

OPINIONS

Technique • Friday, March 26, 2004



TECHNIQUE

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Quote of the week:

"If you can't get rid of the skeleton in your closet, you'd best teach it to dance." —George Bernard Shaw

OUR VIEWS Consensus Opinion

Where's my money?

The Student Government Association's (SGA) continuous heartache this year over the budget for Tier I, II and III organizations is finally winding down, with the budget coming up for discussion in the House and Senate this Tuesday. The Joint Finance Committee (JFC) and Chair Lisa Brown are not solely to blame for the nearly three-month late arrival of the budget; the undergraduate and graduate presidents, Nate Watson and Pellham Norville, must share the responsibility as well.

The proverbial buck stops at the desks of the two presidents; they have the ultimate responsibility to see to it that the necessary operations SGA is charged with completing are undertaken in a timely and effective manner. As the face of the undergraduate branch, the segment of SGA with the most constituents affected by the budget, the undergraduate leadership is specially charged with ensuring the smooth completion of the budgetary process. While its power to make the budget process effective is limited, it should facilitate more communication among JFC, student organizations and SGA as a whole. Initiative should have been taken by the executive branch or by JFC to open lines of communication and provide a forum for feedback from student organizations; instead, it has fallen upon the undergrad executive vice president to do so this year.

Furthermore, the *Technique* should not be the sole source of information about SGA events, including the budget. SGA's Public Relations committee should be the main arbiter of House- and Senate-related news, and leave this paper to highlight, analyze and challenge SGA affairs.

SGA's leadership, both in JFC and in the House, must be recognized for the unique hardships they have faced this year, including a lack of qualified people interested in filling JFC's chair position, a huge increase in the number of budget requests, and a large chunk of the budget having to be earmarked for the new Campus Recreation Center. It might not seem evident, but more money is being allocated to Tier III organizations this year than ever before.

Acknowledging all of these factors, and that all Tier III organizations are suffering similarly because of budget cuts, the upcoming weeks should be used productively—not for complaining—to learn all the information as to why and how decisions on the budget were made, to come up with solutions and ideas for the future, and to allow SGA and JFC to show that they care about their constituency by encouraging open communication.

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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By Matt Norris / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

JFC's actions lack professionalism, respect

There are enough hoops in the convoluted process of applying for and securing money from the Student Government Association (SGA) that a fully-grown lion could leap through them to perform a circus show.

The three of us representing the *Technique* arrived five minutes early to our meeting with the Joint Finance Committee (JFC), like all the business-world etiquette books advise. And then we proceeded to wait 25 minutes for anyone from the group of 10 graduate and undergraduate members of JFC to show up for the meeting they had organized.

Once one member finally walked into the SGA office, he told us that we should wait a few more minutes for more JFC members to arrive. Seeing that only one other person decided to show up in the ensuing five minutes (the chair of JFC, no less), they decided to get on with the meeting. However, no undergrad members were present.

Only after asking us a few questions about our budget and realizing that we were there to defend a bill instead did the meeting get under way. At this point, it was hard to take the gathering seriously without wondering how in the world this group in charge of nearly three million dollars was able to operate with any semblance of success. The two members asked merely three questions about our request for \$7,000, each of which demonstrated their clear lack of knowledge of the bill. In less than a fifth of the time we spent waiting for the meeting to start, our chance to explain our allocations request was over.

The lack of professionalism and respect for other students and their time was staggering—and ours was not an isolated incident. If the organizations requesting money from the pot that is funded by their members' student activity fees have enough



"Getting a bill passed through SGA should not be a dog and pony show for student organizations."

Jen Schur
Opinions Editor

respect for the process to show up on time and prepared, it is unconscionable for JFC to not do their part by caring about the power of the purse they are entrusted with. Getting a bill passed through SGA should not be a dog and pony show for student organizations.

Instead, a certain level of give-and-take should be expected of the players in the process. JFC needs to show that it recognizes the importance of its role and respects the needs of its constituents, the organizations to which the committee disperses funds. This can be accomplished by doing simple things like showing up to meetings on time; dressing appropriately for the situation, as the organization representatives do when they put on more than just sweats; going to the meetings informed and well prepared; and by creating a professional atmosphere.

While these aspects may only address the superficial issues students see upon first inspection, they are important in reviving SGA's image as a whole. If the very visible aspects of SGA like JFC were no longer viewed as irresponsible with their potential and power, then SGA's image as a whole would improve.

