FOCUS

Technique • Friday, January 28, 2005

BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

Just two blocks away from Barnes & Noble, Midcity Cafe combines a bar and cafe in a trendy, affordable atmosphere. **Page 19**

THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

So you're about to pop the question? Tech students who are engaged talk about what the commitment means to them. **Page 13**

Taking a critical look at the evolution debate

Cobb County's move to put disclaimers in high school textbooks sparked media attention and made evolution a hot-button topic. Tech's biology professors respond to the issue and discuss its relevance in a university setting.

By Joshua Cuneo
Senior Staff Writer

At an Institution that emphasizes science and engineering, it's hard to imagine that anyone—students, faculty or staff—would oppose the theory of evolution. In fact, to hear the professors in the school of biology talk, most students either agree with Tech's approach to evolution or learn to appreciate it.

"I find that a really large fraction of students coming in to our introductory biology class do not have a good understanding of what evolutionary theory actually says," said Jung Choi, an associate professor in the School of Biology.

"So when I explain it to them, I think many of them are amazed at how simple at heart the theory of evolution is, and how it's such a logical theory."

The debate over evolution has come to the forefront of public education once again, thanks to a move by the Cobb County school board to insert disclaimers about evolution into biology textbooks.

The disclaimers read: "This textbook contains material on evolution. Evolution is a theory, not a fact, regarding the origin of living things. This material should be approached with an open mind, studied carefully and critically considered."

A federal court recently shot down the disclaimers, finding that they convey an unconstitutional endorsement of religion.

However, the Cobb County school board voted last week to appeal the ruling, much to the dismay of biology professors statewide.

Choi organized a petition in support of evolutionary theory, which was signed by the entire biology faculty at Tech and a number other professors at neighboring universities.

"I'm appalled, of course," said Joseph Montoya, associate professor of Biology. "[From a] scientific perspective, there's absolutely no debate about the fact of evolution, and to see religious disclaimers inserted into science textbooks is very disturbing."

Several professors in the School of Biology expressed resentment that this particular field of biology was singled out for nonscientific reasons.

Todd Streelman, an assistant professor in the School of Biology, teaches BIOL4600: Evolution. "Evolutionary biology is a scientific theory, and that is what most evolution classes try to teach: critical thinking in ways of applying scientific method to evolutionary questions," Streelman said. "So when I see that school boards want to restrict the teaching of evolution or want to claim that evolution is only a theory, and they don't want to do this for other sciences that are just as theoretical, it's disappointing. It's singling out evolution for some reason that is

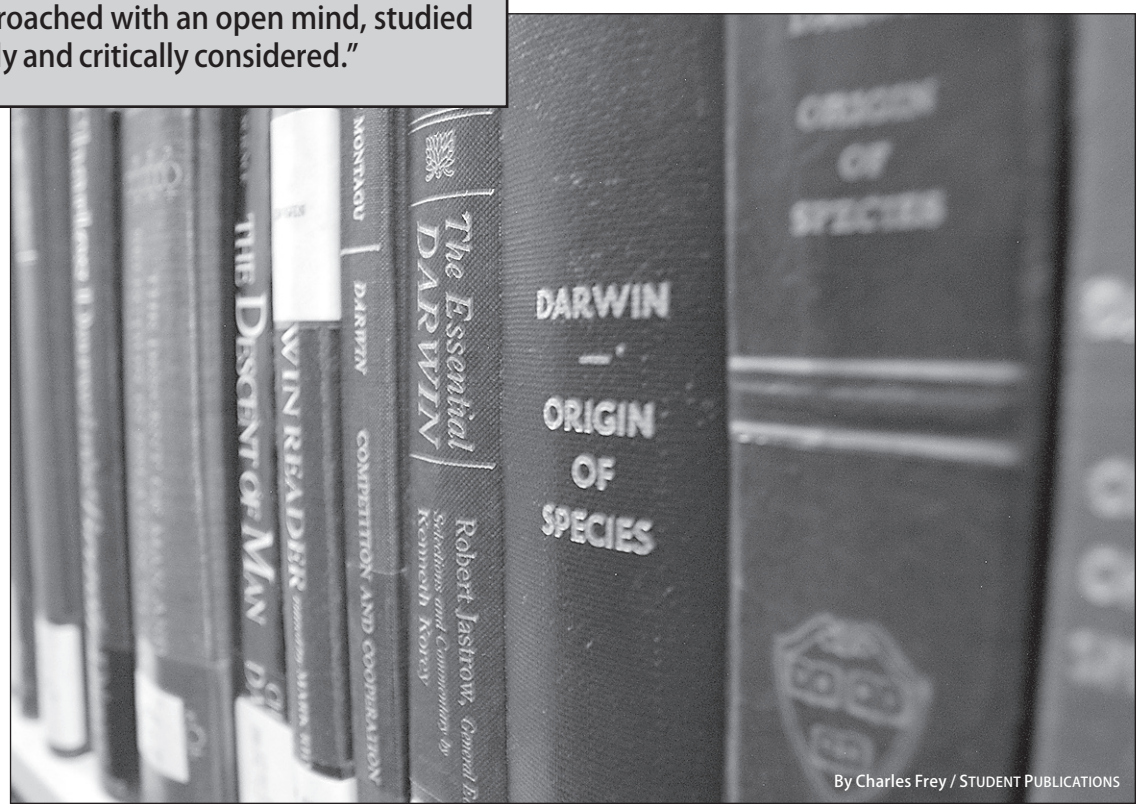
See **Evolution**, page 18

"This textbook contains material on evolution. Evolution is a theory, not a fact, regarding the origin of living things. This material should be approached with an open mind, studied carefully and critically considered."

