



OUR VIEWS CONSENSUS OPINION

Poor alternative

The Athletic Association (AA) had requested a Student Athletic Fee increase of \$96 per year, the best option they could come up with to manage their increasing debt. While students may not have been enamored by the idea, the reasoning behind the decision seemed sensible. However, a recent suggestion to raise the fee to \$88 per semester from the current \$64 and to charge \$100 extra for students wishing to attend football or basketball games is absurd. Clearly, the AA plans to convince the Mandatory Student Fee Committee, which is scheduled to vote Monday on the increase, to approve the original request with the threat of a much worse alternative.

However, the student reaction to news of a potential fee increase has been notable and at least a little surprising. It is great to see students coming together to fight for a common issue, even if it is just to keep some spending money in their pockets or to keep their debts a few dollars lower.

Tech often refrains from fee increases for long stretches of time in comparison to other major universities. Therefore, any increases are often sizeable and seem sudden to students. Running an athletic program requires money and student support, but they could make changes more bearable by implementing gradual increases each year.

Still, it is understandable that students are not willing to pay for an athletic program in which they may not have much pride. Tech may not have a winning basketball tradition as historic as Duke's or a football record to match the University of Florida, but the athletic program is still a rallying point for Tech supporters, and students who claim to support their school should be willing to finance it.

Registering sense

The Office of the Registrar is in the process of reevaluating the current class registration system, which is good news for students. While the current system runs fairly smooth, there is always room for improvement.

Limiting priority registration is a good first step; only those who truly require accommodations, such as students with disabilities, should retain priority registration. Additionally, students with degree petitions filed should get priority over students who have more hours but will not be graduating that semester.

Phase I registration could open with students only able to register for major classes, followed by other degree requirements and minor classes. This system could be implemented in parts to allow students and administrators to acclimate.

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 David Chen / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Airport security still ineffective

I consider myself to be a rather fortunate person. One of the aspects of my life that I particularly appreciate is that my friends are a diverse group coming from many different cultures.

As such, I tend to hear comments and critiques about a wide spectrum of American society. Perhaps the most frequent complaint I get from my friends (aside from the fairly universal "Tech is shafting us") is related to airport security.

The experience of passing through an American airport has become a big joke among my friends who look even remotely like they are from the Middle East.

I'm sure we've all heard quips like "I'd better shave before my flight tomorrow" coming from these people, who know they are virtually guaranteed to be subjected to the "extra-special" search whenever they pass through security no matter what they do or where they are actually from.

The fairly blatant racial profiling that goes on is, of course, a terrible thing in its own right. But their complaints started me thinking about the state of airport security as a whole since September 2001.

The amount spent on all the new security measures is staggering, and the inconvenience of going through all of it is monumental. And yet, as far as I can tell, we aren't really any safer now than we were six years ago.

Last summer, the American and British governments successfully foiled a plot that involved liquid explosives disguised as beverages or cosmetic products. The result of the plot was a brief but near-total prohibition on liquid items in passengers' carry-on luggage.

Even now, the restrictions have been loosened only to the extent of allowing a one-quart clear plastic bag that must be scanned separately from your other luggage.



"We are paranoid, and we are willing to sacrifice a great deal for the big-brotherly pat on the back."

Arcadiy Kantor
 Senior Editor

Personally, I cannot fathom what the officials who come up with these things expect such a policy to prevent.

They state that the regulation is in place because they have no way to detect liquid explosives in carry-on luggage. But the types and varieties of explosives are diverse enough that simply forbidding large containers of liquid has no chance of stopping a determined terrorist who is set on blowing up a plane.

Most of the other security measures strike me as similarly questionable, and most importantly as extremely near-sighted.

Sure, no one will be able to sneak a bomb aboard an airplane in their cowboy boots thanks to each person being forced to x-ray their shoes.

But while everyone is busy tying and untying their shoelaces and the security lines stretch miles back, what is preventing a person from walking in the middle of the crowd and setting off a bomb there?

Perhaps such an attack wouldn't have as devastating a mental effect as taking down an airplane, but the loss of life would still be tragic. And it would be caused by the very tools that are supposed to protect us.

For that matter, why is everyone so convinced that an airplane will be the next vector of attack for any potential terrorist group?

