OPINIONS

Technique • Friday, March 26, 2004

OUR VIEWS Consensus Opinion

Where’s my money?

The Student Government Association’s (SGA) continuous heartache this year over the budget for Tier I, II and III organizations is finally winding down, with the budget coming up for discussion in the House and Senate this Tuesday. The Joint Finance Committee (JFC) and Chair Lisa Brown have not solely blamed the nearly three-month late arrival of the budget; the undergraduate and graduate presidents, Nate Watson and Pellham Norville, must share the responsibility as well.

The proverbial buck stops at the desks of the two presidents; they have the ultimate responsibility to see to it that the necessary operations SGA is charged with completing are undertaken in a timely and effective manner. As the face of the undergraduate branch, the segment of SGA with the most constituents affected by the budget, the undergraduate leadership is specially charged with ensuring the smooth completion of the budgetary process. While its power to make the budget process effective is limited, it should facilitate more communication among JFC, student organizations and SGA as a whole.

Initiative should have been taken by the executive branch or by JFC to open lines of communication and provide a forum for feedback from student organizations; instead, it has fallen upon the undergraduate executive vice president to do so this year.

Furthermore, the Technique should not be the sole source of information about SGA events, including the budget. SGA’s Public Relations committee should be the main arbiter of communication among JFC, student organizations and SGA as a whole.

SGA’s leadership, both in JFC and in the House, must be recognized for the unique hardships they have faced this year, including a lack of qualified people interested in filling JFC’s chair position, a huge increase in the number of budget requests, and a large chunk of the budget having to be earmarked for student organizations this year than ever before.

Acknowledging all of these factors, and that all Tier III organizations are suffering similarly because of budget cuts, the upcoming weeks should be used productively—not for complaints—to learn all the intricacies of why and how decisions on the budget were made, to come up with solutions and ideas for the future, and to allow SGA and JFC to show that they care about their constituency by encouraging open communication.

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

EDITORIAL BOARD

Tony Kluemper, Editor-in-Chief
Justin Parlo, Managing Editor
Daniel Amick, News Editor
Jennifer Lee, Focus Editor
Art Seavey, Entertainment Editor
Jennifer Schur, Opinion Editor
Kimberly Rieck, Sports Editor
Scott Meudelenes, Photography Editor
Karl Guettin, Online Editor
Julia Trappold, Advertising Manager
Jody Shaw, Associate Editor

Copyright Notice

Copyright © 2004, Tony Kluemper, Editor-in-Chief, and by the Board of Student Publications. The Technique is an official publication of the Georgia Tech Board of Student Publications. No part of this paper may be reproduced in any manner without written permission from the editors or from the Board of Student Publications. The ideas expressed here are those of the Editor or the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Board of Student Publications, the students, staff or faculty of the Georgia Institute of Technology or the University System of Georgia.

Quote of the week:

"If you can’t go 'til the drunkenness in your closet, you’d best teach it to dance." —George Bernard Shaw

JFC’s actions lack professionalism, respect

There are enough hooves in the convoluted process of applying for and securing money from the Student Government Association (SGA) that a fully-grown lion could leap through them to perform a circus show.

The three of us representing the Technique arrived five minutes early to our meeting with the Joint Finance Committee (JFC), like all the business-world etiquette books advise. And then we proceeded to wait 25 minutes for anyone from the group of 10 graduate and undergraduate members of JFC to show up for the meeting they had organized.

One-on-one meetings finally walked into the SGA office, he told us that we should want a few more minutes for more JFC members to arrive. Seeing that only one other person decided to show up in the ensuing time, we wondered how the world in this group in charge of nearly three million dollars was able to operate with any semblance of success. The two members asked merely three questions about our budget and realizing that we were there to defend a bill instead of the meeting getting under way. At this point, it was hard to take the gathering seriously, without wondering how in the world this group in charge of nearly three million dollars was able to operate with any semblance of success.

The two members asked merely three questions about our request for $7,000, each of which demonstrated their lack of knowledge of the bill. In less than a fifth of the time we spent waiting for the meeting to start, our chance to explain our allocations request was over.

The lack of professionalism and respect for other students and their time was staggering—and ours was not an isolated incident. If the organizations requesting money from the purse they are entrusted with, should not be a dog and pony show for student organizations.

Instead, a certain level of giving-and-take should be expected of the players in the process. JFC needs to show that the importance of its role and respects the need to share information with other organizations to which the committee disperses funds. This can be accomplished by doing simple things like showing up to meetings on time, dressing appropriately for the situation, as the organization representatives do when they put on more that just sweats; going to the meetings informed and well prepared; and by creating a professional atmosphere.

While these aspects may only address the superficial issues students see upon first inspection, they are important in reviving SGA’s image as a whole. If the very visible aspects of SGA like JFC were no longer permitted to show, the very visible aspects student organizations request for more money are no longer permitted to show.

Instead, a certain level of giving-and-take should be expected of the players in the process. JFC needs to show that the importance of its role and respects the need to share information with other organizations to which the committee disperses funds. This can be accomplished by doing simple things like showing up to meetings on time, dressing appropriately for the situation, as the organization representatives do when they put on more that just sweats; going to the meetings informed and well prepared; and by creating a professional atmosphere.