"I feel bad, in a way, that evolution is still thought to be controversial when there is no scientific controversy over evolution."

Jung Choi
Associate professor

INSIDE: Read what students have to say, page 18



By Charles Frey / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Student survey looks at campus bike helmet use

By Phillip Tang
Contributing Writer

We see them going everywhere—zooming down Atlantic Drive, peddling up the hill and across the Campanile.

Biking is a popular form of transportation among Tech students, when the Stinger isn't available and the time until your next class is short.

But suppose you get into an accident and are injured? Are students cautious enough to wear bicycle helmets?

These and other questions about bike helmet use are what Michelle LaPlaca, an assistant professor in the Department of Biomedical Engineering, and Biomedical Engineering major Thomas Schneider tried to answer through their study.

The study, conducted by Schneider as part of undergraduate research, was meant "to correlate age, gender and other factors in helmet use," according to LaPlaca.

Data was gathered primarily through an online survey conducted through the Laboratory for Neuroengineering website.

The survey was composed of six questions, asking a student's year in school, sex, age, and whether the student wore a helmet and whether he or she had been in a bicycle accident. The last question allowed the stu-

See **Helmets**, page 17

New job? Here's some advice from co-ops past

By Swathy Prithivi
Contributing Writer

You've printed out your resume, dusted off your business suit, set out to find your dream co-op job or internship, and maybe, you've actually landed it. Now what?

Here is a guide for the new trainee/co-op/intern on how to navigate the choppy waters of corporate America—straight from the horse's mouth.

Paul Pearlman, a senior Electrical Engineering major, has co-oped with the Georgia Tech Research Institute for three semesters. He said new trainees should demonstrate their above-average skill sets "the minute they get to the workplace, so that the employers take you seriously and give you real projects to work on."

Pearlman also said punctuality is a very important issue in the workplace. On the other hand, another aspect is socializing. "Don't be afraid to get to know people, as you cannot move up in the hierarchy without it," he said.

Other important things, according to Pearlman, are working longer hours than expected and dressing at the same level as seniors in order to be taken seriously.

"Ask for help when you need it, but not all the time," he said. "Do not pretend you know something when you don't."

Eric Orrington, a graduate student in Industrial Engineering who interned with Medtronic for three semesters, had a different opinion, saying that sometimes, communication matters more than knowledge. "Practice selling your answer and making people buy into what you are saying, as opposed to always giving the right answer," he said.

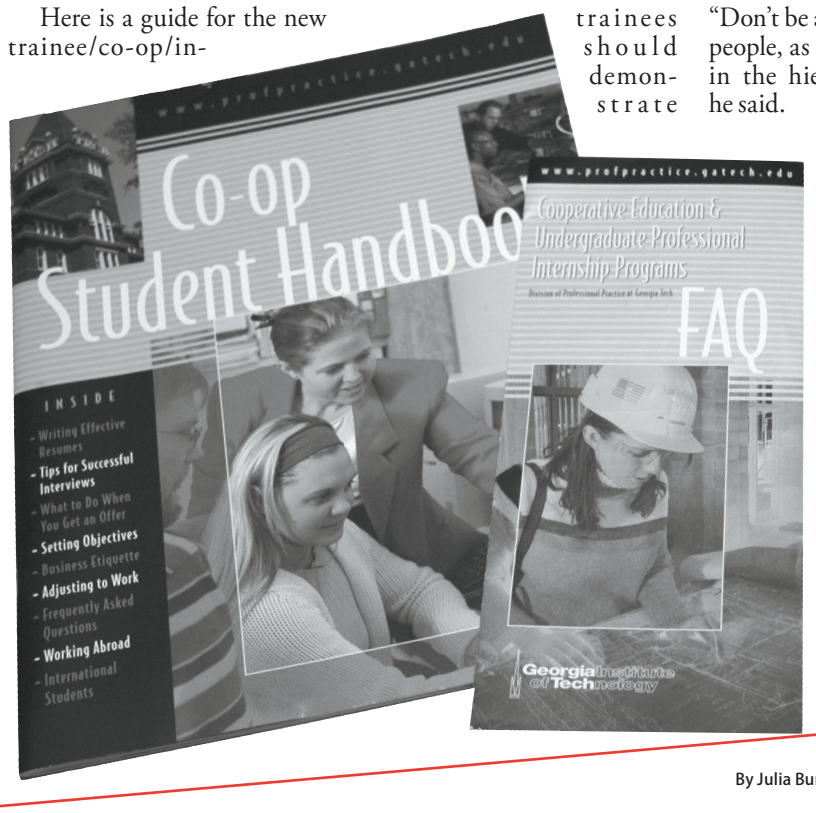
Like Pearlman, Orrington said it's good to prove your dedication by working later hours than expected. He also cautions against "expecting a vacation when co-oping or interning."

