OPINIONS

Technique • Friday, November 16, 2001

OUR VIEWS Consensus Opinion

Put permits online

Many freshmen are facing much harder schedules for the upcoming spring semester than they had anticipated. A large number of them were unable to register for humanities and social science courses, leaving them no choice but to add more math and science classes to their schedules.

Although there is the option to request permits or overloads for many of these classes, more and more students are finding these alternatives frustrating and unreliable, while administrators complain that too many students are coming to them at once begging for the same overloads and permits.

This entire process could be made simpler by implementing an online system for all permit and overload requests. A computer could easily and quickly process all permit and overload requests and assign them to classes according to eligibility and qualifications. If this were the case the whole registration process would be greatly improved. In the beginning of Phase I registration students could register for their major classes and all general courses. Then, in the second half of Phase I registration, permit requests could be looked at and administrators could make the decision to either completely close the classes that already exist by adding students who have requested permits or add more sections of the most sought after courses.

The simplest and most obvious solution to this continuing problem is communication. If students want to take a class that is not required for their major, they should put in a permit request before registration starts so that the process is not as hectic and stressful. In this way administrators will be able to more closely evaluate requests and give the students who need certain classes most the opportunity to add them to their schedules.

Feed foreign students

It appears as though Tech’s international students won’t have much to be thankful for this Thanksgiving. Most of them will be staying on campus for the holiday, but as it stands now there will be no way for them to get food during the better part of the four-day holiday.

While there is an existing program trying to encourage international students to go home with students who live nearby and the Catholic Center continues to offer its annual Thanksgiving Day Feast, these two programs will only feed students on Thanksgiving Day. International students are essentially on their own for the other three days. The dining halls will be closed for the entire holiday, and no employees will be around to take these students to grocery stores or any other food places. Most of these students do not have any other means of transportation. If any of them hope to have food during the break they must plan in advance to get a ride to the store.

There are several solutions to this problem. One of the dining halls could be opened for a limited number of hours each day during the break, or dining services could prepare a number of simple ‘to go’ meals for these students to pick up each day. A Stinger could also be run to a grocery store one or more days during the holiday. No matter what the solution, something should be done to make sure that the students who must stay here over the holidays do not feel isolated.

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

New ticket policy shows GTAA’s laziness

This is in response to the second change that has taken place in two years to Georgia Tech’s basketball student ticket policy.

I am curious as to the real reason the Georgia Tech Athletic Association (GTAA) Ticket Office chose to avoid responsibility by making a first-come, first-serve ticketing policy before the actual game. Do they really believe that less organization and planning will lead to higher attendance? I will be less likely to waste my time walking to Alexander Memorial Coliseum knowing the possibility that I may get turned away. In my opinion, having to arrive upwards of an hour before tip-off will also decrease attendance. In my mind, the only justification for this unstable plan revolves around GTAA’s lack of planning. Even though Justine OU went out of business, there’s always the system that was in place before the online method was used last year.

GTAA’s decision to deny itself assistance from SGA is equally confusing as well as frustrating. I’ve noticed this firsthand through the experience of block seating for the past two years, first when SGA ran things, as compared to this season in which GTAA has struggled to effectively run the ticket distribution independently.

This year procedures are simplified across the board, but oftentimes this is for GTAA’s own selfish goals due to lack of resources or motivation. In more cases than not, the oversimplification breaks down the overall process, making the students suffer as a result of the laziness of the GTAA.

The claim that the GTAA wants student tickets to be hard to get is a total scapegoat. Why would anyone wish upon their own student body the difficulty to attain something that the students are forced to

Quote of the week:

“But at my back I always hear Time’s winged chariot hurrying near.”

—Andrew Marvell

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Techs and the City: Upcoming holidays are a good time to volunteer

By Jen Hinkel Columnist

“There’s no better opportunity to give, and if we will commit ourselves we have the time.”

Jen Hinkel Columnist

I’ve seen Christmas decorations at CVS and Publix. The semester has flown by, and suddenly, the holidays are upon us. Starting with Thanksgiving, we will fall into a downward spiral of sanity that makes us crazy by mid-December, and despite our annual pledges to get everything finished early, to find a simpler state of mind, and to remember the “spirit of the season,” we’ll probably forget those promises by the first of December.

This year, I’m taking a revisionist approach to Thanksgiving. Giving thanks as we gather around tables piled high with turkey, fried okra, and pumpkin pie holds meaning for our families, but Thanksgiving should not be a holiday for only the comfortable and well-fed. Instead of simply giving thanks, we need to constantly be giving so that the less fortunate can also be thankful.

We should celebrate Thanksgiving. But as college students, we’re pressed for time, broke, and stressed out. What can we really give? We may not have money; with job losses and economic downturn, we have even less than usual. But we do have ample opportunity to give, and if we will commit ourselves, we have the time. For organizations that require volunteers to be at least 18 or 21 years old, college students may be their best hope for help. Moreover, in keeping with the collegiate mindset, we would benefit from supporting causes that help others and have the chance to develop our community connections.

