Game day problems persist
Poorly executed policies diminish fun of game day

The past two home games have been exciting examples of Tech spirit. Unfortunately, many aspects of the ticketing system and in-game administration left much to be desired.

A disappointing number of students encountered extreme delays attempting to enter the stadium. We appreciate that Student Government Association and the Athletic Association have decided to install 10 more student ticketing points at the south entrance of the stadium, but attention needs to be paid to the speed at which students are funneled through the existing entrances at the north gate. While security is obviously a concern, the amount of time taken per student to move them through the requisite pat-down, ID check, voucher check and finally Buzzcard scan is significantly longer than the entrance procedures for all other ticket-holders. These delays are a poor example of customer service to the thousands of students forced to stand in line behind those gates while fans of opposing teams stroll through without hardly pausing.

Once inside the stadium, many of the new ticketing policies severely detract from the game-day experience. Students who get individual game tickets or who attend with friends on guest passes are forced to sit in the south end-zone or upper decks. The prospect of sitting alone in an upper deck without the option of visiting with friends in lower blocks is not very appealing, and is not likely to attract students to fill the seats, as was obvious from the vacant seats in the upper decks at the north end zone.

Of course, the voucher policy theoretically allows for students to move about freely after the first quarter without interference from ushers or the need to keep a hold of their vouchers. In practice, ushers have continually enforced sections throughout the entirety of the games, in some cases checking the same students in the same seats as many as four times after the end of the first quarter. Students were evicted from sections when they could not produce their vouchers quickly enough.

It has been proposed that the ushers be instructed to now only check for vouchers for the first ten minutes of the game, which is a fair compromise. Most importantly, it should be remembered that students have self-enforced these sections for years, and should be treated like adults.

Ushers should be willing to work with students. Currently ushers spend almost all of the first quarter and much of the later checking vouchers and forcing students away from the sections that they patrol. This police-work can detract from the students' game day experience and distract ushers from more pressing issues such as violent or drunken fans. We recommend that the AA instruct the ushers to work with documented block-members to evict people who are identified as non-members, rather than actively patrolling each section. This would vastly improve relations between students and the staff who are at the games to help things go smoothly.

The ushers should treat the students like all other guests, as clients. The ultimate goal of the ushers should be customer service to the paying students. The student ticket might not be the main revenue source for the AA, but the increased costs on top of the athletic fees did provide over $200,000 in ticketing revenue this year.

Above all else the AA should remember that for students, the game-day experience is about enjoying yourself while cheering on your team in the company of your friends and classmates. Difficult entrance procedures, stressful ushers and isolated seats detract from that experience, diminishing home games for everyone who attends.

The Consensus Opinion reflects the majority opinion of the Editorial Board of the Technique, but not necessarily the opinions of individual editors.

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If there is one buzzword of the last two years, it has been “Change.” From presidential campaigns to university presidential transitions, global warming to healthcare, we have become ever more aware of the changes in the world around us. For those of us living on campus, we have seen everything from a huge increase in the size of the student body to a never-ending labyrinth of construction site constantly changing on campus.

With change, however, inevitably comes disappointment. From the national stage with the ongoing healthcare debate, to Tech’s considerations of how to change for the future, there is always a debate. Now, there is nothing wrong with disagreement; in fact, I enjoy a good healthy debate.

The problem is that all too often battle lines are drawn between those who favor “change” and those who oppose it. These conflicts are in need of serious rethinking, if we are to engage in meaningful dialogue. First and foremost, we need to reconsider how we think about change in an abstract sense.

Some say that change is intrinsically good, and that it is a symbol of progress. That there is real value in holding to the traditions that built our current society.

On the one hand with change, you have the near limitless potential of the unknown. After all, we’re all human, and there is almost certainly a better way to do everything from academics, healthcare, etc. On the other hand, it does represent a small leap into the unknown, and after all, even “the best laid plans of mice and men oft go askew.”

Sticking with the norm also has its pitfalls. It is comfortable and convenient, but it always begs the question, what are we missing out on? Alternatively, the virtue in tradition is that it is both tried and tested. We know exactly how the tradition works, what the advantages are and what the problems are.

A third option is change to the extreme.

Here, I’m talking about revolution. At times, a revolution is exactly what is needed. Civil rights and slavery are perfect examples. In both cases, both heaven and earth should have been moved to right the wrong. Far more often, however, revolution represents a leap into the unknown in a way rarely responsible. Enthusiastic reform movements are exciting, motivating, and contagious, but there seems to be a distinct lack of discussion of the implications of a revolution.

Clearly there are both positive and negative sides to every choice. One is not intrinsically more “right” than another.

“Change” as applied to any issue, the key to deciding should always lie in discussion. The trick to resolving any issue is to be both persuasive and persuadable.