Orrington also stressed learning to be a "change agent and motivator" and not expecting to do all the work single-handedly.

MacField Young, a fourth-year Mechanical Engineering major, has cooped with Siemens three times and has international co-op experience in Germany under his belt.

"Communication will get you places," Young said, and suggested being "frank and

See **Co-oping?**, page 12



The Office of Professional Practice offers helpful information when you begin your foray into the work world, but sometimes the best advice comes from those who have gone before you.

By Julia Bunch / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Columbia U. residence halls offer laundry machine tracking online

By Lauren Hovel
Columbia Daily Spectator

(U-WIRE) Columbia University—The fear of stolen laundry, the agony of lugging a huge basket around, and the irritation of constantly checking for free machines will shortly be things of the past.

In March, a new laundry notification program will be installed in all Columbia residence halls. The digital system allows students to find crucial information online, like whether there are any open washers or dryers.

According to Herman Matte, director of Columbia Housing, the purpose of the system is to make life a little easier for students—by relieving some of their static cling.

The new system has two main components: one helps students locate empty machines, while the other lets students receive reports about malfunctioning ones.

On the Web site, charts indicate which machines are taken and how many minutes are left on each occupied machine. Upon request, the system can also provide students with e-mails to alert them of available machines or ready laundry.

Matte articulated even more features of the time saving system.

> "If you know you need three washers, you can have an email sent...when the next set of three washers are ready."
>
> **Herman Matte**
> Columbia U. Housing

"If you know you need three washers, you can have an e-mail sent to tell you when the next set of three washers are ready," he said. "Or, if you forget when you put your laundry in, you can check to find out when it will be done."

The system will cost over $10,000 to install, but Matte was quick to put the fluffy price tag in perspective.

"That's not cheap at all, but with 5,000 students, that's about two dollars a student. Service-wise, this program will pay for itself many times over," he said.

See **Laundry**, page 17

Co-oping? from page 11

straightforward."

He emphasized that one should not get "stuck doing gopher work or pushing paper."

If that does happen, though, Young said it is imperative to speak up. "Sit down with your boss and ask them for a clear outline of the job and understanding of expectations," he said.

He also listed some of the common mistakes made by people when looking for a company to work for, such as "only looking at big names... as medium-size companies are more likely to give more quality work." As his work experience attests, Young also recommended looking internationally.

Another fatal mistake is "not responding soon enough and missing deadlines," Young said.

Greg Dann, a Chemical Engineering senior who has co-oped with Citgo and interned with BP, agreed. "Show enthusiasm for all assigned tasks because everything is a stepping stone to greater things," he said. "Those 12 to 14 weeks set the stage for future employment, so be aware of that constantly."

By Julia Bunch / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

ME major Wendy Banh prepares for an interview. The transition between semesters allows students who are interviewing for positions to seek advice from those returning from a work semester.

Dann said it is useful to ask for an organizational chart. That way, he said, "You know the hierarchy of the people you are coming in contact with, and where your boss stands in the company."

Gayathri Balasubramanian, a junior in Biomedical Engineering, has just finished co-oping a semester with Kimberly-Clark. She said co-op can be a great way to widen your horizons.

"Get to know everyone within the team, department and even outside," she said. She recommended "using other employees as resources and talking to people even outside of scheduled meeting times."

Balasubramanian said a common mistake people make is to use paid time to play games or check email on the computer. "Regular employees don't, so co-ops and interns shouldn't either," she said.

She also echoed the importance of being thorough and disciplined and also of showing "what you can do for them on time and well."

Though somewhat clichéd, every single one of the students interviewed said that "attitude is truly everything."

They also stressed the importance of treating everyone in the company with courtesy and respect.

So whether you are new to a job or are returning back to one, take the advice of your peers and don't forget to have fun while you're at it!

Engagement: different couples, different considerations

By Kristin Noell
Senior Staff Writer

Most undergraduate students are counting the days until graduation, when they can enter the workforce and the "real world."

Some undergrads, however, are planning for the future in an additional way—by getting engaged or married.

But making the commitment also involves other considerations, such as planning for a future together, parents' reactions and finding time for a wedding.

Kelly Griendling, a fourth-year Aerospace Engineering major, met her fiancé Stephen in Houston, where she co-ops with NASA and he goes to school. He proposed while they were skating at Calloway Gardens, something they do often. They plan to marry there as well in July 2006.

Her parents knew the engagement was pending and were fine with it. Griendling and her fiancé have been discussing their engagement for about a year, after dating for about two.

"We've been talking about getting married after I graduate because that's when I'm going to be permanently down there. It seemed silly to get married before then, but it seemed silly to wait," she said.

