A worthy increase

Next year will see a 3.7 percent increase in campus fees, resulting in a total cost of $592 per student. The increase, modest in comparison to last year’s 12.1 percent raise, will specifically address needs in transportation, technology, health, student activities and athletics on campus.

Annual budgetary increases are an inescapable part of running any large organization. The 3.7 percent increase should be viewed as an opportunity to help prevent such large-scale increases as last year’s, and as a welcome alternative to the accumulation of debt such as that accrued by the Athletic Association due to the recent stadium renovations and rising scholarship costs.

While any raise in the price of attending Tech is a general negative for the student body, this year’s increases are a needed reevaluation of the Institute’s financial plan. The increases will go not only to cover the normal annual rise in costs and wages due to inflation, but also to begin programs such as extending Stingerette service till 7 a.m. and maintaining the Tech Rec bowling lanes.

The manner in which the Institute has gone about planning for and initiating this process has been exemplary. There has been almost complete transparency in the decision making process, which began in November 2007. The budgetary guidelines for the mandatory fee increase can be viewed online at www.budnet.gatech.edu.

In any of a number of organizations I’ve been involved with on campus, people show up late, do not at all. Just last week, Undergraduate House of Representatives, lost a quorum again and another round of bills and allocations got pushed back to the next session because absent representatives. Or people take charge of an event or are elected to a position and then fail to do what they say they will do, or fail to do anything at all. So events get cancelled, jobs don’t get done, and the organization both suffers and looks bad to the public.

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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Our Views Consensus Opinion

commitment leads only to one thing: being fired. It shouldn’t be too hard to keep a commitment. After all, we make and keep them all the time. We make a commitment to our work every day when we decide to eat. We make a commitment to our hygiene (at least every once in a while) when we take a shower. We made a commitment to our education when we decide to apply and enroll at this school, and we keep that commitment every day when we go to class, do homework, work on a group project, take a test, etc., but it takes bit more effort to actually do it.

LIFE, LIKE LOVE, TAKES COMMITMENT

Commitment. It’s a scary word, and with good reason. It conjures up all types of images of white weddings and gold bands, or if you prefer, nooses and padlocked cages. And yes, I realize V-Day is just around the corner, as every red and pink storefront display cheerfully reminds us, so this may not be the best time to bring up such a loaded word, but I wasn’t thinking about it strictly in terms of romantic relationships, though of course it applies. Here’s the thing: I help run an organization on campus, and this week, only four out of six of our board members showed up to a mandatory meeting. Three showed up more than 20 minutes late. Last year, we held a meeting where only two people showed up, and the meeting had to be cancelled. This is the first or second time that something like this has happened.

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Imagine what would happen if everyone decided that it was okay to miss a few meetings or generally slack off on work. The world would pretty much shut down, as wait times for any place that provides any kind of service—from restaurants to taxis to gas stations to movie theaters to stores—stretched into eternity. In any case, if you were the president of your organization?

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Give the students a Coke at a fair price

Why do Cokes cost $1.50? That's a lot. Like, really. I can remember when I was younger, going to Six Flags with the rents, and them fleecing out because Coke there was $2, and that was in a place where you have no other options to escape starvation. Now I know there's initiatives, and that coke at Six Flags are more like $3 these days but on a college campus, there is no reason for such an essential between-class item to be so damned expensive.

Recently, the Tech community has had the “pleasure” of a Wal-Mart opening nearby. On a recent trip to said Wal-Mart, I was startled by the price of coke. I thought for some good ole Coca Cola, I was quite pleased to find them costing just a buck. Which is exactly the cash I had in my pocket. One dollar. One Coke. What a novel idea for the most common American currency to be capable of purchasing the all-American brand.

Doesn’t that make a lot of sense? I mean, if I walk to the CVS near my house, a two-liter Coke costs $1.70. 2 Liters is near my house, a two-liter Coke. Does that make a lot of sense? I mean, if I walk to the CVS near my house, a two-liter Coke costs $1.70. 2 Liters is near my house, a two-liter Coke.

