



## OUR VIEWS CONSENSUS OPINION

## Geez, fees

No student is happy when tuition and fees go up, but students need to keep in mind that the tuition increases are needed to balance decreases in state funding, and despite the hike, Tech still remains a bargain of a university.

The Board of Regents' decision on fees was more disappointing. Though asking for a \$25 increase in the Technology Fee may have been overly ambitious on the part of the administration, the Regents' decision not to approve any increase at all leaves us wondering whether they really considered Tech's specific situation when approving fees.

In addition, it is unfortunate that the Student Activity Fee was passed in a reduced form. It is too early to say whether SGA's budget will have to be reworked, but even if rollovers and increased enrollment can make up for the deficit, so much worry over the budget—again!—puts undue pressure on incoming SGA leaders.

It is important to remember why SGA finds itself in this position in the first place—ballooning budget requests from the Campus Recreation Center. A proposal circulated earlier this year to split off the CRC's portion of the activity fee should be pursued. Splitting the fee would protect Tier Three organizations from the CRC's excesses and make it absolutely clear exactly where our money is being spent.

## Making the grade?

The Academic Senate's decision to move drop day back and midterm grade reports forward is an example of a job well done in researching other colleges' drop dates and using that as a basis for formulating our policy.

However, the same cannot be said for the grade substitution policy, where a decision was postponed due to "lukewarm support" from faculty and "bimodal" reactions from students. While these are valid reasons for the Senate's reluctance, not acting at the recent meeting means that a future decision will be long in coming. The Senate's next meeting is not for another six months, and even if the policy were passed then, it would probably not take effect until Fall 2005 at the earliest.

At Tech, where students pride themselves on surviving rigorous classes, reaction to any grade substitution policy will always be strongly divided. If the Senate is postponing the decision because they want to do more research, that's understandable. If they are waiting simply to see if they can build a stronger consensus on the issue, they may be wasting their time.

*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 Mark Parsons / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

## Weblogs aren't so geeky anymore

Hi, my name is Jennifer, and I'm a blogger.

Okay, I know what you're thinking. *Oh god, she's one of those lame people who writes about her life online.* I can see you rolling your eyes right now.

Or maybe you have no idea what I'm talking about (though if that's the case, are you living under a rock?).

A blogger is someone who keeps a blog—short for "weblog"—which is kind of like an online journal. What a blogger posts on their weblog can vary from the (sometimes inane) details of their lives, to links to interesting websites, to commentary on current events in politics, technology, art, and anything else you can think of. The best weblogs, the ones that get thousands of hits per day, are usually witty combinations of the above.

Or maybe—just maybe—you're a blogger, too.

Hey, I don't think it's *that* unreasonable of an assumption. These days, blogging is taking the internet world by storm...well, sort of. And now, more than ever, it seems like everyone's jumping on the blogging bandwagon.

And Tech students should be no exception. After all, we spend countless hours surfing the internet; a good part of that time could potentially be spent blogging.

I know a good number of my friends have weblogs, and by following the links from their websites, I'm sure I could find many other weblogs authored by Tech students.

It used to be that your average blogger kept a weblog to keep track of the daily happenings of their lives. At least, this was one reason I started mine, more than three years ago during my senior year of high school. Most people I know who have weblogs still do just that—use them to chronicle their lives—and there is definitely value to that. For example, when I came to Tech, my



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**Jennifer Lee**  
Opinions Editor

blog was a convenient way for high school friends who went to other colleges to keep up with me.

However, weblogs have been evolving, and so have the Tech students I know keeping ones.

What's funny is that so many times, I've heard students say, "Me? Write? Ha! There's a reason why I chose engineering."

But I've read some really well-written weblogs by Tech students, who not only use proper punctuation, grammar and capitalization (who says Tech students can't write?), but who also talk about really interesting things—as opposed to reduses of that person's day, or vents about the usual Tech shafting.

