**Student band members balance music, school**

By Katherine Colmer

Being in a rock band means something different at Tech. At a decidedly non-artsy school, a band can provide what is hard to find at Tech. These student musicians do something special together, including writing and playing music, sleeping, eating and driving cross-country together.

Being in a band is an important decision, for it takes up much time in an already hectic schedule that most college students have.

“We practice three days a week as a band, and individually I try to practice more,” said Cal Wooten, the bassist in his band and a junior double-majoring in Nuclear Engineering and Computer Science.

“Why do I do it? Because I feel like my comrades and I can change the music industry. Because music is my passion. Because it’s the only thing I connect with on all levels,” Wooten said.

Wooten’s band—whose name is Myself on Fire for You—has toured the East Coast in their van, playing nine shows in nine days.

“I got a job when I was 15, bought my drum set when I was 16, and then I just kind of played by myself till I was 18,” Hobson explained. “Then the band [my best friend was in] was having lots of drama and lineup changes, so he begged me to help him out until school started... and now it’s three and a half years later.”

Hobson works on many projects, including the bands I Would Set Myself on Fire for You, has toured three times and has a CD out with Stickfigure Records. Last spring break, the four-member band toured the East Coast in their van, playing shows in nine days.

“[My parents] think I’m crazy,” Hobson said.
In digital age, email etiquette often overlooked

How many times have you accidentally deleted an email from a friend, thinking it was spam, because it didn’t have a subject line? How many times have you had to wade through an email full of forwarded text before getting to the real message?

Everything has rules—and that goes for email, too. There’s a whole list of guidelines out there that users of email are expected to follow, especially in the professional community, to avoid confusion, irritation or text that looks downright ugly.

As email has grown into a widespread method of communication, teaching proper etiquette in writing and sending emails has become a standard part of Tech’s Technical Communications courses. It is also the subject of research by Lisa McNair, Coordinator of the Technical Communications program in the School of Literature, Communication and Culture.

McNair partnered with Judith Norback, Director of Workplace and Academic Communication in the School of Industrial and Systems Engineering, in surveying the workforce to find some of the most common email vices.

Email is one of those things that people assume they know how to do but that they don’t always do right,” McNair said. “It really aggravated [one senior executive] when someone was in an office down the corner or in a cubicle, and they’d send an email instead of popping their head in.

Email facilitiates communication, but sometimes people tend to overuse it. The lack of face-to-face communication can lead to other problems. Sometimes, she said, it can be too casual. Many users often treat email as everyday conversation, so proper spelling and punctuation—the backbone of some students’ existence—can go right out the window, even in a professional context. It also means that users will try to duplicate facial expressions and tone of voice with emoticons, which doesn’t present as clear a message as verbal communication.

“Everything that you’re intending to come across is harder to communicate because you don’t have as many cues at your disposal,” McNair said. So why don’t people just make more face-to-face contact, then? “It is so easy to zap out an email,” McNair said. “It’s just tempting while you’re working to just have a thought, type it in, and send it off to somebody.”

This can often result in stream-of-consciousness emails where the receiver isn’t sure how to respond. For that reason, McNair encourages brevity and preciseness.

“That’s not only considerate of your readers, but you’re more likely to get your main point across if… the body of your email fits into a window that they can see,” she said.

Students at Tech tend to be more technically aware and thus have a greater tendency to send properly formatted emails than many professionals. However, they are guilty of two infamous mistakes: failing to include an alias and using an unclear or nonexistent subject line.

At a school where students’ GT numbers are virtually indistinguishable, and spam is common, an alias is especially important. According to McNair, this can decrease the chance of the receiver opening your email.

“The way to get your email opened is to have your name instead of your GT ID and a precise subject line,” McNair said.

“Email facilitates communication, but sometimes people tend to overuse it.”

The Technique conducted an informal survey of one of LCC Professor Michael Laughter’s Technical Communication courses. Students listed a number of common complaints about the emails they receive, including:

- No subject line, so the receiver does not know what the message is about
- No alias, so the receiver does not know who sent the email
- Misspelling the receiver’s name
- Receiving a forwarded email that has been forwarded multiple times already, and has excess body text

Lisa McNair of the School of Literature, Communication and Culture listed the following as practical guidelines for sending clean, effective e-mails:

- Have a clear subject line with action items
- If sending a message to a group, put them in the blind copy box (Bcc) instead of the copy box (Cc)
- Avoid sending e-mails if the receiver is close by or verbal communication would be more effective
- Use proper grammar and punctuation, especially in professional correspondence
- Keep emails concise and to the point
- Create an alias, especially if your e-mail address is obscure
- Don’t use HTML tags in the body text
- Be careful in your use of common online abbreviations (LOL, IMHO, etc.) and emoticons
- Use a signature—information at the bottom of the e-mail with the sender’s personal information

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Email

She advises using clear action items, points that the sender wishes to stress to indicate the email’s relative importance. This is especially important if the receiver often has a crowded inbox, for in the interest of time, such users will often attend to the most urgent items and set aside the rest, leading to a delayed response time.

