

OPINIONS

Technique • Friday, August 20, 2004



"The South's Liveliest College Newspaper"
TECHNIQUE
Serving Georgia Tech since 1911

Quote of the week:

"The most incomprehensible thing about the world is that it is at all comprehensible."
—Albert Einstein

OUR VIEWS CONSENSUS OPINION

Farewell, OSCAR Web

When students tried to look up classes to register for fall semester, instead of being welcomed by the beloved grid pattern of OSCAR Web, a white page saying "OSCAR Web site has now moved" greeted them instead. Although the site now provides links to the OSCAR (Banner) site, the links are confusing, to say the least.

In the good ol' days, students could find links to class schedules, transfer credit equivalencies, general registration information and course critiques, among others. Now, students have to go on a scavenger hunt for the information at either oscar.gatech.edu, the Registrar's homepage or the SGA homepage.

While we appreciate the Office of the Registrar's attempt to make Banner better, we are having a hard time understanding why the system was changed at all. The old approach worked perfectly well—there was never any confusion about the school calendar or when certain classes were offered because OSCAR Web neatly organized such things in an easy-to-use fashion.

It is now an incredibly tedious and time-consuming process for returning students to navigate a myriad of web sites before they can find out if a class is offered and where it's located. Getting permits for certain classes is hard enough without having to spend extra time figuring out if it is even offered this fall. OSCAR Web may have only been designed in the late 1990s to be a "temporary fix," but it has since become a useful asset to Tech students.

In the past few years, students have been very vocal about letting administrators know when they want changes—as evidenced by the move of Drop Day and Spring Break. Therefore, the Registrar should have thought twice about making a change without students clamoring for it first.

At the very least, the Registrar's Office should help ease our suffering by using OSCAR Web as a redirection mechanism. Instead of expecting students to sift through a scattered mess of webpages, it would be more efficient to use the site to link all the critical information we need. Why should we have to spend twice as long to find our course schedules when all we need is a few simple hypertext links?

If the Registrar's goal was to integrate the Institute's web resources to make life easier for students, there was no reason to kill OSCAR Web when it already fulfilled those needs. Instead of tearing apart existing infrastructure, administrators should build upon OSCAR Web and make improvements. Constructing a totally new system wastes time and finite resources.

We should all take a moment of silence for our beloved OSCAR Web. We miss you, and hope to see your safe return before we have to register for spring classes.

