Ph.D. ceremony shifts venue

By James Stephenson
News Editor

The location, time and ticket allotments have changed for students receiving their doctorates this summer. The ceremony will be held Aug. 4 at 7 p.m. in the Ferst Center for the Arts.

The number of candidates exceeded the number of people that could be on the floor of the [Alexander Memorial] Coliseum, so the commencement had to be split into two venues,” said David Arnold, director of Client Communications in Institute Communications and Public Affairs.

Both ceremonies will take place on the same day, with one in the morning and one in the evening.

“Both commencements will be on Friday, Aug. 4 with the masters students and the undergraduates in the Coliseum from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. and the Ph.D. students in the Ferst Center from 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.,” Arnold said.

Many students who plan to attend commencement have not been notified of the changes.

“I sent out an email to my [executive board] and I got a response from a student who said that it was the first they had heard about the change. In the future there should be more notice about commencement,” said Mitch Keller, the graduate student body president.

According to Keller, he had heard rumors about a few weeks ago, but had not heard anything definitive until recently. “The whole thing could have been publicized better,” Keller said.

The Coliseum is undergoing renovations due to issues with the fire code and it limits the number of people who can be in the building. According to Arnold, the renovations are the reason the Ph.D. ceremony was moved.

“The general consensus I have been hearing is that PhDs is a research degree and should have a more special setting for commencement,” Sangster said.

The first part is the promotion of research in robotics, especially personal robotics and systems that help people in their daily lives.”

Christensen cited his design of a popular autonomous home vacuum cleaner as an example of a personal robot system.

“Other types could be a prosthetic for a handicapped person or an assistant to a nurse or doctor,” Christensen said.

“In education we want to be truly interdisciplinary. Robotics involves mechanical design, control electronics and computers for programming and interfaces. In addition, we need an aesthetic design that goes along with function. The next generation robotics designers...”

GTR opens center in Athlone, Ireland

Tech will open a new research institute in Athlone, Ireland. GTR Ireland will be GTRI’s first expansion outside of the United States. The new institute will focus on four technology areas that mirror Ireland and Georgia Tech’s research strengths: digital media, radio frequency identification, biotechnology and energy.

The new institute will closely work with Irish universities and companies, as well as the Tech community and US industries to bring research to both countries.

By Craig Tabita
Contributing Writer

The College of Engineering and the College of Computing have introduced the new Center for Robotics and Intelligent Machines (RIM@GT), a joint effort between the two colleges with support from the Georgia Tech Research Institute.

The center’s purpose is to serve as the flagship entity to unify all of the various robotics programs on campus with a focus on advancing robotics research and education via interdisciplinary collaboration.

“Through a synthesis the efforts at Tech can have a significantly larger impact,” said Henrik Christensen, a College of Computing professor and director of the new center.

“Earlier research has largely been topical and performed within the respective colleges and academic units. To be truly successful we need to build bridges to use the excellent competencies of other people’s work to synthesize knowledge to be creative and break new ground,” Christensen said.

According to Christensen, other projects, coming to a peak this summer, have a significantly larger impact, Sangster said.

“We are slowly but securely providing the foundation for an effort that hopefully in a few years will be the premier robotics program in the U.S.,” Christensen said.

According to Christensen, although the center has already secured research funds and has begun operating, it will have to take them close to a year to build up enough momentum to be visible.

“We have a three fold agenda,” Sangster said.

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Tickets: Unlimited
Time: 4 per graduate
President’s Undergraduate Research Awards

Applications Due
July 12th!

Undergraduate students may apply for competitive $1,500 salary awards for work with a faculty mentor on research or support for travel to present research work at a professional conference ($1,000 maximum).

Visit http://undergradresearch.gatech.edu/funding.php for more information and application instructions.
Robotics from page 1

must appreciate all of these factors, which implies that we need to have students that have a broad basis and coverage,” Christensen said.

Finally, the center will have as a focus the practical application of its research.

“We want the research results to end up in real products, so we also need entrepreneurial effort to spin out companies that can generate a new industry around [Tech], that have a focus on new types of robotics,” Christensen said.

According to Christensen, the establishment of the center will have several implications for both undergraduate and graduate students with an interest in robotics, including specialized robotics tracks for majors such as ME, ECE, and CS, although no new undergraduate major for robotics will be established.

Students will also be able to choose from a wider offering of robotics courses, including an introductory robotics course similar to the recently established CS 3135 Introduction to Media Computing course.

Graduate students will also have increased opportunities for robotics studies. “We have applied for the setup of a new Ph.D. program, which should be launched by 2007,” Christensen said.