Students explore email etiquette in their Technical Communications courses, which makes extensive use of several forms of electronic communication. Among other things, students learn the value of proper email etiquette in group collaboration.

“When a lot of people are working together...you end up with a lot of email chains, where someone will start an email and maybe copy a few people, and then you start replying to all, and then at a certain point you might forward the whole thing to someone else,” McNair said.

That can lead to political ramifications, especially if a user forwards the chain without realizing that confidential information is enclosed somewhere within the body text. This can be especially dangerous because emails are considered by law to be public documents and have been used as evidence in court.

Further guidelines can also be found on the web or in most modern technical communications textbooks. The key to adhering to these rules is practice, and McNair assures that following them can have a profound impact in the professional market.

“A lot of what we...say about e-mail etiquette isn’t something that a bunch of teachers just sat around and thought was a good thing to do,” she said, “but it’s actually feedback from people in industry...Choose your mode of communication carefully.”

Depression often, not always, major contributing factor of suicide

Suicide
Continued from page 13

other means to end their lives.

“Sometimes one of the masked suicides, or call ‘autoicides,’ is the one-person single car accident,” Lester said. “People don’t really know how it appears to be an accident, but sometimes it could actually be a suicide.”

Suicide now ranks as the third leading cause of death for college students, behind car accidents and death by violent means (although it has dropped from second place in recent years). College students are more likely than their non-college peers to commit suicide.

Depression is the most common cause of suicide. Not every suicidal person is depressed, but most are, and this is a condition which may be exacerbated by Tech’s stressful environment.

The depression itself may be rooted in that stress or may stem from personal trauma, such as the death of a family member, the end of an intimate relationship or a sexual assault or similar violation. A family history of suicide, mental or physical illness or drug or alcohol abuse are also linked to suicides.

“Sometimes the person confuses ‘wanting to die’ with wanting to get away from the awful pain from having lost a loved one,” Lester said.

“Determining why students choose suicide instead of finding some means of assistance is more challenging,” said Karen Boyd, the Senior Associate Dean of Students for Student Life. “If you could answer that, we wouldn’t have suicides.”

“We have suicide, there are always a whole lot more questions than answers,” said Mack Bowers, director of the Counseling Center. “We could speculate about causes or reasons, but the fact is, we really don’t know.”

Students with suicidal tendencies may not realize that Tech has assistance in abundance.

The Counseling Center is the most popular option, with many professional counselors available throughout the day. For those who cannot or do not wish to make an appointment, emergency walk-in hours are at 8 a.m. and noon every day.

After hours, students may call the Center’s hotline (404-894-2204) to get in touch with the counselor on call that week. A psychiatrist who works in concert with the other counselors is also available at the Health Center.

Students can also contact the Link Counseling Center, which helps people whose lives have been impacted by suicide. They offer individual or group counseling and a support group, Survivors of Suicide (S.O.S.), at Sandy Springs (404-256-9777) and Cobb County (770-541-1114). The Center can also be found online at www.thelink.org.

In addition, depressed students can contact their mental health association, or even, if they are religious, their clergy.

Lester and Boyd also encourage student involvement and networking to recover from or fend off suicidal feelings. Institutions such as Tech’s religious organizations or the Wellness Center can help students broaden their support network and seek comfort in others.

“A lot of people who come to college have a really difficult time separating from family, so they feel pretty lonely or depressed.” Lester said. “So getting involved, I think, can really be helpful.”

Furthermore, Boyd added, “If you have people at your back, [you] feel like a community...Take care of each other.”

To that end, students should be aware of suicidal warning signs in their peers.

“Here are a few helpful hints: people who start giving away their things, people who have had great stress, and you’ve been worried about them...[people who are] suddenly finding great peace,” Boyd said.

Students suffering from depression may also exhibit lifestyle changes. They may not eat, sleep, bathe or socialize.