Instead, these weblogs contain insightful stories or interesting vignettes that could very well pass for something you might turn in for a—gasp!—creative writing class.

For example, a Materials Science and Engineering major I know posts poetry on his weblog. A friend of mine, who's an Electrical Engineering major, maintains a great "photoblog" (which is like a weblog, but instead of posting words, you post photography). A friend majoring in Computer Science posts eloquent, well-argued essays about the war in Iraq on his weblog.

Maybe I've been blogging for too long (or maybe I'm just a dork), but when I find out that yet someone else I know has started a weblog, I can't wait to get online and check it out.

And what I think is also exciting is that more and more people, in general, are learning what a weblog is, and even if they're not keeping one themselves, they're appreciating the power of personal publishing.

For example, a couple months ago, the *Technique* ran an article about how LCC professors were using weblogging in freshman English classes. Having to keep a weblog for a grade might take away from the fun of it, but I for one would definitely rather have kept a blog for English than write a 10-page paper on, say, Frankenstein and the human condition.

We here at the newspaper have also been throwing around the idea of a *Technique* weblog, where, perhaps, the editors could post links or interesting items that we can't, for space or other reasons, publish in the paper. Then maybe you, the readers, could respond to them. (What do you think? Send us your opinion!)

Weblogging by itself is just another cool thing. Within the context of Tech, though, it becomes relevant. One of my favorite things about weblogs is that they reveal facets of your average Techie that we don't usually associate with Tech students, such as being communicative and analytical about their lives in addition to their work and classes.

And my other favorite thing? Nowadays, I can mention my weblog in casual conversation—and get grins of recognition...instead of strange looks.

# Change should be embraced, not feared

Some of the *Technique's* more observant readers may notice a few changes in this week's issue.

If you didn't catch them, I forgive you. Most are admittedly minor: a few new fonts here and there, some tweaks to story bylines, a new way of marking some story jumps. The *Technique* flag on the front page is also different—sleeker and more integrated than the previous version.

Taken individually, these changes may seem marginal. But hopefully, when added together, they serve to begin a process of reinvigoration and reinvention that I, as editor-in-chief, plan to build upon in the coming year. Expect more changes in the weeks and months ahead. Some of the changes will be cosmetic, visible to the casual observer. Others will be less so, focusing on content and quality.

I know I am new at this job, and I know I still have a lot to learn, but I want to take this opportunity to share with you, the reader, some of the ideas and principles that will guide my time in the *Technique's* big chair.

As you may have guessed, the first principle is to always be willing to try new and different things, to embrace change when it makes sense.

Change can be hard to achieve in an organization with as rich a history as the *Technique*. Rules,



**"When should things be tweaked, and when should they be thrown out entirely?"**

**Daniel Amick**  
Editor-in-Chief

practices and traditions that develop over long periods of time serve some purpose initially, but gradually the rationales behind them disappear. We are left with arbitrary doctrine that no one can justify, but everyone accepts.

Part of being a good leader is recognizing what elements of an organization have become obsolete and what elements remain integral. When should things be tweaked, and when should they be thrown out entirely?

It's a fine line, and such judgments are not easy. The challenge is one I am already beginning to understand in my short time at the *Technique's* helm.

I can't guarantee I will always decide correctly, but in order to maximize my chances, I will seek out as many viewpoints and opinions as possible. If you point out aspects of the newspaper you don't like (and your suggestions aren't completely off-the-wall), I will listen.

Identifying aspects of an

organization that require re-vamping is only the first step. Next, a good leader has to settle on a single, unified vision and go about persuading people to buy into that vision.

This can be a difficult proposition, to say the least. Not everyone is a fan of change. Some people become so rooted in established ways of doing things that they cannot easily consider alternatives to the status quo.

The temptation for autocratic, explanation-free decision-making is always there. After all, who cares what any of *you* think anyway? But unilateral behavior only breeds resentment and resistance, maybe not immediately, but eventually.