It's been done once, and I can't see any particularly compelling reason to target airplanes again in the next major terrorist attack on

American soil.

Indeed, there have been plots foiled, as well as false threats (like one in which an innocent but rather dumb person posted a hypothetical threat of a chemical attack on several large NFL stadiums as part of a "scariest potential threat" contest that he failed to tell anyone about) that had nothing to do with airplanes at all.

Yet security is by far the most severe for flight.

I am certainly not the first person to have these ideas about just how secure we really are; I have no doubt that there are countless people working in the government agencies responsible for making these decisions who are far smarter than me and are well aware of all the concerns I have expressed.

But if they know it's ineffective and I know it's ineffective, why are they bothering with these security restrictions in the first place?

I think the goal of the efforts is to appeal to our gut, not to our sense of reason.

By making us jump through hoops every time we pass through the airport, we consciously or subconsciously feel reassured that yes, there is someone out there protecting us, and by God, no blasé terrorist will be able to walk aboard our plane and blow it up.

We are paranoid, and we are willing to sacrifice a great deal for the

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Quran stirs congressional controversy

January 4 should have been a moment of national pride in America, which once earned the U.S. nicknames such as the “melting pot” or the “home of the free.” Keith Ellison, a Minnesota Democrat, became the first Muslim member of Congress after being sworn into office by Nancy Pelosi, the first female Speaker of the House.



“What...does a Detroit-born...Congressman who converted to Islam have to do with immigration?”

Lindsay Deal
Entertainment Editor

Unfortunately, instead of serving as a reminder of the different types of people, different political stances and different religions that comprise the American nation, Ellison’s oath served more as a platform for extreme right-wing views against immigration.

Ellison announced last month that he planned to place his hand upon the Quran, the central religious text of Islam, in a private ceremony.

Representative Virgil Goode, a Republican from Virginia used the opportunity to send a letter to hundreds of constituents condemning the use of the Muslim book of faith. After the contents of the letter were leaked on the internet, people across the country were able to read Goode’s words.

“I do not subscribe to using the Koran in any way,” Goode wrote in the opening paragraph.

I wonder, would he have preferred Ellison to use the Bible?

Would it be better to swear in our congressmen on oaths taken on books that are meaningless to them?

Don’t you think by using the book associated with his religion, Ellison makes his oath more meaningful? Some take their oaths and use no book at all; I think using a book of religious significance only serves to strengthen his oath.

Later in his letter Goode wrote, “The Muslim Representative from Minnesota was elected by the voters of that district, and if American citizens don’t wake up and adopt the Virgil Goode position on immigration, there will likely be many more Muslims elected to office and demanding the use of the Koran.”

My questions is this: What the hell does a Detroit-born African-American Congressman who converted to Islam have to do with immigration?

Sadly, since Sept. 11, 2001, the war on terrorism and the United States’ fight against Muslim extremists at home and overseas has fuelled widespread discrimination against those who don’t fit under the narrow umbrella sheltering American-born, Anglo-Saxon Christians.

Besides the fact that Ellison is not an immigrant, Goode’s conviction that Muslim immigration to the United States is a threat to our traditional “values and beliefs” contradicts many of the ideas upon which this country was founded.

Goode chooses to ignore the six to seven and a half million Muslims in the United States who identify themselves as Americans.

To me it seems more “un-American” to discriminate based on religion or to attempt, on a grand scale, to exclude “outsiders” from our country.

Goode seems to promote

“freedom” only in the sense that we should be free to exclude those unlike us from our country or force them to adopt similar views.

Not surprisingly, Goode also promotes adopting English as a national language (something this country has made it a point not to do thus far, partially in an effort to reinforce the idea that we are a nation open to all people).

In a wise political move that served as a reminder of America’s long history of holding religious tolerance in high esteem, Ellison decided to use not just any Quran in his unofficial ceremony, but one that had belonged to Thomas Jefferson. (Maybe because Jefferson’s birthplace of Albemarle County is included in Goode’s district, or maybe just because of the reverence for Jefferson and his ideas on religious freedom in this country.)

During a multi-faith prayer service for Congress members earlier in the day, Ellison read a short Quran verse that said, in part: “Oh, humanity, we created you from a single pair...and made you into tribes and nations, so that you would know each other and not despise each other.”

Ellison later explained that he chose the verse because “it

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BUZZ Around the Campus

What is your New Year’s resolution?



