

OPINIONS

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Quote of the week:

"It seems only yesterday I used to believe there was nothing under my skin but light. If you cut me I could shine."
—Billy Collins

OUR VIEWS CONSENSUS OPINION

One year later

At this time last year, Technology Square was just finishing up. Restaurants and retail stores were moving into empty shop spaces, and students had yet to come back from summer vacation to discover that the side of Fifth Street across the interstate had changed. Now, one year later, Tech Square is proving that there are still things to look forward to, with a number of new restaurants and a specialty stores opening this fall.

Though Tech Square's patrons also include surrounding Midtown businesspeople, the student body is an undeniable part of its clientele, as well as a fairly accurate indicator of demand. Most students know which Tech Square venues have been successful and which ones have not: for example, the restaurants—Ribs N' Blues, Tin Drum, Moe's—have done quite well, benefiting from hungry students looking for non-dining-hall food.

And it was never surprising to find Celoe Paris, the women's boutique near Great Clips which closed earlier this semester, eternally empty: most college students can't afford high-end clothing, and then, of course, there's the ratio. In addition, sales at Tech Square have dropped 40 percent since summer semester began, showing more evidence of the impact of student patronage.

So Tech Square should, at least in part, reflect student needs and desires, and be oriented toward the Tech community. With that in mind, and setting aside all practical considerations, here is a wishlist of what we'd like to see in Technology Square:

What about a Blockbuster, so freshmen can spend a few Friday nights in the dorms instead of braving MARTA to get to Phipps? What about any sort of 24-hour convenience or grocery store, as an alternative to going to the BP on North Avenue at 2:30 a.m.? Perhaps a store that sells trendy, yet affordable college clothing might also be successful, as Urban Outfitters was when they opened a location at the University of Arizona. Also needed is a casual, comfortable and definitive Tech hangout, such as a coffeeshop or bar, that is open later than Starbucks' 10 p.m. closing time. And, on a more realistic note, could Marble Slab Creamery please get some tables and chairs?

Though Tech Square's shiny facades and smooth sidewalks remind us that it's only been a year, students have already begun incorporating its shops and restaurants into the Tech culture. Venues are starting to respond, too—for example, St. Charles Deli plans to offer new, cheaper options. Tech Square's location across the interstate makes it feel not quite on-campus, but in the minds and conversations of students, Tech Square is something that we're beginning to think of as our own.

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

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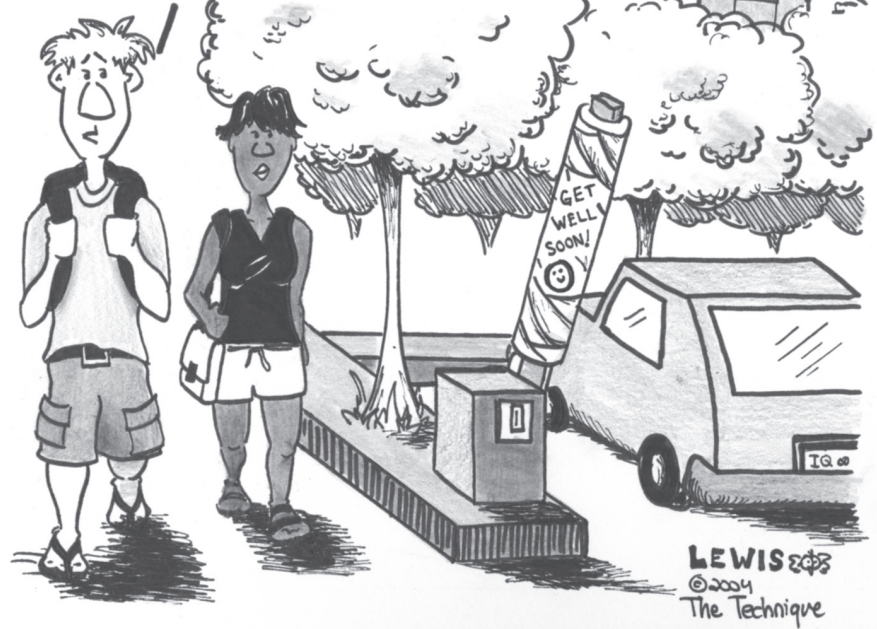
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\$500 FOR A PARKING PERMIT!
WHO DO THEY THINK WE ARE...
EMORY STUDENTS?