Organizations need to feel like the time they spend defending their bills (and budgets) before the board that creates fiscal policy is worth it, and that their presence in front of JFC makes a difference in how the committee considers their bill. As the relationship between JFC and

the Undergraduate House functions currently, though, the House frequently undermines JFC's policy-based recommendations.

JFC's attitude towards bill-discussion meeting attendees is the same, if not worse, during budget meetings. Thus, specifically in relation to student organization budgets, JFC can improve its image as a fair and balanced recommendation board by thinking about all student organizations, not just the typical ones, when creating across-the-board guidelines for what they will and will not fund.

Instead of cutting entire line items from budgets based on its list of budget-appropriate requests, JFC could utilize a percentage system in which a certain percentage of spending in particular areas would be funded by SGA for organizations whose missions are clearly related to those expenses.

Granted, it is important for students to recognize the challenges inherent in any JFC position. Though the members are faced with a thankless, hated job and shouldn't be canvassed as uncaring, irresponsible people, they should be held to a minimum level of professionalism and high-quality, dedicated service to the committee.

Hopefully our soon-to-be elected officials will make improvements in the effective management of SGA's fiscal matters. I want to be able to respect and believe in the democratic process by which bills and budgets are passed by my SGA.

All Div. I sports need support, not just b-ball

When the men's basketball team arrived back to campus Sunday after its amazing win over Boston College, throngs of fans greeted the players and head coach Paul Hewitt. The team has received an overwhelming response to its numerous successes on the court this year, as well it should, considering that tonight Tech will play in its first Sweet 16 game since 1996. And no one is more thankful of the fans' support than Hewitt, who has often credited the student fans for much of his team's success.

But where have the throngs of fans and support been for the rest of Tech's Division I teams?

While fans have flocked and filled Alexander Memorial Coliseum to see the men play, hardly anyone went to the women's basketball team's games. I admit, I wasn't able to go to many of them myself this season because of my Thursday night physics lab, but not everyone in this school has the same excuse.

At the biggest game of the year, MaChelle Joseph's team played Alana Beard and the then-No. 1 Duke Blue Devils before a crowd of over 8,000 people. Unfortunately, the team only averaged 1,397 people per game over the course of the entire season, when the coliseum has a capacity of over 9,000. Tech ranked No. 75 for attendance, according to a study of Division



"How amazing would it be to go to a swim meet and have thousands of fans screaming and cheering?"

Kimberly Rieck
Sports Editor

I women's basketball team attendance figures conducted by the University of Wisconsin-Madison's sports information office.

Joseph, in her first year on the job, and the team made valiant attempts to get fans hyped up about their games with offers of giveaways and numerous personal appearances by the team. At the Ball at Midnight, each player took the time to talk to people in the audience after the game, to sign autographs and to pose for pictures with fans. Many of the women's games were decided by less than 10 points at home, including a two-point loss to Wake Forest in overtime January 29. How much of a difference could a packed house have made in those losses?

Tennessee's women's team is in the Sweet 16, and coincidentally has the highest attendance figures in the league, averaging 14,000 fans per game. Tennessee may be a legend in women's

basketball, but legends have to start somewhere. If we want to see our women's team or any of our other sports teams exceed, we have to throw our support to them and attend games. Some may argue that if a team has a winning record, the fans will come, but that's not fair to the team or long-time supporters. Why should hard-working student athletes prove anything to fair-weather fans when they already have to answer to coaches, the media, teachers in the classroom and teammates? Not to mention the fact that poor attendance sends a bad message to incoming recruits, further hurting a team's chances at success.

Last weekend I saw in person how loyal the Badger Nation is to Wisconsin men's team. The Bradley Center was practically shaking from the cheers of 17,000 plus Badger fans clad in red and white. Heck, the excitement made me want to become a Wisconsin fan. I was envious because I wish

the Yellow Jackets' fan base could replicate that type of support and throw it towards our teams at all of their home games. I know some of you may argue that the only reason there were so many Badgers present was because their game was in Milwaukee, but Wisconsin fans have proven to be loyal in more than just one sport. The Badgers rank second in the nation for average volleyball attendance, sold out their tickets for next year's football season already, and are 50th in women's basketball attendance.

How amazing would it be to go to a swim meet and have thousands of fans screaming and cheering? Or have to wait in line for a seat at a baseball game? All Tech athletic events are free to students, so you might as well take advantage of the opportunity while you can. Once you graduate, you'll have to pay for tickets, and you won't be able to get a seat as close as you can get in the Swarm, even with major donations.

