

OPINIONS

Technique • Friday, June 14, 2002

OUR VIEWS Consensus Opinion

CS allows collaboration

The College of Computing's decision to revise its policy on collaboration in introductory computer science is a step in the right direction. At the very least, the revisions show that the administration realizes that last semester's cheating scandal was not entirely the fault of students. While no one can deny that every student is responsible for his or her own actions, this revision of policy demonstrates to students that the administration is concerned about of Tech's learning environment.

The CoC has never shown reluctance to "tweak" its introductory courses, something that should be commended, as it shows that student feedback does have an impact on the course. This large overhaul in response to a large problem shows logical judgement. The department should continue to be unafraid to make adjustments to the course as it becomes obvious they are necessary.

Taking all of the above into consideration, the revisions to the policy are troublesome in many ways. One basic problem is that the committee that designed the changes did not include even one student. While it is obvious that academics and professionals should be given authority in designing curriculums and courses, the revision of the policy surrounding the introductory CS classes is an issue in which students should have a voice, especially in light of recent events.

Allowing collaboration, in and of itself, seems to be a good solution to many of the problems that the CS courses have faced in the past. Learning together is essential to grasping concepts that are alien to many students. The increased emphasis on tests may also lead to students having a better grasp of concepts rather than struggling to get code done for a homework assignment.

What is disturbing about this solution, however, is the possibility that the problems the introductory CS courses have faced may simply be shifted from one area to another. It is difficult to tell if the trials the courses have faced are a result of a policy problem or a result of a more deeply seated issues, such as the curriculum of the courses or the way that all students are required to take at least the first CS course. After at least some of the new policy's effects are known, the CoC should try to examine some of the deeper issues underlying the situation of last semester.

Beyond allowing collaboration, there are many other potential changes that should be considered by the CoC. First and foremost, the department should encourage more collaboration between professors and the TAs. Students would greatly benefit from such improved interactions because it would allow their TAs to be more effective. The department should also consider changing the course to a three-day-a-week course worth four hours of credit. This change would allow students to earn an amount of credit commensurate to the amount of time they must spend to make a satisfactory grade in the course.

From the CS scandal to the forging of resumes, this past year would make it easy to say that people at Tech are not honest. It is important to remember that addressing moral issues that arise is just as important to fostering an ethical community as is attempting to prevent such crises before the arise, something that Tech has systematically done throughout all of these issues. Without both proactive measures and a system that helps people learn from their mistakes, Georgia Tech could not truly call itself an Institution of integrity.

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

Quote of the week:

"Oh, the fear I've known that I might reap the praise of strangers but end up on my own." —Indigo Girls

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Emerging Leaders valuable program

As a co-chairperson (along with Bob Morton of Housing) of the Advisory Board of the Emerging Leaders Program, I read with interest your article and editorial about the program in the May 31 issue. I hope that additional information about the program might prompt you to reconsider your opinion that it is redundant to programs already in place.

You cite Freshman Council, FreshGA, and Psych 1000 as programs for first-year students which Emerging Leaders duplicates. Freshman Council consists of 30 students who are chosen based on leadership experience in high school,

among other factors. Amy Stalzer, who oversees FASET and advises Freshman Council, is a member of the Emerging Leaders Advisory Board and provides us with information to enable us to avoid duplication with other initiatives for first-year students. FreshGA was created by SGA to nurture skills and interest in students who will likely aspire to membership or leadership in SGA.

