Students keep interstate love going strong

By Madhu Adiga
Contributing Writer

On Valentine’s Day, even some of the busiest couples make time to see each other. However, spending time together becomes a challenge for those whose significant others are on opposite ends of the country.

“Like many of my classmates, I’m used to long distance relationships because of the change in my hometown from Springfield, Virginia, to Tech’s campus,” said Aerospace Engineering senior Elizabeth Deems. “It’s not that my long distance relationship is any different from that of my other friends, but it’s more difficult because there’s not much else going on here at Tech.”

For many students, long distance relationships are part of college life. According to CS Major Carol Hsu, “I get a kick out of watching others’ misfortunes,” said freshman Jennifer Hanes, a Management Information Systems major. “I think that [couples] should definitely have a set thing they do every day, or every other day.”

“However, I don’t think that it truly portrays real people—I don’t think anyone with such magnitude of work would really want to be on the show,” said Butler. “So, what do the guys think about these shows?”

“Some of them are funny—nothing like watching others’ misfortunes,” said driver Dale Han with a grin. “But most of them make love seem like a big joke.”

Alan Bakowski, a public policy major, "I get a kick out of watching the girls fight on Blind Date... but it’s not like you can take the show seriously." Carol Hsu
CS Major

The almost ancient Tech vs. UGA rivalry may be the ultimate clash. Sel-dom on Earth is there such a magnitude of hate between schools, yet there are some other Tech students who, despite this huge rivalry, date students at UGA.

“How does that work?” one might ask. “How can two people with such vast ideological differences have a meaningful relationship?”

A few of those students who are brave enough to try a Tech–UGA relationship told the Focus section the reality behind their romances. Finding Tech students that date students at UGA, on the surface, may not seem to be such a difficult task. The abundance of men at Tech and the contrasting abundance of women at Georgia is huge, said Jennifer Hanes, a Management Information Systems major. “I’d like to date a girl from UGA,” said Joe Lowe, a Management Information Systems major. “Sometimes when I go to visit
added, “They’re so cheesy and stu-
pid you feel guilty watching them.”

Freshman Electrical Engineer-
ing major Larry Lindsey, however, had a response that may be more representative of the Tech male con-
stituency: “I don’t think these shows have an adequate representation of the population. I mean, when do you ever see a nerd on these shows?”

Lately even, it seems as if these programs have acquired a perverse appetite for destruction. In an ef-
tort to increase ratings by appealing to vast sadistic audiences, some dat-
ing shows have seemingly begun to intentionally arrange catastrophic mismatches. Such maneuvers have worked twofold in the case of the WB’s Blind Date, where the extra chaotic date situations yield more opportunity for the sarcastic pop-
up features and make the show even racier. Then, the higher ratings give the show’s producers the liberty to hire an even more creative troop of writers to exploit such situations.

Those who are not so amused by the influx of dating shows like Dis-
missed and Blind Date shouldn’t get too worried. TV isn’t going in the all-dating direction any time soon. At least at Tech, shows such as Daw-
son’s Creek and Felicity still attract the most addicted audiences.

Rivalry

her, her friends are very nice to me. They sometimes compliment her for dating a guy from Tech,” Lowe said. Others seem to encounter a slightly more harsh welcome.

Constance Mansour, a STC major, and her boyfriend Ryan, who attends UGA, have been dating since high school.

“Sometimes his friends make lots of comments and jokes about com-
puter stuff, but sometimes when I visit he’ll tell people I go to Georgia State instead of Tech,” Mansour said.

Another student said that sever-
al male students at UGA once told him to “Go back to Atlanta and stay away from the UGA girls,” while he was visiting his girlfriend. For the most part, however, those inter-
viewed seemed to have few prob-
lems in their relationships dealing with the rivalry, except when it came to football.

Football, of course, brings the Tech–UGA rivalry to what can be-
come a very nasty zenith. So the Tech students were asked about how they planned to handle the obvious problem of seating at the Georgia game next year in Athens.

“She’ll sit in the Tech section for the football game,” said Lowe of his UGA girlfriend. “She’ll root for Tech, too,” he added, optimistically. “Well, at least I won’t root for UGA.”

Hanes and her boyfriend will take a different approach, “We’ll sit wherever we can get the best seats,” she said.

Despite the rivalry, some stu-
dents have found romance in Ath-
ens. However, dating a rival might not be easy. “Compromise is defi-
nitely the way to go,” said Lowe, “So just remember that before you head over to UGA.”
email: focus@technique.gatech.edu
Winner will be selected randomly from correct entries and receives a Technique T-shirt and free Papa John’s pizza.

Last week’s Tech Up Close:
A knob on the Engine (in front of Tech Tower)

Last week’s winner:
Michael Castille
Distance
dated his girlfriend who lives in Dal-
las, Texas, for three years now. He

“..."When I first came to Tech, I used to try to see her once every one or two months. But it’s gone down since then; this year I only got to see her twice," he said.

Many students in long-distance relationships experience the same; as time goes on, the demands of college preclude frequent traveling. However, the relationships do not have to fade.

Over the years, technology has eased the plight of those in long-
distance relationships.

Such is the case for Mechanical Engineering freshman John Fuller, whose girlfriend is currently living in Thailand and finishing out her last year of high school. They met when they went to the same high

“I now have a cell phone, so we talk on the phone. The other person is available for download at Microsoft.

Email is also an important way to keep in touch because it al-
lows for more permanence in mes-
ges.

Even with all the available on-
line technologies, the telephone re-
tains the key way to keep in touch. Many cell phone companies now offer convenient plans that are con-
ductive to extensive long-distance communication.

“One now has a cell phone, so we talk at least once every week when I get back from my meetings and prac-
tices,” said Deems of conversing with her boyfriend. “It’s nice that I can

“If you want [the relationship] to work badly enough, you’ll make sure that it does.”
Daniel Larsen
Computer Science major

rely on talking to him and relaxing during that time. It’s Clarke’s around again.”

One of the best kept secrets of phone communication, according to Larsen, is bigredwire.com. Big-

redwire, formed as a backlash against sketchy telecommunications mar-
teting, dedicates itself to spreading the truth about long distance com-
munication and providing long dis-

ance at low rates. For example, rates across the United States are only four cents per minute, which helps those who talk to their out-of-state significant others do so on a student budget.

Despite communications advanc-
es, distance makes celebrating Van-

centine’s Day difficult. Larsen and his girlfriend decided to celebrate a week early; she traveled to attend his formal. Fuller, on the other hand, will be calling his girlfriend on the phone for the fourteenth.

“We’ve basically just decided to make up for everything this sum-
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Technology or no, some basic rules exist to surviving a long-dis-
tance relationship. Trust is key, as both parties will be having separate experiences. Being faithful is im-
portant, but so is respecting the other

person’s lifestyle, as getting in touch

may not be instant and visits may be infrequent. Living apart, both parties will have their own friends, activities, and in part, lifestyles.

Those who maintain their long-
distance relationships also point out the importance of the “little things.”

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