OPINIONS

OUR VIEWS CONSENSUS OPINION

Progress and sacrifice

Progress should not marginalize college experience

The current Tin Building is unsafe. It is doubtful that the building lifespan is not already near its end and that a replacement is needed. The process of replacing old and out-dated facilities is certainly nothing new to campus, but many times it seems as if little regard is given to the current student body that live through the transition process.

Student organizations have the privilege and the need to have on-campus locations. The destruction of the Tin Building, however, puts this necessity at risk for several organizations. Students do not work, especially when dealing with extracurricular activities, during regular working hours. It is essential that students have a safe and convenient place to do the work associated with their extracurricular activities. Moving several student organizations into the Home Park neighborhood could potentially put students at risk, especially with the recent rash of crime against students traveling in the area.

Tech must accommodate these organizations better if the plan to close the Tin Building comes to fruition. Providing timely and efficient transportation late at night to the off campus location should help mitigate the situation, but ultimately the most effective solution to the problem is to ensure that the displaced organizations are given an on-campus location as soon as possible.

Tech must continue to make progress on all fronts to ensure it stays competitive with other top institutes across the nation, albeit necessary and worthwhile, has already been burden to the current student body; future plans should keep in mind the forced sacrifice students are already making.

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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Technique in exceptional hands

By Emily Chambers
Editor-in-Chief

The Technique is important. Not just as a student organization, not just as a piece of campus history and not just as a source of Friday entertainment. The Technique is important because it is our job to inform campus, to serve as a voice and a channel of communication, to absorb the happenings of campus groups, the administration and even ourselves. It is our job to inform students of labor rights issues on campus, of horrific crimes, of fantastic events and unfortunately, of actions that we feel were not worthy of us, the Tech student body.

My tenure with the Technique is ending, and it has been my goal to serve as an accurate, diligent and respectful editor. I hope that you, our audience, have been at least satisfied with our work, and if you have not that you have felt free to critique us. As I leave office it is my great pride to entrust the paper that I love and respect so much to the next editor, a soon-to-be Tech undergraduate alum and Tech graduate student who I know will work tirelessly to serve you, the Tech students; Hahnming Lee.

Hahnming has served this paper for four years, working as our Assistant Sports Editor his freshman year, one of the paper’s most thankless jobs. He is a skilled writer who covered not only the popular revenue sports but also club sports and summer events. He then became the paper’s official Sports editor, producing a fantastic section and learning the ins and outs of sports management that are so important to all organizational leaders.

During his third year Hahnming moved over to the little-known but critical business world of the Advertising Manager in charge of physically building the issue each week and invoicing hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of advertising contracts. He also gained critical sales experience working with local businesses and national advertising groups. This year as Business Manager he has taken on responsibilities never before given to a student editor, working on ad sales contracts for the paper, setting up our classifieds system and maintaining our internal human resources data. He has been a strong voice of reason on consensus issues, never losing sight of the fact that it is the paper’s responsibility to reflect even the most polarized of issues without marginalizing any campus voice. He has juggled all of his responsibilities flawlessly, all while taking on extra work at the paper as a copy editor, writer and Hil-in meeting attendee for me when I was sick.

Hahn, you have been such a blessing not only to this paper and me, but also to the school as a whole through your service so far. I look forward to reading the paper each week next year and watching you further your goals and visions for this great publication.

Congratulations, and welcome to the best job on campus.

YOUR VIEWS LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Nicknames cannot be forced onto students

A lot of fuss has been made by the school over the potential nickname of the G. Wayne Clough Undergraduate Learning Center.

In truth, one cannot simply assign a nickname to a building. A building’s nickname must be earned over the years through the nature of the building. Case in point, The Campanile is regularly known as “The Shaft,” due to its tall shaft-like centerpiece and its embodiment of what Tech does to its student-body. We also have the ThrillerDome (Alexander Memorial Coliseum), the Rocky C (Russ-Chandler Stadium) and of course, The Flats. The College of Computing is known simply as the CoC. Klaus is sometimes referred to as the Super CoC. None of these nicknames was assigned, they were coined by popular opinion. It is ridiculous to expect that an administrative-assigned nickname would be capable of halting such a force of nature.

However, despite these arguments, I propose the nickname “The G-Spot.” This name incorporates the building’s namesake G. Wayne Clough. The CULC is in a central part of campus and undergraduate life. It is a building that all undergraduates love and enjoy visiting and attending as often as possible.