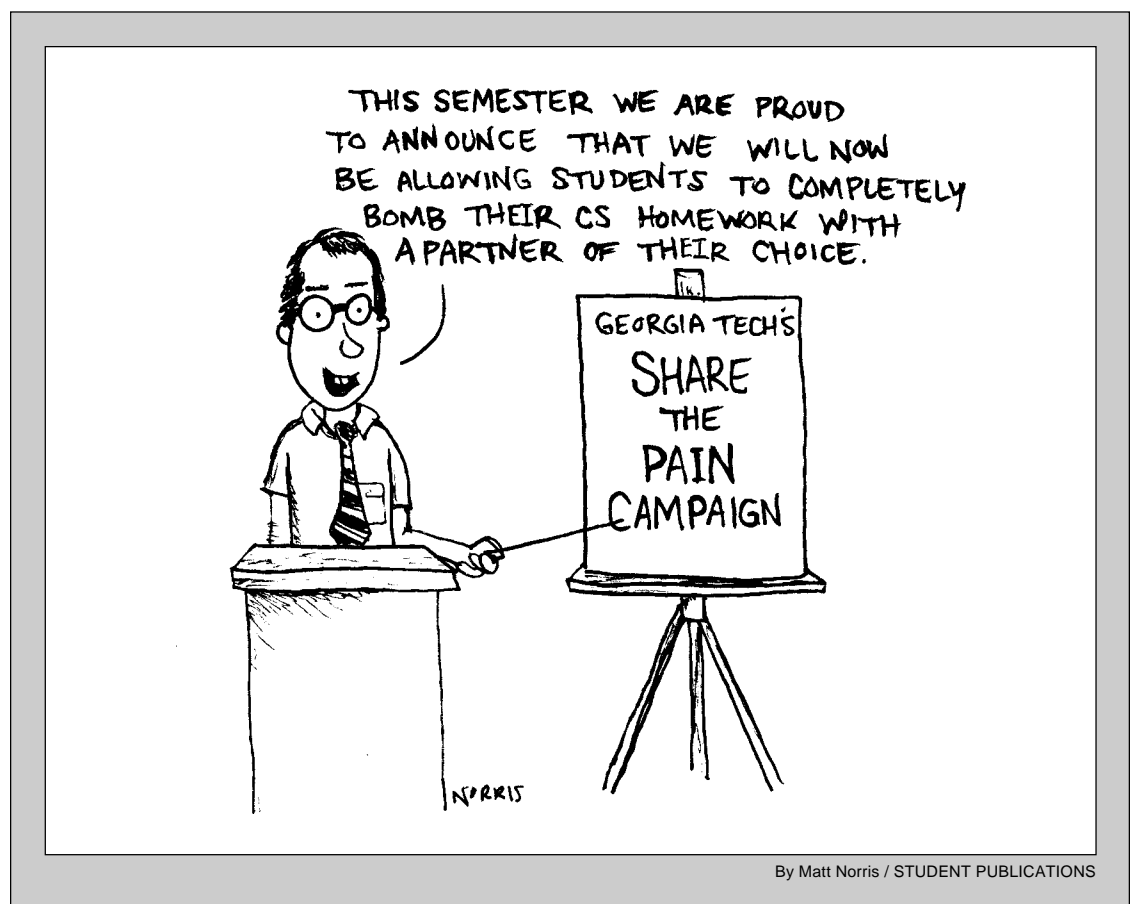
Although Psych 1000 has a leadership component, its primary focus continues to be the successful adjustment to college life.

The Emerging Leaders Program does not require any prior leader-

ship experience. In fact, it is our hope that some incoming students who do not readily envision themselves as future leaders at Tech will apply for the program. Initially, the program strives to identify and prepare potential leaders, not to offer opportunities to create new campus initiatives or programs for students who are transferring their leadership experience and skills to college.

After the participants have had formal training in components of good leadership, self-knowledge exercises and experiences, analysis

See *Leaders*, page 6



Tech construction could be more beneficial to students

Recently, I have felt absolutely overwhelmed with the amount of construction at Tech. While it is exciting to walk around and see so many new buildings at Tech, I am also sad because I know I will be gone and forgotten before many of them are completed. Beyond my occasional sentimentality, I am also suspicious that my recent flat tire was caused by a nail picked up from one of these construction projects.

The other thing I notice when I look at much of the construction is how much of it is directly related to either the quality of student life or academic research. The new Health Center and SAC II are both construction projects that will create amazing benefits for Tech students in years to come. Other improvements in this area are in the works, including the renovation of the stadium, a project that benefits practically every person at Tech, and the Home Park Learning Center, which will provide child care for some Tech students.

Many of the other buildings that are underway are meant for research and academic administration. This type of construction is also essential as it both accomplishes one of the main missions of the Institute and will provide more students with the opportunity to be involved in undergraduate research, definitely a worthwhile goal. While most of these buildings will contain some classroom space, teaching and learning are not the primary functions of these buildings. Tech needs to focus more of its energies on making sure that students have enough space for all the activities that are related

In order to provide students with a full and complete education, Tech must provide space for both academics and extracurriculars.

Sara Cames
Opinions Editor



to our education that are not time in a classroom or a lab.