I will also do my best to admit when I am wrong. This can be hard for me, as I'm sure it is for many people. But if something isn't working, new or old, I will be the first to admit it, take responsibility and make the necessary corrections.

## Rock, or mock, the vote

By David Weigel  
*Daily Northwestern*

(U-WIRE) Northwestern U.—It was fall 2000 and as a volunteer for the Ralph Nader campaign and a fresh Associated Student Government senator, I had been urged doubly to register my classmates to vote.

Looking back, I'm a little embarrassed. I know why I did it: We politically obsessed students truly believed voting was vital and our classmates had to do it to save their souls from Dante's sixth circle.

But it doesn't particularly matter whether Northwestern students vote. It doesn't matter to the world at large and it doesn't matter to our Evanston neighbors. In fact, the vote you cast for your favorite American Idol may have more bearing on your life than the vote you cast for president.

You go to a private school, so you won't feel the effect of a

reeling education budget. You probably don't pay taxes; if you do, you're in the lowest bracket, and neither party is going to shake you down.

The issues that fire up most Northwestern University students—abortion rights, globalization, gay marriage, war and peace—currently aren't affecting us directly. When we vote we're playing around with decisions that will have a bigger impact on other people.

Even the reasons for voting in a local election are a little specious. Would throwing our weight against one alderman or another really do more for the way Evanston treats us than, say, donating our time to helping at a local church or school?

I wouldn't suggest that students actually restrain their friends from voting. But it's rude to assume your love of politics must be forced upon your peers. If they don't want to vote, they've got nothing to lose.

### 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 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 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 Marcus Kwok at (404) 894-9187, or RoseMary 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>.

## OUR VIEWS HOT OR NOT

# HOT- or -NOT



### New signage

Okay, we know signage isn't all that exciting, but the new signs that have been popping up all over campus sure do look pretty. They make parking less confusing, and we're looking forward to seeing what will be posted on the blank "Campus Directory" billboards that are being placed in strategic locations around campus. Let's just hope that they don't stay empty for long.



### Woody's woes

Our gripe with the dining hall this time has nothing to do with the food—we're wondering why it's not open during the summer. With most of summer housing located on West Campus (Sixth Street, Center Street, Hemphill), why not open Woody's and close Brittain instead? Hungry students who can't cook are forced to walk all the way over to East Campus just to get dinner.

### Home run!

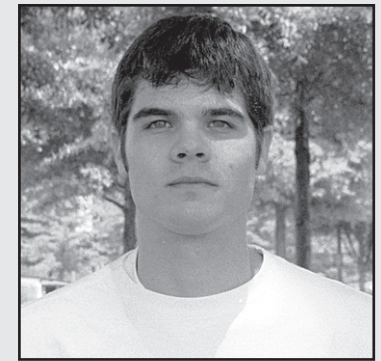
The drop in student population over the summer doesn't seem to have dampened turnout at baseball games. It's always great to beat UGA—but to do it in front of 28,000 fans at Turner Stadium make it all the sweeter. With a record 18-game winning streak, Tech beesball is definitely tearin' it up.

### RIAA = evil?

The RIAA has given students even more reason to hate it, subpoenaing OIT to release the names of nine Tech students accused of sharing music. It's too early to jump to conclusions, but it's hard not to feel unsettled by the prospect that this might be just the first round of lawsuits to come.

# BUZZ

**Around the Campus**  
What do you like about Tech during the summer?



**Marcus Eliason**  
Fourth-year ME

*"Playing volleyball in the sun with all of my lady friends."*



**Ali Asmi**  
Second-year CS

*"The atmosphere is less stressful."*



**Kamal Abu Nasser**  
Third-year CompE

*"No shoes, no shirt, no dice."*



**Sarah LaRose**  
First-year CS

*"Modular object-oriented robust coding, all while catching some killer rays."*

Photos by Derrick Ma