

OPINIONS

Technique • Friday, August 30, 2002

OUR VIEWS Consensus Opinion UHR meeting changes

The Undergraduate House of Representatives finalized plans this week to vote on financial bills using a slate system and to center meetings around discussions of topics about which the undergraduate student body is concerned. The slating of financial bills will be based heavily on the Joint Finance Committee's recommendation about the bill.

The JFC is composed of both undergraduates and graduates and gives a recommendation to the legislative bodies on whether or not to pass bills. The new policy of slating puts the JFC, a body which is appointed, not elected, in a position of great power as their approval will be used to slate the bills. Many of the responsibilities that SGA representatives have under the Constitution relates to the disbursement of money. This policy moves the representatives away from this duty and makes them less accountable for their votes on individual bills.

Additionally, it may be inappropriate for nonelected officials to have such power over the workings of the House. SGA elections are held every Spring so that the student body can have some say over the process of how Student Activity Fees are spent. This new process may reduce the value of the elections if students feel that their elected officials have less power over the legislative process.

Even if all of these obstacles are overcome, the current policy sets the monetary limits for inclusion in the slate much too high. \$2000 is a significant portion of student activity fees. Any group requesting such a large sum of money should be required to justify their costs not only before the JFC but also before the UHR. This system of individually considering each bill will help the student body to evaluate whether their funds are being spent wisely or not.

The other portion of the UHR's plan, to hold issue-based meetings, is questionable in many ways. What issues will be discussed? How will they be determined? What action will UHR take on these issues? What will be the tangible product from this change? The main concern that arises from this new system is what sort of results can be expected from these conversations. Constituents must be able to see some benefits from the new system for these changes to be successful. The new system is highly confusing, and without more information, it will be difficult for students to communicate to their representatives their opinions on both the issues covered and the new format of the meetings.