Write to us:
letters@nique.net

We welcome your letters in response to Technique content as well as topics relevant to campus. We will print letters on a timely and space-available basis. Letters should not exceed 400 words and should be submitted by Tuesday at 7 p.m. in order to be printed in the following Friday’s issue. Include your full name, year (1st, 2nd, etc.) and major. We reserve the right to edit for style and length. Only one submission per person will be printed per term.
OPINIONS

Teen pregnancy still a prominent problem

While Facebook stalking young students from my old high school this past spring break, I made a profound discovery. Half of the teens in my hometown had babies since the time that I had graduated. Okay, so the number wasn’t as high as advertised. In researching my town’s teen pregnancy numbers, I counted five girls who had children. Five girls among my 100 high school Facebook friends alone. Who knew how high the number actually is?

According to the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancies, half of all pregnancies in the U.S. are unplanned. This number is high, especially when you take into account that each year, three in ten women will have at least one child by the age of 20. Ga. ranked eighth in order of teen pregnancy rates with 80 pregnancies per 1,000 girls between the ages of 15 and 19.

Unplanned pregnancies not only create hardships for young parents, but also add a financial burden to taxpayers. Data taken from a 2006 analysis of the state of Georgia by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancies found that teen childbearing costs taxpayers at least $344 million in 2004. The average annual cost associated with a teen pregnancy by a child is $5,526. In terms of national statistics, teen pregnancies cost taxpayers about $1.9 billion a year.

Teen pregnancy is still a problem in the U.S., despite the numerous contraceptive methods available. TV shows like MTV’s 16 and Pregnant (which starred a girl from my hometown last year) and Teen Mom try to depict the struggles that face couples who try to conceive early in their unstable lives.

And yet, in the summer of 2008 we learned of the pregnancy pact made by over a dozen girls at Gloucester High School in Mass. Those young women decided to get pregnant and raise their children together. This was not a case of accidental pregnancy. This was a case of making an irrational and romantic decision.

As a student, I have found it so hard to imagine that there are still teens out there who don’t know how to practice safe sex, or, in the case of Gloucester High School, that there are teens who deduce themselves into thinking that having a child at such a young age is a good idea. Both issues, however, can be resolved through constant communication and effective educational programs. Sadly, we still seem to be in an era of abstinence-only programs.

My sixth grade year, almost 10 years ago, was the first time that I was exposed to any kind of sex talk in a school setting. I remember two high school students coming to my home-room class to talk about the reasons why we should wait until marriage to have sex. Abstinence was presented as the only option of avoiding unplanned pregnancy. No one asked how to prevent a pregnancy if one did want to engage in sexual activity. This topic seemed so taboo at the time.

I wasn’t until high school that the topic was approached in a school setting again, this time in my health class. The topic was more educational and provided options for practicing safe sex before marriage. Abstinence was still preached very loudly and clearly, but at least other options were given.

It seems so obvious that abstinence-only education is not that effective. We all know teens will still have sex, no matter how many times they are told not to. Therefore, I was shocked when my young- est sister came back from her sixth grade class a few weeks ago and told me that she was given the exact same abstinence speech that I had received.

The most effective way of preventing teen pregnancy is through honest communication. The Guttmacher Institute reported that 75 percent of American teenagers will engage in sexual intercourse before they are 20. Only 15 percent of teens report staying abstinent until the age of 21. With these numbers, it is ap- parent that a majority of teens are not waiting until marriage to have sex, or waiting for very long. With such a large per- centage of teens having sex, shouldn’t we encourage open discussion when a child is first introduced to this concept?

Sex is ingrained into every part of our culture, our commercials, our movies and our songs. Teens are exposed to sex in a variety of avenues. Shouldn’t we start the dis- cussion earlier? Shouldn’t we warn young children of the dangers of having unprotected sex? We have the knowl- edge and power to prevent teen pregnancy, and we should share this information with others as openly, honestly and frequently as possible.

Little things sometimes annoy the most

“Please always remember: people can turn their eyes away; they cannot turn their noses off.”

Matt Hoffman
Opinion Editor

After nearly three years here at Tech, some things re- ally piss me off.

First, the people who scrape ‘T’ off signs around campus are idiots. This stupid hobby is in no way whatsoever in keep- ing with the Tech tradition of stealing a ‘T’ from the Tech tower; it is simply childish vandalism.

Stealing a ‘T’ off of Tech Tower was an accomplishment because it took engineering skills. When these people roof, remove a large, and prob- ably heavy, lit letter and not fall off and die. Using a razor blade to remove a ‘T’ from the Instructional Center sign re- quires the user not to be a total moron; something many drug users are very proficient at.