Griendling does not think that getting engaged during college is a bad idea. "Now was a good time to get engaged because we needed that much time to plan a wedding," she said.

Griendling also says being engaged and being a student do not interfere with each other, especially since her fiancé is in Texas.

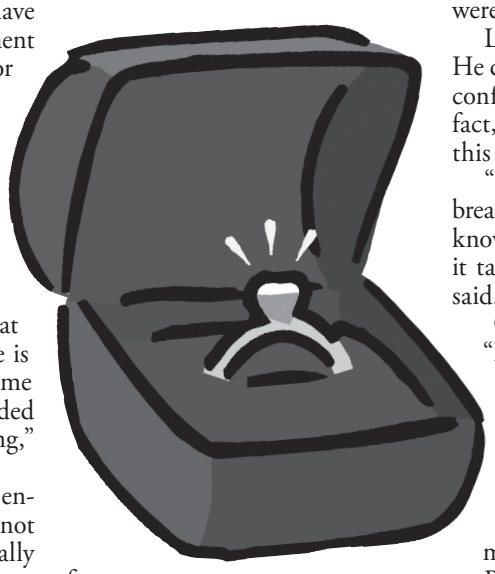
"I wouldn't say I like being away from him, but it's good to not have the distraction," she said.

As for the future, they're waiting to see what happens once Stephen has graduated and they know where they will have employment.

Fourth-year Mechanical Engineering majors Chow He and

> "We've been talking about getting married after I graduate...It seemed silly to get married before then, but it seemed silly to wait."
>
> **Kelly Griendling**
> Fourth-year AE major

Jennifer Robinson got engaged last semester the week before finals. They also plan to let their careers decide the



future, including when they get married.

Robinson and He met through friends their freshman year. They lived in adjoining dorms, and he was friends with her boyfriend at the time. They just started dating over this past summer.

They had no plans of getting engaged; it just happened. "It was right before finals week and I didn't want to study for finals," Robinson said. "So I said, 'Let's go shopping.' So we went to different rings stores...and I found the ring. We weren't really planning on getting engaged, but it seemed like the right time."

So how did she know it was the right time? "More like I knew it was the right person," she said.

He asked Robinson's mother's permission on Christmas Eve after he had already asked Robinson to marry him.

"She almost passed out," Robinson recalled. "She started crying... but eventually she was happy." They told his parents about the engagement the next day.

"My parents, they're worried about me and that I'm young and everything, but they love Jen, so they were happy," He said.

Like Griendling, Robinson and He do not think their engagement conflicts with being a student. In fact, it seems almost beneficial at this point in their lives.

"You don't have to worry about breaking up or anything because you know that's not going to happen, so it takes that stress off," Robinson said.

On the other hand, He said, "I can't really make any of my choices or decisions on a day-to-day level without thinking about where she's going to be or if I can meet her for dinner, things like that. You have less time, I guess, so you have to make better use of your time."

Robinson plans to go to medical school for internal medicine or cardiology, while he is going into the workforce. They have yet to set a date for the wedding, though they say it will probably be in about two years, "after I get a real job and have some money," He said.

By Andrew Saulters / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Fifth-year Mechnical Engineering major Elizabeth Kooymans met her husband Eric before entering college. They married in July 2004, and Kooymans is finishing up school while her husband is working.

Like Robinson and He, Amber Stewart and Eric Sapir, both third-year Management majors, dated for less than a year before their engagement. They met during FASET and lived in neighboring dorms their freshman year. Their respective roommates set them up on a blind date, and the rest is history.

The engagement was "more of a formality rather than the right time," Stewart said.

"We knew we wanted to get married," she said. "It made things official and solidified that we were going to be committed to each other."

Stewart and Sapir's ages also didn't matter when it came to breaking the news to their parents.

"My parents were really excited," Stewart said. "[My mom] was happy that it was an actual commitment rather than me just living with 'some guy.'"

For Sapir's parents, "As long as I'm alright, they don't really care," he said.

As students, their engagement has its pros and cons. When it comes to academics, "if anything, it probably helps," Stewart said. "It's nice to have companionship. We have dinner together at night and can relax."