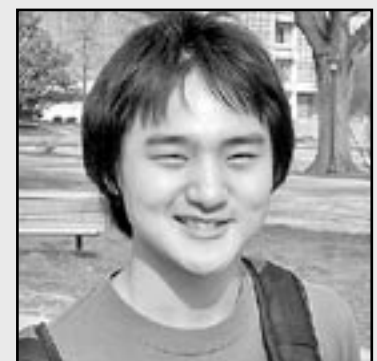
Austin Eberhart
Third-year AE

“To fight crime in my underpants.”



Aya Ishizu
First-year undecided

“Stay awake in class.”



Graeme Wicks
First-year PTFE

“Go to the CRC more.”



Chris Griggs
Third-year AE

“To be a better guitar player.”

Photos by Shane Stimpson

OUR VIEWS HOT OR NOT

HOT- or -NOT



Dominating Duke

Jan. 10 was a day for celebration, as the men’s basketball team defeated Duke 74-63. Tech has not come out on top of the Blue Devils at home since the Feb. 7, 1996 game. The Jackets last won the contest in 2004 in Durham, breaking the Blue Devils’ 41-game home winning streak; Duke later defeated Tech in the ACC Championships. We look forward to the opposite outcome this year.



A sad goodbye

Younger Techies may not remember the days when Tech gained yards mostly by the efforts of halfback P.J. Daniels, who went pro after graduation. Football fans might have worried about our offensive future at the time, but our fears fled the day Calvin Johnson first walked onto the field. Johnson has given Tech three great years, and his decision to leave school in favor of the draft is a hard blow for fans.



Proper conduct

The newly-revised Student Code of Conduct is a good news for many students who previously had doubts about violations and their rights as students. The process will be smoother in the future, and students can expect issues to be resolved in a more reasonable timeline than they have been in the past.



Fenced in

Construction is just a fact of life at Tech, but that does not stop us from expressing irritation at returning to a campus even more torn apart than it was before break. The Instructional Center sidewalk is behind schedule, and more fences have gone up around campus. Besides, we already feel imprisoned enough here.

YOUR VIEWS LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

WREK valuable tool for engineering students

As Tech alumni and former WREK staffers, we would like to express our support for WREK in its current form as a student-operated noncommercial radio station. WREK’s broadcast signal is a valuable asset, but it should be remembered that this asset only exists because of the efforts of countless Tech students over the last 38 years.

Beginning in 1968, students organized WREK as a station to be operated by and for the students of Tech. Students built the first studios and obtained the equipment needed to begin transmission. Students filed the paperwork for the original FCC license as well as many upgrades and renewals. Students developed and maintained successively more sophisticated broadcast and studio facilities.

Students made history when WREK became one of the first stations to broadcast streaming

audio over the internet.

Over the years, WREK has provided a voice for Tech students and a forum to exchange views. WREK has covered live events at Tech that include the visits of Presidents, interviews, music concerts, and countless varsity sports matches. WREK’s programming has provided a valuable alternative to the heavily consolidated commercial FM band. WREK has accomplished all this at minimal cost to Tech, with operating expenses funded by Student Activity Fees.

As WREK alumni we are some of the many students who helped build and operate WREK over the last 38 years. We look back on the time we spent working at WREK fondly and realize that whatever career path we have taken, our experiences at WREK were an important and formative part of our Tech education.

We take great pride in the fact that WREK continues to

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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 Amanda Dugan, 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 reserves 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 Nancy Romero 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.

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thrive as a student-operated station. WREK is a highly visible demonstration of the engineering prowess, creativity and entrepreneurial spirit of Tech students. We believe that a student-operated WREK is a Tech tradition that is well worth preserving. Please work with us to keep it in the hands of our own Tech students who built it, funded it, staffed it and continue to benefit from the WREK experience.

John Nestor
jnestor@ieec.org
Friends of WREK

Student insurance subsidies need to be reviewed

I am a grad student at Tech and buy my own health insurance policy because I don't like the mandatory policy from Pierce and Pierce. Each semester I have to obtain a waiver and get the charge removed.

This semester, there was a \$200 "GRA/GTA Insurance Subsidy" credit that appeared on my account. However, once the insurance waiver was approved and the charge for the mandatory policy was dropped, the subsidy was dropped as well.