While these aspects may only address the superficial issues students see upon first inspection, they are important in reviving SGA’s image as a whole. If the very visible aspects of SGA like JFC were no longer permitted to show, the very visible aspects student organizations request for more money are no longer permitted to show.

Instead, a certain level of giving-and-take should be expected of the players in the process. JFC needs to show that the importance of its role and respects the need to share information with other organizations to which the committee disperses funds. This can be accomplished by doing simple things like showing up to meetings on time, dressing appropriately for the situation, as the organization representatives do when they put on more that just sweats; going to the meetings informed and well prepared; and by creating a professional atmosphere.

While these aspects may only address the superficial issues students see upon first inspection, they are important in reviving SGA’s image as a whole. If the very visible aspects of SGA like JFC were no longer permitted to show, the very visible aspects student organizations request for more money are no longer permitted to show.

Instead, a certain level of giving-and-take should be expected of the players in the process. JFC needs to show that the importance of its role and respects the need to share information with other organizations to which the committee disperses funds. This can be accomplished by doing simple things like showing up to meetings on time, dressing appropriately for the situation, as the organization representatives do when they put on more that just sweats; going to the meetings informed and well prepared; and by creating a professional atmosphere.
All Div. I sports need support, not just b-ball

When the men’s basketball team arrived back to campus Sunday after its amazing win over Boston College, throngs of fans greeted the players and head coach Paul Hurley. The team has received an overwhelming response to its numerous successes on the court this year, as well as signals that tonight Tech will play in its first Sweet 16 game since 1976. And no one is more thankful of the fans’ support than Hurley, who has often credited the student fans for much of his team’s success this season.

But where have the throngs of fans and support been for the rest of Tech’s Division I teams? While fans have backed and filled Alexander Memorial Coliseum to see the men play, hardly anyone went to the women’s basketball team’s games. I admit, I wasn’t able to go to many of them myself this season because of my Thursday night physics lab class, but not everyone in this school has the same excuse.

For the biggest game of the year, McChelle Joseph’s team played Alana Beard and the then-No. 1 Duke Blue Devils before a crowd of over 8,000 people. Unfortunately, the team only averaged 1,397 people per game over the course of the entire season, so the coliseum has a capacity of over 9,000. Tech ranked No. 75 for attendance, according to a study of Division basketball, but legends have to start somewhere. If we want to see our women’s team or any of our other sports teams exceed, we have to throw our support to them and attend games. Some may argue that if a team has a winning record, the fans will come, but that’s not fair to the team or long-time supporters.

Why should hard-working student athletes prove anything to fair-weather fans when they already have to pay to coaches, the media, teachers in the classroom and teammates? Not to mention the fact that poor attendance sends a bad message to incoming recruits, further hurting a team’s chances at success.

Last weekend I saw in person how loyal the Badger Nation is to Wisconsin men’s team. The Bradley Center was practically lifeless during the men’s Big Eight Conference game. The fans are still waiting for a seat at a baseball game! All Tech athletic events are free to students, so you might as well take advantage of the opportunity while you can. Once you graduate, you’ll have to pay for tickets, and you won’t be able to get a seat as close as you can get in the Swarm, even with major distractions.

There are several baseball games left in the season, along with tennis matches, football games and even the track and field team’s Yellow Jacket Invitational, not to mention spring practices for the football team. If we throw our basketball-style support to all sports, there’s no limit to how high Tech athletics can rise.

“I’m from the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the reggae music they play reminds me of home.”

Jill Martell and Heidi Khalil
BME Senior

“We would listen to WREK radio, we just don’t know what station it is. Advertise better!”

Ryan Pirkl
EE Junior

“It sucks. They play noise.”

Photo by Jane Zhang

Debates lack oomph

Wednesday’s scene at the Cam- pante looked more like a calm tea party than a lively SGA de- bate. The debates, a chance for the campus community to share their ideas and question answerers, were more like a friendly question and answer session.

In the future a true Lincoln-Dou- glas sort of debate should be host- ed, giving the electorate a chance to witness their candidate’s actions in action.

YOUR VIEWS
Letters to the Editor

Hold ‘em more than a game

By Kinsee Morlan
The Daily Aztec

U-W: RIESEAN DIEGO STATE U.—My favorite part of this spring break was improving my Texas Hold ‘em poker skills with my friends from back home in Colorado. My sister, her poker-loving boyfriend and I went to play Texas Hold ‘em with a high school friend. I am now married and have a little 6- month-old baby boy, so we had to sit in the kitchen, be as quiet as possible and smoke outside. Right down the street was another group from high school, and when I dropped in to say hello I learned he, too, has a wife, a child, and interestingly enough, was playing Texas Hold ‘em. After losing most of my money, I went home won- dering what it is about Texas Hold ‘em that people find so in- triguing.