So rather than just gripe and moan I am going to offer some suggestion on how to fix this travesty and displacement of student trust.

Go back to the BuzzCard use discount. In my freshman year, you got a discount at all the Coke machines on campus with a BuzzCard. The discount was an incentive to keep money in your BuzzFunds so the BuzzCard center could earn interest on it. A smart move, but not so well executed.

I think the demise of this system was the fact that anyone could just load up a few bucks at the machines and spend the money on their own drinks. I know there was a possibility to resell the Coke, but on a college campus, there is no need for such a practice.

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Social media becomes catalyst for rising celebrities

The power brokers of the world have heretofore had a number of methods for wielding influence over society at large. TV radio and newspaper advertisements, speeches, rallies, etc. The lead-up to Super Tuesday’s primaries has seen the candidates utilize all of these in an effort to garner support. This campaign has also seen an expansion of a trend started four years ago by Howard Dean; the effective use of the internet for everything from fund-raising to rallying the base to propagating a candidate’s message throughout the nation. Candidates like Ron Paul and Barack Obama have been able to leverage the web community to exponentially increase awareness of their campaigns. Paul has gained particularly strong support from the most avid internet users, and the result has been a disproportionate amount of coverage related to his campaign on key social news sites like Digg.com and Reddit.com. Despite widespread popularity, the internet hasn’t been enough to push Paul’s campaign over the top into the promised land. Obama has undoubtedly benefited: of the $32 million raised for his campaign in January, 88 percent came from online donations. That’s hardly chump change. The political candidates are far from the only ones to benefit from intelligent use of the power of social media. Perhaps the best example of using the movement effectively is illustrated by Kina Grannis, the winner of the Doritos “Crash the Super Bowl” contest. The top prize of the contest, a record deal with Interscope and a 60-second clip from her music video aired during the Super Bowl, is perhaps the best kickoff to a career a singer could hope for. And the means by which Grannis achieved her victory? Leveraging the social aspects of the internet. Grannis is certainly not lacking in talent; record company experts selected her as one of the top 10 entrants into the contest. But her musical style, with clean vocals accompanied by a simple acoustic guitar, is not exactly what one would expect to appeal most to the Ally-Space demographics voting in the contest. Rather, I believe Grannis secured her victory with a very careful and intelligent grass-roots publicity campaign that leveraged the power of the internet. After her performance at the Super Bowl, she was able to parlay a little bit of internet smart into a record deal and an opportunity to harness the best kickoff to a career a singer could hope for. And the means by which Grannis achieved her victory? Leveraging the social aspects of the internet.

Grannis’s song, “Message from Your Heart”, is available via iTunes. As a Savannah resident, I am proud of the teams that Tech has sent to Savannah for the past 10 years. Win or lose, they display the highest levels of sportsmanship and competitive spirit. All of the teams put on quite a show, and give local fans of any sport the only chance to see the Savannah Memorial Health Hockey Classic. In front of some 5,000 fans, mostly Dawgs, the Jackets avenged their Friday night loss to FSU with a Saturday night nail biter win over UGA. With this win they secured a hard fought runner-up record deal with Interscope and a 60-second clip from her music video aired during the Super Bowl, is perhaps the best kickoff to a career a singer could hope for. And the means by which Grannis achieved her victory? Leveraging the social aspects of the internet. Grannis is certainly not lacking in talent; record company experts selected her as one of the top 10 entrants into the contest. But her musical style, with clean vocals accompanied by a simple acoustic guitar, is not exactly what one would expect to appeal most to the Ally-Space demographics voting in the contest. Rather, I believe Grannis secured her victory with a very careful and intelligent grass-roots publicity campaign that leveraged the power of the internet. After her performance at the Super Bowl, she was able to parlay a little bit of internet smart into a record deal and an opportunity to harness the best kickoff to a career a singer could hope for. And the means by which Grannis achieved her victory? Leveraging the social aspects of the internet.

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