

OUR VIEWS CONSENSUS OPINION

Growing pains

Student Center overwhelmed even after renovations

Crowds of students swarming though the Student Center is a traditional rite of the beginning of fall semester, but the magnitude of the crowds this year point to challenges the Student Center faces in the short term and the larger problems of the future.

We commend the continued efforts the Student Center has made to accommodate students, but more must be done. While the new dining options in the Student Center Commons appear to be a success with students, the utilization of these eateries has been greatly hampered by long lines and a lack of seating space. Even if the current level of usage reduces by a third and efficiency increases, the current model for the Student Center Commons food court is unsustainable. More action is required in that area to alleviate the congestion, which will only get worse when the CULC opens.

All space in the Student Center must be studied for how it can best be used, and

priority should be given to services and offices with true need for a prime location on campus. While the Student Center should be the central hub of student activity, its facilities are stretched too thin right now and honing its priorities and offerings should help the problem. The transplant of Under the Couch saw it lose some of its charm and is a missed opportunity to change the programming of the area to better cater to the needs of students.

But those who run the Student Center are working with a lack of resources, and as enrollment increases, the deficit will only get worse. The physical Student Center is too small and is in need of expansion, a renovation or a complete replacement. Buildings for students services have not kept pace with either the jump in the number of students or the increase in the number of academic buildings. The administration must make it a priority to find a solution to this growing problem.

The Consensus Opinion reflects the majority opinion of the Editorial Board of the Technique, but not necessarily the opinions of individual editors.

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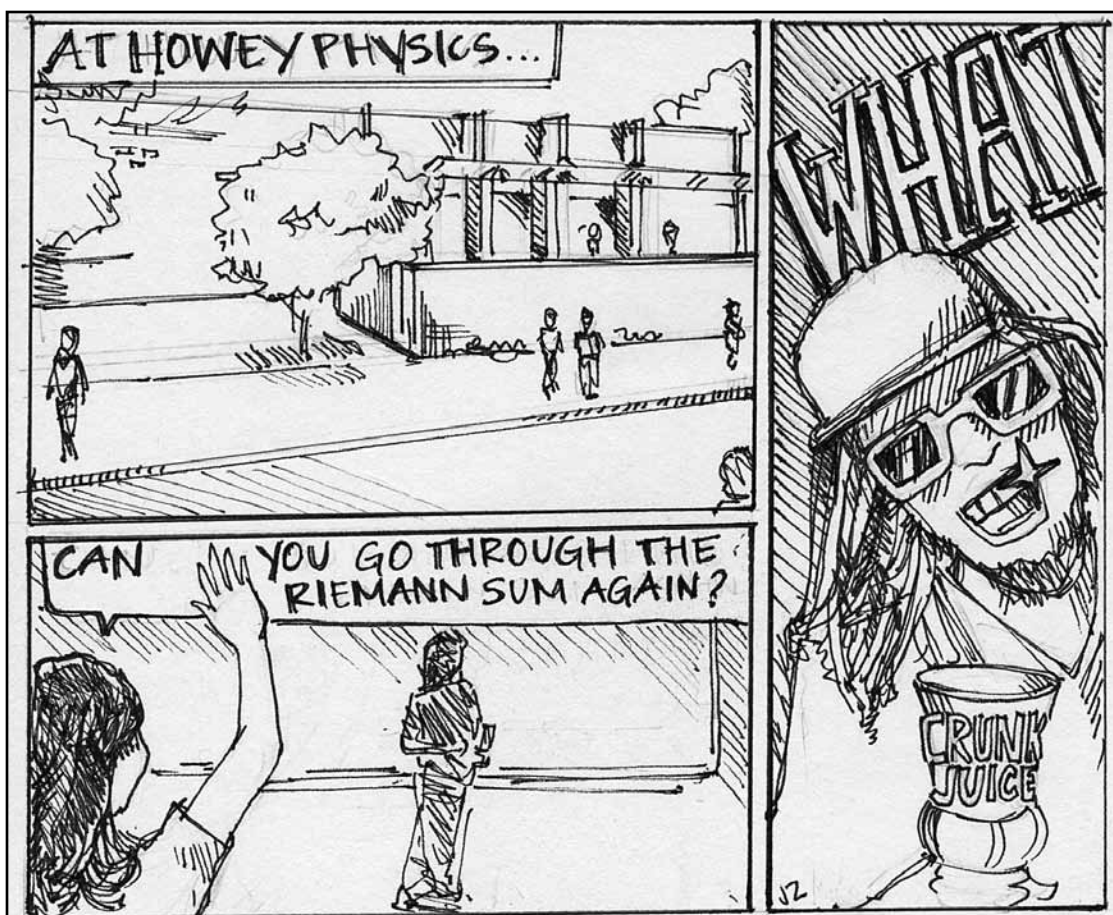
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YOUR VIEWS LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Mosque location lacks sensibility