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

EDITORIAL BOARD

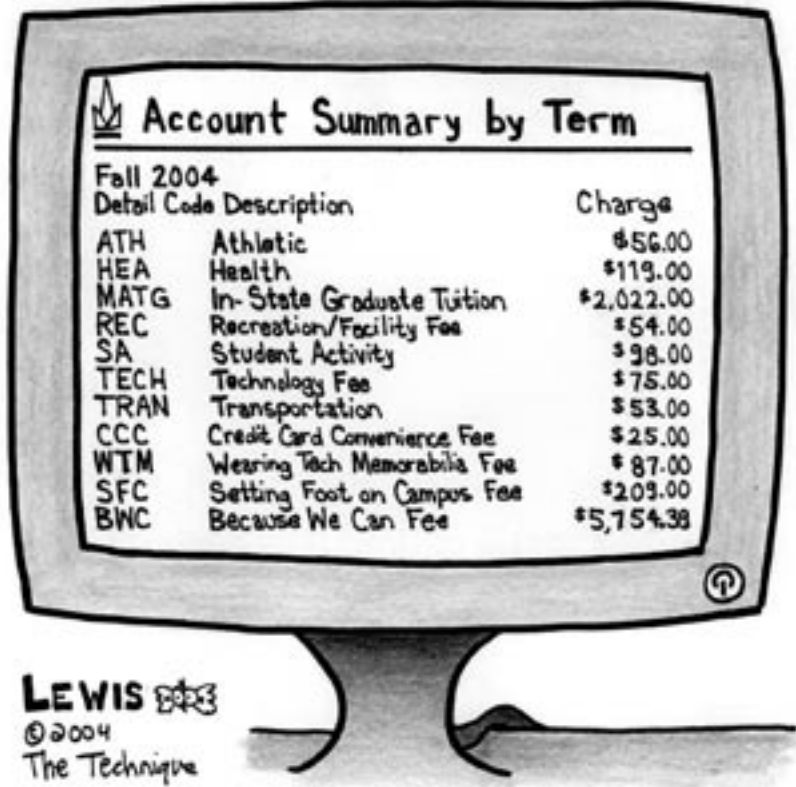
Daniel Amick, *Editor-in-Chief*

Jennifer Schur, *Executive Editor*
Stephen Baehl, *News Editor*
Jennifer Lee, *Focus Editor*
Hillary Lipko, *Entertainment Editor*
Edward Tamsberg, *Sports Editor*

Kimberly Rieck, *Opinions Editor*
Jamie Howell, *Photography Editor*
Karl Guertin, *Online Editor*
Lauren Griffin, *Advertising Manager*
Art Seavey, *Development Editor*

Copyright Notice

Copyright © 2004, Daniel Amick, Editor-in-Chief, and by the Board of Student Publications. The *Technique* is an official publication of the Georgia Tech Board of Student Publications. No part of this paper may be reproduced in any manner without written permission from the Editor or from the Board of Student Publications. The ideas expressed herein are those of the Editor or the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Board of Student Publications, the students, staff or faculty of the Georgia Institute of Technology or the University System of Georgia.



By Brian Lewis / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Changing majors? Don't sweat it

The application stated Mechanical Engineering. First semester it became Industrial Engineering. Then shortly thereafter the major of the day was Computer Science. Ultimately the adventure will come to an end this year with Public Policy.

My seemingly haphazard path towards a major probably sends chills down guidance counselors' spines.

Parents may shake their heads at what they think is a child's direction gone askew. I can assure you, neither group is correct in their superficial assumptions.

Each of my major switches has a common thread stitching them together. At every turn of my tutelage lies a new professional experience.

I became comfortable in my dorkiness, like most of you, long before entrance to Tech. I attended a science and technology high school, and during my senior year, I had the fortunate opportunity of interning with a railroad-technology company.

The world of mechanical engineering, my "first love," became more like waking up the night after.

The experience of jumping into the R&D world so early was eye-opening and quite interesting. But it didn't excite me enough beyond my time there. Thus, I bolted, quickly notifying Tech to save me from ME.

One gem that I gleaned from the experience was my interest in the business workings of firms, especially managing high-tech development. Industrial Engineering seemed to be the logical field.

I enrolled in PSYC 1000 for Industrial Engineers, and perhaps contrary to most people enjoyed it immensely. Why? Because I found out that I hated I.E.

The class did a fantastic job of exposing me to what professionals in that field did. Bottom line, logistics is a much-needed expertise—but



"My seemingly haphazard path towards a major probably sends chills down guidance counselors' spines."

Art Seavey
Development Editor

leave me out of it.

In high school I took a few computer programming classes, why not try out a few more? During my first year at Tech, I enrolled in five CS courses.

In the summer, I went back home and worked for a different division within the same engineering company. Only this time, I played the role of a computer scientist supporting Department of Defense intelligence agencies. Once again, I can't thank the company and my colleagues enough. They literally changed my life.

Coding, although interesting in high-school, is different when you have to do it eight hours a day. I prefer sunshine.

My longest-lived major so far, read three semesters, is Public Policy, perhaps the biggest crapshoot of them all. Impulsively I asked to perform research with a professor. I had no clue what the topic would be, but I knew it would be something completely off my usual path.

Two semesters of nuclear waste transportation issues later, my pseudo-professional experience opened new doors. But still, I had to do more examination to make sure that Public Policy was a keeper.

Luckily, a year after my swap, another litmus test was around the corner to confirm its viability. This summer I interned with the Natural Resources Defense Council in Washington, D.C. I was exposed to wonderfully foreign fields of nuclear

security and government relations.