However, when it comes to the wedding, Sapir admitted that it was

See **Engaged**, page 15

Graduate program melds engineering and business

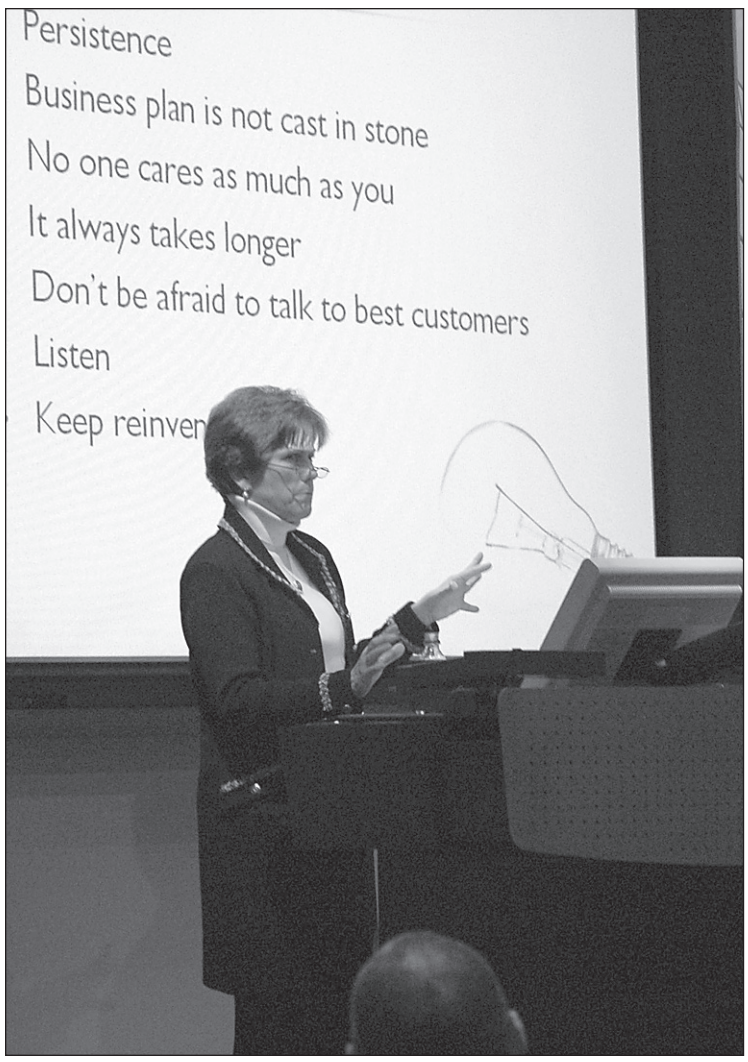
Want to start your own business? Engineering entrepreneurship certificate offers solid foundation

By Inn Inn Chen
Contributing Writer

Cut off from campus by I-85, some students often complain that Technology Square further separates management majors from the rest of campus.

Fortunately, there are plenty of programs that are tying it all together.

One of these programs is the College of Management's joint certificate program in Engineering Entrepreneurship with the College of Engineering.



By Amanda Thomas / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Mary Madden, president of Valubond, Inc., speaks last week as part of the IMPACT Speaker Series, which is sponsored in part by the College of Management's Engineering Entrepreneurship program.

This program is targeted specifically toward undergraduate and graduate science and engineering students. It is not open to Management majors.

As with any certificate program, the Engineering Entrepreneurship certificate requires 12 credit hours, with introductory core classes and a selection of elective courses.

The Engineering Entrepreneurship program was introduced as a university-wide initiative to offer engineering students access to management courses as well as market ideas.

Terry Blum, Dean of the College of Management, said, "[The courses] complement what the students learn in engineering...focusing on soft management skills."

These skills, according to Blum, include team-building, leadership and the ability to recognize market need.

The undergraduate and graduate programs were funded and formed at different times.

The undergraduate program began when alum Larry Huang endowed a Chair for Engineering Entrepreneurship. Dr. David Ku, a professor in the School of Mechanical Engineering and the founder of a biomedical company, currently holds this chair.

According to Blum, the program was created during the time of the "tech bubble," when anything seemed possible and the Engineering Advisory Board was "interested in getting engineering students complementary access to [learning about] value creation and start-up businesses."

The graduate program was supported by the Whitaker Foundation, and was originally for biomedical engineering students before the program opened to all non-management majors.

The program reinforces the growing trend of students pursuing management as a complement to their science and engineering classes.

Blum cites that about one-third of the credit hours taken in the College of Management are taken by non-management majors or those specifically in the certificate program.

About 30 to 40 students take the Engineering Entrepreneurship capstone class each semester. Blum estimates that 70 to 80 students complete the certificate program each year.

> "I don't think anybody has as comprehensive an approach for technology, entrepreneurship, and innovation as we have..."
>
> **Terry Blum**
> Dean, College of Mgt.

Pat Dickson, an assistant professor in the College of Management, teaches and facilitates MGT6789: Technology Ventures, one of the core Engineering Entrepreneurship classes at the graduate level.

Dickson's course focuses on how to commercialize technology. "Seventy-five percent of the course is looking for market application," he said.

According to him, market application includes not only looking for potential uses of an idea or product but also looking for real need and the right market and customers.

For one portion of the class, students must work on a semester-long group project in which they make a complete business plan.

For Dickson, teaching students from a non-management background gives him a different perspective.

"[The students] are the brightest group I work with," he said. "They know coming in it's a huge amount of work...[but they are] highly motivated and have incredible ideas." He estimates that groups put an average of 400 hours during the semester in order to develop the plan.

Out of the 20 to 25 business plans that are developed each year in his classes, Dickson said that about one idea a year actually makes it to the marketplace.

One such startup idea that made it to the marketplace is Radatec, a company formed by alumni Scott Billington, Jon Geisheimer and Dave Burgess. Radatec is now three years old and is located in the Advanced Technology Development Center at Technology Square.

