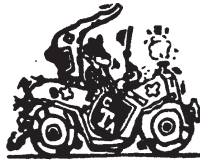


# OPINIONS

Technique • Friday, September 30, 2005



"The South's Liveliest College Newspaper"

## TECHNIQUE

Serving Georgia Tech since 1911

### Quote of the week:

"It has yet to be proven that intelligence has any survival value."  
—Arthur C. Clarke

## OUR VIEWS CONSENSUS OPINION

### Dear Mr. Smith

After the departure of Bob McMath to the University of Arkansas this summer, students were left wondering who would be selected to fill his large shoes. This week we found out: Anderson Smith, an associate dean in the College of Sciences, will be McMath's replacement as vice provost of Undergraduate Studies and Academic Affairs.

As the first-ever vice provost of Undergraduate Studies and Academic Affairs, McMath set a high bar for the position. Always a friend of the students, McMath brought forth many of the initiatives that continue to shape the Institute today and helped expand Tech's focus to include more than just graduate research, giving added attention to the undergraduate learning experience.

Thus it is exciting to see Smith's commitment to undergraduate education. Even as he prepares to take on his new responsibilities as vice provost, Smith, who won an Outstanding Teacher Award in 1999, will continue to teach undergraduate courses and conduct his research on age and memory.

Smith, who has been at Tech since 1970, should be very familiar with the issues that are important to students, and we hope he can use this to his advantage. As a veteran of the Tech way of life, Smith won't face the often-difficult struggle of adjusting to the job of a Tech administrator. With many exciting on-going initiatives to focus on, Smith has the opportunity to make his presence felt immediately.

While Smith's long tenure at Tech is a positive asset to his ability to enact changes, hopefully he can retain an open mind when performing his administrative duties. Tech students are brimming with new ideas on how to improve the school, and a change in the guard is a perfect time to address and take a look at some of the issues that affect our academic lives.

In recent years, the Division of Student Affairs has made strides in improving student life. We are no longer in the top 15 for "Least Happy Students" in the Princeton Review's annual rankings, but we do still top the list for "Class Discussions Rare" and are No. 4 for "Professors Get Low Marks."

Pushing the initiatives such as the Undergraduate Learning Center, the Honors Program, the International Plan and the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program should help remedy these issues, however care should still be taken to implement these programs properly instead of rushing to expedite the implementation.

We wish Smith luck in his new position, and look forward to see what he brings to the table.

*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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Requiring  
major grades before  
dropday had seemed  
like such a good thing...



By Erin Gatlin / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

## Tech lacks true football spirit

College game day—I get excited months ahead just thinking about it. Fall means football season, and I love when noon comes every Saturday.

My favorite part of college football is the tradition: the excitement that is poured into every game from stellar student athletes who are balancing the demands of class and practice generates the emotion on the field. And in the stands, I love the fans and the cheers—everything that makes being at the game an incredible experience.

I guess you could say I come from a "football family." Game day means greasy wings, snack mix and constant channel flipping all day long. I grew up in the south in the heart of the SEC schedule—a conference that lives and breathes football, embodying tradition and fierce rivalries. Nearly every game is a tough win.

I was (and to some extent still am) a diehard Auburn fan from birth, donning the cute little cheerleading outfit at age three and crying "War Eagle!" after every kickoff for my mom's alma mater. There is something about the spirit along the plains, with fans outpouring in an intense sea of orange to tailgate hours in advance.

But my point is not a banner article to glorify Auburn or SEC football. I was in the stands dressed in yellow cheering the Jackets to victory in our season opener on the road, and I would not trade the vivacity of that win for anything.

I love Tech tradition and Tech football—we boast an extensive history of remarkable athletes, awe-inspiring coaches, national championships, bowl games, vicious rivalries and a slew of spirit as Ramblin' Wrecks.

But as much as I love Tech (yes, I know I am a nerd and I really do love our school), I am disillusioned with Tech's overall lack of support



"Why can we not even draw a crowd for a pep rally or an away game send off aside from the band, cheerleaders and Ramblin' Reck Club?"

**Halley Espy**  
Executive Editor

and intensity on game days.

As a first-year student last year, I had no idea what to expect with Tech and the ACC. There was a sense of unfamiliar excitement as I dressed up in yellow and pearls for the first game, complete with a date and tailgating fun.