Here the answers to questions I had never before surmised came rushing up to me.

Before, I was worried about starting salaries, long-term job security and maintaining the status quo of my education. Never before had I ended a job with a feeling of emptiness.

In the past, the last day of work was a relief. The answer had come to the question of what field truly made me want to get up in the morning.

The upshot is that if you told me four years ago I would not be delving into math problems incessantly and pigeonholed into mechanical engineering, I would have recommended you procure a strait jacket. Today, only three years after entering Tech, I am graduating with over a year's worth of varied, valuable professional experience.

No matter how stubborn or goal-oriented you are, your path will change, or at least should change repeatedly.

Tech, with its diverse offerings and avenues out into the real world, would be a waste if not for peeking around every corner. Eventually you will find the correct hallway and venture out to make your mark on the world.

I urge you to land internships, perform research with a professor and get deeply involved with an organization. Nothing can replace experiential learning. Hating a professional experience is just as valuable as loving it.

You don't know everything, and that's OK

Freshmen. They show up for the first day of class full of enthusiasm, energy and drive. They show up on time, having awoken early enough for a hot shower and a warm Brittain breakfast.

They sit erect in class, taking notes on everything the professor says, relevancy not required. As soon as the Whistle blows, they rush across the Fifth Street Bridge to buy every textbook listed on the syllabus—full price, latest edition, brand-spanking new.

And that's good. Tech needs this infusion of vibrancy each fall. By and large, upperclassmen aren't put off by this youthful spunk. We view it wistfully, nostalgically, like echoes of a long-forgotten song. We don't begrudge these bright, happy individuals their brief, fleeting moment to envision how glorious college life will be.

No, what pisses Tech veterans off about freshmen is not their blissful ignorance. What pisses off Tech veterans is a freshman's overwhelming arrogance.

Freshman Arrogance Syndrome (FAS) is a malicious pathology.

We've all encountered someone who has fallen victim to the illness; that person sitting in the first row who feels an insatiable need to demonstrate that he knows just a little bit more than



"Freshmen, you do not know everything. And that's ok. Accept it. Embrace it."

Daniel Amick
Editor-in-Chief

everyone else in the room, including the professor.

Students afflicted with FAS often can't see it in themselves until it's too late. Here are the symptoms of classic FAS in its most extreme form:

1. He (freshman arrogance usually manifests itself most visibly in males, though not always) comes from a local high school where he was at the top of his class.

2. He lacks even a hint of social skill, as well as the capacity to interact with members of the opposite sex. He does however have several years of coding experience (self-taught, of course...alone...in his basement).

3. To make up for social inadequacy, he needs to dominate every situation, staggering his peers with his vast knowledge and analytical ability.

4. He enters Tech with a step-by-step career plan that

includes a three-year schedule for graduation, entry into a top graduate school for doctoral work, a projected starting salary and the name of the Fortune 500 company that will hire him.

If left untreated, FAS inevitably leads the subject to ask pointless, off-topic questions one to two minutes before the end of class. These questions prompt a seven to eight minute response from the professor.

Because this freshman sits as close to the professor as possible, he doesn't realize that disgruntled seniors are preparing to lob heavy objects at him from the upper rows.

FAS can also manifest itself in less extreme forms. Most students suffer from FAS at one time or another, and it can reassert itself unexpectedly, even after the freshman year.

This occurs most often in group project settings. The tendency to dominate drives

the subject to either condemn contravening ideas or adopt them as his own.

If you or anyone you know exhibits some or all of these symptoms, seek help immediately. There are a variety of remedies.

The simplest and most effective cure for FAS is the first flurry of tests, exams and papers that all are due around the second week in September. This treatment will cure approximately 80 percent of FAS victims.

Should that treatment fail, there are other alternatives. Dead week projects combined with finals week and depressing grade postings just before Christmas will usually cure 15 of the remaining 20 percent.

Some, though, can never be helped. They carry their arrogance into their second, third, tenth years. At that point the syndrome becomes Freshman Arrogance Syndrome—Extended Term (FASET).