Tech has committed itself to the idea that learning and leadership are intimately intertwined, a conviction that carries with it a heavy burden of providing the resources for students to learn both in and out of the classroom. The practical implications of such a position include providing space for students to work and learn together. In order to provide students with a full and complete education, Tech must provide space for both academics and extracurriculars.

Obviously there are some plans in the works that will greatly improve Tech's performance in this area. The Undergraduate Learning Center, whatever it will be called when it is finally built, will certainly be a vast improvement over the facilities that we have now. This center will include interactive, high-tech classroom facilities, lots of study spaces for both individuals and groups, and meeting spaces that will support all of the extracurricular activities that Tech students are involved in. In short, it will be a building entirely dedicated to improving the academic environment for students.

The only real problem with this facility is that a start date for construction has not been set yet although the plans and the space for the building have been ready for several months. This delay in construction is probably related to the fact that only one large donation has been made toward the building. How is it that the Capital Campaign can raise enough money for several academic and research buildings, but not enough for one of the most innovative, student-focused buildings in the master plan?

The Student Center is another example of the inadequate space that is dedicated to students. Tech's student center is one of the smallest in the nation in space-per-student. Currently, there are no plans in the work to expand or even renovate the Student Center. While everyone involved in both the Student Center Programs Board and the administration of the Student Center make good use of the space they have, there is simply not enough floor space for them to support all the programs that would be beneficial to the student body. Beyond programs, there are very few spaces conducive to studying in the Student Center, meaning that one of

the few buildings on campus dedicated entirely to students is not appropriate for one of the activities students do most.

Many other buildings on campus currently serve as study space for students but serve the purpose inadequately. The Student Services Building, my favorite space to study, is usually full during the day, and at night, many student organizations use that space to meet because of scarcity of space available in more appropriate facilities. The library, currently undergoing renovations, has group study spaces that are so dismal and morose, one is often forced to leave to regain the energy to actually accomplish anything. Clearly, there is a need for a new type of space that could be embodied by many of the projects mentioned above.

The way to solve these problems is for the administration to put more emphasis on student academic issues. Tech must encourage alumni to fund buildings that deal with student learning as well as those that deal with research and student life. Tech also must be proactive, innovative, and creative in finding and designing new spaces that will be dedicated toward the accomplishment of this goal.

With all of the talk about how academics and leadership intersect and how Tech is determined to produce the technological leaders of tomorrow, it is essential that Tech move these initiatives forward as quickly as possible. We cannot begin to accomplish these goals without the resources these buildings would provide.

Advice for males from a Tech female: there is no TBS

It only took me a few weeks at Georgia Tech before I started hearing about the classic disease that supposedly afflicts the entire female population of this school. Yes, the infamous Tech Bitch Syndrome, otherwise known as TBS.

Guys, it's not really your fault that you're not having much luck meeting girls here. We are just all arrogant, irritable, and get a rise out of leading on every guy we meet. Right...

"But wait, I never treat guys like dirt." It doesn't matter. Apparently the moment females set foot on this campus they become arrogant because they are in the minority and can afford to be selective when it comes to dating.

I can understand the complaint that there are not enough girls here, given the ratio. It's disappointing, though, that so many males here feel the need to validate their lack of a social life by simply writing off Tech's entire female population.

I heard generalizations like this even back during the last few months of my senior year in high school. Sitting in my first period class full of guys who had decided to go to UGA, I heard one of the junior guys comment, "It's a good thing you all will be at UGA... Tech girls are pretty ugly." I hope that foot tasted good. Ironically enough, this guy is coming to Tech in the fall, and probably with the same amount of tact.

Georgia Tech's female population, however small it may be, is diverse enough in personalities, interests, and even physical appearance that it does not deserve such broad, degrading generalizations. But

"Georgia Tech's female population is diverse enough that it does not deserve such broad, degrading generalizations.

Madhu Adiga
News Editor



for those of you who still insist that TBS is a valid affliction, perhaps it is in order for me to suggest a "treatment," so to speak.

First, remember this above all else: Just because a girl gives you the time of day does not mean she wants to go out with you. Your experience with girls will most definitely improve if you adopt the mindset of meeting people, rather than scouting for potential dates.

Whatever kind of mixed signals and hidden messages girls give out, I can assure you that "thanks for your help," or "it was good talking to you," does not translate into "Please ask me out!" In short, treat us like people, not prizes or pieces of meat.