Dickson said, however, that the Engineering Entrepreneurship program "is an educational program; it's not designed to start companies."

The Engineering Entrepreneurship program also allows students to take advantage of Tech's many academic partnerships.

"I don't think anybody has as comprehensive an approach for technology, entrepreneurship, commercialization and innovation as

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Engaged from page 13

a lot of planning. "We've got that huge planner," Sapir said.

Their wedding is set for July 2006, so there is a lot to be done before then. Like Griendling, Stewart and Sapir are putting their wedding together in pieces during the breaks.

Stewart said that a lot of people ask her if she misses dating, but she enjoys having that "settled."

"If I want to go out, we go out," she said. "We don't have to go find a date. We go out and have fun together."

"I don't think we're weird," Sapir said of their early engagement. "A lot of people date for four years and then get engaged. We'll be engaged for two years, so it's kind of equivalent."

> "A lot of people date for four years and then get engaged. We'll be engaged for two years, so it's kind of equivalent."
>
> **Eric Sapir**
> Third-year MGT major

The future is a little unclear, but they do plan to look for jobs that will help them in their goal of buying a house.

His family lives in New York and hers lives in New Jersey, so they hope to find work in that area.

Until then, "We have two dogs currently; it's like our little family," Stewart said. "Eventually we want to have an actual family with children."

Elizabeth Kooymans, a fifth-year Mechanical Engineering major, has made it farther down the marital path than most—she was married this summer on July 17.

Kooymans met her husband Eric at her neighborhood pool. "He was just graduating high school the following week, and I was just finishing my junior year," she said.

"He tried to sell me swim lessons, so we started talking, and we ended up going to get ice cream...It just went from there," she said.

Her husband graduated from Rinehart College last year and now has a job in Buckhead; the two share a townhouse in Duluth.

The two saw no reason to wait to get married, and planned their wedding for after his graduation.

"That was the important part, since he's the 'bread-winner'...so he would have a job and be able to support us," Kooymans said. "It worked out okay. He's making the money, I'm going to school."

In her opinion, her marriage has not affected her studies at all.

"Everything flows when you're in school," she said. "It's just like having a job and being married. You just have to balance your life and work it out."

Her parents, however, were less than thrilled when she chose to marry before graduation.

"[They were afraid] that there would be something that would hinder my graduation, like getting pregnant perhaps," Kooymans said. "But once they realized there's nothing that's going to stop me from graduating, they got over it and they were all supportive."

Kooymans and her husband are moving to Texas in June, where she will start her new job and he plans to start his own internet-based business.

Though Kooymans believes marriage is a lot of work, she said that preparation, including pre-marital counseling, can help prevent marital problems, particularly for younger couples.

And, after all, it's worth it. "Marriage is absolutely awesome," she said. "It's the way to go."

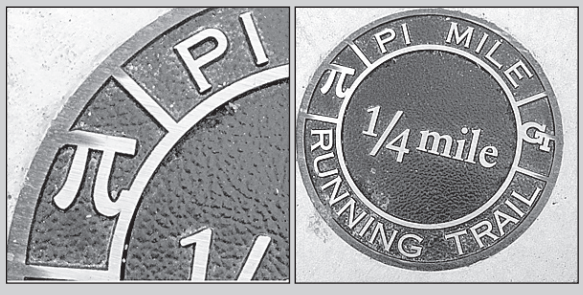
Tech Up Close

CAN YOU FIGURE OUT WHERE ON CAMPUS THIS PICTURE WAS TAKEN?

Email **focus@technique.gatech.edu** if you think you know the answer—and check to see if you won in next week's issue!

THIS WEEK'S PHOTO:

By Scott Medway / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS



Last week's Tech Up Close:
New Pi Mile running trail markers

Last week's winner:
Chris Dalbec

Come to our weekly staff meetings!

Tuesday @ 7:00 PM
in Room 137 of the Flag Building

Laundry from page 12

For interested students, the site also provides weekly usage reports that show each machine's activity for the past two weeks. Matte described an instance where the reports may come in handy.

"If you're down to your last two socks, the weekly usage report will tell you not to try to do your laundry at noon on Sunday because that is when it is the most busy," Matte said. "I think knowing what's available based on past performance is going to be huge."

> "The email notifications will let students know if their laundry is ready without having to run downstairs and check."
>
> **Michelle Oh**
> Columbia U. student

Michelle Oh, vice president of funding for Columbia College Student Council, hopes the system will end the big issue of laundry larceny.

"There have been incidents where people have had things stolen because they forget they have laundry in a machine," she said. "The email notifications will let students know if their laundry is ready without having to run downstairs and check."

Reports about machine failures will be checked regularly by Columbia Housing, and Matte believes that will speed up repairs.

"There are over 100 machines. Now we can know where the problems are and get them fixed quickly," Matte said.

Laundry-beleaguered students rejoiced at the news.

"I hate it when people take the wet clothes out and put it on top of the washer because you're two minutes late and it gets moldy," Walter Rahmey said.