Freshmen, you do not know everything. And that's OK. Accept it. Embrace it.

College is a time to expose yourself to new ideas, to accept that other people have important, relevant, interesting things to say—things you may never have conceived of. Now is a time to listen as often, or more often, than you speak.

OUR VIEWS HOT OR NOT

HOT- or -NOT



Homepage makeover

After years of the same old www.gatech.edu, Tech has finally given its homepage a much-needed makeover. Even UGA used to have a better-looking webpage, but now with our webpage's soft butter-yellow tones and eye-catching graphics, we can finally showcase our best assets. We're also really digging the new Buzz poll, challenging us to think outside the Tech bubble.



Charge it? Not likely

Just when you thought Tech couldn't find anything else to charge us for, the Bursar's Office decided to assess a \$25 convenience fee on all credit card transactions online. Although the new fee will help Tech defray the costs of Visa and Mastercard's merchant fees, students were still caught off guard this month. At least students can use the new WebCheck system, and save their money for Pandini's.



Commons opens

How cool is it that in one convenient place we can get an Einstein Bros. bagel, meet an SGA rep, and watch a giant plasma TV? Plus we're glad to see Jackets finally open. After all, where else can we get root beer on tap? However, we're not feeling the cheesy "CNB Seen" grand opening slogan.



Parking squatters

Peter's parking deck permit holders got burned Wednesday. Instead of being able to park in their paid spot, the deck has been overrun with parking squatters. How awful would it be find your favorite spot taken by an illegally parked car? Despite the visible presence of tow trucks, we're devastated to say the least.

YOUR VIEWS LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Where are my 800 pages?

As any third year or older remembers, OIT has restricted lab printing for the past several years to 50 pages per week.

After overwhelming protest from the student body over this inadequacy, they updated the policy to offer 800 pages per semester.

Sadly, we have regressed. When I stopped by the library in my normal, early-semester routine to print lecture notes and syllabi on Monday, I was stunned when I was only able to print one course's worth of material.

It appears I had exhausted my Virtual Printing Units (VPUs) in no time. How is a student supposed to survive off only 50 pages per week, and why did it

change?

Many students are required to print lecture slides and various readings or old exams from electronic reserve.

These printouts quickly sum up to over 50 pages some weeks, allowing no slack to print any last minute reports or notes.

On the contrary, there are weeks when these same students do not need to print anything, yet they lose their 50 pages.

VPUs do not rollover week to week, in the same manner that most unused cell phone minutes do not carry over from month to month.

Furthermore, there is no way

See **Printing**, page 23

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

Advertising Information

Information and rate cards can be found online at www.nique.net. The deadline for reserving ad space and submitting ad copy is noon on Friday, one week prior to publication. For rate information, call our offices at (404) 894-2830, Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Advertising space cannot be reserved over the phone. The *Technique* office is located in room 137 of the Student Services Building, 353 Ferst Drive, Atlanta, Georgia 30332-0290. Questions regarding advertising billing should be directed to Corey Jones at (404) 894-9187, or Rose Mary Wells at (404) 894-2830.

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/stuorgguide.pdf>.

BUZZ

Around the Campus
What are you looking forward to this fall?



Justin Steigerwalt
Fifth-year AE

"Graduating!"



Misty Hayden
Third-year CS

"I want to make better grades."



Meg Goldman
First-year ARCH

"My architecture classes, and meeting new people."



Rebekah Neal
Fourth-year BME

"The end of next semester."

Photos by Stephen Marek

Printing from page 21

to print a color document longer than 10 pages since color printouts cost five VPU's per page instead of just one.

To print larger files, and to not deduct from the 50-page-per-week limit, OIT suggests sending jobs to Central Printing and Copying Services (Central PCS) through Acme.

I have relied on Central PCS for years to print large documents, but it has its drawbacks.

For one, users must first save their file as a PostScript, which occasionally drops formatting, before sending it. Then, it's several hours or even the following day before you can pick up your printouts from the Rich Building.

