OPINIONS

OUR VIEWS

Consensus Opinion

SGA budget

The Joint Finance Committee’s proposed budget for the next fiscal year is well crafted and fiscally balanced. Most organizations either increased their budgets or maintained them. Additionally, JFC managed to give budgets to many small organizations who had never had them before. The Student Center Programs Board was given a substantial increase in order to fund a large on-campus concert, an event that will correspond nicely with the introduction of the Student Life Fund. While some organizations’ budgets were cut, it is important for all organizations to realize that SGA has limited resources. The amount of money that any one organization can receive is limited by the money that all other organizations want.

Hopefully, this good planning on the part of JFC will result in an easy passage through the Undergraduate House and the Graduate Senate. Quick passage will help student organizations to do more in-depth planning for the upcoming year, encouraging more campus-wide events. A speedy approval will also increase acceptance of the JFC, a part of SGA that gained power this year under the slate method of voting on financial bills.

This budget also includes a large increase for SAC because of all the new staff members that will be necessary to operate the SAC expansion. To fund these salaries, the Mandatory Student Fee Advisory Committee has recommended the student activity fee be increased $8 beginning in Fall semester. Both Georgia Tech and the Board of Regents should approve this increase. It has been many years since fees were increased, and these increases will be used wisely to improve student life at Tech. This increase is both practical and fiscally responsible, as this fee increase should decrease the likelihood that more increases will be needed when SAC II is completed.

While this increase in fees may upset many students, growth will allow for both the funding of SAC II and the Tier III student organizations. Without it, smaller organizations would be left without funding. The money used for construction is also a necessary component of student fees. We as students rely heavily on the fees paid by the students who came before us. The Library West Commons, the Love Building, and the Bioengineering and Biosciences building were all funded by students, many of whom are probably not still around to see the fruits of all their fees. Although it is frustrating to endure the fees increases and the constant construction, Tech will be a much better place for future students and for all of us who return to campus to visit after we have graduated.

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Parking policies counterproductive

“I wonder which kind of bread I should get at the grocery store today, the whole grain or the wheat natty?”

Wait—what’s that yellow thing doing assaulting my windshield?

And that is precisely how I came to purchase the latest addition to my side provided by the Department of Parking, “although I think Department of Ticketing” would more aptly describe what the division does to keep busy. In fact, perhaps a more appropriate name would include allusions to some sort of street oligarchy.

It’s nothing new for anyone who has ever driven a car around Ferst Drive (when that was still possible, anyway) to come across a deceptively innocent white truck stalking the parked vehicles. I’m surprised the parking enforcers haven’t started following moving vehicles that would allow them to avoid a one hundred dollar piece of plastic dangling from the cars’ rear view mirrors, to just hand the driver the ticket as soon as they illegally pull into a space. This would also mean that then the next ticketer could give the car another ticket, without knowledge that the deed had already been done! What a coup for the Department they wouldn’t have!

When I was taken off the wait list for getting a parking pass, I was ecstatic. My enthusiasm rapidly waned, though, as I realized that the new plastic card I had invested in was only going to buy me more hassle.

For example, in my latest run-in with the office of parking, I was ticketed twice in two days for the exact same infraction—parking in a nonexistent space in the lot for which I held a pass. Considering that because of the light paint lines demarcating spots I assumed that where I parked was legal, there are two problems here, representative of larger problems many students have with the department of parking.

First, the incentive for students to follow Parking’s mostly arbitrary rules decreases drastically because of the perception that they’re likely to get ticketed anyway. For example (aside from my incident), one student moved his car from the lot he has a pass to because of a basketball game, the student returned to his car a few hours after the game was over to find a ticket stuck to his windshield for parking in a lot he didn’t have a pass for—does Parking expect students to rush to their cars immediately after games are over, sit idly while the fans eat their parking spaces, and then back to their rightful spots?

Secondly, Parking ticketers are overzealous about doing their jobs. It seems unnecessary (and even a waste of paper!) to ticket the same car, for the same infraction, repeatedly in a short period of time—especially in the span of two hours.