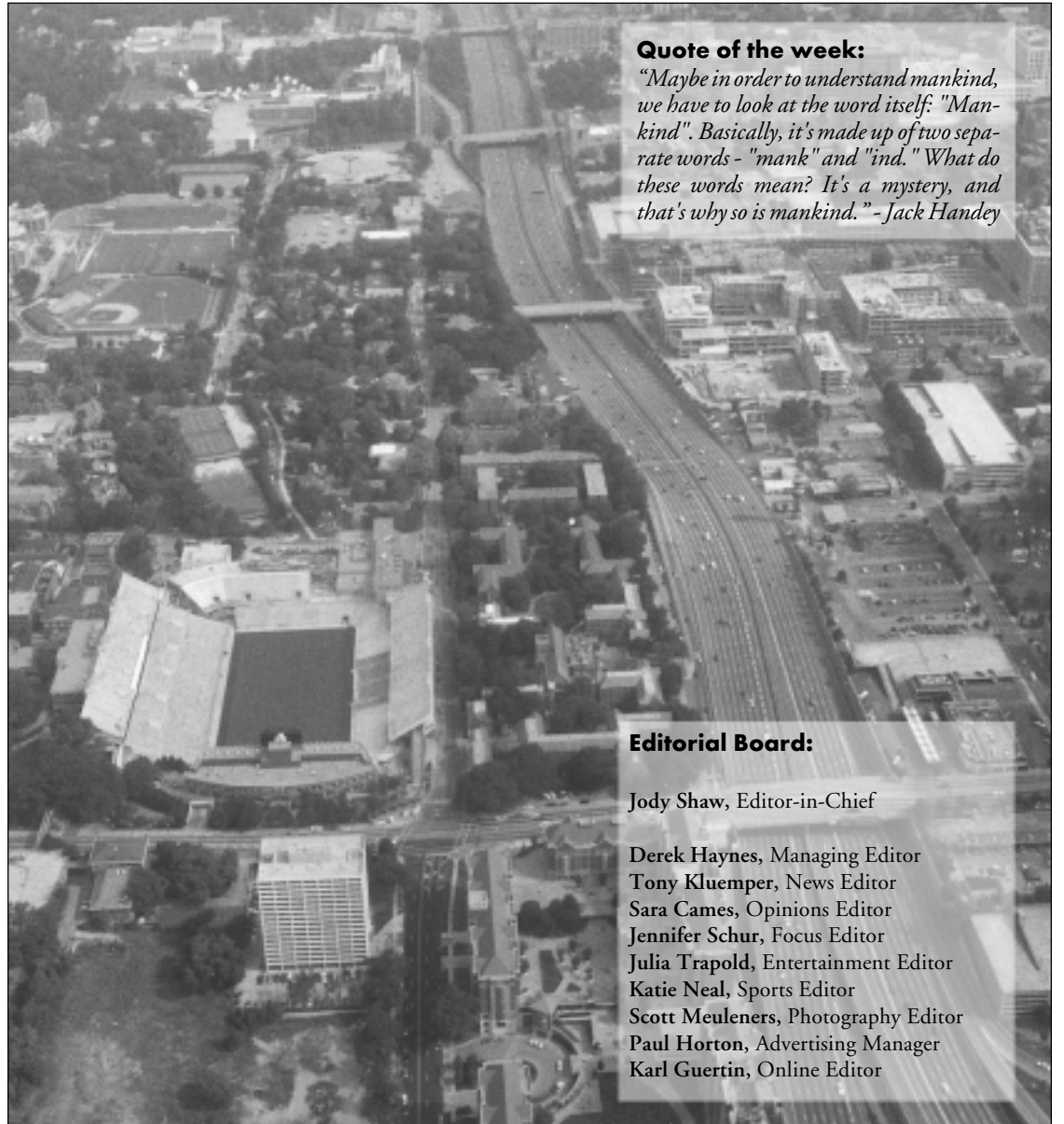
CoC and Housing tutoring

The move to place tutors for the introductory Computer Science courses in the freshman dorms is a truly monumental step in the right direction. This policy will allow more students to get help on their own time table while also improving the ability of the College of Computing to teach Tech students the essentials of computing.

The tutors selected would ideally be Teaching Assistants for the course already, but as this will probably be impossible given the demands that are already placed on their time, the tutors should be as qualified as possible. These tutors should be trained to give consistent information so that all students will have equal opportunity to excel.

This policy will help Tech with more than the grades in its Computer Science courses; hopefully, the effort that Tech is putting into improving undergraduate education through initiatives like this one will show up in significantly better retention rates.

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



Quote of the week:

"Maybe in order to understand mankind, we have to look at the word itself: 'Mankind'. Basically, it's made up of two separate words - 'mank' and 'ind.' What do these words mean? It's a mystery, and that's why so is mankind." - Jack Handey

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ROBERT HILL

Tennis Center policy harmful to students

I have a problem with the Tennis Center policy of holding the student IDs while using the courts. Currently, at the entrance to the Center a student has to leave his or her ID on a table with the attendant before gaining access to the courts.

Almost every time I have been to play over the last few weeks, either on my way in or out, the desk was unattended, and the student IDs were laying in plain view. My concern is that anyone can just walk in and steal the IDs. This would result in a personal expense (cost to replace it), a potential loss of funds (I have a lot of money on the ID), and a security risk since the ID acts also

as a key to get into secure buildings/research centers and parking.