But the momentum of the crowd seemed lost and seats were empty. The thousands of diehard fans were absent from the crowd and the intensity of the game was just not there.

As the course of the 2004 season progressed, this trend stayed the same; the fan-base seemed to fluctuate and never fully embodied my perception of football in the South.

I am aware that I am making an apparent generalization. I road-tripped to Clemson (the pinnacle of last year's season, and such an incredible victory), and I went to every home game with loyal Tech fans that love college game day just as much as I do—I know Tech has great fans.

But as a team steep in tradition in the heart of Atlanta, why do we have seemingly poor school spirit and why are we unable to fill our stadium come Saturday?

As a fan rooted in the SEC, I originally attributed the lack of support and intensity from fans to the ACC conference itself.

However, I can no longer attribute the lack of school spirit and

fan-base for Tech football to solely ACC conference. I hate to mention Virginia Tech (the game is still painful to think about), but Blacksburg was crazy. Fans poured out on game day as if football was a way of life. And not to mention Miami, FSU, Virginia—game days there are an institution.

So why is Tech so different from these universities? Why can we not even draw a crowd for a pep rally or an away game send off aside from the band, cheerleaders, and Ramblin' Reck Club? Where are the students?

Poor marketing and communication could possibly be attributed to the Athletic Association and the institution. Who knew the Virginia Tech student tickets were being sold back to Blacksburg weeks prior to the game or that a lottery existed for the Athens game last year?

But support has to be generated from all aspects of Tech life.

Tech is a unique university, and I would not trade my experience here or the dynamic student body. We are by no means a bandwagon school, and we pull our support from current students and alumni. We are a smaller institution by numbers and an academically challenging university geared toward getting a degree.

But this season I am making no more excuses. Tech students simply

See **Spirit**, page 8



# Priority registration system requires fairness

Over the summer, I authored a Focus article highlighting the priority registration system here at Tech. And now I'm going to make a frank admission: that article was motivated by an incident that revealed just how unjust and unfair that system is to the student body.

I have an undying love for science fiction, and I was all set to enroll in Dr. Lisa Yaszek's Science Fiction course this past spring. I had four years worth of academic credits under my belt—enough, I thought, to guarantee an early enough time ticket to register for the class. I held my breath and logged into OSCAR at the earliest possible moment only to discover—surprise!—the class had filled up hours earlier.

I was furious, and I knew who the culprits were: priority registration students.

For those of you who don't know, class registration is based on a course credit system: the more credits you accumulate, the earlier you get to register. But a selected group of students gets to register first, regardless of the number of credits earned.

The problem is that it puts the rest of us upperclassmen at a disadvantage, because our credits don't count for much if our favorite classes continue to fill up before we can get to them. Furthermore, it means that many elective courses will fill up with



"I call on the Registrar and her staff to reconsider the priority registration system."

**Josh Cuneo**  
Online Editor

students looking for an easy A instead of students genuinely interested in the material. So I thought it was time to shed some light on the subject. I examined many of the groups who benefit from priority registration, and I will now proceed to question their legitimacy.

Should disabled students get it? Yes, but only where necessary. There are some disabilities that do not impact when or where you attend class, so not every disabled student needs priority registration. But if you're blind, or you're in a wheelchair, or you absolutely have to be back at your apartment once every six hours to take your medication, then yes, you definitely need priority registration.

Should student athletes get it? That's a little more complicated. The intellectual elitist in me wants to insist that students are in their sport by choice, and no student should receive academic merit for that choice. But I also understand that many students

are here on scholarships, and they wouldn't be in school at all if not for their athletic prowess. These athletes need to stay in their sport to stay in school, so it's important that they have ample time in their day for practice and games.

Should FASET leaders and Registrar's office assistants get it? I understand that the Registrar's office wants to reward students who assist them, so I guess I'm willing to live with it. These students only make up a tiny fraction of the priority registration group anyway, but I would like to see the Registrar's office consider other incentives.

Should tour guides get it? No. Students become tour guides by choice, and their participation does nothing to assist either their academic standing or the Registrar's office. This is where the priority registration system fails: it rewards students on the basis of their choice of activities.

Yes, I understand that the guides need to be available during

the predefined tour hours, but many organizations hold their members to inflexible schedules. *Technique* editors, housing staff, organization presidents and the like are required to report to their activities at assigned times, so perhaps they should get priority registration to avoid any scheduling conflicts.