There are several baseball games left in the season, along with tennis matches, softball games and even the track and field team's Yellow Jacket Invitational, not to mention spring practices for the football team. If we throw our basketball-style support to all sports, there's no limit to how high Tech athletics can rise.

OUR VIEWS Hot or Not

HOT-or-NOT



Extra! Extra!

Read all about it...for free! Take advantage of the free *New York Times* and *USA Today* newspapers around campus over the next few weeks as RHA decides whether to pay for the service in the fall. The idea is a great one, though the payment details need to be ironed out—for example, why should residents' money pay for papers available to nonresidents? Still, providing these papers is a great move on RHA's part.



Debates lack oomph

Wednesday's scene at the Campanile looked more like a calm tea party than a lively SGA debate. The debates, a chance for the presidential and vice presidential candidates to share their views, were more like a friendly question and answer session. In the future a true Lincoln-Douglas sort of debate should be hosted, giving the electorate the chance to witness their candidates in action.



Fuel up

This year's installment of Sting Break and Student Appreciation Day will bring the band Fuel and artist Bubba Sparxxx to campus in two weeks. The show promises to be a good one, not just because it's free, but because it will be held in the still-new Yellow Jacket Park on what will hopefully be a warm spring night.



Gatsby's new dive

"Chocolate Slap Yo' Mama" got the boot recently when new management took over the Jake's on Howell Mill Road. The new West Egg Cafe, a pun on Fitzgerald's classic novel, features food and coffee but no longer carries Jake's ice cream. This travesty of taste can only be remedied by visiting one of the other two Jake's left.

YOUR VIEWS Letters to the Editor

Hold'em more than a game

By Kinsee Morlan
The Daily Aztec

(U-WIRE)SAN DIEGO STATE U.—My favorite part of this spring break was improving my Texas Hold'em poker skills with my friends from back home in Colorado. My sister, her poker-loving boyfriend and I went to play Texas Hold'em with a high school friend. He is now married and has a little 6-month-old baby boy, so we had to sit in the kitchen, be as quiet as possible and smoke outside. Right down the street was another friend of mine from high school, and when I dropped in to say hello I learned he, too, has a wife, a child and, interestingly enough, was playing Texas Hold'em. After losing most of my money, I went home wondering what it is about Texas Hold'em that people find so intriguing.

After pondering this question

for several minutes, I came to the conclusion that poker is a perfect analogy for life. I realized my friends from high school and I are all playing the same game, but because of a lot of luck in regard to my cards in the hole—the parents I was arbitrarily born to—I am able to stay in the game and keep betting. My friends had to fold early on—their cards in the hole didn't give them the opportunity to keep on playing. However, I reminded myself that one cannot forget about the importance of strategy and skill, which, in Texas Hold'em, is almost as important as the luck in the "flop" cards, the "turn" card and eventually the "river."

I wondered, what if my friends had used a little more strategy and skill in life? Would their outcomes have been any different? The combination of luck

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

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BUZZ

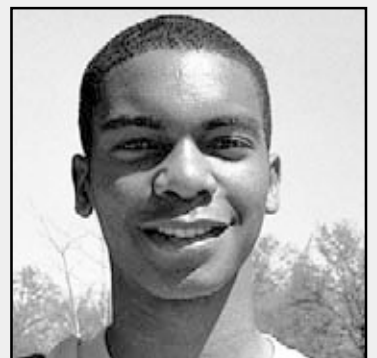
Around the Campus

What do you think of WREK radio?



Daniel Vall-Ilobera
INTA Senior

"The whatzit?"



Jon Megahy
ME Senior

"I'm from the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the reggae music they play reminds me of home."



Jill Martell and Heidi Khalil
BME Seniors

"We would listen to WREK radio, we just don't know what station it is. Advertise better!"



Ryan Pirkl
EE Junior

"It sucks. They play noise."

Photos by June Zhang

A global trek with view from Tech

Recent events show counter-terrorism complications

This week for the first time, Ivan Allen College Founder's Day, a celebration of the College and its mission, took place in conjunction with the Sam Nunn Bank of America Policy Forum, an event that seeks to bring together public and private actors to discuss pertinent issues with an eye towards solutions. From 1997-2002, the Policy Forum took place annually with Georgia Tech, the University of Georgia and Emory University co-sponsoring the event and rotating the host responsibilities. Now, the forum belongs completely to the Institute, which will host it every two years.