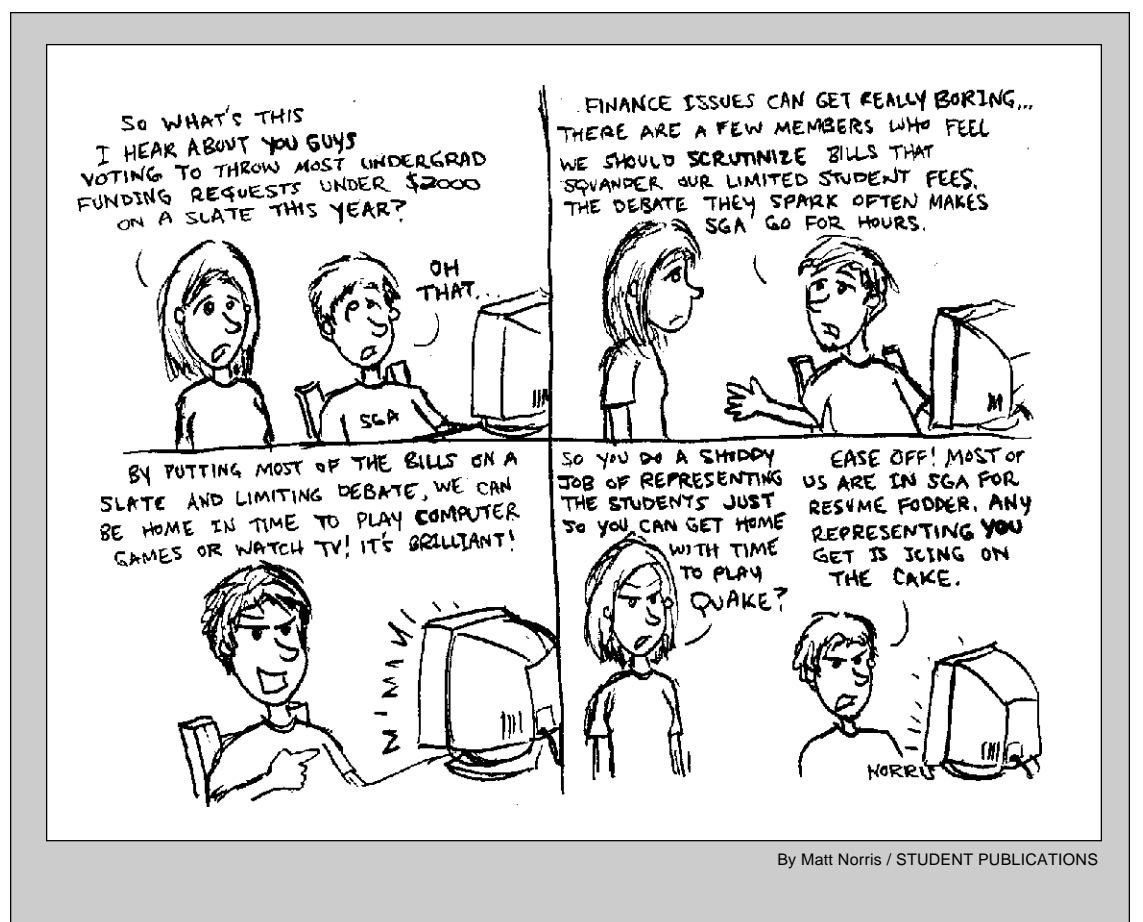
When I spoke with a member of the tennis center staff, I was told that the policy was established because students pass the ID through the fence and non-Tech people get in. When I asked why not compare the picture with the person, I was told that many times it's hard to tell. What's the role of a picture ID if it can not be used as identification?

As I continued to complain, I was told that if I don't like the policy, I should go play at the courts on Peter's parking deck; why are those available to non-Tech people?

While I understand why the center's staff implemented this policy, I still think that the risks and potential losses outweigh the benefits of this policy. Since the booth was unattended so many times, non-Tech people can still just walk in, while Tech Students can have their IDs stolen.

The Tennis Center could fix this problem in many ways: have the booth attended continuously, or ask for the student ID and another picture ID (at least one of the pictures should match the person!).

Tudor Palaghita
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By Matt Norris / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Ethics education essential to becoming a leader

This past year Georgia Tech featured a definite increase in the attention given to ethics. From the College of Computing cheating scandal to the falsification of information in our coaching staff's résumés, Georgia Tech's ethics have come before the world and have been found lacking. We must explore new and innovative ways to fix these problems and to help everyone at Tech become honorable.

It's not just Georgia Tech, however. Ethical issues have touched many different areas of our culture recently. Enron and WorldCom have presented to the world the negative effects that shady business practices can have on vast numbers of people and indeed, on our entire economy. We also have become increasingly aware of the ethics of our leaders, leading to a national debate on whether or not candidates' personal lives should be involved in elections.

All of these happenings have sparked ideas about how to educate people about ethics and how to then convince them to use this education to act ethically. This concept of how to get people to "do the right thing" is as old as human society itself, although our conception of ethics has changed drastically. What we here at Georgia Tech must ask ourselves is how effective our education is in teaching students here about the value of ethics and integrity.