“Are they going to class? Are they performing official or academic duties such as participating in class or a housing official or somebody,” she said. “If you try to handle that yourself, it’s too big for you.”

The Dean’s Office in particular has the power to intervene on the student’s behalf. While a counselor will not visit a suicidal student without the student’s personal request, a dean has the power to perform a security check to see how the student is doing.

“I think that nothing is more painful than a student dying,” Boyd said.

Students can learn to help themselves by leading a healthy lifestyle, which reduces the risk of depression and suicidal desires. A nutritious diet, exercise and adequate sleep are necessary for good mental health, as is maintaining a strong network of support.

Students should also avoid alcohol or drug abuse. According to Lester, nearly half of suicidal youths use alcohol or drugs shortly before their deaths. Even some people who normally avoid alcohol, she said, use it just prior to their attempts.

“Don’t be afraid to ask about suicide. Asking them will not cause them to decide to do it.”

Rome Lester
Marriage and family therapist

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FOCUS
Technique • Friday, September 17, 2004 • 15
Tech Up Close

CAN YOU FIGURE OUT WHERE ON CAMPUS THIS PICTURE WAS TAKEN?

Email focus@technique.gatech.edu for a chance to win a free student combo at Lil’ Dinos.

Last week’s Tech Up Close:
Plaque outside Bobby Dodd Stadium

Last week’s winner:
Brian Nguyen

This Week’s Photo:

Making Friday classes more interesting!
Research, teaching both factors in tenure process

By Amanda Dugan  
Contributing Writer

Undecided Engineering major Zachary Schreer expressed an opinion that may sound familiar to many students. "Faculty seem a lot more concerned with research than teaching," Schreer said. "With Tech ranked fourth by the Princeton Review in "Professors Get Low Marks" and 10th in "Professors in the Top Ten," students are beginning to think that teaching and research are not equal concerns for professors. Steffes is one example of this stereotype. "I have problems with professor's teaching," Schreer said. "At one point in the Chemistry department when they focused a whole lot on research than helping the students," said Chemistry major Joanna Griffith. "They actually keep their door closed during office hours." However, according to Robert McMath, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies and Academic Affairs, the stereotype of research-obsessed professors who only care about achieving tenure is flawed. "There are three general categories used for evaluating tenure: teaching, research and service," McMath said. "Both teaching and research are taken seriously" in the tenure process, McMath said. "If someone is a monstrous teacher, they are not going to get tenure." Students may also be surprised to learn that course surveys and class observations factor into the decision to award a faculty member tenure. "Teaching is measured based on student evaluations and peer evaluations," said Patricia Sobecky, an associate professor in the School of Biology. "Senior faculty will sit in on lectures and evaluate the tenure-track faculty," McMath said. McMath does not entirely dismiss students' perceptions, however. "I certainly can understand students who feel ignored, but those particular faculty are the exception, not the rule. Most of our folks care about both the students and the research," McMath said. In addition, there is an important distinction between promotion and tenure. "Both teaching and research are decisions made separately," the Faculty Handbook reads. "A promotion is awarded based on the criteria used as a basis for each decision are similar, the underlying philosophy differs." According to the Handbook, "Promotion is based on the intrinsic merit of the individual's work. It recognizes the faculty member for meeting the criteria of the next higher level in the professional hierarchy." A promotion is awarded based on an evaluation of the individual's scholarly activity including instruction, creativity and service. Tenure, on the other hand, is concerned with the faculty member's value to the Institute. "In contrast to promotion which is based on an individual's merit, tenure represents the Institute's selection of a faculty for a long-term commitment," the Handbook reads. "Individuals are selected whose performance is outstanding and whose capabilities and interests...most closely support the objectives of the Institute." For example, the performance of a faculty member may justify promotion but not the awarding of tenure. Faculty may be awarded tenure without a promotion, though that is a less likely scenario. The tenure process, however, does not have to be a full professor to receive tenure—full-time assistant and associate professors are also eligible.