By Brian Lewis / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

An alternative to renting movies

We all know that Tech is an excellent engineering school, a top-ranked research institute, and that it is constantly ranked as one of the top ten public universities in the country by *U.S. News & World Report* magazine—but how many students even know that we have a drama department? And no, I am not talking about the Ferst Center; I am talking about DramaTech.

Although the Ferst Center of the Arts is located in the heart of our campus, and plays host to an annual lineup of performances featuring music, theater, opera and dance, it generally does not showcase Tech talent.

The website does make reference to the fact that the Tech Music Department performs several concerts at the venue during the year, and that DramaTech, "the campus theatre group that has its own performance space," performs one show at the Center each spring, but to the Ferst Center's mostly-Atlanta clientele, these Tech groups usually take second seat to more famous names.

DramaTech is a quaint student-run theatre that is situated behind the Ferst Center. I'm sure you've passed it before, not knowing what it was. The building has stained glass windows and a marquee that says "DramaTech" in bold print.

Interestingly enough, although the theater might be unheard of to students, it is the oldest existing theater in Atlanta, having opened its doors in 1947. All productions are primarily staffed by students, and are supervised by Greg Abbott, a member of the LCC faculty. Abbott typically casts and directs the show, while all other positions and responsibilities for running a theater are left to students.

And I mean all responsibilities: wardrobe, lighting and sound, set design and creation, running the box office, concession sales, and, perhaps most importantly, advertising and



"There still seems to be a poor turnout of the student body at most of the DramaTech shows."

Jessica Luza
Entertainment Editor

promoting shows.

With ample distribution of flyers and postcards publicizing the productions, not to mention the chalked advertisements on Skiles Walkway, there still seems to be a poor turnout of the student body at most DramaTech shows.

Perhaps some of this is due to the fact that after a hard week of classes, Tech students either just want to sleep or party. Or maybe it's because all these "engineering" majors aren't really interested in "drama."

Yes, Tech is an engineering school, but it has well-rounded students and a drama department too—a drama department that works hard and would like to feel appreciated every once in awhile. Going to a play might not be as cool as tailgating and going to a football game, but it is still a worthwhile and fun experience.

DramaTech actors, technicians, managers, council members and volunteers spend quality time in the theater working to make each production possible, sacrificing study time, Friday nights or their valuable summer vacations. Not only do the members of DramaTech love what they do, but they also want to share these artistically enriching performances with their fellow students.

I can say this from personal experience. As an actor in the current production of *The Importance of Being Earnest*, I can honestly say that I have volunteered over 50 hours of my time for rehearsal alone, and that is not including the hour-long

roundtrip commute that I have to get to Tech.

Technicians and stage managers spend the same number of hours, if not more, perfecting the set up of the stage and sound and lighting cues in order to ensure the smooth running of each show.

With all the time and energy that is put into the final creation of one production, one would hope that more Tech students would want to catch a show, or at least be interested in learning more about DramaTech.

Unfortunately, the typical theater attendees are friends of DramaTech and buddies or family members of the actors or technicians. I understand that a Brad Pitt movie might seem more appealing than watching a college-run play, but you will be surprised at just how professional and enjoyable a DramaTech show is. Plus, you can always rent the million-dollar action flick later; DramaTech plays are only around for three weekends at a time.

So next time you are in the mood to go out and see something, why don't you take a break from the movie theater and spending 20 bucks on a ticket, a Coke and some popcorn, and come check out the talented cast in one of DramaTech's current shows.

Brad Pitt won't notice if you're not in the theater, but the cast and crew of a DramaTech show will greatly appreciate the higher attendance and having you there!

Learning Turkish is harder than you think

To escape from Tech for my fourth and final year, I've decided to do an exchange program in Ankara, Turkey. While I don't actually speak Turkish (and there are these pesky frequent bombings in Istanbul), I really think that both of these are nothing compared to Tech's continuous shafting. Thus, I am willing to take my chances.

