



OUR VIEWS CONSENSUS OPINION

Power play

Earlier this week, the Board of Regents decided against a midyear tuition increase. The announcement came on the heels of last Friday's protest at the Georgia Capitol and the delivery of a petition protesting the cuts that had been signed by tens of thousands of students statewide.

The Regents' decision is a triumph for college students statewide. Publicly, neither the Board of Regents nor the governor cited the petition or protest as a reason for their decisions. But student activism, along with intense media and public scrutiny, unquestionably played a vital role in avoiding an unprecedented midyear tuition increase. We applaud the actions of all students who worked tirelessly for this cause, whether from student government, RHA, Greek organizations or no organization at all.

The results show that the petition and protest were not a fruitless waste of time. They prove that, when roused to action and properly organized, we represent a powerful force capable of effecting real change in the state.

While the battle was won, the war continues. Higher education faces continued budget pressure. The new task force that is being created to examine long-term tuition levels represents an opportunity for student leaders. Lobbying efforts, coordinated with Institute administrators, should be focused on conveying student concerns to members of this task force.

Faculty progress reports

We encourage faculty and administrators to make midterm course evaluations an Institute priority.

Just as students get a midterm progress report, so too should faculty members. Every professor should ask their students three questions: what am I doing right, what am I doing wrong and what would you like to see more of? This admittedly small step achieves two things. First, it allows professors to fine-tune their teaching style to suite the unique dynamic of an individual class. Second, it gives students a feeling of empowerment and the chance to offer meaningful, constructive criticism.

Since end-of-term course evaluations are one of the measures used to determine tenure status, faculty members would find it advantageous to read unofficial student reviews earlier. This way it would give professors a chance to bring up their marks, while improving our educational experience. These evaluations would also be a small step on the road toward improved academic rankings, since professors' performances and perceptions of approachability play a key role in national rankings.

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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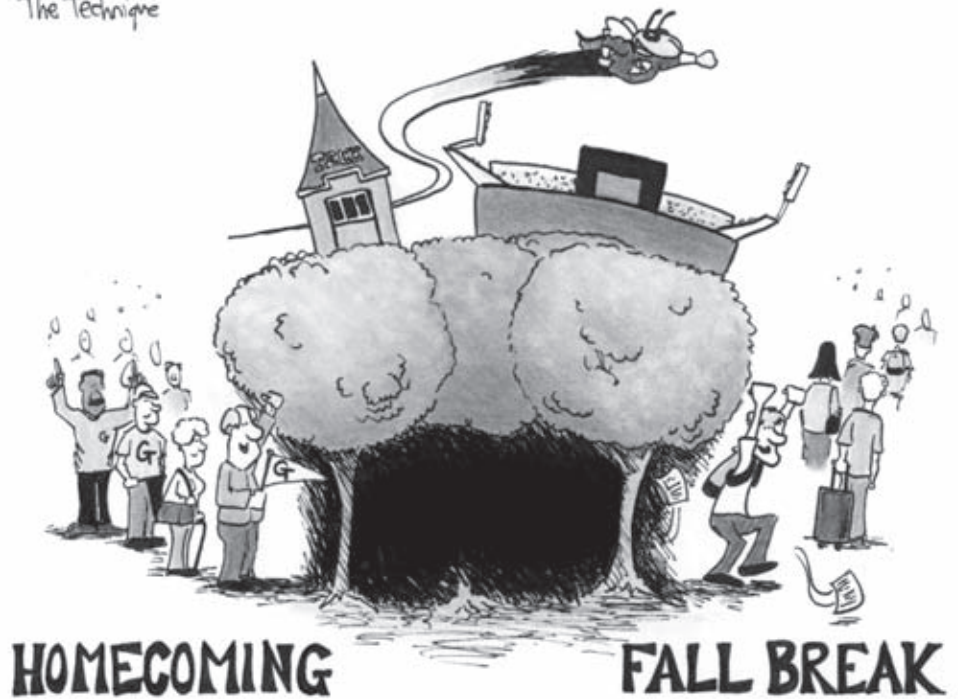
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By Brian Lewis / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Student orgs need to open doors

Involvement is so hot right now. Leadership is even hotter, with loads of money waiting to be allocated to leadership classes, student organizations and other motivated groups. Tossing large chunks of capital around demands that the current system of organizational involvement and recruitment face careful scrutiny. Many of the already involved probably fail to note any flaws in the status quo, but vast amounts of anecdotal evidence suggest otherwise.

General feeling on campus seems to be that if you aren't involved in something by your second year, you don't have much hope to become involved in something down the road.