Many people claim that attempting to educate people about values is impossible, especially when trying to educate those in college. These people argue that values are already developed by the time one reaches college age and that significant change is incredibly difficult. Any develop-



"What better way to mature the values of ethics and integrity than through the challenge that Tech academics represent."

Sara Cames
Opinions Editor

mental theory, however, posits that although basic values may already be set, the maturation of values will almost certainly occur during college. What better way to mature these values than through the challenge that Tech academics represent. To help us successfully navigate these challenges, Tech must provide us with the resources and support to make the right decisions. College is supposed to teach us about how to be effective people; one factor of this is being able to make ethical decisions in real-world situations where the right answer is not always obvious.

Tech currently does a fair job of introducing its students to what comprises ethical behavior. Students are first introduced to what is expected of them at college at FASET. This year Tech did an especially good job of integrating these concepts into many different presentations. The FASET leaders were trained on ethics, the SGA welcome often included a mention of the importance of integrity and, of course, the Honor Code presented to incoming students a very concrete way in which Tech expected ethical behavior from them. It is essential that freshmen be educated on what Tech expects of them from multiple points of contact; this way,

the idea that ethics is important is made obvious to freshmen.

Beyond this official introduction, Tech students encounter ethical decisions in the classroom every day. We are all forced to decide our own personal stance on all the academic decisions we are faced with here. From copying someone else's paper to witnessing cheating and not reporting it, ethical decisions have become an essential part of our education. Most majors now have a class on ethics as one of their requirements, although Tech could make many improvements on their course offerings in this area. Additionally, Tech is now offering an academic integrity seminar for those who are found responsible for cheating. This activity, placed as it is in a classroom setting, allows ethics education to be integrated into the academic environment, a property that will be essential if teaching integrity is to be successful.

One additional way that Tech could drastically improve in this area is to encourage more professors to be involved in actively discussing issues of integrity with their classes. Professors must show students that they are willing to help them be ethical. This can be done by professors being available and making sure that their students have the resources

they need to learn the material. No one can doubt the benefit of hard work in learning material; however, there are many things that professors can do to make a more ethical environment a reality, including communicating what is expected in the classroom, providing examples of the testing mechanisms that will be used, and frequently revising the evaluating materials.

Tech also provides students with the opportunity to be ethical with the coop program, undergraduate resources, and internship opportunities. It is real life experiences like that allow us to put our ethics into practice.

Finally, Tech is also trying to expand the role that ethics plays in our lives outside of the classroom. One of the best ways to develop one's ethical sense is to serve on one of the many hearing panels that Tech has. The development gained in these is unparalleled in other student organizations. Basic involvement in other activities at Tech also fosters the values of honesty and integrity, especially as Tech continues to expand its use of the Leadership Initiative, one of the tenants of which is ethics.

While many may argue that attempting to teach ethics is a fool's errand, I think it is Georgia Tech's responsibility to be on the cutting edge of this area as we are in so many others. The use of technology especially requires a strong and developed sense of integrity and fairness. The skills we will learn here should be continuously augmented by knowledge of the power that our education gives us and the ability to use it to help others in an honorable manner.

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Princeton Review confused about Tech's nature

So six years ago, the city of Atlanta decided to build several acres worth of brick buildings, spending millions of dollars in taxpayer money. Unbeknownst to most Atlantans (and even most Tech students), though, was the fact that the city was ACTUALLY building dungeons. Indeed, rows upon rows upon even more rows of dark, dreary, dismal dungeons. And now they're all commonly known as your dorm rooms!

This is all according to the Princeton Review, that adored team that cooks up hundreds of ways to "help" students decide where to go to college by making them "pay" (money's no object for the gains of an education, right?) for "books" and other such accoutrements vital to learning which college has the most students nostalgic for Reagan (for the freshman engineering majors: don't worry, you weren't alive then, you aren't expected to know him; but Tech was number 18 in this category), a statistic without which I know I wouldn't have felt right making my college decision.

By the way, I sought the advice of the Princeton Review's "counselor-o-matic" which is supposed to match you to your reach school, your perfect fit, and your fall back school. My perfect match? The University of Georgia. Enough said about the validity of the research and college-knowledge skills of this rinky-dink site.