Now, I am sure that people reading this editorial have already heard a deluge of reasons about why they should incorporate a semester studying abroad into their college plans, so I shall try to refrain from mentioning how it can actually be cheaper and how much you can learn by abandoning that game of Halo and leaving your dorm room for another country.

Sitting in one of those proverbial boring Friday afternoon lectures last fall, I was pleasantly surprised one week with a guest presentation on the Brussels Summer Study Abroad Program. I got home, vaguely remembered all of the wonderful advice that I had received, and emailed the program coordinator, Dr. Birchfield. Six credit hours, four good friends, two very interesting professors, twelve fascinating cities and countless lectures later, I came home and decided that I had enjoyed studying abroad much more than an average semester at Tech.



"That's why I chose to go to Turkey—not Western Europe, Australia, or any other 'traditional' place."

Amy Schmisser
Focus Editor

Therefore, upon my return to Atlanta, I told everyone I knew to go to Brussels and, wanting to go somewhere else, I started looking into other programs that Tech offered. After dismissing all of the faculty-led programs (all too short, and I wanted a year-long program to maximize my time away from Tech), I discovered the wonderful world of exchange programs.

After many debates about whether I should be studying in Leeds, England or Ankara, Turkey, I chose Turkey, and immediately began putting off the long process of learning Turkish. Luckily, the university I'll be attending, Bilkent University, is an international university, and the classes are taught in English.

The pros of exchange programs made my decision to actually undertake one easier: classes will count for transfer credits toward my degree, and the Office of International Education offers a scholarship known as a

"tuition waiver" where out-of-state students have the chance to obtain in-state tuition, which will save me roughly \$13,000. And I will inevitably meet a lot of Turkish people who are very cool and very different from myself.

The cons for exchange programs differ from person to person, but there is a lot of paperwork, a lot of running around and annoyances to deal with, but the OIE people are friendly and helpful, and have adequately answered all of my 15,306 questions. I also have to pay Tech for fees...so, while I have to pay for the CRC (with the new waterslide!) I don't really get to benefit from it. On the other hand, I'll be living in an International House for about \$800/semester, so it kind of balances out.

One of the hardest parts of this entire exchange program was getting certain schools at Tech to approve classes. While some were quite considerate, quickly

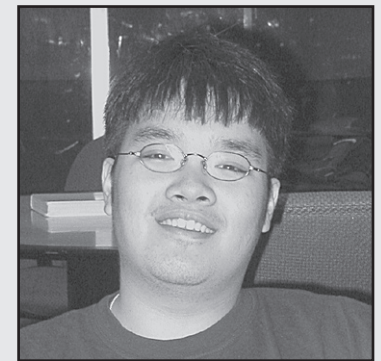
reading the syllabi that I emailed them and responding in a timely fashion with feedback about its suitability, others did not feel the need to respond...ever. So if you decide to do an exchange program, make sure to make friends with your advisor. However, now I'll never gripe about the preferences that international students get at Tech, because I wouldn't graduate if Bilkent University didn't give me priority in registering for the exact classes that I need.

In all honesty, I do expect to learn quite a bit from this experience: it will force me to look outside of my own ethnocentric world as I endeavor to understand a culture completely different from my own.

That's why I chose to go to Turkey—not Western Europe, Australia or any other "traditional" place. In those places, though there are plenty of opportunities for me to act as an "ugly American," there is little difference in the institutional political structure, Judeo-Christian heritage or Western dominance. In order for me to truly expand my own horizons, I must be able to embrace the ideas and beliefs of others; I must be challenged, not only about what I believe, but why I believe it.

Oh, and if anyone knows Turkish beyond "merhaba," feel free to give me a call.

BUZZ Around the Campus Where can you find the most obnoxious people at Tech?



Branden Lee
Fourth-year CompE

"The freshman dorms."



Jennie Long
Fourth-year IE

"CS class—the people that sit in the front row and make jokes with the professor that no one gets."



Shakeel Qureshi
ECE grad student

"The fourth level in the library, where people start talking after 10 p.m."