SLIVER

www.nique.net/silver

stolen: blue motorcycle
dump dump dump dump die die die die greer greer greer philippino
e
I am Ripley, the Alien-Killer!!!
Huzzah! Power is back on in my apartment. I should have cleaned out the fridge after day 3 of no power. Now my fridge smells of ass and vag. But not College of Computing. That would be wrong. But all the food is out of the fridge. And my apartment is slowly starting to smell OK again. Maybe when I return from the cruise, all will smell OK. But Dawn's making me buy a straw cowboy hat. Because Luke has one. But Dawn's frumping Luke and not me. So why should I wear a Possibly hat on head would lead to frumping with Dawn. Or maybe Luke. Of course, there’s reason to believe that Comer and I were frumping. Since we were neighbors at Jax Beach and all. Atlhh, Jax Beach. But now I'm in West Palm. And Comer’s in Gainesville. Getting his Abercrombie self on. But we're to go to Vegas if Ivan hits. Hooyah! Dead hookers in the trunk! It doesn't make sense to have so many guys at our school with all of single girls out there. don't try to figure out the logarithm to striking up a conversation. Just do it already, there are so many it is really necessary to have Chaunte Howard’s goin for everyone to see? what kind of newspaper is this? sweet touchdown, talk about wow same donor.... different planet. My God, but UGA fans are retarded. Sliver me Timbers? It isn't pirate day yet... My God but UGA fans are stupid. Listening to the games all the way from Sweden kinda sucks. Chocolate/Vanilla snack packs are the coolest! Swedish people apparently love hotdogs.

See page 19 for more Slivers!

NUMBER OF TENURED FACULTY MEMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>591</td>
<td>Tenured faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>296</td>
<td>Faculty who are on tenure track</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Non-tenure-track faculty</td>
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</tbody>
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There are 919 total faculty members, a figure which includes administrators such as deans, associate deans and provosts. Non-tenure-track faculty include lecturers, Brittain fellows and the president.

Robert McMath  
Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies and Academic Affairs

The criteria used as a basis for each decision are similar, the underlying philosophy differs. According to the Handbook, "Promotion is based on the intrinsic merit of the individual's work. It recognizes the faculty member for meeting the criteria of the next higher level in the professional hierarchy." A promotion is awarded based on an evaluation of the individual's scholarly activity including instruction, creativity and service. Tenure, on the other hand, is concerned with the faculty member's value to the Institute. "In contrast to promotion which is based on an individual's merit, tenure represents the Institute's selection of a faculty for a long-term commitment," the Handbook reads. "Individuals are selected whose performance is outstanding and whose capabilities and interests...most closely support the objectives of the Institute." For example, the performance of a faculty member may justify promotion but not the awarding of tenure. Faculty may be awarded tenure without a promotion, though that is a less likely scenario. The tenure process, however, does...
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"The pressure is on for a junior faculty member. You have to start a lab, mentor students, teach and establish yourself in the scientific community. You have to find a balance," Sobbeck said.

In addition, there are time constraints. A faculty member must complete at least five years of full-time service at the assistant professor level before he or she is eligible for tenure.

However, the maximum time that may be served at the rank of assistant professor or above without the award of tenure is seven years.

"The reality is, a young assistant professor has no more than seven years to establish themselves in research and teaching," McMach said.

The seven-year tenure process only tells part of the story, and faculty continue teaching once it is achieved.

"With tenure I can take more risks, but there is still pressure on my time," Sobbeck said.

With constant pressure put on faculty to perform across the board, even after achieving tenure, Tech students encounter a variety of teaching styles and qualities.

The diversity of classes at Tech, such as lectures, labs and recitations, also present a different level of interaction with faculty who are working towards tenure as well as teaching.

McMach said, "It’s hard to generalize about faculty, but most of us in this field enjoy teaching and also have a passion for research. Ideally, the professor brings their passion for research into the classroom."

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Whether dream or hobby, students play in bands for love of music

**Bands**

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"On the...[nine-day] tour, I was doing fluid mechanics homework in the back of the van."

Paul Hobson
Chemical Engineering senior

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"I go live in a van for nine days," Hobson said. "They just want to make sure that I do well in school, which I have been able to do."

However, it’s not always easy. "On the same tour, I was doing fluid mechanics homework in the back of the van."

"Being in a band can help you self-confidence as a person, but it does not help your academic confidence, Wooten’s band agreed. But none of the band members seemed to be perturbed by that; in fact, most of the musicians seem to be inspired by the challenge of balancing the two."

"Though dreams of being a rock star have surely gone through every band member’s head, different students view their own bands differently."

For Hobson, making music is not his true calling. "This is definitely a hobby," Hobson said. "But (my band) is unique because we don’t hate work. Other political bands say ‘screw work, do what you love,’ but...if everyone said that, where would we buy our instruments?"

Hobson added, "[We’re all] on the same tour, I was doing fluid mechanics homework in the back of the van."

However, many bands must practice more—especially when there is a show coming up.

"On the...[nine-day] tour, I was doing fluid mechanics homework in the back of the van."