Freshmen attend Peterson’s first convocation

Jonathan Saethang
Managing Editor

While Commencement marks the end of a student’s college career, Convocation commemorates a student’s entry into the arena of higher education. Convocation acts as the first official rite of passage for freshmen, to welcome them to Georgia Tech’s academic community, and to acquaint students with Tech’s mission and traditions and to serve as a rite of passage for freshmen,” said Steven Girardot, the Director of Success Programs.

At Convocation, all freshmen receive a RAT Cap, which has been a Tech tradition for nearly a century. Freshmen also receive a T-Book, which is a book the chronicles most of Tech’s traditions over the years.

“Taking part in the RAT Cap tradition and singing the fight song with 2500 classmates was the highlight of Convocation and will remain a highlight of my freshman year experience,” said Scott Rowland, a first-year Industrial Engineering major.

Another unique aspect of Convocation is the sophomore welcome, in which an outstanding sophomore student is selected to deliver an address to the incoming freshmen. Jeremy Feaster, a second-year Chemical Engineering major originally from North Carolina, was selected to deliver this year’s address.

“The topic of my speech was being successful as a ‘FROSH,’ where FROSH stood for the five things that helped me to be successful in my first year at Tech. I chose the topic as I thought about what I would want to hear if I was a freshman asking for advice from a sophomore,” Feaster said.

Speakers for the sophomore welcome are selected on a nomination basis. Nominees are then given a chance to submit an abstract on what their speech would be about. The speaker is then se-
Back to school health and wellness choices abound

By Kate Comstock
Focus Editor

The beginning of the school year brings excitement, new opportunities, new schedules, and for some of us the stress of all these things can lead to weight gain. Ample time to workout and make good food decisions often fade with the summer and many of us are left to find whatever we can to eat in between classes and settle for workouts consisting of walking to and from class.

Freshmen seem especially vulnerable to getting trapped in an unhealthy lifestyle while they become acclimated to college life. Many students claim they gain the “freshman fifteen” within the first semester of college. The weight gain not only hurts many students’ self-esteem, but the bad food that often contributes to weight gain can also lead to poor health.

Poor health often leads to students feeling fatigued and getting sick more often, illness can often severely impact performance in class. Freshmen seem especially vulnerable to getting trapped in an unhealthy lifestyle while they become acclimated to college life. Many students claim they gain the "freshman fifteen" within the first semester of college. The weight gain not only hurts many students' self-esteem, but the bad food that often contributes to weight gain can also lead to poor health.

There are many options to minimize the back to school or freshman weight gain and Tech provides many resources to keep students feeling healthy. Staying active is a major part of avoiding weight gain. One of the most important thing when establishing a fitness routine is making it fun so that you will stay with the program.

The CRC has many various opportunities for students seeking ways to add fitness to their everyday routine. The CRC’s G.I.T. Fit Program has everything ranging from Aikido classes to yoga classes. G.I.T. Fit offers over 30 group fitness classes a week, most of which are covered in the $65 group fitness fee.

“The classes are really fun and motivational. It’s a lot easier to sweat it out with 20 other people,” said Judy Bau, third-year E&IE and instructor of the Bosu Blast group fitness class.

Intramural and club sports, also organized by the CRC, can be a great way to meet new people and enjoy a really enjoyable fitness activity.

And of course, there is always the opportunity to hit the treadmills or the track by yourself or with a friend.

Check out the CRC to see the many other services that they offer to students to help keep the campus stay in shape. Although it is very tempting to grab something from the vending machine when you’re low on time, watching what you eat is also an integral part of staying off the pounds.

Keeping a food journal is a good way to keep track of everything that you’re eating. Because our schedules here at Tech can often be very hectic, it is also a good idea to keep healthy snacks around.

For those seeking more personalized advice about tailoring their diet to become healthy or lose weight, Stamps Health Services offers the services of a dietician for $5 a visit. To schedule a visit call 404-894-1420 to leave a message for the campus dietician.

Athletic and fitness options at the CRC range from group classes to solo running on the treadmills or track upstairs.
Students explore campus opportunities at Tech Involvement Fair

By Andrew Ho

As the fall semester kicks off with a record number of incoming first-year and transfer students scrambling to attend their first week of classes, settling down in their quaint dorms, and getting to know new faces; the question undoubtedly arises of what a new student can do with their free time in a fun and hopefully productive manner.

Student organizations offer students the opportunity to escape from the exhausting studies at Tech and enjoy the company of others that have the same interests.

While student organizations have had opportunities to reach out to incoming students by way of FASET and various exhibitions around campus during the first week, the dizzying number of student government boards, fraternities, sororities, recreational and sports clubs and honor societies may leave some first-year students overwhelmed.

With over 350 organizations to choose from, it isn’t hard for a new student to find one that’s just right for him or her. “I was interested in [GT] Trailblazers because I like being outdoors and I already know people in it,” said Casey Little, a first-year ARCH.

“I’m looking at Runnin’ Wreck, though someone from [GT] Triathlon tried to recruit me,” said Lilly Burken, another first-year ARCH.

“I’m definitely looking for something that could make my stay in GA Tech rocking,” said Vinyet Desai, a first-year EE.