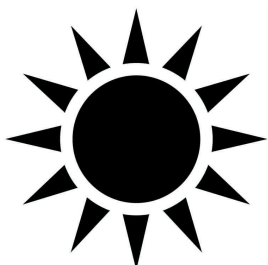
April Henden & Taneshia Marshall
First-year CS

"The most obnoxious people can be found late at night in the dorms!"

Photos by Lauren Griffin

OUR VIEWS HOT OR NOT

HOT- or -NOT



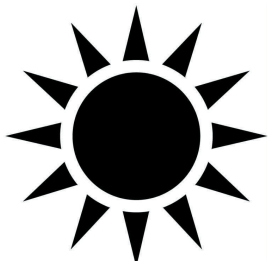
Online degrees

CAPP, the online degree planning system currently available on OSCAR, is still in beta testing, but we applaud that it's starting to become a reality. Even though many majors' information is not yet available, there is a lot of potential. Hopefully in the future it will make tasks such as switching majors, choosing a minor, and figuring out how much longer until graduation a little easier.



Freshman-time!

It's that time of the year again, when bright, starry-eyed freshmen come to campus for two days of FASET orientation, where they learn The Good Word, register for class and are taught that the ratio is "almost even" and that freshman dorms are "nice." Though their enthusiasm can grate on a jaded Tech student's nerves, there is some satisfaction in knowing that the optimism won't last long.



Whitewater it isn't

...but the waterslide at the CRC is finally open! Though summer camp participants may be enjoying it now, we can't wait until fall to see what the student response will be. Hopefully, Tech students will be able to let go a little, abandon their sense of decorum and pretend they're ten years old again.



Housing

Though fall semester is fast approaching, some waitlisted students are still expecting to hear about their fall housing assignment, while other students are having trouble getting the roommates they want. For many, this is done online, which may make it harder to find a person to talk to when a problem comes up.

Pop culture loses its cool

Courtney Roach
Oklahoma Daily

(U-WIRE) U. Oklahoma—Lately I have realized an addiction that affects most Americans without their knowledge, especially girls my age. Americans are addicted to celebrities. How big is Britney's engagement ring? Is Mary-Kate in a treatment center for anorexia or coke?

This addiction is a much smaller indicator of a bigger and more pressing issue: Pop culture. Part of the problem is that it is not possible to drive a half block without hearing about Paris Hilton's sexual antics.

Another side of the problem is that we have grown so accustomed to following what is "in style" that we forget there is a line between good taste, which can reflect an individual style, and plain ugly. The ugly is usually a reflection of mass-produced, over-priced designer items marketed to sorority girls that will wear them no matter what

because, hey, it's "in style." (Case in point: jelly totes. Seriously, take a good look at them. I have nothing against style, but a jelly tote is ugly.)

On the other hand, there are the few who openly reject the pop culture industry. This is actually a slap in the face to the idea of non-conformity because going against mainstream culture has become such a movement within itself that it is a trend. Kurt Cobain would be so disappointed to see rock become a "trend" that has degenerated itself to a point where 12-year-old pop princesses with glitter in their hair...are turning "punk." (Case in point: Avril Lavigne and her followers.)

I refuse to give up hope though, based on the fact that I have met people who seem to be truly original simply because they are not trying to market themselves as a certain brand of "unique." So rest easy, knowing there are truly original people out there, and you may be one of them.

Letter Submission Policy

The *Technique* welcomes all letters to the editor and will print letters on a timely and space-available basis. Letters may be mailed to Georgia Tech Campus Mail Code 0290, emailed to editor@technique.gatech.edu or hand-delivered to room 137 of the Student Services Building. Letters should be addressed to Daniel Amick, Editor-in-Chief.

All letters must be signed and must include a campus box number or other valid mailing address for verification purposes. Letters should not exceed 400 words and should be submitted by 8 a.m. Wednesday in order to be printed in the following Friday's issue. Any letters not meeting these criteria or not considered by the Editorial Board of the *Technique* to be of valid intent will not be printed. Editors reserve the right to edit for style, content, and length. Only one submission per person will be printed each term.

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