After pondering this question

Letter Submission Policy

The Technique welcomes all letters to the editor and will print letters on a timely and space-available basis. Letters may be marked to Georgia Tech Campus Mail Stop C295, emailed to editor@technique.gatech.edu or hand-delivered to room 137 of the student service building. Letters should be addressed to Tyaji Klauber, editor-in-chief.

Letters must be signed and must in- clude a campus box number or other valid mailing address for verification purposes. Let- ters should not exceed 400 words and should be typed double spaced. The Technique reserves the right to edit letters for style, content, and length. Only one submission per person will be printed each term.

Advertising Information

Information and rate cards can be found online at www.technique.gatech.edu. Information and rates for advertising are available by phone at (404) 894-1815 or by email at adinfo@technique.gatech.edu. The Technique office is located in room 137 of the Student Service Building, 355 Fort Drive, Atlanta, Georgia 30332-1520. Questions regarding advertising should be directed to Marcus Kwok at (404) 894-1800, or Rosemary Wells at (404) 894-2850.

“I was a roomate of one of them myself this season because of my Thursday night physics lab class, but not everyone in this school has the same excuse.”

For the biggest game of the year, McChelle Joseph’s team played Alana Beard and the then-No. 1 Duke Blue Devils before a crowd of over 8,000 people. Unfortunately, the team only averaged 1,397 people per game over the course of the entire season, so the coliseum has a capacity of over 9,000. Tech ranked No. 75 for attendance, according to a study of Division basketball.
Recent events show counter-terrorism complications

This week for the first time, Ivan Allen College Founder’s Day, a celebration of the College and its mission, took place in conjunction with the Sam Nunn Bank of America Policy Forum, an event that seeks to bring together public and private actors to discuss pertinent issues with an eye towards solutions. From 1997-2002, the Policy Forum took place annually with Georgia Tech, the University of Georgia and Emory University co-sponsoring the event and rotating the host responsibilities. Now, the forum belongs completely to the Institute, which will host it every two years.

As part of the Founder’s Day, former U.S. Senator and School of International Affairs namesake Sam Nunn accepted the Ivan Allen College Prize for Progress and Service. Nunn served in the U.S. Senate for 24 years, during which time he chaired the powerful Senate Armed Services Committee. He later founded the Nuclear Threat Initiative, which tackles proliferation problems.

While Nunn’s address on American’s security challenges, the panel forums throughout the Founder’s Day event, and those related to bio-terrorism that took place the following day at the Nunn Forum all raised interesting issues related to national security, I found that Nunn’s response to an audience question most interesting, especially in light of recent world events. Nunn explicitly criticized the idea of preemptive military action as a way to counter terrorism around the world. Nunn’s comments, and others that emerged in the Founder’s Day panels and Forum discussions combine with recent events at home and abroad to highlight the controversy related not just to terrorism itself but also how to prevent it.

The terrorist bombing that occurred March 11 in Madrid, Spain and killed over 200 people provides a chilling reminder that today’s world remains as unsafe as ever and the threat of fundamentalist terrorism remains real—especially as the signs of that investigation increasingly point to Al-Qaeda. The way in which the Spanish people responded to the attack, however, demonstrates a view that differs from that held by the majority of Americans.

In voting out the Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar’s Popular Party and electing a socialist majority, Spaniards overwhelmingly rejected the idea of preventive military action. Prior to 3/11, many analysts predicted an Aznar victory, despite his previous decision to support U.S. action in Iraq against the objections of 90 percent of his constituents. After the attacks the election became a referendum on Aznar’s decision—did the “preventive action” against Iraq actually contribute to making Spain a target for foreign terrorists? If voters indeed asked themselves that question, it appears they answered in the affirmative.

Recent activities of the U.S. Congress follow this tragedy, where Secretaries of State and Defense from the current administration and the previous explain their pre-9/11 anti-terrorism activities. Was Al-Qaeda viewed as a serious threat? Why wasn’t U.S. action against the group effective? Was military action an option prior to 9/11?

Retrospectively reflecting on the incidents of 9/11 and 3/11 allows any number of speculations about what governments could or should have done to prevent their passing, but as a society must also look with an eye to the future, with an eye to solutions. In other words, our discussions must mirror those of the Nunn Forum at our own Institute.

Does preventive military action reduce the threat of terrorism? Perhaps, but I argue that preventive military attack in the name of anti-terrorism can only be part of a solution—and only a final option. Looking at 9/11, the threat came from an individual and an organization with extensive resources, of which military action could only destroy part. Other actions are needed to cripple the financial and human resources employed by groups like Al-Qaeda, and these actions require partnerships—only across national boundaries, but also across sector bounders of public, private and civil society actors.

Preventive military action may prevent terrorism, but, because of its polarizing nature, it may also prevent other more collaborative efforts just as necessary in the prevention of terrorism. In the rejection of preventative action by the Spaniards, its questioning by Nunn and the acknowledgment by senior Bush and Clinton officials that preventing terrorism includes unimaginable depths of complication, the opportunity for opening cross-sector societal dialogues exists. These discussions, of which the Tech community now serves as a leader, show how difficult it remains to be simply “with us or against us.”