life can be. At the outset, I could barely understand my classes. Now, I barely understand my classes. Then, being new, I hardly knew anyone. Now, being sixth year, most of the people I knew have graduated. Both times, I stood on the verge of nearly starting my life from scratch. Somewhere in between these times, things were different. I understood, I knew, I was established. But leaving Tech almost where I started (in measurable terms), it must have been what happened in the middle that counted.

Years of advice has been dispensed calling you to action, telling you to “get involved”, “do something”, or “aspire to something”. You can join organizations, save the planet, and get good grades all to your own glory. The question is this: What will you keep when the hand of God dashes your personal Tower of Babel to pieces?

Now that I realize that the long-sought destination of my five and a half years at Tech is back where I started, I am glad I chose also to learn from the path. Here’s a challenge to current undergrads: name ten people who were students here in 1985. I can’t name one. Chances are, in 15 years (and probably sooner), people won’t remember you or me either. Really, the only chance you have of your name being remembered after you’re gone is to wait about 50 years, donate a lot of

“I’ll miss the time here, but five and a half years is plenty of time to learn...it’s time to start another cycle.”

Rob Kischuk
Sports Editor



money, and get a building or college named after you.

Whatever you have done will probably be either undone or overshadowed, and all that you get to keep with you are the things you’ve learned and the relationships you build. The lessons to be learned are infinite, and the experiences make for good stories. While limiting you to my lessons would defeat the whole purpose and reduce things to an exercise in imitation, I’ll give a short list, so humor me.

Get a good grade without actually understanding the material. Often times, knowing how to learn is actually more important than the material at hand. Knowing how to solve a problem based on similar problems is useful. Specifically knowing how to calculate N-dimensional surface integrals will never help you after Calc III. You tell me which is the more important life skill?

Get kicked out of at least one organization. Do it on principle, and come to grips with the surrounding feelings of conflict, uncertainty, and rejection. Do it with confidence, and do it without harboring and resentment afterwards.

Quit at least one organization.

Not just randomly. Do it when you realize you’re just going through the motions. Do it because it’s only worthwhile to do the things you really care about.

Bite off more than you think you can chew. Take on tasks that are just beyond your grasp, so you can realize how much you underestimate yourself. It’s amazing how much more time you find you have when you’re busy. I’ve had the most free time in quarters (yes, quarters) that I was the busiest.

Join the Technique, as an editor, or at least something similar. So many organizations will let you slide by, shift responsibility, and the like. Find a major commitment that is neither optional nor transferable, your responsibility week in and week out. You may not even learn this lesson from your job.

Have a meaningless fling. I shock myself saying this, considering myself quite conservative, but it needs to be said. Use it as an opportunity to realize how much more valuable meaningful flings can be. I personally recommend finding someone worth marrying, but that’s my personal take on things.

Run your credit cards to their

limits, and spend the next several years paying them off. Cut up at least one of them. The lesson here is twofold. First, realize that your 36” Sony Vega makes life tougher—it doesn’t fit in your room, and makes it much more tempting to skip class. Then, learn the financial discipline it takes to pay the cards off.

Realize that you don’t have to go through all of this to learn the underlying messages. Repeating the mistakes of those before you is a sign of ignorance, and we are all ignorant sometimes.

Lastly, and this one is important, get to know the staff in Student Affairs and Success Programs. This one is serious. These men and women are some of the best citizens of this campus, vast resources of campus lore and wisdom. They are some of Tech’s most dedicated and genuine employees, and unfortunately also the most underpaid. Getting them a large pay raise will make it so I remember you in 1 years.

More than anything, the point is to learn. If you find yourself back where you started, make sure you learned something along the way. So, as I came in, I’m homeless, broke, and wary of the future. After five years in the working world, I’ll still be just one dot-com bankruptcy away from being back there again.

Tech and the world at large are great teachers, if you look for the lessons within. I’ll miss the time here, but five and a half years is plenty of time to learn, and being back where I started, it’s time to start on another cycle.

What are the key factors that motivate Tech students?

Students work hard for four, five years or more. Why do we do it? Money, love of academia are all possible reasons for busting your rear now. Find why you work hard.

It’s fun to observe (and sometimes judge) what motivates Tech students. For the majority of students, motivation is a necessity in order to graduate from Georgia Tech. A great part of Tech academia is endurance and one has to wonder what keeps someone going when you see him or her at 4 a.m... in a lab. Is it money? Is it a love for the area of study? I think there are some clear classifications of these types of students and I’ll present and judge each of them here.

The first and most obvious thing that motivates a great many Tech students is money. These students have dollar signs in their eyes when they’re slaving away late at night and then update their resumes the next morning. This type of student usually hopes to excel rapidly in a very high-paying career field and retire early. The Georgia Tech style of doing this is to pursue a particular area of one’s major that is in highest demand in private industry.

The example I’ll use here is the computer science specialization of database design. If you graduate from Georgia Tech with a decent knowledge of databases and have experience with particular database management systems, it’s quite easy to find a job that pays very well. This is a very popular area of study for the computer science students that want the easiest path to graduation with a degree in computer science and a means to make good money.

“Why are you working so hard to graduate from Georgia Tech? Ask yourself... are you proud of what motivates you?”

Matt Flagg
Online Editor



A much smaller group of students that are motivated by money take a much more challenging path to their goal. These students pursue discovery through invention, theory, or in general, the unlocking of a secret that has some very valuable application. What if a materials engineer unlocked the secret to producing spider silk, an extremely strong and flexible material?