So, grad students only get the

subsidy if we buy from Pierce and Pierce, not if we buy from some other provider. Therefore, the subsidy is not a health insurance subsidy; it is a Pierce and Pierce health insurance subsidy. I don't think it is proper (or legal, although I'm not an expert on that) for a public institution to give a subsidy if and only if you purchase a product from a specific private company.

I voiced my concern to the Bursar's office, which sympathized with me but said they were merely following instructions, and also to the office of the assistant dean of graduate studies, who politely told me that fair or unfair, the decision was made. She told me that the purpose of the subsidy was to help with beginning-of-semester costs, but she conceded that the fairness issue was unaddressed and could only tell me that the decision had been approved by the dean of graduate studies.

Granted, it is only \$200, which isn't going to break me. Plus, I believe the school's intentions were genuinely good—to help defray the initial layout of money. However, I feel very strongly that the way the subsidy has been administered is highly improper and unethical.

And, although I don't plan on hiring a lawyer, I also feel that if I were to do so, the school would lose the case. I know that some people will think I'm ruining it for every-

one else, but even those people can probably understand my point and sympathize.

I have been told that this subsidy will not be repeated next year (for reasons other than my complaint), and although it does appease me somewhat to know that this questionable behavior will not continue, it does not make this year's behavior any more excusable.

Christopher Neel
MSE grad student
kit_neel@gatech.edu

Support student athletes whether they win or lose

I am sorely disappointed with some of the Tech fair weather fans. You are polling readers asking what we think of the proposed athletic fees hike, and 40 percent of students have said that they don't attend games so they shouldn't have to pay. And yet these same students are the ones announcing at the top of their lungs the inadequacies of our football team, from the coaching staff to the players.

While obviously their performance hasn't been top notch, either way we should at least be supportive. Or at the very least, if you don't attend the games to support those you like, then keep your opinions to yourself

about their performance.

Amanda Ondras
Third-year IE
gtg322y@mail.gatech.edu

Jackets can build on this season for future success

Although I now live in Wisconsin, seemingly far away from Tech sports, I am a die hard fan. I follow the teams every way I can and tell everyone how proud I am to be a Yellow Jacket.

I want all players to know how much support you have from all of us real, true fans. We saw your all-out effort in every game this year, win or lose. Many critical "fans" have no clue what it really takes to be a player at your level. You dealt with some distractions but hung together and gave a good WVU team all they could handle. Build on that effort—don't be satisfied with close.

Many of you will be back next season and you've got lots of reasons to be optimistic about the 2007 season. Again, congrats on a good year and can't wait to see you open up against ND next season. Go Jackets!

John O'Dell
MGT 1972
odell5060@yahoo.com

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big-brotherly pat on the back.

Both the government and the industry are well aware of this, and they have decided fewer passengers will stop traveling as a result of the inconveniences they must undergo than as a result of appearing to do nothing to fight terrorism.

And as a result we are all taking off our shoes, taking out our laptops and buying little tubes of toothpaste that will fit into a small plastic bag.

I wish I could wrap up with a nice bow of "here's how we can work to make the situation better." But I can't think of any real way to do that.

So consider this as a simple plea for reason: If people keep focused on the actual benefits (or lack thereof) of this protection perhaps we can escape the gruesome fate of cavity searches 10 or 20 years from now.

Quran from page 9

says that the diversity among us is something God embraces. We as human beings look at the difference among us as a point of division. We should not."

But those who could gain the most from this verse, those like Virgil Goode and other right-wing extremists, were probably not listening.

Read the *Technique* online at www.nique.net

NOW HIRING



PART-TIME TUTORS AND MENTORS

Georgia Tech's Center for Education, Integrating Science, Mathematics and Computing (**CEISMC**) has part-time positions open for math and science tutors and mentors to work with elementary through high school students in the Atlanta Public School System.

Salary for new tutors and mentors is **\$10/hour** (including paid training and travel). No experience is required—just a strong interest in working with students of all levels and backgrounds. Only current Tech students (graduate or undergraduate) in good standing are eligible to apply, and both work-study and non work-study positions are available.

For more information and an application, please visit our website:

<http://www.ceismc.gatech.edu/cmp>

Deadline for spring semester applications is
Wednesday, January 24th!

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