This problem can be especially challenging for the out-of-town co-op student, who has a disjointed five years to commit to an organization, or the transfer student who is thrown into the heap halfway through their college career (excluding standouts like our own student body president).

It's hard to take the big push for campus involvement seriously when it's being pushed by those already super-involved, by the organizations whose membership includes the same 100 people that also belong to every other "high-level" organization.

It's hard to take the push seriously when one can't break the organizational bubble his or her second year and when experience seems to count more than potential, passion, time availability and demonstrated ability in places other than extracurricular activities. This is, of course, not referring to honor societies and the like with specific previous-experience requirements.

I'll admit, I could probably be considered a part of this "organizational elite" that I'm describing, having been a member of stereotypical "it" groups, like Freshman Council (FC) and a sorority, among others.



"It's hard to have hope for change when most organizations are made up of elites serving elites..."

Jennifer Schur
Executive Editor

So please take my words from the vantage point of someone who's become frustrated with the system and has grown old enough to realize that there's a better way to accomplish things around here.

Speaking of freshman organizations, general opinion seems to indicate that FC, FreShGA and FAB (the "Top Three Freshman Orgs") are elitist and self-serving groups that exist solely to act in their own self-interest. They act as feeder organizations to the "Big Time" organizations. The Big Timers—high profile groups plagued with organizational inbreeding—seem to reward names associated with these "prestigious" freshman groups, regardless of individual effort.

Beyond the fact that the process of becoming a part of the Top Three is arbitrary at best, the idea that their members have some sort of assumed talent and extraordinary ability over their peers who are not members is ludicrous.

The thought that the Top Three do much more than just develop their members is just part of the hype; the Top Three mostly serve to connect their members with the organizational elite and breed them to become the next class of the elite.

I loved my time with Freshman Council, and wouldn't trade it even though it is associated with so many negative connotations. At the same time, I recognize it for what it was. FC helped me find my direction at

Tech and gave me the tools to follow that direction. The travesty, though, is that not every freshman receives such an opportunity for discovery.

Extracurricular activities should be an outlet for students to grow as people, to discover their passions and to develop a support system of friends and confidants, while contributing to the goals of the organization, not to serve as resume fodder or a way to shake the "right" peoples' hands to get to the "right" place.

Understanding that it's not that simple, that organizations are of a limited size for very good reason—monetary, operationally, feasibility—there must be ways to make the recruitment process more fair.

There must be a way to change the stereotype that older students, transfer students and co-op students are not welcome within the organizational hierarchy of this campus.

Organizations can take steps to change their memberships' mindset and to begin actively seeking potential instead of rewarding bulleted lists of previous involvement. The details of your group's recruitment process should be made open to the members of the organization such that, when possible, each member has input in membership selections. Perhaps the written application should be taken more seriously as a reflection of what each applicant has to offer and employ group, task-based

See Orgs, page 10

Don't sweat it; dropping a class isn't so bad

Another semester, another class dropped. It's starting to become a trend. I keep thinking that I will eventually get over the "hump" and that school will begin to get easier, but I've been here three years and it hasn't happened yet.

What is worse is that I don't really have any easy classes left to take. All that is left for me is advanced mechanical engineering courses and a few artsy electives (you know, the kind that are annoyingly difficult for all the wrong reasons). I can see myself barely getting by with taking 12 hours each semester from here until graduation. That is what I did this semester, which makes it all the more embarrassing that I had to drop a course.

It has been my experience that the first exam for any particular class is the most dangerous. Unless your professor has given you exams from previous semesters, you generally have no idea what to expect. Generally, when a person has no idea what to expect for a first exam, at least one of two things will happen. They will either study unnecessarily hard or will completely and utterly fail the test.

If the latter happens, odds are you will seriously consider dropping the class. The first exam in a class is generally a good indicator of whether or not you



"So look on the bright side. By dropping a class, you not only get to keep your sanity..."

Jamie Howell
Photography Editor

are cut out for that class. If you do horribly on the first exam and you honestly don't think there is any hope for salvation in the class, don't be afraid to drop it. It is much better to take a lighter load, maintain a decent GPA, and keep your sanity than to overextend yourself (physically and emotionally) and do poorly in your classes.

I have witnessed firsthand the effects of overloading oneself academically and they aren't pretty. I'm sure most people know someone who fits the description. They take between 16 and 20 hours as a part of this crazy plan to get out of college as soon as they possibly can. They are constantly complaining about how stressed they are and how they never have any time for anything. They start to lose social contact with their friends. People start saying things like "Whatever happened to John? I haven't seen him in months."