As part of the Founder's Day, former U.S. Senator and School of International Affairs namesake Sam Nunn accepted the Ivan Allen College Prize for Progress and Service. Nunn served in the U.S. Senate for 24 years, during which time he chaired the powerful Senate Armed Services Committee. He later founded the Nuclear Threat Initiative, which tackles proliferation problems.

While Nunn's address on America's security challenges, the panel forums throughout the Founder's Day event, and those related to bioterrorism that took place the following day at the Nunn Forum all raised interesting issues related to national security, I found that Nunn's response to an audience question most interesting, especially in light of recent world events. Nunn explicitly criticized the idea of pre-

emptive military action as a way to counter terrorism around the world.

Nunn's comments, and others that emerged in the Founder's Day panels and Forum discussions combine with recent events at home and abroad to highlight the controversy related not just to terrorism itself but also how to prevent it.

The terrorist bombing that occurred March 11 in Madrid, Spain and killed over 200 people provides a chilling reminder that today's world remains as unsafe as ever and the threat of fundamentalist terrorism remains real—especially as the signs in that investigation increasingly point to Al-Qaeda. The way in which the Spanish people responded to the attack, however, demonstrates a view that differs from that held by the majority of Americans.

In voting out the Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar's Popular Party and electing a socialist majority, Spaniards overwhelmingly rejecting the idea of preventive military action. Prior to 3/11, many analysts predicted an Aznar victory, despite his previous decision to support U.S. action in Iraq against the objections

of 90 percent of his constituents. After the attacks the election became a referendum on Aznar's decision—did the “preventive action” against Iraq actually contribute to making Spain a target for foreign terrorists? If voters indeed asked themselves that question, it appears they answered in the affirmative.

Recent activities of the U.S. Congress follow this tragedy, where Secretaries of State and Defense from the current administration and the previous explain their pre-9/11 anti-terrorism activities. Was Al-Qaeda viewed as a serious threat? Why wasn't U.S. action against the group effective? Was military action an option prior to 9/11?

Retrospectively reflecting on the incidents of 9/11 and 3/11 allows any number of speculations about what governments could or should have done to prevent their passing, but we as a society must also look with an eye to the future, with an eye to solutions. In other words, our discussions must mirror those of the Nunn Forum at our own Institute.

Does preventive military action reduce the threat of terrorism? Perhaps, but I argue that preventive military attack in the name of anti-terrorism can only be part of a solution—and only a final

option. Looking at 9/11, the threat came from an individual and an organization with extensive resources, of which military action could only destroy part. Other actions are needed to cripple the financial and human resources employed by groups like Al-Qaeda, and these actions require partnerships—not only across national boundaries, but also across sector boundaries of public, private and civil society actors.

Preventive military action may prevent terrorism, but, because of its polarizing nature, it may also prevent other more collaborative efforts just as necessary in the prevention of terrorism. In the rejection of preventative action by the Spaniards, its questioning by Nunn and the acknowledgment by senior Bush and Clinton officials that preventing terrorism includes unimaginable depths of complication, the opportunity for opening cross-sector societal dialogues exists. These discussions, of which the Tech community now serves as a leader, show how difficult it remains to be simply “with us or against us.”



JODY SHAW
COLUMNIST

Poker

from page 15

and skill determines the final outcome in poker, but is it the same in life?

I noted the main difference is the number of hands you're dealt. In poker, you have infinite opportunities to get that perfect hand. In life, you are stuck with the hand you're dealt. The outcome is up to each individual to decide, but when everything becomes an uphill battle it is more likely you will entirely give up or, as my friends did, settle down with a family and accept a mediocre job to pay the bills.

That outcome is not necessarily a bad thing, but I think most other college kids are guilty of the same thing I am, which is having hopes and dreams of something more, whether it be simply more monetary success, or a more adventurous, important and challenging career. As long as the funding is there, we college kids keep on betting and playing the game in hopes of walking away with the entire pot. Is this fair to those who didn't even have the chance to play?

In the actual game of Texas Hold'em I played, my sister's boyfriend walked away as the big winner of the night. Using the analogy of poker as life I asked him whether he thought it was fair.

I guess all I can do as an individual player is perhaps toss a few chips in the direction of the “unlucky.” The only other option would be to change the rules of the game entirely. But just ask the late Wild Bill Hickok—men have been shot in the back for a lot less.