Still, do not think that the various signals you put forth are enough to let girls know that you are interested in them. We are no more adept at mindreading than you are, and if you are interested in a date, do not be afraid to ask. All we ask is that you be patient enough to get to know us as people and establish some sort of friendship before you try and jump to the next level.

Here's a prime example of how not to act: At the 99x Downtown Rocks stage last Friday, the crowd had its fair share of girls who were hoisted on other people's shoulders

to see what was going on. This apparently excited one of the guys next to us, because every time he saw a girl get up on someone's shoulders, he promptly made use of the one word in his vocabulary: "Boobies!" Granted, some were happy to oblige, but this tactic will most likely not work on those of us who can pass a Breathalyzer test.

This brings us to the second tip: a date is not, I repeat, NOT an invitation to bed. Neither is a hand hold, or even a kiss. As hard as it is to believe, some of us college women do believe in waiting to have sex. If it is an issue you need to bring up, discuss it with her, but do not assume that she'll be ready when you are. This is one of the most important factors in respecting us, and expecting sex from a girl after the first night out is a surefire way to kill a relationship.

Third: Tech most definitely has its fair share of girls who are arrogant, irritable, and petty. Do the remainder of us a favor, though, and realize that the majority of us will only be bitches to you if you treat us as such. If you are going to pigeonhole us into categories, at least make sure you have options other than "they have TBS," or "they're ugly."

I am not a bitch, nor have I ever been one, and I certainly did not magically become one as a result of stepping on to this campus. And while I am probably not the embodiment of female beauty, I do not consider myself ugly either (you be the judge from my head shot). Most of us will show you respect if you show us respect.

Fourth, I'm going to let you in on a little secret: This is not just a Tech problem. Every college is going to have its share of females who are disagreeable, taken, or physically unattractive, and probably more so if the college has a larger pool of females to choose from. You knew the ratio coming in to Tech, and you knew what to expect. So make the best of it.

Know where to look besides that frat party you went to Friday night; ask your friends to introduce you to other girls, meet people through organizations and activities, maybe even venture off campus (gasp!).

Or maybe you just need to stop worrying about it and let things happen. It is ok not to have a girlfriend, and if you end up with a few good female friends in the process, the pursuit is not a total loss. Just think, those females probably know other females...

Finally, if you are still going to complain about TBS, at the very least have the intelligence not to complain about it to girls. You are not going to get any sympathy from girls when you tell them that they are all haughty and irritable. I don't really have any warm, fuzzy words for a guy who tells me, "You know what the problem with Tech girls is? They're either bitchy or ugly."

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Leaders

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of a text they will study, and group experiences, they will be encouraged to seek opportunities to lead on campus. Our intention is to provide a foundation to potential leaders who will pursue leadership roles in a wide variety of campus organizations.

Like Freshman Council, we have a selective process, but one which will look for students at a different level of experience from that group's members. Like Psych 1000, we have a learning focus for an extended period. Our focus is for a full academic year and is solely concentrated on the myriad of factors that contribute to sound and effective leadership. The Emerging Leaders Program will consist of weekly seminars, periodic guest speakers on leadership topics (whose presentations will be advertised so that others can attend), self-assessment tools, and group projects and interaction.

The program is managed by Georgia Tech graduate interns who are excited about organizing the program. Many campuses with leadership development offices have programs for emerging leaders as the foundation for further student leadership development initiatives. Such programs help reach new populations of students whose experiences as freshman will often pique a lifelong interest in the theory and practice of leadership.

I want to reassure the campus that the program has been planned from its inception with the intention of providing something which will augment existing programs. With an anticipated freshman class of over 2,200 this fall, surely there is a need for a number of programs in addition to the ones you cited and the new Emerging Leaders Program if we are to meet Georgia Tech's student leadership development goals.

Sally Hammock
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Question of the week

"What do you think of the new CS policy on collaboration?"



Buzz Around Campus



Feature and photos by
Christopher Gooley



Ahn Dang
ME PhD

"This should have been the policy in the first place."



James Holland
CompE Freshman

"Collaboration? Let me go ask my friend what that means..."



Courtney Brewer
CS Sophomore

"It's great! It helps students to learn together."



Michael Kettner
MATH PhD

"I think it makes sense. Before it was like, what's the point?"



Genevieve Wolff
MGT Senior

"It should have been implemented a long time ago."



Miles Thomason
CS Junior

"In the real world you collaborate. Exams should catch cheaters."

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