Norman Yung agreed that the new system would be very convenient. He reasoned that if "you can check printer queues...why not check your laundry too?"

A few lucky students, though, remained above the fray. Jonathan Lauer said, "My mom does my laundry so it doesn't affect me."

The new site, created by the MacGray Corporation, will be accessible through the Columbia Housing and Dining home page.

EE Cert. from page 14

we have in collaboration with our partner schools at Georgia Tech," Blum said.

One program that is linked with the Engineering Entrepreneurship program is the Business Plan Competition.

The program brings engineering and management students into interdisciplinary teams that work to present their ideas at a competition in February.

"The business plan competition connects them to the real world," Dickson said.

Another graduate certificate program in Management of Technology also ties in with the Engineering Entrepreneurship program.

Robert Burgess, a lecturer in the College of Management, teaches the core class for this program, MGT6772: Managing Resources of the Technological Firm, which he considers an entry course to any student thinking about entrepreneurship.

Helmets from page 11

dent to enter additional information about why they did or did not wear a bicycle helmet.

To try and get a large sample population to take the survey, Schneider posted flyers at various locations around Tech. He also placed an ad in the *Technique* to call for volunteers in the online survey study.

To supplement the survey, Schneider used another observation data gathering method. He personally viewed passing bike riders' helmet habits in two locations: between the J. Erskine Love Manufacturing Building and the Instructional Center, as well as between the College of Computing building and Van Leer.

Schneider used Microsoft Excel and Minitab to analyze data from both the online survey and his observations.

> "Sex makes very little difference whether one wears helmets or not."
>
> **Thomas Schneider**
> BME student

The results of the survey were mixed. According to the online survey, a high percentage of bicycle riders wore helmets. However, when Schneider observed bicycle riders, he only saw a small percentage of them wearing helmets.

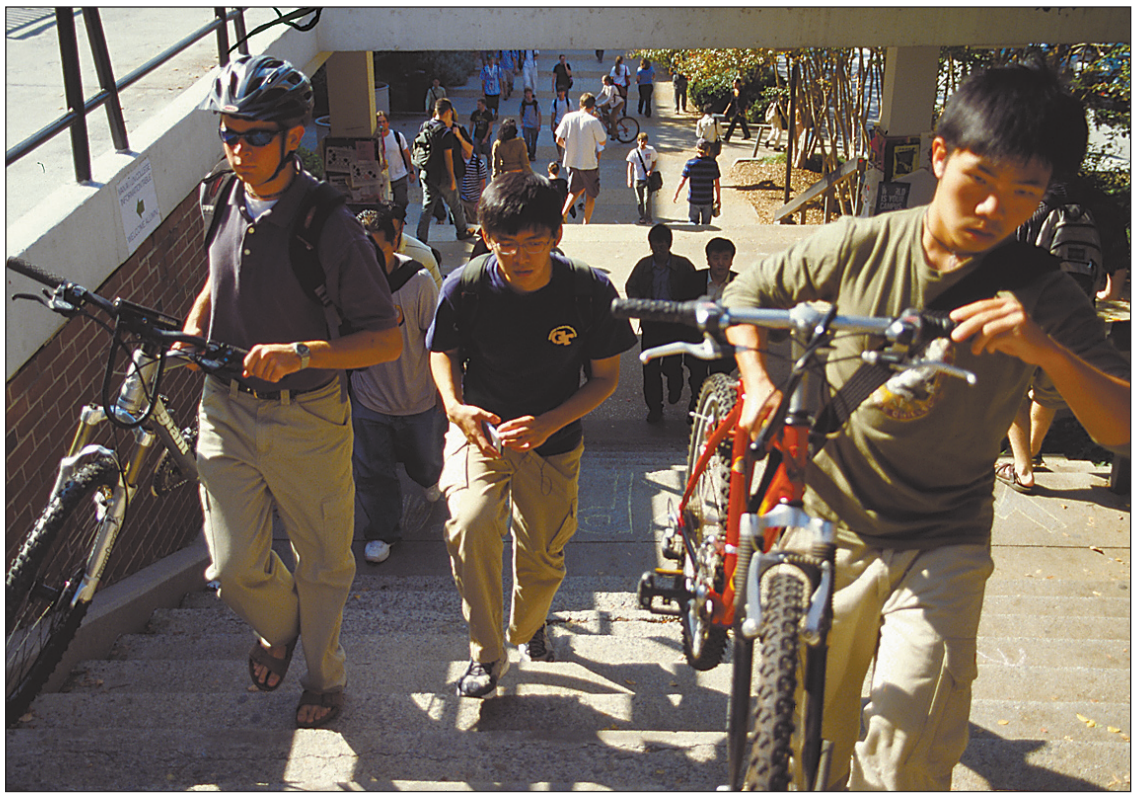
Schneider gave several possible reasons for the discrepancy.

"This suggests that an unknown variable is influencing the results on [the] online survey," he said. He also noted that people who wear helmets might have been more likely to respond to the survey.

Schneider also found that sex made very little difference when it came to wearing a helmet.

Age and year, however, had a high correlation with helmet use: as a person grew older, they were more likely to use a helmet.