If we allow inflexibility to serve as an excuse for tour guides, then in the interest of fairness, all organizations with this same standard should receive it. Otherwise, if a student finds that a class conflicts with an activity, then he must choose to either drop the activity or the class, regardless of the activity in question.

Should Presidents Scholars receive it? Absolutely not! This is the worst possible group to receive such a privilege! No student should be put at an academic disadvantage just so another student can rest on his high school laurels. I understand that the PS program is supposed to draw in the top students who might be torn between Tech and, say, Harvard or MIT, but I highly doubt that any candidate's decision rests on which school provides a better class registration deal.

So I call on the Registrar and her staff to reconsider the priority registration system. It

See **Priority**, page 8

## OUR VIEWS HOT OR NOT

### HOT- or -NOT



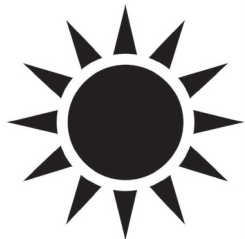
#### Survey says

It's great to see SGA going out of its way to get student feedback on the issue of off-campus Stingerette service. The timely response to a hot-button issue reflects SGA's commitment to students. Hopefully, SGA and Parking and Transportation can work out a solution that lets students keep using the service for safe transport outside of campus boundaries and still doesn't cost an arm and a leg.



#### Football fumbles

Everyone expected the Virginia Tech game to be a tough challenge for the Jackets, but not to the tune of a 51-7 blowout. True, Reggie Ball saw limited practice as a result of his hospital stint last weekend, but the team just did not preform like a top-25 team. A score this lopsided is a huge surprise, even against such a formidable competitor. Let's hope the N.C. State game goes better.



#### Making it count

The Tech Charitable Campaign has cut its operational budget in half by moving operations online to Techworks. Not only will it be easier for faculty and staff to donate, but now their donations will go that much further. If only we could start a "feed the hungry students" campaign on Techworks.



#### Midterm blues

Tests are tough, and they are even tougher when eight of them come within the span of one week. It's not like a normal week at Tech isn't stressful enough for us students, but when professors have to give exams for midterm grades, the stress level goes up a notch. It's enough to make you want to tear your hair out.

## YOUR VIEWS LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Consolidation proves illogical

Arcadiy Kantor draws a horrible conclusion in his recent editorial. The idea of consolidating "similar" student organizations in order to make it easier for freshmen to select an extracurricular activity is absurd and by simply applying this concept to other "problems" this will hopefully become evident.

By Kantor's logic, we could reduce the number of opinions on the Op-Ed pages, since each columnist essentially performs the same task.

By extending this logic even further, we as a student body would save the money spent on student publications every year if we simply consolidated the yearbook and the *Technique* into a single publication. The task both organizations perform—reporting on the events that take place at Tech, granted at slightly different timeframes—is essentially the same.

We could continue to reduce redundancy by focusing our gaze,

not just on publications, but on Tech at large. There would be one fraternity and one sorority on campus. They all do about the same thing, right? There'd be one elliptical trainer in the CRC. And there would only be one Stinger pattering around campus (even though sometimes it feels like that anyway).

We could reduce the amount of redundancy here at Tech, but would it really solve the problem of freshman burnout?

I find it hard to believe that just because we have clubs that "sound" the same on Cyberbuzz our freshmen are not staying involved in extracurricular activities.

There may be several reasons that some students just seem to drop out of activities. For example, perhaps they're reading too many student publications.

Andrew Schnell  
ME graduate student  
gtg639j@prism.gatech.edu

#### 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](mailto:editor@technique.gatech.edu) or hand-delivered to room 137 of the Student Services Building. Letters should be addressed to Kyle Thomason, 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.

#### Advertising Information

Information and rate cards can be found online at [www.nique.net](http://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 Grant Schissler 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, email [editor@technique.gatech.edu](mailto:editor@technique.gatech.edu).

## BUZZ

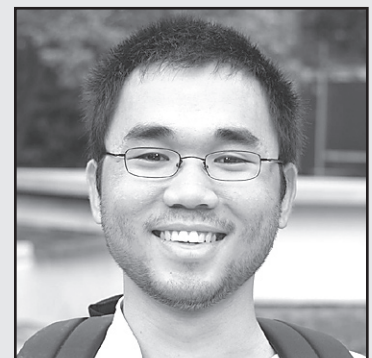
### Around the Campus

#### International Plan: Thoughts, anyone?



**Amy Griswold**  
Second-year CE

"Don't know enough about it to say."