"Oh, you didn't hear? He's taking 20 hours." I can't imagine anyone having an enjoyable college experience under such circumstances. If you ever find yourself in a similar situation, dropping a class is probably the best thing you could do for yourself.

In addition to the social and health benefits that go along with relieving yourself of an excessive class load, there are also academic benefits.

There are two big things working in your favor when you take a class for the second time. First of all, you know exactly what to expect on the dreaded first exam in the class. Because of this, and the fact that you've seen the introductory material twice, you'll likely get off to a much better start the second time around.

Secondly, the experience you gained from taking classes from the previous semester will likely

help you in the class you had to drop. I am speaking from experience here. I, personally, have managed to make Bs the second time around in all of the classes I have had to drop.

As a general disclaimer, just about anything can be overdone. Dropping classes is no exception.

If you've been here three years and you still have 1000-level core classes in your schedule, then it's time to either start studying a little harder or looking into another major.

So look on the bright side. By dropping a class here and there, you not only keep your sanity, but you get to enjoy college a while longer as well. Stop laughing, I'm serious. College is supposed to be the best years of a person's life. Granted, it's not quite the same at Tech as more academically relaxed schools, but the premise is the same.

Going out with friends, dating, attending sporting events, just acting goofy for the heck of it—all of this stuff is a lot easier when you aren't having to work 40 hours a week to make a living.

You may think you hate this school now, but I can almost promise that sometime in the future you will look back and wonder why you thought it was so bad.

BUZZ Around the Campus What is your favorite Homecoming event?



Kim Cooper
AE Junior

"I like the Ramblin' Reck Parade."



Matt Quilliams
MGT Senior

"When Buzz stung me at the football game."



Maggie Arrington
INTA Junior

"The Mini 500."



Chris Hannemann
ME Junior

"The Freshman Cake Race"

Photos by Ethan Trehwitt

OUR VIEWS HOT OR NOT

HOT- or -NOT



Drop away

In years past, drop day came so fast that it was hard to take advantage of the freebie, but this year was a different story. Thanks to the efforts of student leaders last year, drop day was moved back two weeks this year. The later date enabled students to get out of bad situations faster than you can say "shaft." With over 3,400 courses dropped, students can finally get a good night's sleep and not fret over GPAs.



Not super timing

This week students have a tough decision to make—take a fall break or stick around for homecoming. Students shouldn't have to choose between going on vacation or cheering for the Jackets. Organizers should have taken the timing into consideration before they planned this year's festivities. For homecoming to remain a cherished tradition, it needs to serve as a diversion from classes, not vacations.



Give us shelter

Just when we had resigned ourselves to exposure to the elements while waiting for the Stinger and Trolley at Ferst & Atlantic, Tech surprised us by adding a bus shelter. No longer will students get drenched on rainy days in that area. Now if only someone could eliminate Trolley congestion.



Braves stomped

Coming off the heels of an exciting Tech win over Maryland, we had hoped to see our beloved Braves go on to the National League Championship Series. We had been looking forward to a possible matchup against the Red Sox or Yankees. Maybe next year will bring happier times for Chipper Jones and crew.

YOUR VIEWS LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Voter turnout misrepresented

[Editor's Note: This letter responds to the Oct. 1 article on the Graduate Student Senate election results.]

As an INTA graduate senator, I feel compelled to tell you that I was astounded that [the article] relied on mere raw numbers to decide which academic department received the most and the least votes. I find that method to be highly flawed.

The article mentioned that the Chemistry senator got the highest votes, though she got only 34 votes out of 220 Graduates students enrolled in the Chemistry department. In essence, she received only 16 percent of the total possible votes.

By merely looking at the raw numbers, your method results in a highly skewed and flawed output.

There are graduate departments, like the INTA department, that are striving to get involved in the graduate student

body. Although I got only 18 votes, there are only 52 Graduate INTA students enrolled, giving me about 35 percent of the total possible votes.

Even my opponent, who got 10 votes, did better than the Chemistry senator by grabbing 19 percent of the total possible votes. In addition, the voter turnout in my department was about 53 percent, which I would argue was one of the highest voter turnouts.

I felt that the article completely sidelines the efforts made by a few departments on our campus that try their best to get their graduate students involved in on-campus activities. Not to mention, it sends out a completely wrong message that graduate students are generally not interested in getting involved.

Omer Khan
INTA Graduate Senator
gte232h@mail.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 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.

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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, email editor@technique.gatech.edu.

Students need to continue fight for higher education

[Editor's Note: This guest editorial is in response to the recent decision by the Board of Regents to use other methods besides a midyear tuition increase to deal with budget cuts.]

It's not over yet.