Schneider also found that a popular reasons students chose not to wear helmets included the inconvenience of carrying it around campus. In addition, a portion of the respondents said that while they do not wear helmets on campus, they do wear them off campus.



By Andrew Saulters / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

BME student Thomas Schneider conducted a student survey to evaluate bike helmet use on campus. Among the results, he found that while gender did not seem to affect bike helmet use, age did.

Evolution from page 11

unknown to me."

"I feel bad, in a way, that evolution is still thought to be controversial, when there is no scientific controversy over evolution," Choi said.

Professors argued that evolution was a critical component of modern studies of biology and could not be downplayed in any science curriculum.

Streelman noted that evolution also plays a role in many subdisciplines of biology as well.

"Molecular biology, medicine, comparative biogenetics...almost all aspects of biology are rooted in evolution," Streelman said. "It's one of the few comprehensive biological disciplines...and so it's a really critical topic to be teaching a student."

"Evolution is such a central concept in biology that you can't really have a functional understanding of biology without evolution," Choi said. "And to the extent that people think that evolution is unfounded or still not completely there as a theory, then they're not really understanding biology."

Opposition commonly stems from people who support creationist views of history and argue that evolution is a scientifically weak theory.

In response, professors point to the wealth of data in support of evolution.

"If you look at the fossil record, there's abundant evidence of the pattern and history of macroevolution," Montoya said. "And then on shorter time scales that are experimentally accessible, there's a wealth of evidence for microevolution."

Besides, professors like Streelman point out that courses that study evolution are not promoting atheistic values.

"When we teach evolutionary biology, we are not teaching that there is no god. We're simply teaching the methods of a biological science," he said. "There are numerous evolutionary biologists who believe in God and believe that their faith and their science are just different ways to take a look at the world. And I think a lot of the students and a lot of the faculty in this community probably take that approach."

Choi, a Presbyterian and a member of his church choir, is one such faculty member.

> "Molecular biology, medicine, comparative biogenetics... almost all aspects of biology are rooted in evolution."
>
> **Todd Streelman**
> Assistant professor

"The only reason for this controversy over evolution is on the part of a certain fraction of the...conservative religious communities that are fundamentalist," he said. "It deals with the role of God [in] the literal interpretation of Scripture, and they somehow feel that it invalidates them or goes against their reading of Scripture."

Despite the various religious leanings of the student body at Tech, professors report that the controversy over evolution has little bearing on Tech's biology program or even on the Tech community in general. Most students, they said, are willing to give the theory of evolution due consideration.

"I asked my students on their final exam to hypothetically recommend a course of action for the Cobb County Board of Education," Streelman said. "The majority of the students said that...they should put a similar disclaimer onto every textbook from physics to history to social studies, because all of these textbooks involve theory, and all of these textbooks involve human interpretation of data."

"Other students wrote that there was no reason for this type of disclaimer...because evolutionary biology is a science, and that is what the textbooks tend to stick to," he said.

In fact, Montoya said only a few students have protested the teaching of evolution in their biology courses.

"Occasionally, I have students email and then ask why we don't have someone presenting creation science," he said. "The obvious answer is because this is a biology class, and the proper place for creation science or creationism is in a comparative religion class, which I'm not competent to teach."

Other professors, like Streelman, take the opportunity to lead a class discussion in competing theories on the origin of life.

"That's exactly what we want to begin class with, because that is how we can demonstrate that there's issues of faith that everyone can have...and there are matter of science that we will discuss in class," he said. "And no one seems to have any problem with that."

what students are saying

on the Cobb County disclaimers

"I'm kind of annoyed, really, that parents are generally trying to screw their children's education in such a manner. Honestly, if they want to teach their kids, if they want to disclaim something that their kids are being taught, then they can tell their kids at home."
—David Leuszler, second-year Computer Science major

"When I was going through grade school, the book we used basically defined all the major evolution theories, two or three kinds of creation and, I think, three theories for evolution. So in terms of how it should be presented in a book, I think it should just be: either present them all or don't present any."
—Michael Nolan, second-year Civil Engineering major

"I think that they're being a little bit absurd. I mean, it's a scientific theory. It's not fact, as a matter of fact, but neither is gravity. Neither is any other scientific theory out there at the moment. To put a sticker in a book saying this specific theory is somehow less proven than other theories is to simply ignore the scientific method."
—Phillip Hastings, first-year Physics major

"Creationism is a belief of Christianity, and it is being presented in Cobb County Schools through the stickers being put into the books."
—Whitney Rudin, first-year Biology major

on how evolution is taught at Tech

"It seems to be taught well. I haven't actually taken a biology class, but I've seen other students here that have, and they seem to be taught pretty unbiased, but I'm not exact on bias because I haven't taken the course yet."
—Hastings

"They seem to go over it pretty well. I've only taken an intro to biology course, and they seem to go over it pretty well, like, most of the technical details and stuff."
—Leuszler

"It shouldn't be specific...why just focus on evolution?"
—Katlyn Gordon, first-year Biology major