Finally, every file has a coversheet of a solid-black GT logo attached to the top that almost always gets thrown away. Does no one consider that to be a waste of paper or toner?

I support OIT's initiative to limit unnecessary and accidental printing through the use of the Print Release Stations.

But the quota per student should be set at a reasonable level so as not to hinder students. The quota should not be based on any length of time less than a semester.

Since OIT already monitors individual printing, a more appropriate action would have been to warn and reprimand those who abused the system.

Rhett Finch
gte957@mail.gatech.edu

GUEST EDITORIAL STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Take advantage of this year's opportunities

Welcome! My name is Amy Phuong and I am the Undergraduate Student Body President of the Georgia Institute of Technology.

First, I would like to personally express how excited I am to kick off an extraordinary year to come. To all the freshmen—RATS rather—it's an honor that you have chosen to be a part of Tech's community.

After having had the pleasure of meeting many of you during FASET, I truly can say that this is the most qualified and talented class in Tech's history.

Not only does your class have the grades and aptitudes, you already have the motivation, energy and drive to get involved in student organizations and create your own initiatives.

The Student Government Association is here for you to help you achieve your goals and ambitions during your Tech career, whether that is three or seven years down the road from now.

We provide numerous opportunities at different times throughout the year to get involved.

Whether it is joining freShGA, running for a Representative position in the House or being actively involved in several Executive and Institute-Wide Committees. We are always seeking students to mold and shape the future of Tech with innovative ideas. Each branch of Student Government is designed to meet your interests.

So what else does Student Gov-



"On top of our physical improvements to the campus this year, Tech has grown in size and diversity of students."

Amy Phuong
SGA President

ernment do? Well simply put, we are your voice and the voice of the student body. We are the link to the different facets on campus— from the students to the administration, faculty and staff. The Student Government Association voices ideas, opinions and concerns of the student body to promote positive change.

Currently, the Student Government Association is working hard to promote student life programs such as Midnight Breakfast, Women Awareness Month, and GT Night @ Six Flags (shameless plug to tell you to buy your ticket NOW for the Sept. 3 event!).

We are also working with other leading student organizations to provide more campus resources to students and examine pertinent issues.

With other institute departments, we are researching ways to improve academics from looking at existing policies to continuing strong student and faculty relationships.

We are proud to announce the nearing completion of the campus running loop and more advertis-

ing space through plasma screens, and the Drop Date for classes is now pushed to the eighth week of school.

This is such a great time to be a Yellow Jacket! Our campus has grown tremendously, offering more space for students to utilize for academics and social life.

There are more ways to stay fit with the grand opening of the Campus Recreation Center and all of its new equipment and workout rooms.

There are more dining options available from the growing restaurants in Tech Square and the Student Center Commons.

On top of our physical improvements to the campus this year, Tech has grown in size and diversity of students.

We have enrolled over 2600 new students with the highest enrollment rate of women at 33 percent. This means that there are even more opportunities to gain personal growth, development and awareness from your peers.

As part of my job as your Student

Body President, I hope to be able to meet you. The Student Government Association's new office is located in the Student Center Commons on the first floor across from Einstein Bros.

Feel free to stop by as we welcome all questions or comments you may have.

Our official "Open House" for you to take a break from classes and meet me, my fellow Executive Officers, and your fellow Representatives is Aug. 23 from 10 a.m. to 1p.m.

There will be other opportunities throughout the year to "meet and greet" Student Government members. I'll be looking out for you throughout the year at all sporting events and campus-wide programs.

So whether you're an incoming freshman, a transfer student, or an "old person" like me, the Student Government Association is always here for you.

I, along with the rest of the officers, serve you, the students. Utilize us as much as possible, because that's why we are here.

Please don't hesitate to contact us at feedback@sga.gatech.edu. On behalf of the Student Government Association, best of luck with the start of this semester. I look forward to seeing you soon.

Amy Phuong is a fourth year International Affairs student and SGA president. You can contact her at president@sga.gatech.edu