While the battle to stop a mid-year tuition increase was won by the students, the war to maintain the quality of higher education still remains.

Let us not stop here when our efforts are strong and our voice has just begun to reverberate across the state.

Let us show top state officials that we, the students, mean business and will fight for our rights.

Take that same passion that compelled you to sign the petition, to get your friends on board, rally behind your fellow peers and continue to show that the quality of higher education should be a top priority.

The future of Georgia depends on it.

For my fellow HOPE recipients, why should you care?

Well, I could say that myself given the fact that not only am I on HOPE but graduating in the spring also.

However, this fight was not just about our pocketbook, although that was the easiest way to relate to the students. But rather, it's about protecting the size of our classrooms, the academic excellence of our professors, the climbing growth of our national rankings, and the

prominent seal on our degrees.

Students, I urge you to continue to promote the quality of higher education by writing to your local legislatures and the Governor.

The

most

successful

victory of the

tuition

petition drive

was the

collaborative

efforts from

various

students

and student

organizations on

campus as well

as the various

student

governments across

the state.

Be

proactive when

issues similar

to this come up

again.

Without

the positive

help and

input across

Tech's campus,

SGA

could not have

been successful

in expressing

the student

body's voice.

I

personally

thank everyone

who took part

in some way

in this

effort.

I

look forward

to your

continue

support for

other

initiatives

throughout

the year.

Amy

Phuong

Undergraduate

Student

Body

President

president@sga.gatech.edu



Amy Phuong
SGA President

'Healthy' fast food an oxymoron

By Andrew Vaupel

University Daily Kansan (U. Kansas)

(U-WIRE) LAWRENCE, Kan.— College students eat fast food for breakfast, lunch, dinner and even between meals. Fast food is only a part of America's obesity issue, but college students must become aware of the problem. The Centers for Disease Control reported in 2003 that the prevalence of obesity among adults ages 20 through 74 nearly doubled from 15 percent in 1976 through 1980 to 28 percent in 1999 to 2000.

Despite our best intentions to eat a healthy diet, cravings and the demands of school, work and time send us in search of the quick fast food fix. No one can stop you from eating fast food, so here are some tips for when you have your next burger-and-fries craving.

A regular-size burger provides two servings of grain, 3 ounces of

protein and 260 calories, which is just right for a single meal. But if you switch from a regular burger to a Big Mac value meal with large fries and a large Coca-Cola, your calorie total soars to 1,400 calories -- almost a day's worth of calories for the average college student. Either take home leftovers for another meal or buy smaller portions. Even though the larger sizes don't cost much more you may end up super-sizing your waist and your value meal.

So watch how much fried food you eat. Even fish sandwiches are rarely healthy, because they are usually fried. Items that are baked, broiled, roasted or grilled are better choices. But ask for the sauces on the side so you control how many extra calories, fat and carbohydrates you eat.

Even if you choose healthy main dishes you can destroy your hard work by ordering a big drink. Skip the sodas and you'll save tons of

calories.

A super-sized 42-ounce pop or fruit drink will set you back 410 calories. It would be more, but you get a lot of ice.

Take the time to make good decisions about what you eat and where. Don't let the closeness to home, school or work dictate where you eat.

Look at your options and for places where your food is made to order so you can control the amounts. Consider ordering large salads, but don't spoil them with high-fat dressings. Roast beef, turkey and chicken sandwiches are often better than a burger.

Ask for nutrition information or visit fast-food Web sites to know what you are eating. To make the comparison simple, check out three popular options at five different restaurants below by grams of fat, grams of protein, grams of carbohydrates and calories.

Orgs from page 8

challenge interviews.

Change will only happen if each of us takes it upon ourselves to search for the elements of a good member in the ability and promise of the applicants both inside and outside other student organizations.

It's hard to have hope for change when most organizations are made up of elites serving elites, and today's leaders reap the benefits of the current system's structure. But I think we can

do it. I think we can positively impact the negative perception of "power," pop open the student organization bubble, and show the campus that everyone with genuine interest and a willingness to work is welcome.

In the meantime, students interested in getting involved should accept the fact that the flawed status quo exists, but they can begin their involvement by contributing to groups that do not limit membership. Some such organizations include: all student publications, service organizations (like MOVE), SGA

committees, campus political parties, GT Student Foundation and sports clubs, just to name the few that immediately came to mind.

If we, as campus leaders, continue to shut the door on excited potential members with a willingness to commit, we are merely shutting the door on an opportunity for growth. We're not only slamming shut an opportunity for our organizations to grow, but also an opportunity to afford individuals the chance to grow. And isn't that the greatest purpose an organization can have?