While students wandering around campus will almost undoubtedly encounter a student organization actively recruiting members on campus or promoting their organization, a few are hesitant about their choices due to either being unable to find a list of organizations or not being sure about joining one.

With so many different choices it could be difficult for some students to make a decision regarding where they spend their leisure time.

“I’ve been thinking about joining the CSA (Chinese Student Organization), but it’s kind of ambiguous and hard to find for me,” said Coby Lu, a first-year CompE.

Whatever new students are doing these first few important weeks, one place to look for all the chartered student organizations is at Cyberbuzz, which also lists contact information and meeting times/places.

There are a myriad of religious and cultural organizations available, enough to include pretty much any faith and background, much of which host activities and outreach programs for their members and to the public alike.

New students living on East Campus will find it hard to miss the rows of fraternity and sorority houses located there, especially with the recent fall rush to bring new pledges into their brother and sisterhoods. Those looking to get involved with student affairs can look at the various committees like FASET (Student Government Association) or by applying for one of the five Freshman Leadership Organizations (FLOs), organizations that offer leadership service and event opportunities exclusively to freshmen.

Recreational and leisure activities that run the range from archery, dancing, and hiking to anime, video game design and robotics can be found all over campus as well, representing a huge variety of interests and passions available to students.

For new students that still remain stumped on what they should join, simply ask students who have been here longer or just attend a meeting and correspond with an organization’s members. There are almost always students that are willing to talk about their experiences.

Student organizations regularly turn away the chance to have fresh blood in their group, and it’s all too likely that finding a suitable fit will bring a first-year student good friends and memories to last throughout the college experience.

---

Students navigate the crowds last year on Skies Walkway, where groups table, flyer and recruit new students all year long.
Selected by Success Programs. "My main source of inspiration was the fact that I would be able to share some of the helpful tips and useful knowledge that I had gained throughout my first year with the incoming freshman class. This would help them to enter the semester on a positive note and motivate them to succeed in not only their first year at Tech, but in their following years, their careers, and ultimately, their lives," Feaster said.

The Honor Advisory Council also delivers an address at Convocation. This year's address was delivered by Sam Vojdani, a fourth-year Biology major and Chair of the Honor Advisory Council. "I hope that the freshmen took my speech to heart, meaning that I hope they realize the importance of maintaining ideals such as honor and integrity on Georgia Tech's campus," Vojdani said.

"I was impressed with the diligence of the honor code and the fact that the honor code allows for collaboration yet still protecting academic integrity," said Xenia Strosnider, a first-year Civil Engineering major.

President Peterson also made an address at this year's Convocation. This year marked Peterson's first Convocation at Tech. "We were honored and excited that President Peterson has continued that tradition and participated in his first Freshman Convocation this year, where he gave a very inspiring address. We were also excited that Mrs. Peterson attended the ceremony as well, and both President and Mrs. Peterson received their official RAT Caps right along with the freshmen," Girardot said.

Although this year's Convocation ceremony has just passed, the planning for next year's event has already begun. "We begin planning for the next Convocation literally the day after the event is held. It takes a full year to plan this event because it requires coordination with many campus stakeholders, including the Freshman Experience, Greek Life, Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, the Alumni Association and Auxiliary Services, just to name a few," Girardot said.

Even though planning Convocation is a considerable amount of work for the Office of Success Programs, the planners of the event expressed the value of their efforts. "I love seeing all the freshmen in their RAT Caps, and I, of course, love hearing the remarkable speeches—those by our students...as well as the keynote remarks by our President. I always leave Convocation inspired and impressed," Girardot said.
Mother Nature might simply decide to be argumentative that day. After years of dealing with problems like this, though, housing staff are well-trained to deal with problems both common and bizarre.

“You can’t know what will happen, but you’re sure that something will,” said Morrison. Every now and then, one of the mishaps, be it natural or human-error induced, ends in amusing results.

This year, one student in particular had a surprise waiting for him upon arriving, as his gender had somehow been swapped in the system, leaving him the sole Y-chromosome in an apartment full of women until he could be reassigned to a male-occupancy apartment.

Stories of such errors however, are the exceptions that prove the rule. For most of the Tech community, move-in is a fairly smooth process, especially when compared to how much of a nightmare it can be at other universities.

“We get letters from lots of parents saying, ‘I just dropped my son off at X university, and had to wait an hour to check in,” or, “We drove around all afternoon just to get a place to park,”’ said Morrison when asked how Tech’s move-in process compares to other similarly sized or urban universities. Comparatively, Tech managed to situate over 3200 students on Saturday and Sunday alone, all with relatively little pain for students.


Buzz helps the Greek Movers relax after a long and stressful morning helping freshmen move-in on east campus.
Keep your money in check.

It's easy with the Student Package. Only from Bank of America®

Lots of tools to help you manage your money:

- **CampusEdge® Checking** — get an account with no monthly maintenance fee for five years
- **Savings Account with Keep the Change®** — save money effortlessly
- **Online and Mobile Banking** — check your available balances, get e-mail and text alerts, transfer funds and pay bills 24/7

Manage your funds the easy way. Get your Student Package from Bank of America today. Visit bankofamerica/com/oncampus or any local banking center.

Bank of America