When people familiar with Tech come on campus and see the signs vandalize, they do. I do care when people around them, there are seri- ous issues. It shows a complete lack of consideration for one’s fellow student, and a complete lack of civility. So please al- ways remember: people can turn their eyes away; they cannot turn their noses off.

When the semester rapidly comes to an end, projects, tests and homework assign- ments are beginning to pile up since for some reason it seems that some professors have the time management skills of college students. I guess I would like a “lack of planning of your part does not constitute an emergency on mine,” does not apply when former person referred to in the quiz assigns a million pages of homework.

I understand that some- times things come up, people get sick, they look to change their course classes get canceled. But it seems for the most part that the faculty at fault one ses- sion for scrambling at the end of the semester are also the fac- ulty at fault the next semester. Is college not supposed to be a learning experience where peo- ple learn from their mistakes and adapt to ensure a more ad- vantageous outcome the next time around?

Also, there seems to be a complete lack of understanding, with some of the faculty when it comes to prioritization. If a student has five classes in a se- mester, chances are good that not all of those classes hold equal priority for named student. Chances are also good that the elective classes that the student is taking are not turn away; they cannot turn their noses off.

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**Honor Code ensures the quality, integrity of degrees earned at Tech**

Monday afternoon, I participated in an interview with a journalist from Azerbaijan. He had come to Tech to find out a little more about American universities and, in particular, how we handle academic integrity. He asked the other participants and me why we have an honor code, some of the details of how we run our academic integrity system, and our views on academic integrity in general.

It was fascinating to speak with the journalist because it was clear that we came from two very different cultures. He was very interested in the violations that happen most often on campus. When we told him how the cases that come up most were those of unauthorized collaboration, he was rather intrigued. He told us that the problem his country’s schools often face is students bribing professors for a better grade in class.

We did not have much time to talk about why there was such a difference, but it did get me thinking about our issues at Tech. Why is unauthorized collaboration such a big problem on campus? I think it may rest somewhat in how we view the Honor Code at Tech. Much of our focus rests on the section describing student responsibilities. In brief, it says students must not cheat or plagiarize. We all know this, and we agreed to abide by it when we signed the Honor Agreement upon our entrance to Tech.

The system we have set up to enforce academic integrity is also student focused. The professor reports a case to the Office of Student Integrity (OSI), and then OSI takes it from there. If a violation is determined to have happened, the student receives a sanction. Yet, the student body of Tech did not create the Honor Code to put itself under more rules. It created the Code to make explicit and enforce an agreement between students, staff and faculty. It aims to “cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor.”

Honor at Tech is not a one-way street. It is not the responsibility of only students to uphold our Honor Code. All of us, students, staff, and faculty, have our own responsibilities, and we all must ensure everyone else upholds their responsibility. The Dean of Students and faculty make sure we students do our part. Students, through the Honor Advisory Council and SCA, provide input on how the Dean’s Office and OSI enforce academic integrity. But who makes sure faculty are fulfilling their responsibilities?

That answer is simple: You do! Faculty must make clear their policies on academic integrity, in particular unauthorized collaboration. Many do this in their syllabi at the beginning of each semester. However, students must ask their professors if anything is unclear. Students go to each other for help first. When students go to their peers, they should know what the can do with who. Collaboration policies should not be secret, nor complex. The only way to ensure clear policies is for students to open dialogues with their professors early and often about academic integrity.

The Honor Advisory Council is there to help open these dialogues. You may have seen us with our Honor Wall on Skiles Walkway this past week. We asked many of you your opinions about issues involving academic integrity on campus, and we will use your feedback in our future plans.

HAC’s mission is to promote academic integrity on campus, advise individuals on the policies and procedures used to enforce the Honor Code and work to educate the Tech community about the specifics of the Code. The only way we can do that effectively is by getting feedback from the campus community.

You can stop by our office hours throughout the week. We’re there to answer questions about the process and the Honor Code in general. You can look at our website for more information about the Council’s activities, at honor.gatech.edu, or send us an email, honor@gatech.edu.

The Honor Code ensures the integrity of the Tech degree. It tells other universities, businesses and official agencies that Tech grads earn their Tech diplomas. It tells them that Tech grads are people they can trust. It tells everyone that Tech is a place where honor and integrity can thrive.

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**Join the Technique!**

We are always looking for new writers, photographers, and artists.

General staff meetings are held every Tuesday at 7 p.m. in room 137 of the Flag building.