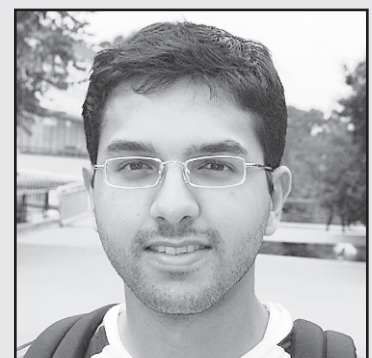


**Chee Soon Lee**  
Fourth-year CS  
"Like study abroad?"



**Callie Reis**  
First-year ME

"It's a great way to experience other cultures and apply that to...industry."



**Rahul Rajan**  
Fourth-year ECE

"I wish I was a freshman, so I could do it."

Photos by Jon Drews



**Priority** from page 7

should only be given to those who absolutely need it to succeed scholastically. I bet that we could cut out enough trivial recipients that no rising fifth-year would ever have to face the dilemma I did.

I also call on all other colleges and schools at Tech to start offering more sections of their most popular courses, or else find other methods to restrict the number of priority registration students who can enter. Offering major restrictions or more permit-required courses is a good start.

As for me, my story has a happy ending. After a talk with my academic advisor, I established a line of communication with Dr. Yaszek over the summer and proved my worthiness to earn an overload into her class. But by the time any student gets to year five, overloads should cease to be an issue.

**Spirit** from page 6

need to get out of their rooms and into the stadium. Have some fun. Tailgate all day long. Wear a crazy yellow wig and paint your body. Yell incessantly. Road trip (it is an amazing experience). Crowd around a small TV in someone's dorm room and watch the away games. Fill the stadium and watch how intimidating a crowd can be. Go to the pep rallies and send off. Game day is what we, the student body, make of it—we are responsible for keeping the Tech tradition alive.

**Evolution debate cooks up ideological soup**

This week I hyperventilated once again while reading the evening news, for the “intelligent design” debate has resurfaced in a boiling soup of ideological heat, political lightning strikes and acidic verbal sparring.

I hyperventilate because every time I read about the evolution debate, I'm reminded of the impossibly awful Tim Burton remake of *The Planet of the Apes*.

That movie was so bad I returned the movie to Blockbuster without seeing the end. So bad, in fact, when my mother found out I was dating someone who at the time had walked out of the theater during this movie, she said, “Oh, he sounds like a quality guy.”

For those who haven't seen it, there are teenage monkeys playing basketball in an urban-like primate environment. There's also the sexy, voluptuous blond woman who's appeared in every other B-movie since 1935 and stays perpetually 25 years old.

I turned off the movie when a Jesus-like ape descends in a spaceship and the monkeys bow down to worship him in an act that was either extremely sacrilegious or proof Tim Burton couldn't afford a competent animal trainer.

So I avoid that movie whenever possible, much as I avoid the Varsity.

But the remake does remind me of the many ways humans are intimately connected with monkeys from tool-making skills to similari-



**“We’ve gone from full-out trials to stickers with some minor court cases...Now that’s a step in the right linear and preconceived direction!”**

**Alexandra Pajak**  
Columnist

ties in hemoglobin structure. The movie also reminds me that evolution has brought us many good things, indeed.

Take, for instance, postmodernist literature and moral relativism. They always brighten my day. Or paternity tests, never hurts to have those handy.

Perhaps through understanding evolution, we can make the world an even better place. We could breed really cute poodles with pink fur or create entirely new species in a science lab. (Hypoallergenic dogs and cats would rock my Claritin world.)

Which brings me to my point: we've come a really long way in this past century in teaching evolution:

In 1925 the Scopes trials in Tennessee agreed it was legal to teach evolution.

In 2001, Cobb County placed stickers on biology textbooks stating that evolution is only a “theory.”

Currently in 2005, parents are suing a Philadelphia school district for incorporating “intelligent design”

in ninth grade biology classes.

We've gone from full-out trials to stickers with some minor court cases here and there. Just superficial stuff, really. Now that's a step in the right linear and preconceived direction!

I remember learning about evolution for the first time in 10th grade. It was kind of scary. Thinking we all just got here randomly. But then maybe skipping class wasn't so bad after all. Maybe shoplifting isn't a big deal if a person doesn't get caught.