I’m sure there’s plenty of companies that would pay big bucks for this. A less daunting task that falls in this class is that of invention. I’m willing to bet that something very valuable will emerge from the intelligent home project being carried out by some of our computer science researchers. It’s probably safe to say that those that pursue these challenges are most likely motivated by other factors besides money, but I’m sure there’s a small group here at Tech with hopes for more than fame and contribution.

Aside from money, a lot of Tech students are motivated by the simple need to do something constructive with one’s life. Unwilling to have an nonrespected career that

doesn’t require a college degree, these students have always done well in school and know how to work hard. Usually, these students have a hard time choosing a major since the truly decisive ones generally have a passion for the area of study in pursuit and are mainly motivated by this passion and less by the need to fit into society in a respectable manner. A lot of these students come to Tech because their family came here and have always told them college stories of tradition and pride. These students lean towards the college experience of campus life, athletics, and Georgia Tech pride when discussing Georgia Tech with their peers and away from the professors, projects, and in general, academia.

On the other end of the spectrum, we have the “hard core” students that are highly driven by their love of their academic area of interest. Determined to learn as much as possible and further contribute to their area of study, these students are strong candidates for graduate school and love to look for interesting undergraduate research projects. Instead of reading entertainment

magazines and novels, these students read textbooks and academic journals.

Sometimes it’s hard to determine who these kids are without talking to them. I know a lot of these kids who are very slack yet perform very well on tests and go on to graduate school. I think that most of these students would rather think and theorize than produce and apply knowledge. I also believe these students tackle the toughest areas of study and take pride in their passion of a subject that so many others hate and fear. Applied mathematics is a good example of a topic area that attract these types of students. I don’t know very many applied math students that aren’t passionate what they study. You really need to appreciate the art of proving and have a creative mind to excel in this area.

The next time you’re studying in the common area of your college of study, take a walk and try to guess what motivates the other students who are motivated enough to study along with you. I think there’s a clear spectrum of these types of motivation and by coming up with your own classifications, you can judge what really motivates yourself. Why are you working so hard to graduate from Georgia Tech? Is it the idea of graduation that drives you to work? Once you’ve answered these questions and reflected on your own motivation at Tech, you should ask yourself, are you proud of what motivates you?

TECHNIQUE

“The South’s Liveliest College Newspaper”
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MORE VIEWS Letters to the Editor

Take time to fill out online course critiques, win prizes

This is a busy time of year...you have to study for those final exams, finish up labs and projects, make your travel plans home, and maybe even get some holiday shopping in. There is one more task that should be on your "to-do" list: fill out your course/instructor opinion surveys at www.coursesurvey.gatech.edu. This is your chance to really make a difference in the teaching and learning environment at Tech. The profs really do read the results! Not only that, but their school chairs and deans also read the results to the first 24 questions. This data is used in promotion and tenure decisions!

In addition, the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning (CETL) provides

data from these surveys for your SGA Course Critique. So, by filling out these surveys, you help your faculty, you help your fellow students, you help Tech!

We are all in this, the educational process at Tech, together. Please give serious thought to completing your surveys for all your classes, now through Dec. 8. You will be helping to make a difference...and you just might win a PalmPilot or GT bookstore gift certificate in the process!

Questions? Contact CETL help@gatech.edu

Donna C. Llewellyn
Director, CETL
Billie Pendleton-Parker
Assistant Director, CETL

Blame Atlanta's air quality on suburbia

Of those students that commute, particularly during the summer, how often do you see a smog alert sign? Anybody who has attended Georgia Tech for more than a year knows how bad the pollution is in Atlanta. We can thank Atlanta suburbia for two reasons. First, the average worker spends two hours commuting to and from home every day. Second, only two metro Atlanta counties, DeKalb and Fulton, have MARTA.

Instead of a rail system reaching to all corners of suburbia as was originally envisioned, MARTA is stuck inside the Perimeter because of racism. Suburbia insists that MARTA, while giving easy access to downtown, would bring downtown to them, a downtown that would blemish the picturesque 300K homes and infinitely large golf courses. Then again, that's why suburbia exists: white flight. Residents com-

plain about traffic problems which could easily be remedied but aren't because of the color of downtown's skin.

Three things, above all else, come to mind when I think of reducing air pollution caused by Atlanta drivers. Here's a list:

Bring MARTA to the suburbs.
Revoke 50% of all licenses in a 50-mile radius of downtown Atlanta. Consider what would happen: workers would be forced to carpool, less licenses = less cars = less pollution, and people would be forced to use MARTA, which would eliminate MARTA's funding difficulties.
A random lottery, drawn every 3 years, with no preferences or politics involved, never hurt anybody. It will not happen, though, due to the simple dependence on Henry Ford's invention that is our greatest weakness as is illustrated by the recent surge in gas prices over the

summer.

Increase the minimal driving age to 18 or 21. Being past that age, I realize that it isn't important for non-full time workers to have vehicles. This is perhaps the easiest and least controversial move that the legislature could pass. However, they won't pass such a bill in the name of air problems. No, the legislature will protect teenage drivers from themselves instead.

In thirty years, you won't be able to go outside without putting on some sort of basic sunscreen. 10% of Atlanta will die from air-related problems in the next century. Your grandchildren won't be able to play outside for more than a few minutes at most because of the air quality. And whom do we have to blame but Atlanta suburbia?

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OPINIONS

share some opinions@technique.gatech.edu

Think of something over the holidays. Write under 400 words. Send it to me.