Throughout the large protests that have flooded the streets, televisions, newspapers, magazines, and talk shows have been signs depicting individuals who disagree with the building of the New York City mosque within two blocks of where the Twin Towers once stood as being “intolerant” of the religion of Islam. Instead of pointing fingers at each other, we need to evaluate the cultural significance of building a mosque two blocks away from the most significant event in my lifetime.

We must first understand that the vast majority of Muslims are good people that obey the laws of their country and practice their religion in a peaceful way. The number of Muslims engaging in terroristic activity is a small percentage compared to those who do not. Most Americans wouldn't think much of it if they meet a Muslim in a social setting. Muslims come to the U. S. because of the wonderful opportunities this country has to offer, many of which come because of the affluence of Western Culture; yet the religion itself and the Arab culture have vast hatred toward Western culture.

The Sept. 11 terrorist attacks have become a very touchy and upsetting portion of our culture, just like any other country has its share of touchy and upsetting events. So my question is: why build the mosque at this location if you wish to participate in American and Western culture? I believe the members of this mosque have the right to do so, but I question the manners and the respect to understand the cultural significance of this area. Would building a Japanese shrine next to Pearl Harbor be respectful and well mannered? Would build-

ing an Antebellum-South museum next to the Martin Luther Kings center be understanding of the vibrant African-American culture in Atlanta? All these things have the intention of preserving or understanding certain cultural significances, but they all lack respect and manners.

The building of this mosque is a serious statement about the Muslim culture in America. I question why Muslims living in Liberal-Democracies in the U.S. and Europe sit in silence when leaders within the religion, like Osama Bin Laden, do these horrible things in the name of their religion and their God. Why does it take a talk radio show host or writer calling them out on this for them to admit the obvious truths of their religion? The Ground-Zero mosque developers need to not only understand the cultural significance of this area, but the pain and suffering the 9/11 victim families have gone through in the name of their God and their Religion.

James Padgett
Second-year MGT

Jailbreaking phones legal, inconsequential

By Casey Goodwin
Daily Cougar

Houston—Once you buy a smart phone, it is yours. There is no reason not to download any legally purchased applications or use that phone with a different carrier. Manufacturers should have no right to completely control how consumers use their devices.

Thanks to a new ruling passed by the Copyright Office, it is now legal for owners to use their “wireless telephone handsets to execute software applications” by circumventing the built-in security measures designed by the manufacturer.

It is also legal to use wireless telephone handsets on other cell phone carriers, as long as the owner makes that change. Tech savvy friends, competing cell phone car-

riers and outside companies cannot jailbreak your phone for you; the jailbreak has to be commercial and nonprofit.

Admittedly, this ruling is unlikely to change anything significant right away. There will be no surge of current smart phone owners jailbreaking their devices, since most people who want to do so already have. The people who have already jailbroken their phones will not have to deal with legal action.

Despite the fact that it is legal, jail breaking still voids the iPhone's warranty and the warranties of many other smart phones. As time passes and the computer-wise smart phone users refine the jailbreaking process into something simple, elegant and basic, there is a good chance that many smart phone users will leave their phones untouched.