Last semester one of my friends knowingly parked her car in an spot for which she did not have a pass, mostly because she was lazy and running late, but also because she figured she would get a 40 dollar ticket at most in the two hours she expected to be there. When she returned to drive home, she was met by a line of cars along the street, none of which were hers. Turns out she had been ticketed, boot and towed in the span of two hours.

Anyway, my personal frustration with the lack luster administration of nonsensical policies is overshadowed by the more important issue here: the need for the Parking Department to respond to the needs of the students.

The recent move to remove after-hours restrictions on parking in areas surrounding the library was a good move, I applaud the officials who made this a reality.

One step in the right direction does not equal a panacea, though, instead, more improvements need to be made before officials are allowed to rest on their laurels.

Access to campus during off-hours should also be granted, under a similar policy to the one governing the library area. Students with off-campus cars should be able to park on campus without a permit in A lots on the weekends—and especially during holidays, as should visitors (such as parents and alumni).

These new policies would increase student safety at times when campus is deserted and dark. In light of the many recent incidents of crime near Tech’s campus, the possibility of lessening parking restrictions should be seriously considered.

If Parking kept in mind that students are not meant to be their sole source of income, there’d be happier students driving around campus. Well, once they are able to get around campus by car, that is.
Bad student life fault of apathetic students

It’s generally agreed that life at Tech, for lack of a better word, sucks. Between the Princeton Review ranking Tech students the second unhappiest in the nation and most students I talk to agreeing with the GT Susi anti-Tech website, it’s obvious that student life, particularly our student life, has a problem. I see this as Tech’s biggest problem, and it is growing.

I know student tour guides who tell me that incoming freshmen have started asking about it; believe it or not, there will very soon come a day when Tech’s reputation and ranking in the coming years. The Tech website and the popular tours regularly call for “something to be done” to improve this and the administration has and continues to make attempts at addressing this problem.

Specifically, the Hill has increased the number of big events on campus the two years since my freshman year, increased activities, created several student leadership initiatives, and just this week agreed to a specific Student Activities Fund which will hopefully lead toward an endowment.

In short, I believe that the administration is making honest attempts to improve student life, though quite a few of their attempts have been pretty dumb. The problem is that under current conditions, any attempt they make is doomed to fail before it starts.

The underlying problem is that there isn’t enough to do on or off campus. Further into the results of the Princeton Review, Tech is rated among the top of schools for having events to do on campus. Off campus, we’re in the middle of a major city, immediately next to the Fox and within (long) walking distance of the Georgia Dome, Centennial Park, and a dozen restaurants.

The underlying problem isn’t that Tech is hard. If that’s your complaint, then why did you come? Most people choose to come to Tech based on its academic reputation, which for a public university is highly dependent on the difficulty of the classes. This means that people come to Tech (indirectly) because it’s hard.

The problem isn’t a lack of time to do stuff. If you’re taking a normal number of hours, which I consider about fifteen, then you shouldn’t be spending more than eight hours per day on school, which is the same amount you’ll spend virtually any job. Yes, it’s more work than you were doing in high school, but it’s a joke.

So if student life at Tech sucks but it’s not the fault of the administration, number of activities, or amount of time, what’s left?

The students.

It is my firm belief that the general apathy and negative disposition of many Tech students is the cause of student life malaise. The problem with dumping more money into large athletic like the Student Activities Fund is that Tech students don’t care. Many large activities that Tech currently puts on are poorly attended despite flyers being posted in all the dorms and regular chalking along Stiles.

Why? Students simply don’t care. Maybe it’s our general lack of social skills coming back to bite us, and we’ve never had good programs without liberal arts majors who are more people oriented. I refuse to believe that.

Sure the Shaft is alive and well here on campus, I won’t deny its existence, but the most part people are shafted far more often by themselves than by the administration.

We should not allow negative events in our lives to make us negative people. When life hands you the Shaft, go about making Shaft-ade.