Almost in support of our number one ranking in the "Don't inhale" category, I received an email



"We've got the second least happy students with the most to do in the ninth ugliest place to do it."

Jennifer Schur
Focus Editor

with a link to this all-telling and sordid guide no less than 5 times. You might be wondering, what does "Don't inhale" mean? My initial take on it was that we have so many potheads roaming Ferst Drive and Cherry Street, hot-boxing Stingers left, right and center, and piping (oh, bad pun) green plant aromas through the air ducts of the super-cool newly-redone library that you shouldn't inhale if you want to remain straight-headed.

Alas, the true explanation of our ranking is much more mundane. We are the tops of the non-partiers, head of the boring, president of the party poopers. What about those LAN parties my friend was telling me about? Don't tell me the Princeton Review is hating on a different kind of fun.

After all, Tech is ranked number nine for "Students from different backgrounds interact." We're an accepting campus and can appreciate people with all sorts of majors (I know plenty of INTA majors who are friends with CS majors); even more impressive, I know plenty of guys who know more than five girls! This online fad is nothing new.

Instead, quite frequently most of campus is flooded with the same email about the same airline deal or the same mall sale or the same magazine poll in which to vote. For example, I felt my own brush with celebrity when I caved in to an email telling me to go to Time Magazine's site. Last year, I was one of the many Tech students who helped vote George P. Burdell into the spotlight as Time's Person of the Year for a couple of days in their online poll.

Maybe it's instances like these, then, that earn Tech the number 18 ranking in "Students who never stop studying." Tech breeds an internet and constant email checking addiction and dependency that is shrouded from the world with the excuse that all of our students are studying intently on their computers, which happen to be tucked away in the corners of their respective dungeons.

Perhaps we seek solace in the far away lands the internet constructs in order to escape our "tiny and unsightly campus" (we're number nine in rankings for this accolade). Or perhaps it is because the "professors suck all life from materials"

(Tech's a whopping 4th for this doozy). In any case, I'd say that the Princeton Review's discouraging rankings of Georgia Tech are probably why Greek recruitment was down this year.

Anyway, at least we can rest easy knowing that if we ever finished studying there'd be a great wealth of activity for us to explore. The Institute is ninth in the ambiguous "More to do on campus" class.

I recently conducted a survey, in which I rigorously adhered to the same high scientific standards the Princeton Review used. After asking the five people I live with (plus my roommate's fish) what they felt this classification means, I've concluded that it means there's more to do on our campus than at most colleges.

Maybe the Review board needs a refresher in irony—we've got the second least happy students with the most to do in the ninth ugliest place to do it.

After this critical analysis of the "well-respected" Princeton Review's latest marks gathered from students around the country, it seems clear that what Tech students should really be ranked first in is complaining about their own school.

I say we join together and show these "Princeton" people how great our campus is! Let's rebel against our self-created stereotype! If you're with me, toss that frown aside and leave your keyboard! Let's go do something wild and crazy...but we might have to contact UGA friends for some ideas first.

Alumnus reminisces about Tech of old, offers advice to freshmen

I cannot believe that it is almost September again. I know that due to the semester conversion, most of you do not remember starting Fall in the middle of September. Bear with me while I remember the good old days while I pathetically try to recapture my youth.

Back in '92 Smith Hall was just a little bit different than it is today. To begin with, the rooms were baby blue painted cinder block with a concrete floor. The furniture was not the nice wooden lofts of today. They were metal bunk beds.

There were times as I lay in bed that I thought about how many people had gone through what I was going through in that very room. The dorm was built sometime in the 1930's, some 60 years ago (well 60 years ago in '92).

Funny how the 1990s and the 1930s could not be any more different, but the students who inhabited the dorm then worried about the same things that I was worrying

about. Will I fail Calculus I? I miss home. I think I made a mistake; I don't really want to be an engineer.

Back in 1992 Smith was across the street from Techwood, which was both a dorm and a crack neighborhood. It was not uncommon to find used crack pipes outside the dorm and to hear gunshots at night.

But of course you wouldn't know anything about that now that they have torn down the dorm and the neighborhood. Junior's used to be across the street from Smith Hall? They had lovely pancakes on Saturday mornings...

