

OPINIONS

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TECHNIQUE

"The South's Liveliest College Newspaper"
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Quote of the week:
"The only way to get rid of a temptation is to yield to it."—Oscar Wilde

OUR VIEWS Consensus Opinion

Hello, Boston College

The addition of Boston College to the newly expanded Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) means the conference now has a total of 12 members, including the recently added University of Miami and Virginia Tech.

Despite the drawbacks this expansion will have on the Institute, including detrimental effects on the smaller sports that will now have to pay more for travel to schools farther away, a larger conference will ultimately be beneficial for Georgia Tech.

The first way many people are acquainted with a school is through the school's athletics programs; the more places the Georgia Tech name is known across the nation, the better it will be for the Institute as a whole in enhancing our profile.

Another benefit of the expansion will be an improvement in Tech's recruiting power. We will now be able to tap into the lucrative northeastern talent pool, since athletes who choose Tech will now be able to play away games in their home region. Also, since Boston is the sixth largest television market in the nation and Miami is also among the top markets, the ACC's television contract promises to be a lucrative one. The addition of a conference championship game will also add more money to the pot from which Tech will get to draw.

Forgive or forget?

The Student Government Association and several administrators have recently begun discussing the possibility of implementing a grade forgiveness policy at Tech. While the details are far from being set, and the project is still in the brainstorming stages, it is absolutely necessary for the decision makers to seriously evaluate what their motivations are for making these changes.

If the primary motivations are to increase Tech's rankings, then grade forgiveness is a policy that should not be implemented. If, however, the policy is being explored because of its possible benefits for students, then it should continue to be examined.

HOPE is another issue that needs to be brought up in the discussion of grade forgiveness—how will the effects grade forgiveness will have on freshman GPAs effect the in-state scholarship, especially considering the dwindling financial support the scholarship is facing.

Motivations, the HOPE scholarship and the many other issues involved in implementing a grade forgiveness policy must be explored before long-standing decisions are made.

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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SO ARE YOU
MANAGEMENT MAJORS
LEARNING ANYTHING
"TECHNOLOGICAL"
IN YOUR NEW BUILDING
AT TECHNOLOGY SQUARE?



NAH, JUST THE USUAL..
ACCOUNTING,
FINANCE, AND
HOW TO MANAGE
FOLKS LIKE YOU..



HEY, WHY DOES
THAT GIRL'S SKIN
HAVE A REDDISH
HUE?

OOOOO—
I THINK THAT'S
WHAT THEY
CALL A "TAN!"



By Matt Norris / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Grade forgiveness policy needed

In the last Undergraduate House meeting, representatives discussed a system of grade forgiveness, whereby students could retake failed classes and then substitute the retaken grade for the original one. I feel that if properly implemented, some sort of a grade forgiveness policy would make the adjustment to college life easier for freshmen, as well as making Georgia Tech a more attractive school.

This along with other changes would ease the introduction of freshmen into college in such a way that would increase the freshmen retention rate while at the same time not reducing the quality of our education. I also feel that other changes should be made to make a student's adjustment to college life smoother.

In order to create a grade forgiveness policy that will allow our school to still maintain its academic strength, careful consideration would have to be made as to how the policy is implemented. I believe to keep Georgia Tech at the forefront of engineering schools, the forgiveness policy would have to be limited to only first year or even first semester freshmen.

Regardless of what type of forgiveness policy was implemented, if it is implemented for upperclassmen, it makes a degree at Tech much easier to obtain and devalues past graduates' degrees.

To most of the incoming students at a tough school like Tech, the amount of work required to succeed is quite a shock. This combined with the fast-paced atmosphere of college life, with parties, fraternities, sports and most importantly, no parents, creates a huge learning curve.

I know my freshman dorm was about the rowdiest place I've ever lived, which made getting any amount of work done next to im-



"Some sort of a grade forgiveness policy would make the adjustment to college life easier for freshmen."

Scott Meuleners
Photography Editor

possible. When we were in high school, we were used to taking seven or eight classes a day, every day of the week and constantly being held accountable by teachers and parents to keep on our studies.

But in contrast, in college, we have to learn more material in less time, having class only two to three times a week, while at the same time not being held accountable for showing up to class. While this is a necessary transition to real life, it can be a tough one, and grades often suffer.

Instituting a grade forgiveness policy would allow students to get past their freshman year without these mistakes affecting their grades for their entire college career.

I know this type of policy would have helped myself and many other people get past their first semester woes. I feel however, that students should learn to deal with the increased load by the end of their freshman year, so grade forgiveness should not be extended beyond that time. If a student cannot learn to deal with the rigors of Tech by that time, and is still allowed to continue on, others' degrees would be devalued.