Maybe I didn't have to eat my vegetables, since I'd just die anyway. (Yes, that's sarcasm. Have a sense of humor and get off your pessimistic cross, people.)

I heard something on NPR by a physics and mathematics professor from Columbia University named Brian Greene who supports string theory—the idea that the entire universe is connected in a unified framework.

He said that no “scientific achievements have told us why we're here or given us the answer to life's

meaning—questions science may never address. But just as our experience playing baseball is enormously richer if we know the rules of the game, the better we understand the universe's rules—the laws of physics—the more deeply we can appreciate our lives within it.”

I'd like to meet Mr. Greene sometime. Maybe he and I could share some herbal tea or decaf Frappuccino and other stunning culinary creations and make up our own dialogue to a muted *Planet of the Apes*.

Do those particular monkeys have the right thumbs to properly pass a basketball?

Were anorexic women attractive back in the Stone Age?

And where are Jimmy Caviezel and Mel Gibson when you need them?

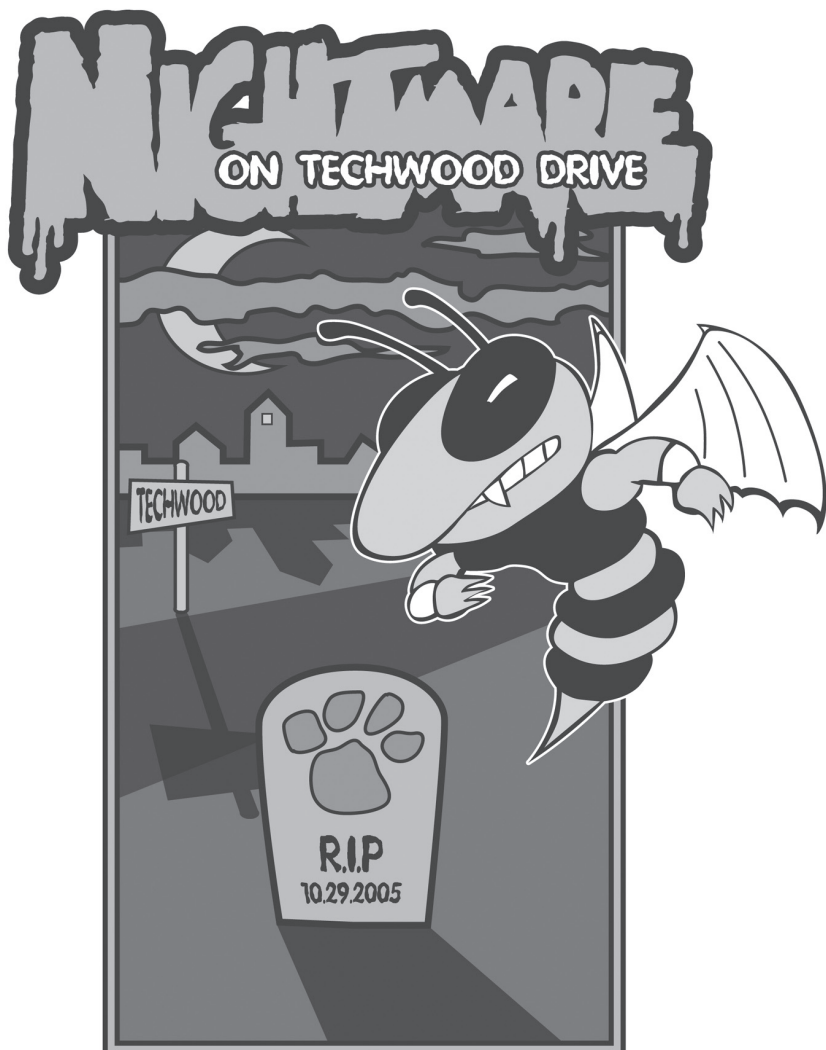
So bring me some *E. coli* and I'll show you how those suckers get immune to antibiotics.

Give me a textbook with a misleading sticker and I'll gently peel it off with a little warm water and soap on a washcloth (I learned that trick from my mom.)

Take me to the Atlanta Zoo, and I'll gladly visit the gorillas and pay my respects to Willy B, for he and I share some second cousins thrice removed.

From the dark and the deep to the fish to the land to my navel lint, I love America. Let's steer it in the right direction. And the direction I mean is to the left. And as quickly as possible.

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