The computers back in 1992 were just a bit slower than today. I remember when the guy across the hall got a 486dx25. My God it was the fastest desktop I had ever seen.

One day I was in the Rich building with a computer geek friend and she told me that there was this thing called "email" and the "internet." My friends and family could not believe that I could send an

email to anyone in the world. I knew that the Internet was here to stay when one day not to many years ago I heard my mother talking about sending emails and chatting in chat rooms. Isn't it funny how things go from cutting edge technology to everyday use by your mother?

We used to surf the web using Mosaic. This was a long time before IE and Netscape. Then there was writing the emails in VI. That damn "Esc : wq" to end your message. I thought I had died and gone to heaven when someone showed me a nice editor called Pico. Amazing.

Everyone in the administration used to love to talk about "Green Spaces" on campus and how we needed more of them. Where the fountain and concrete amphitheater are outside the Student Center, there used to be a very large grassed hill. It was perfect for lying around in the sun getting some sleep or a tan.

But hey, they gave you nice, cold

concrete seats around a fountain with a huge, ribbed shaft. Nice. What exactly is their definition of "green space?"

Then there were the endless hours playing Netrek in the French building. For those of you who are not familiar with the game Netrek, I urge you to ask your older siblings about the game, or do a search, download the COW, and have fun.

If you ever look up stats and all time records, look up I Eat Torps!. That would be me! Too bad that it has been proven that your GPA is inversely proportional to the number of Netrek hours played. But I sure had fun!

I say all this to remind you that all glory is fleeting. One day you will look back and realize that it has been ten years since you left home for Atlanta and Georgia Tech. Enjoy your time and learn what you can. Trust me, you will eventually finish and get your diploma. It may take a while but you will finish.

There will be classes that you have to take that have nothing to do with your major. These can be a real pain in the butt.

However, you never know when you will actually need to use that stuff down the road. As a Civil Engineer I just knew that I would never need any information from that damn EE class on circuits.

Well, I just got finished looking over a set of electrical drawings for a new well I am working on and I must say that the drawings looked like a bunch of Hieroglyphics. So take every class seriously because you never know when something is going to come back and bite you in the hindquarters!

By they way, I have never ever used Calculus for anything! You can take that to the bank! Enjoy your time at Tech!

Mike Talley
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Buzz Around the Campus



Question of the week

“What would you improve or change about parking?”

Feature and Photos by
Christopher Gooley



Caroline Burnet
ARCH Senior

“Have a better way of determining who gets permits...”



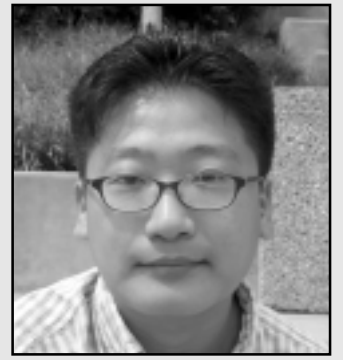
Caroline Seabrook
PSYC Sophomore

“They could give me a spot!”



Daniel Arnett
ME Senior

“They should assist us rather than just making money off us.”



H. Joon Jang
ISYE Grad

“I don't see a problem.”



Jinwoo Kang
ECE Grad

“More parking lots!”



Kah-Mun Low
ECE Grad

“Make it cheaper!”



Lauren Piper
STaC Junior

“It's not right that the parking people work on commission.”



Meg Monaco
CE Sophomore

“Why can't they make the buses run on time?”

IAC facts out of date

The *Technique* did its usual fine job with the first issue of the year. However, one correction needs to be made in your "Freshman Survival Guide."

In your article on how frequently Tech students change majors, the *Technique* reported that "only 61 percent of the students originally admitted into the Ivan Allen College actually graduated from IAC," and that "liberal arts and social science majors tend to switch away from those programs more frequently, most often into management."

These statistics are misleading because they used the 1993-5 freshman cohorts. In those years, Ivan Allen College included the School of Management.

When IAC divided and Management became the Dupree College in 1998, many IAC students left IAC and moved to Dupree but only because they already were management majors. A more valid comparison might use the 1996-1999 period, when 334 students moved into IAC from other GT colleges and 150 moved out (not counting those who were originally IAC/Management).