Grade forgiveness would have the added benefit of increasing the freshmen retention rate, as it would keep students here that would have otherwise transferred to an easier school to try and increase their grades. As it is being discussed, the policy would not get students out of learning the material, it would simply give them another chance to master the

material.

I also think that it is important to make sure freshmen take a reasonable course load upon entering. While it might seem like a good idea to take 18 hours your first semester, I can say from experience that it is not a good idea for the vast majority of sane people.

I think that a policy limiting the number of hours that a freshman can take would also help out greatly to ease the transition into college life for freshmen.

Policies such as this have been in place for many years at schools of the same caliber as Georgia Tech and have not tarnished the reputation of these schools.

MIT has the policy of making all freshmen classes graded on a Pass/No Record basis, whereby no grades are assigned for freshmen courses, and instead the course is only recorded if passed.

This does take a great deal of the burden off of freshmen, but I think that it is still important for freshmen to be held partially accountable for grades received, which is why I feel that the grade should be recorded, but not counted in a student's GPA.

I feel that a grade forgiveness policy that does not reduce the quality of education at Tech would make the Institute a more attractive school, while at the same time increasing our freshmen retention rate, not to mention the benefits this policy would have for the students.

Jewish opposition to new movie unwarranted

I have mixed feelings about Mel Gibson's newest movie, *The Passion of Christ*—especially regarding the fact that a human being will be trying to portray the feelings, thoughts and emotions that Jesus felt over 2,000 years ago. I do not believe any human can play the role of Jesus without contaminating it to some extent. However, I believe the message the movie represents will still be conveyed.



"There will not be any additional strain placed upon Jewish-Christian relations due to this movie."

Justin Partlo
Managing Editor

Gibson's film, expected to be released next spring, portrays the final 12 hours of the life of Jesus Christ. The movie's limited dialogue is filmed entirely in Latin and Aramaic with English subtitles.

While the producers' choice to limit dialogue and use a foreign language might create a problem for those of us who don't like to read and watch at the same time, Gibson believes it will make the film "more real" and will force him "to transcend language barriers with filmic storytelling."

The Passion of Christ will demand that the audience focus more on the actions rather than the words of the actors because of the foreign language. This constraint will make adequately portraying the role of Christ even more of a challenge for James Caviezel, the actor chosen for the lead role.

Gibson does not want his film

to be like other "sterilized religious epic[s]. I'm trying to access the story on a very personal level and trying to be very real about it." The danger in his goals for the film is that he and his cast will almost unquestionably end up injecting their own imperfect interpretations and viewpoints, especially in a film that will focus on the passion of Jesus.

In addition to the actor-role fit problems, the film is further tainted by the tremendous amount of negative publicity—mostly from members in the Jewish community. Their strong opposition to the film will detract from the positive message it is meant to convey. They argue that the film paints them as "bloodthirsty and vengeful," and many are afraid that it will harm Christian-Jewish relations across the globe.

I can appreciate why some Jews might feel that way, especially since most do not accept Jesus as the Son of God. How-

ever, I think their argument is invalid, because they are mainly concerned about the Christian reaction.

As a Christian, I already realize that the Jews were largely responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus. However, the Christian faith is based upon the belief that we are all equally guilty for the death of Jesus. The foundation of the religion is the belief that Jesus came to this earth for the sole purpose of sacrificing His life for the sins of the entire world. It does not endorse a crusade against the Jewish population living today for acts their ancestors committed 2,000 years ago.

Because this view is accepted by almost the entire Christian faith, the Jewish opposition is unwarranted. "Anti-Semitism is not only contrary to my personal beliefs, it is also contrary to the core message of my movie," Gibson said. "*The Passion [of Christ]* is a film meant to in-

spire, not offend."

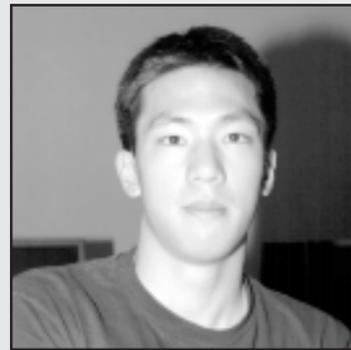
I believe Gibson's intentions are good, and I believe he really is trying to make an inspirational film for the purpose of spreading the Christian faith. Because Christians will generally agree with his statement, I do not believe there will be any additional strain placed upon Jewish-Christian relations as a result of this movie, except for the strain some in the Jewish community seem to be trying to create.

In light of the tremendous pressure on the nation of Israel right now, "for Jewish leaders to risk alienating two billion Christians over a movie seems shortsighted," said Ted Haggard, president of the National Association of Evangelicals.