Reverse racism, sexism impede debate

The first lesson a news writer learns when interviewing a subject, aside from journalistic integrity and the avoidance of bias in an article, what not to ask, otherwise known as taboo topics—religion, gender and race. While these topics can be approached when the time is warranted, but otherwise, this triumvirate of topics has generally become untouchable in any other circumstance. After all, these areas have always been sources of debate and discussion for thousands of years, causing in extreme cases violence and wars well into the beginning of time, and thus so should logically be treated with care and reverence in our post-racial society.

While our nation's culture has been described as a "post-racial" one since the election of President Barack Obama two years ago, the treatment of gender and race in our culture has evolved into a bastardized form of its former self. Somehow in our so-called "post-racial" society, the last two years have brought terms such as "reverse racism" into the vernacular of households across America. True, the issue of racism and sexism should never be pushed aside in a hush-hush manner, but instead be something to stir an open dialogue. However now, sexism and racism, the two formerly serious offenses, have become more and more exploited as



"The exploitation of reverse racism and sexism has been particularly evident on a national scale."

Vivian Fan
Managing Editor

tool for political advancement, and even sometimes a weapon to damage the reputations.

Even I will admit that as a high school student if I did poorly in a class, often times I would exclaim (without proper thought), "Oh, I'm not doing well in [Subject XYZ], because my teacher hates Asian kids." When someone would suggest I talk to the school administration about it, I quickly realized that the issue of my grades was less about color of my skin and more about the fact that I didn't study for the class at all.

The exploitation of reverse racism and sexism has been particularly evident on a national scale over the course of this summer with the plight of Georgia State Director of Rural Development for the U.S. Department of Agriculture Shirley Sherrod. Although Sherrod stated no wrong in a speech addressed to the NAACP, a two-and-a-half minute video of her speech that could have sounded like a vitriolic hate-rant. Rather than investigating the entire un-

ited video however (the speech in context was actually about how she learned to open her eyes against reverse racism), the clip sparked a firestorm of outrage from conservative politicians and media outlets alike with pundits such as Bill O'Reilly and Glenn Beck alleging reverse racism. At its peak, the controversy fueled criticism of the Obama administration (for Sherrod's ties) by the conservative Tea Party movement.

Yet, it begs the question: how damaging of an impact or how fair is it to allege a prejudice as devastating as racism or sexism just for one's own aims? Not to mention, the entire debacle just highlights how inept those making the claims are that they couldn't listen to the entire 20-minute speech to learn that the discussion was not one of hate at all. Rather, it was about the promotion of respect through all socioeconomic classes, an ideal that should be praised.

On the other end of manipulation and exploitation,

racism and sexism have also been used in the past few months as a tool to push forward the political careers of certain national figures. Sarah Palin, who has been touted by Fox News and a number other news programs as the "future of the feminist movement" with her "Mama Grizzlies" campaign, has used her own gender to rally supporters, with claims that anything otherwise is harmful to women everywhere. These forces acting against the "Mama Grizzlies" have been listed as "Obama, Pelosi and Reed and what they are doing to our country", which of course is a rather contradictory statement given that Nancy Pelosi, a woman, would be damaging everything in the name of feminism and the feminist movement.

My opinion is of course said not to diminish the seriousness of these two prejudices. Racism and sexism are two important issues that can still be found anywhere in one's daily life. Yet instead of pointing out at any possible instance of these prejudices, one should have a discriminating eye when it comes to these behaviors. Instead of using gender or ethnicity as an excuse, people should just begin to own up to their own inadequacy and ineptitude. Maybe the world's problems will be solved faster and easier.

ACC should make move on expansion

With constant talk of conference expansion and realignment filling the blogosphere and in some cases conferences actually making moves, the ACC must move quickly to avoid being lost in the shuffle.

While many believe (admittedly me before this summer) that Tech should find the closest lifeboat and get off the sinking ship that seems to be the ACC, the conference could position itself as a top three conference once the age of the super-conferences arrives with the Pac-16 and Big Ten.

The SEC is the weakest conference in terms of markets within its footprint, and as time goes on, that will hinder its future financial prospects. The Big Ten, Pac-10 and ACC could also trap the SEC as a regional conference, further hindering the growth of the traditional southern football conference. Unless the Big Ten sends Tech an invite, a larger ACC is the best for Tech.