Incidentally, the primary sources of internal GT transfers into IAC majors have been Computing and Biology, followed by ME, CMPE, IE, and UEC.

Richard Barke
Associate Dean, Ivan Allen College
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Responsible college drinking starts while still at home

By Jessica Velez
Daily Texan

(U-WIRE) University of Texas at Austin—Recently, the American Medical Association asked The Princeton Review to eliminate their "Party Schools" list from the Best College series. Not only did this list provide an easy reference for worried parents (now why did Johnny choose that school?), but it also showed prospective students at which universities one could find both an education and a social life.

But this sort of view is not one that educators joyfully endorse. They want to present parents with the image of a pristine center of education where their child will diligently study for hours and make straight A's with little effort thanks to the academic atmosphere.

A wake-up call is in order. To believe a student will go to a university and not attend at least one party with alcohol is naïve. Colleges have earned their alcoholic reputations, but college life is not a 24-hour binge party unless the student makes it so. Responsible drinking can be part of an academically rewarding college career.

Parents need to wake up and take responsibility for their child's potential actions. If the student was raised in a home where alcohol was treated as some sort of repulsive disease rather than the staple of human society it is, the child will have an immature view of world in which alcohol use is a reality. A student who is raised in a house where alcohol is a dirty word is far more likely

to indulge him or herself than a student who was raised in an alcohol-tolerant environment.

The ability to drink responsibly is not something that magically materializes on one's 21st birthday; it is something that must be learned and acquired. But to think that parents will take a more tolerant view towards drinking, especially with the incessant drunken-driving murders that occur, is also naïve. Because of social taboos, alcohol has

"The ability to drink responsibly is not something that magically materializes on one's 21st birthday."

become what parents fear most: a lethal agent.

The United States is renowned world-wide as a stodgy country when it comes to drinking—many other countries have younger legal drinking ages, some of which are younger than a child's driving age. This gives a child the opportunity to learn his or her alcoholic limit and thus become a responsible drinker before potentially becoming a hazard on the road. But because the United States treats underage drinking as the Forbidden Fruit, it has become a social taboo, practically a brag-

ging right: "I got totally wasted at last night's party."

For many who have been refused the seeming privilege of drinking previously, their first time drinking heavily can be a terrible, even scary experience, complete with bingeing and eventually passing out. The risk is far greater for these types of people than for a person who has been taught from an early age to respect the potential effects of heavy drinking, and even come to realize their drinking limit.

First-time drinkers can make it a nightly habit, having suddenly discovered the hazy joy of being drunk. Some can even become addicted to this sensation, and this is far more fatal to one's academic life than an occasional drink. For those who have imbibed before, alcohol has lost much of its mystery, making it an almost common-place experience. The more one has experienced hangovers, the less eager one is to do so again.

A responsible drinker is taught to respect alcohol for the lethal agent it could become, not fear it or see it as some sort of far-away privilege that only others are able to enjoy. Both of the latter views only serve to make alcohol more enticing overall, a strange yet popular—and therefore good—product.

Even worse is when the parent tells the student they shouldn't drink at all. To tell a child not to do or say something only fills the child with a sudden insatiable urge to do or say just what they were told not to. This reverse psychology does not disappear with age—perhaps the ability to resist becomes stronger,

but it is a well-known fact that peer pressure is the most powerful force on Earth, up to and including natural disasters. Therefore, a parent should simply know that words alone will not suffice. Teaching by example is the way to go.

This is not to say that all college students who were raised in an alcohol-free environment become incessant drinkers when they hit college. Some of them develop an aversion to drinking in general, and some

"Because the United States treats underage drinking as the Forbidden Fruit, it has become a social taboo."

are mature enough to handle the entire situation without previous experience.

Parents cannot assume their child has this level of maturity; it is far better for the student's safety for parents to assume the opposite, and raise them to accept and respect alcohol for what it is, what it could become, and what it can be. Lack of alcohol during childhood does not provide protection against future alcohol abuse. It is only through knowledge and wisdom that college students will learn to act responsibly with alcohol.