As I stated earlier, I have mixed feelings about the film. I believe the message will be severely tainted by the unfortunate bad publicity the film is getting in addition to the impossible task of correctly portraying the true passion of Christ. However, I also believe the film is a great way for the Christian message to be spread to people who would not otherwise hear it.

While all the negatives could certainly reduce public support for the film, I tend to lean more towards favoring it because I believe it will have a profound impact the lives of thousands, perhaps millions of people.

BUZZ Around the Campus What do you think about midterm grade reports?



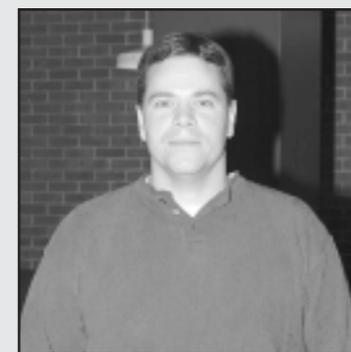
Ming Hsu
EE Sophomore

"Could have been better..."



Inder Singh
BIOL Undergrad

"They should correspond more to the drop date if at all possible."



John Simmons
CMPE Junior

"They help students maintain awareness of their academic performance."



Mohit Jain
CMPE Junior

"It's useless."

Photos by Lauren Griffen

OUR VIEWS Hot or Not

HOT-or-NOT



Gamers rejoice!

RHA has announced that it is planning to give East Campus's Brittain Rec a face lift in the coming weeks. The improvement project will include the addition of several arcade-type video games and possibly a food market similar to the West Side Diner. Comfy couches are sure to be the highlight of this promising project. The security of the games (and the comfy couches) from theft need to be addressed, though.



Where's the music?

IFC raised money and planned on having a concert/block party tonight, yet somehow they managed to drop the ball. Even though their bid was rejected by the band they were courting, IFC should have had a back up plan just in case precisely this happened. The lack of a block party type event leaves students without much to do at the Tech Square opening ceremonies. Unless, of course, you're looking for some free food.



No Cookie For You

On Wednesday, the campus College Republicans held an affirmative action bake sale. While this positive nod in their direction is not endorsing the content or political message of the sale, we here at the *Nique* applaud any political activism on this campus, especially activism that involves baked goods.



Samford Who?

The announcement that Tech is scheduled to play Samford University (not to be confused with the more distinct school to the west, Stanford) during next fall's football season is a disappointment, especially considering the success our team has had this year and the fact that Samford is a Division I-AA football team.

YOUR VIEWS Letters to the Editor

Israel not to blame

I read with interest Jody Shaw's column "Engineering World Peace," in the Oct. 10 *Technique*. I agree with some of what you said, but feel you misplaced a lot of focus. You asserted that Israel's strike on a terror camp in Syria derailed peace efforts. Yes, you did acknowledge the awful attack in Haifa, but you laid primary blame on Israel's strike.

You are wrong in that, Mr. Shaw. Ultimately the blame lies on the Palestinian and other militants/terrorists that aim to destroy Israel. Until they are defeated, there can never be hopes of peace.

Maybe you have forgotten (as I sometimes think former President Carter has) that Israel, under Barak, offered 97 percent of the West Bank and part of Jerusalem to the Palestinians in September 2000. Arafat responded with war. He told President Clin-

ton that there never was a Jewish temple in Jerusalem, and that Jews have no links to the holy land. Then he started a war. Camp David negotiator Dennis Ross has written several pieces that attest to this.

This is not the first time Israel offered "land for peace." In 1967, Israel offered the West Bank to the Arab world straight after gaining it, in return for recognition and peace. The Arab world replied, "no recognition, no peace, no negotiation."

The reason the peace treaty with Egypt worked was that the Egyptians decided not to attack Israel again, a favor for which they got the Sinai (three times Israel's size).

Egypt has not fulfilled the provisions of the treaty relating to normal relations, and attacks Israel in every international fo-

See *Israel*, page 12

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 Tony Klumper, 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 reserves the right to edit for style, content, and length. Only one submission per person will be printed each term.

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Coverage Requests

Press releases and requests for coverage may be made to the editor-in-chief or to individual section editors. For more information, visit <http://nique.net/storguide.pdf>.

Through the looking glass

Give spammers a taste of their own free Rx

The nation-wide attack against the telemarketers has finally taken effect, and I haven't heard even once from the mindless parrots about consolidating my student loans at twice the present interest rate!

Nevertheless, I am still receiving enough email spam and unwanted junk mail to choke an already bloated cow—I think it is time to turn our wrath on the hordes of spammers and corporations who force us to sift through their unrequested garbage.