Aristotle rightly said that the happy life is one of excellence.

Excellence comes from achievement, achievement from purpose. If you’re unhappy, find a purpose for your life. Why spend it because you’ve driven towards a goal, find religion, or serve others, do SOMETHING to give your life purpose.

The simplest thing is helping others: tutoring, food, homeless, clean up an area, hold a door, smile at people as you walk past. Figure out what you’re living for and work toward it. We the Tech student can change. Life is not what happens to you but what you do with it. Happiness is your opinion about it and controllable by you.

Jonathan Torrell
CompE Senior

“Forget the SAC. Tech needs more work on the Shaft.”

Kelli Lewis
ID Sophomore

“Yeah, I’m tired of waiting in line to use our machines.”

Stevie Hale
IE Freshman

“The waterslide is going to be awesome!”

ROCK DUNLAP
CS Senior

“I’m all in favor of a bigger SAC.”
Power of spoken word great, unpredictable

By Emmanuel Olubajo

(U-WIRE) Bowling Green University—An experiment was conducted a few years ago on the implication of spoken words to people. One hundred students in a class were made to take a written test and the individual result of the test was not made known to the students. The class was then divided into two sets of 50 students each: the genius class and the mediocre class.

The genius class was told that they had the highest IQ and was the most brilliant and brightest set of students to have ever lived in the world. The class was told, that without even teaching them, they had the brain capacity to teach themselves, as creativity was their birthright.

Students in the mediocre class were told that their IQ was very low, that they were very lazy and were told that their IQ was very low.

The actual fact is that the students in the genius class scored the lowest set of scores in the undisclosed result of the initial test, while the mediocre class had the highest set of scores in the initial test. The experiment proved that, the students in the genius class believed the words of their teachers, that they were the most brilliant and brightest set of students in the world, hence performed to meet up with the expectations.

While the mediocre class (which was in fact the brilliant set of students) took the words of their teachers for reality that they had very low IQ, hence performed badly in the second test. This experiment shows the importance of the use of our positive or negative words to our friends, partners, students and workers.

Your words are very powerful. A great man once said, two things shape a person’s future; first is spoken words about oneself and second is thinking about oneself (self-image).

Whatever you are told as a person and you believe it, you will manifest it. One trait of successful people is the ability to always use positive words at the slightest opportunity. Many often talk themselves to failure; they say “I don’t know why I’m always acting foolishly!” “I’m broke,” “I suck,” “I’m doomed” and so on. Very soon whether you meant to fill your life with positive words or not, you will ultimately manifest what you have said about yourself. It’s no magic, it is a simple principle of reaping what you have sowed into your own life. While listening to Robert Kiyosaki (Author of Best Selling Book, Rich Dad Poor Dad) last year in Atlanta, he said many people talk themselves into poverty by saying, “I cannot afford it!” and as long as you make this kind of negative confessions, you may never achieve prosperity.

Cultivate the language of champions and achievers in life, who more often than not use words such as, “I can,” “I believe,” “It’s possible,” “Thank You” and other positive words.

Your words reflect what you believe about your future. Mark Twain said, “The difference between the right word and almost the right word is the difference between lightening and the lightening bug. Always talk happiness, progress, prosperity, good health, peace and success.”

Emmanuel Olubajo
The BG News Columnist

“Always talk happiness, progress, prosperity, good health, peace and success.”

Diversity

Georgia Tech has been named the top producer of black engineers and intends to remain the trendsetter. Quoted in the August 31st, 2001 issue of the Technique, Ingrid Hayes, Associate Director of Undergraduate Admissions, states “the goal of Georgia Tech was not to increase African-American application and enrollment to improve some idealized statistic, but to make Georgia Tech a more complete, diverse learning institution with a broad cultural base.”

In this statement, the student body is not only being addressed but also the faculty. A pipeline for black students has been laid by the collaboration between Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and an organization has been established called Minority Recruitment Team (MRT). These actions show a desire to increase diversity; why should diversity end with the student body?

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