There are some pie-in-the-sky candidates for the ACC, which are pipe dreams at best. The two that come to mind are Penn State and Notre Dame. So against what some over zealous ACC fans may say, Penn State will not leave the Big Ten unless Big Ten Commissioner Jim Delany completely drops the ball and does not appease the Nittany Lions with some eased travel schedule. The ACC is probably the Fighting Irish's second choice



"UVA should keep Virginia Tech in line, and if N.C. State wants to leave, the ACC should buy them luggage."

Matt Hoffman
Opinions Editor

for full conference membership, but that is a very distant second choice.

But there are also some candidates that do not meet the criteria to be in the ACC. Louisville, Cincinnati and West Virginia come to mind here. None of them have the academic merit to be in the ACC, nor should exceptions be made for those schools because none of them really bring that much to the table.

So who fits the bill academically but does not have much better options? UConn, Syracuse and Pitt come to mind. Pitt and Syracuse are members of the Association of American Universities (AAU) and UConn has its own academic merits. They all have well developed athletics programs and will increase presence in the Northeast markets.

I will concede that they do not add the football presence that other conferences seek, but it would create the greatest basketball conference and that should have a huge financial windfall for all the schools in the conference. And a strong

economic base will allow the conference to develop into a major football contender.

The potential fight with the Big Ten for these schools could also be avoided by making a deal that the ACC would destroy the Big East in exchange for those schools, which will allow the Big Ten to swoop up Notre Dame. It is a win-win for the ACC and the Big Ten. Granted, some guy at Georgetown Law will say that this is somehow illegal and unethical, collusion maybe, but Duke also produces great lawyers, so I like our chances.

This would put the ACC at 15 schools and would need one more to get to the magical 16. Here there are some options. First, an invite to Vanderbilt should not be completely blown off. Vandy is like the kid who grew up on the wrong side of the tracks but actually decided to do something with his life but struggles to ditch his old, dumb friends from the neighborhood. Maybe an opportunity to join a group of schools more fitting of their profile would allow the Com-

modores to sever their old ties.

A dark-horse, off-the-beaten-path candidate, which should not be overlooked is Fordham. Hear me out on this one. For those asking what is Fordham: it is a Jesuit college based in Brooklyn. They have decent basketball history, and their football team has played in both the Cotton and Sugar Bowls, albeit both appearances were during World War II.

They offer the New York market, and their basketball team would be competitive in a few short years with the ACC brand to recruit the New York talent. Their football stadium leaves a lot for the heart to desire, but with ACC money they should have the means to build one, or potentially use Yankee Stadium.

Now, the only thing to worry about is some school leaving the ACC. Florida State can be retained by reminding them that they are striving for AAU membership, and the SEC ain't going to help them with that. No one really wants Clemson, or Miami for that matter. UVA should keep Virginia Tech in line, and if N.C. State wants to leave, the ACC should buy them luggage.

Ideally, the ACC would get the three Big East schools, Vandy and Fordham and lose N.C. State. As for why Rutgers should be left out, it is simple: because they are Rutgers and should have never existed in the first place.

BUZZ Around Campus

What would you do with \$750 million?



Chelsea McQuade
Fourth-year CHBE

"Not work anymore. Give to charity. Buy Las Vegas."



Azfar Aziz
First-year CS

"Half to charity. Half to build a spaceship."



David Carroll
First-year ME

"Drop it, scream and run away."



Chelsea Thompson
Second-year CHEM

"Pay for college."

OUR VIEWS HOT OR NOT

HOT^{-or-}NOT

Bye bye swamp

The new irrigation systems and grass at the Burger Bowl are a much needed upgrade to one of the most common recreation areas on campus. The selection of the Bermuda grass that is specifically grown for athletic turf should be much more enjoyable than the lovely combination of mud and rocks most students dealt with in their previous years on the playing field.