One of the first projects the center will participate in is the 2007 DARPA Urban Challenge, sponsored by the Department of Defense, which researchers from the center will compete in simulated military supply missions.

Students will design autonomous vehicles to safely and effectively complete a 60-mile urban area course while navigating through traffic and avoiding obstacles.

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about donating and give them a stake in the project. We didn't want to include them in the project as a partner,” Sangster said.

“We will include them at all steps and try to benefit them into the project,” Moreland said.

The fundraising will not end when the $75,000 is reached, however.

“We plan to continue fundraising throughout the fall. There can extra $25,000 we have to raise to cover associated costs,” Moreland said.

The actual building of the house will take place during the fall as well.

“September 2nd will be the groundbreaking for the project, which is the football season opener. We are trying to tie in that excitement to the project. Building will begin the next weekend. Hopefully we will be finished by homecoming,” Moreland said.

“The work will only be on Saturdays and will take place over seven Saturdays,” Sangster said.

The planned building site is close to west campus. The site will be on English Avenue which is five minutes from campus, Sangster said.

The project is open to everyone in the Tech community, not just Greeks.

“We are still in a spreadsheet phase. Students will start seeing fliers around campus. Anyone who wants a stake can do anything for the project,” Sangster said.

“It’s more about being inclusive with the entire campus,” Moreland said.

“It will be an extremely successful event that everyone should try to be a part of,” said Alison Graab, undergraduate student body president.

“We are trying to achieve unity and community on Tech and in Atlanta.”

Jonathan Sangster Interfraternity Council Secretary

“We are trying to achieve unity and community on Tech and in Atlanta. We want to get the community to take a stake in the project. It requires a lot of collaboration from the campus and the community. We will be bringing everyone together to prepare for the execution of the project,” Sangster said.

According to Sangster, people will be able to see this project from start to finish.

Both Sangster and Moreland said that Habitat Atlanta has been instrumental in the formation of the project.

“Habitat Atlanta has been incredibly helpful. They made exceptions for us to do this. Weowere them a debt of gratitude,” said Moreland.

“It’s rare that someone goes to Habitat and want to provide the funding and all the work,” Sangster said.

“We will have a mutual gain with Habitat. They are getting exposure and a house built,” Moreland said.

“The plan is to not have the project as an isolated event.

“Hopefully the momentum from this project will make it easier to make this an annual thing,” Sangster said.

We weigh each project at the beginning of the year to see how they will be received. We want professional and sustainable projects. The fact that we’ve invested so much to a project to help Pan-Hellenic and IFC have come,” Moreland said.

“Therefore, we have gotten so excited about our capabilities. We’ve been lucky,” Sangster said.

“I hope the project is ambitious, but ambitious projects are the ones worth taking on,” Grab said.

Israel widens attacks to northern Gaza

Israeli air strikes continued through the week into northern Gaza, while Israel sent ground forces into southern Gaza to retrieve Cpl. Gilad Shalit who was captured by Palestinian forces during a raid into Israeli territory last Sunday, according to CNN.

The Israelis targeted power stations that served at least half of the territories residents as well as targeted bridges to sever the connection between northern and southern Gaza. Israel had issued warnings to residents to leave their homes and no casualties had been reported as of Wednesday.

Court rules prisons can withhold newspapers

The US Supreme Court ruled that prisons could withhold newspapers from inmates as an incentive for inmates to behave, according to CNN. The decision reverses the decision made by the 3rd US Circuit Court of Appeals but upholds the dissent of Justice Samuel Alito, who was serving on the Court of Appeals when the case was originally decided. Alito did participate in the Supreme Court Opinion, as his recusal was made before the case.

Justice Breyer wrote that the decision could be short lived if another constitutional challenge to the high-security prison’s methods are brought before the Supreme Court.

“Fahrenheit 9/11” Marine killed

Staff Sergeant Raymond J. Plouhar, a former recruiter from Michigan, who appeared in Michael Moore’s documentary was killed by a roadside bomb in Iraq, according to CNN.

Although Plouhar appeared in the documentary of his own volition, Plouhar’s father claims that his son did not think that the film was going to have an anti-war message to it. Plouhar’s widow gave a statement that he was off from active duty to become a recruiter after he donated a kidney to his uncle.

Take a Prof to Lunch

Thursday, July 6
11:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Ferst Place Restaurant

Take your professor (or academic advisor, or department secretary, or research supervisor, or favorite staff member... you get the idea!) to lunch to show them just how special they are to you. Total price for both meals is just $6. RSVP by Friday, June 30 by calling 404-894-2805

Tie Dye and Ice Cream

Thursday, July 20,
11:00 AM, Skiles Walkway

Free card holder compliments of the Student Center.