The best ideas come out of community, and community entails discussion. I cannot tell you how happy it would make me to see people out by the campus discussing economic theory, or how sustainability should actually work.

One of the biggest barriers between this idea and reality is the lack of civilly engaging with those with differing opinions, particularly along the change/no change divide.

I could write a whole newspaper page on the issue of “civility.” Recent days have shown us how few good examples of civility there are in the world, from Rep. Joe Wilson’s outburst during President Barack Obama’s speech to Serena Williams’ four-letter rant at the U.S. Open, to Kanye West’s interruption of an awards ceremony.

These examples are only the most recent in a long string of a national culture that seems to be losing its sense of civility. Only once we learn to treat one another civilly, destroy the idea of “change” as either good or bad, and actively engage with one another will we be able to rise above the challenges.

My dream is that we could see more discussions at Tech that embrace that alternative.

One where we first acknowledge that we may be mistaken in our positions, and are therefore persuadable.

One where we have thought about our position, and can muster coherent arguments for our opinion.

One where we seek discussions with others to put our ideas to the test, so that we can together seek to build a future rooted in the traditions of the past, but open to the ideas of the future.
Democrats fail in execution, not policy

After facing much criticism from all sides of the political spectrum, President Obama spoke to a joint session of Congress last week about his plan for healthcare reform. The president outlined his vision for reform and re-emphasized his support for a public option, but hinted at his willingness to look at alternative solutions.

After the GOP's speech came after a tough Congressional recess in August when the healthcare debate had devolved into shouting matches and open confrontations in town hall meetings across the country, fueled by partisan falsehoods and scare tactics. In conducting a proper discourse on the issues, the debate was hijacked by misinformed individuals using buzzwords like “socialism” and “Nazi.”

Several of the concerns raised by the GOP are legitimate points of discussion, especially the argument that a public option will not suit private enterprises. I concur that more competition should be created by healthcare reform, as private enterprises. I believe that government has a role in increasing competition. Another legitimate concern raised by the GOP is the effect of reform on the national debt, how reform will be paid for. But instead of debating the proposals on their merits and weighing across the spectrum, some have developed a solution: the GOP has resorted to comparing proposed reforms to Canada’s healthcare system, a government-run system that more competition should be created by healthcare reform from the audience and cameras. It is important to note, however, that Beyonce on the night of Sunday, Sept. 13 at the MTV Video Music Awards, Taylor Swift showed that a majority of Americans supported a public option. What happened?

One of the things that I am constantly impressed with is the lack of debate within the GOP. The debate on the issues. Finally, instead of engaging in a vigorous political views as enemies and political world where we can only engage in the debate our differences. We never seem to keep tabs on what happens after the problem.
Challenging courses
After many years of planning and construction, the new GT challenge course had its grand opening this week. Tech celebs like Dr. Peterson and Buzz had a chance to fly down the zip-line and test their leadership skills. The course will be open to student groups, classes and non-campus groups, but the truly hot thing is the steeply discounted rates for student groups.

Career-free fair
The recession may be winding down, but hiring for new graduates and interns doesn’t seem to be picking up if the recent Career Fair is any indicator. The event, held at the CRC, was full of employers who had been willing to pay the registration fee earlier this year, but very few seemed willing to schedule interviews or even accept resumes in person now.

Bright white
The Clemson game last Thursday was a sea of blinding white from the fantastic first quarter all the way down to the nail-biting fourth. The Reck Club and SGA managed to hand out thousands of shirts and motivate the alumni base to participate this year. The Tech spirit was so infectious that even the ushers wanted to participate as they patrolled the student sections in their crisp white polos.

Plumbing problems
This past weekend’s Connect with Tech students got a distorted picture of Britain dining hall’s popularity. A pipe burst in the Woodruff dining hall Sunday afternoon. The pipe forced dining services out of Woody’s, so all meal-plan participants had to eat at the student center or Britain, over-crowding both dining halls beyond their normal capacity and presenting a slightly disorganized front to recruits.

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Just like it’s never okay to hijack the spotlight from a deserving young star or to threaten a judge for doing his or her job, it is not alright to belittle the office of the president of the United States in a childish and petulant manner while the president is in the middle of addressing Congress. This should not be awarded or allowed to let slide. Public tantrums almost never end well. While the act of releasing anger or expressing adrenalin-induced excitement in the form of vocal outbursts may feel good at the moment, points get lost when people realize that these are not the people they want to look up to. There’s something to be said about just being a plain ol’ nice person.

GT has exchanges with 60+ universities in over 20 countries.
On some exchange programs, classes are taught in English. With others, classes are taught in the local language. To learn about all of your options, attend a language-specific information session this Fall.

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