Wake up call

While Tech is known for leaving students sleepless, normally a 6:45 a.m. fire alarm is not the traditional method of sleep deprivation. There probably would have been less outrage from residents of North Ave. North had the alarm been set off at 4 a.m. instead, since many students at Tech enjoy the wonders of Xbox Live and other online gaming experiences during this period.



Volleyballin'

Volleyball season kicks off tonight at O'Keefe Gymnasium by AMC. For students who have never attended a volleyball game, O'Keefe is an electric atmosphere on any given weekend. The Jackets look to improve on their successful season in the second year under Head Coach Tonya Johnson, who led the Jackets to the first round of the NCAA tournament.



Back to old tricks

Some things never change. The Stingers and Trolleys following each other around campus like a caravan, leaving students stranded for long intervals of time hoping to get a ride is one of those things. Here's a fun game: walk to class while a friend takes the trolley or stinger, and see who gets there first. Of course, spot the bus-taker 10 minutes just to make it fair.

Greek Life one of many facets available to Tech community

Welcome, or welcome back, to Tech. In the fall, the Institute is a fantastic place to be. Whether this is your first year on campus, or you've returned for your sixth, you're here at the right time to witness the perennial renewal of Tech in the oppressively humid days of late August.

Since last Spring, the Interfraternity Council (IFC) has made concrete efforts to improve Tech, the community that we all belong to. In May, we worked with the Dean of Students' office, as well as other student organizations, to craft and finalize a new campus-wide policy on hazing, which makes all student organizations accountable to the same strict anti-hazing policies that Greek life has promoted in past years. Along with the SGA, we collaborated with the Athletic Association to increase the number of student tickets allotted to all students and streamlined the ticket registration and actual gameday ticketing process. This past week, the Greek Councils hosted a Peer Education session that helped freshmen recognize their personal values, as well as understand how to combat some of the negative influences of collegiate life, such as binge drinking and peer pressure. Next Saturday, we'll finalize the roll-out of the Greek Recycling Program, a fully student-funded initiative which will provide convenient access to individual recycling centers for fraternity chapter houses, as well as all students on East Campus.

Yet as the new fall term starts, we're all offered an opportunity to experience Tech in a different way: by joining a new organization, contributing in a greater way



"Whether you are a freshman, sophomore or super senior, it is never too late to find a student organization."

Ashby Foltz

President of Interfraternity Council

than in the past or strengthening existing relationships with friends, new and old.

The Institute is buzzing with activity, and it represents an opportunity. Fall semester at the Institute is an opportunity to start fresh. I want to share with you the secret to happiness at Tech: get involved and give back.

This past week, around 450 young men and 300 young women joined one of the IFC or Panhellenic chapters on campus. Each one of these students made the decision to get involved at Tech in a big way. If you're one of the young men or women who took a bid this week—congratulations. Greek Life here at Tech is a fantastic, unique experience and opportunity to grow, learn and become lifelong brothers and sisters with fellow Jackets. You've joined one of the most lauded Greek communities in the southeast, winning multiple awards each year from Greek organizations across the U.S. Unlike other universities, Tech's Greek community is highly cohesive, where members see past their letters and extend beyond their individual organizations.

Greek life has been an integral part of campus since before Tech even began. The first fraternity came on campus in 1888, one month before the school term

even started. Institute President Isaac S. Hopkins, the first President of the Institute, recognized the need for an institution for students to both socialize and grow as leaders, in a values-based organization that would help change them into better men. Since that time, fraternities have played that integral role of both leadership incubator and social outlet.

Yet, fraternities and sororities are not the only routes to involvement at Tech. Whether you're a freshman, sophomore or super senior, it's never too late to find a student organization that provides opportunities to get out and get involved with fellow Jackets. In my three years at Tech, I've been involved in many different facets of student life—and they have all been immensely rewarding in their unique ways.

So as we start a new fall, welcome to the Institute. I urge you to get involved with campus organizations, be they Greek chapters, professional clubs or service organizations. You'll gain great friends, leadership skills, and experience first-hand the satisfaction of contributing to student life at Tech. Regardless of your affiliation, Greek or independent, there are two letters greater than those of a fraternity or sorority that bind us all together: GT.

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