How many times have I received wonderful opportunities to earn \$10 million dollars from relatives of a recently deceased Kenyan warlord, get the inkjet cartridges for a printer I do not own filled for half the cost or, more classically, to have my penis enlarged by following three easy steps? Or the offers to lose weight and put extra hair on your head? Even better, you can answer a survey with your bank information and social security number and save scammers the trouble of doing any actual work before they rob you.

Email spam is not limited to thieves trying to ferret out your credit card information, but also extends to respectable companies doing their best to advertise their wares with a minimum cost.

I buy almost everything with a

credit card so that I don't have to carry cash, and as a result, my name and address end up on all those bloody lists sold under the table. I receive a stack of pre-approved credit card offers every time I visit home, and a bad side effect of earning four degrees is that I receive not one, but four requests from the Alumni Association for money I don't have.

Not too long ago, my mother won a \$400 men's suit in a community raffle—she clearly had no use for it, so I was quite happy when \$30 dollars in alterations later, I had a nice new three-piece suit.

Ever since, I have received email and mailed brochures telling me of bad prices, and why, as a poor college student, I need yet another dress suit. I simply protest by clicking the REMOVE button and trashing the written materials unread. Then there's a maker of old-fart cars that insists on sending emails even though I have asked to be removed from their list three times.

Without too much work, you can trace back the origins of the mail—no work at all to figure out who sold my name to Visa for the REI Visa card or who made it their business to inform companies that I am a recent college grad.

With email, more thought is required: use a list of aliases such as email_companyX@yahoo.com under bogus names and let them all funnel into your well-guarded private account—the next useless offer you receive, you'll know exactly who sold your personal data.

The bottom line is that the simple boycott and trash routine is no longer effective; it's time to unleash a can of cyber whoop-ass. There's no fun in boycotting a company when they don't know you're doing so, so let them know you do not appreciate their invasions.

In place of asking the government to levy fines on violators, we simply create socially imposed fines

to every company that wastes our time. With telephone calls, responses to Mrs. "Out-of-Area" can be staged murders or "what ya wearing darlin'?"

Pinging their email servers once every micro-second is probably considered rude, so sign up the customer service department for Viagra supplements and inkjet replacements.

Find out who is legally registered on offending domain names and toss them in with the rest.

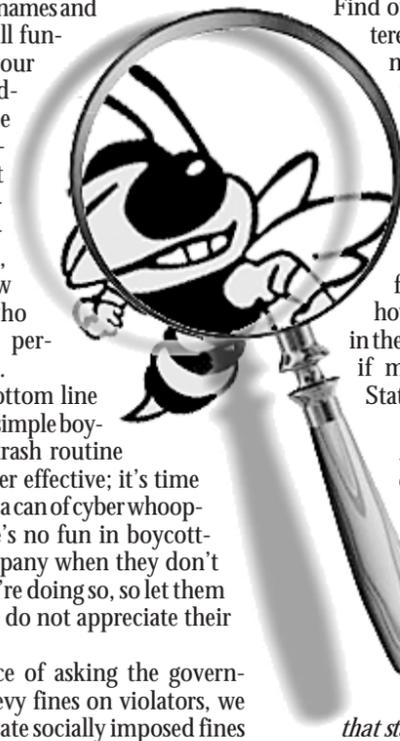
My personal favorite is to encourage my absent-mindedness when I apply for every single one of those credit cards offered to me, but somehow forget to put anything in their "no postage required if mailed in the United States" envelopes.

Oops.

Currently working on his Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering, Alan Michaels has been involved in teaching, research, student government and other random clubs during his GT tenure that started in 1998.



ALAN MICHAELS
COLUMNIST



Israel

from page 11

rum. Many Egyptians still hope that the Palestinians will succeed where Egyptian might fail.

You asserted that the Middle East struggle is not about terror, but about land and legitimacy. You assert that the Bush administration has given up neutrality by regarding the Middle East struggle as part of the struggle for terror. That is wrong.

Hamas' constitution calls for Israel's destruction openly and trains children and teenagers to deliberately kill civilians.

If that is not terror, what is? It is anti-Israel hypocrisy to call terror everywhere else, but not when directed against Israelis.

What do you advocate the US do? Push Israel into unilateral gift of the West Bank to Arafat or similar leaders? This will not bring peace. It will simply accelerate attacks.

The Palestinian leadership and most of the Arab world is riven with people who believe that they can destroy Israel with enough terror. They are prepared to sacrifice millions of their own to do that, something Arafat and others have repeatedly stated publicly. 70% of the Palestinian populace just voted (in a poll) for suicide bombs.

If you appease terror, the US and the West will be rewarded with more terror.

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