If you’re a neophyte volunteer, the Hands on Atlanta Web site (http://www.handsonatlanta.com) and the Student Center’s MOVE office can start you off with a number of resources. For those seeking programs specifically geared toward Thanksgiving, Atlanta offers numerous opportunities to lend a hand.

The Fulton Family and Children Services Food and Gift sorting is one such seasonal operation. It needs volunteers to prepare Thanksgiving and Christmas food baskets to be delivered on November 17, 20-21, and various days in December. (404-699-4387) If you have time tomorrow, Operation Street Harvest Holiday Parties needs volunteers in Decatur to serve a meal to women and children from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (404-241-0072).

Many Tech students participate with Project Open Hand, an Atlanta initiative that prepares and delivers meals to people living with AIDS and other medical conditions. This week, they will need volunteers to prepare and deliver Thanksgiving meals. (404-872-2707 x118)

On Wednesday, CHRIS Homes, a system of group homes for children and young adults who have been abused or neglected, will need volunteers over the age of 21 to help residents 17 to 21 years of age prepare and serve Thanksgiving dinner. (404-486-9034) Volunteering to help our peers could take us from our comfort zone, but it could also enrich us with a profound experience.

Even more holiday-specific volunteer activities will need participants in early December. And as people concentrate on donating their time and energy to hunger and food agencies, they may forget that the number of depressed people in this country skyrockets around the holiday season each year. Therefore, nursing home residents and those living in shelters might want nothing more than a friendly visit when they have no family around during the holidays. Home construction organizations such as Habitat for Humanity will need volunteers to build houses before the coldest winter months. With the recent economic downturn, agencies that help with job training and interviewing skills may be scrambling to find work for those entering the workforce.

This Thanksgiving, start giving, and let the thanks that you receive be your reward. Just think of the warm, fuzzy feeling you’ll have as “Ramblin’” plays next Saturday, celebrating yet another Yellow Jacket victory, and you can think: “I’m a Ramblin’ Wreck from Georgia Tech and a Helluva volunteer.”

Peace is not the answer

Daniel Uhlig ponders the consequences of the war against terror, but the only option we have is to terminate the perpetrators of the 9-11 atrocity with extreme prejudice. If we were to listen to the problem they have with this fine nation and attempt to solve them in a peaceful manner, we would send the message to other belligerent states/people that murdering U.S. citizens on U.S. soil is a viable way of opening a forum for discussion.

We would never see the end of terrorist attacks upon our land.

Britton Carter gte691@m-prism.gatech.edu

GTAA from page 6

pay for as part of their tuition? Is going out of your way to make a trip to the ticket office not make it ‘hard’ enough?

Currently, camping out for big games occurs at night in anticipation of the distribution the following morning. The new revised plan would require waiting in line all day, perhaps being forced to cut class, to ensure a spot into certain games.

Is this what the GTAA wants to encourage? Would that prove fan loyalty? That’s the message being sent.

Shane Bailey gte694e@prism.gatech.edu
“What do you think should be done about seniors who are two hours or less shy of graduating?”

Tim Maher
ARCH Freshman
“They should graduate with recognition, but they should promise they will finish.”

Jason Ward
CP Grad
“If it is due to conversion, the administration should take that into consideration.”

Aman Solomon
BioChem Junior
“They should either allow them to take the classes for free or let them graduate.”

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“They should let them override the system and graduate early.”

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Feature and Photos by Andrew Saulters
Yahoo Wins Round
Projects and Hiring

In the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks, many companies are putting off spinoffs, product orders, hiring decisions, real-estate projects and other important activities. In early October, more than a quarter of finance chiefs said they were postponing planned capital expenditures as a result of the attacks, according to a survey by Financial Executives International and Iona University’s PGA School of Business. The Las Vegas resort and casino Mandalay Bay pulled back on completion of a huge expansion by six months to January 2001.

Businesses Delay Projects and Hiring

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Yahoo Wins Round
In French Dispute

A U.S. court ruled that Yahoo! Inc. doesn’t have to comply with a French court’s order that the company block French users from accessing Nazi-related materials on its Web site, a decision seen by many as an important victory for free speech on the Internet.

IPO Activity Picks Up
Sputtered by a rebounding stock market and pent-up demand, the IPO dance card is as full as it has been in years.

Nine initial public offerings of stock came to market from Oct. 1 through the end of last week, and 24 more are in the works through December, making this the highest-volume quarter for 140s this year, data company Thompson Financial said. An IPO is a company’s first sale of stock to the public. Only 14 deals were completed in the third quarter, the fewest in a quarter since 1997.

Analysts see the return of the IPO business as a sign of confidence in the stock market’s rebound from its mid-September lows. Thompson Financial said Yahoo! Inc. has been waiting in the wings for months, and the fact they are striking now means they don’t think recent gains will soon fizzle.

Traffic Patterns
The deal of America Online Flight S87 is a new jet to the airline industry just as uniforms were beginning to return to the air, U.S. monthly passenger boardings, in millions

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Auto Sales Soar on Mix Of Deals, Patriotism, Seize-the-Day Spirits

J ust how are Americans dealing with economic downturn, high unemployment, terrorism and war? They’re buying brand new cars—1.73 million of them in October, the most ever in a single month. At that rate, one in every 18 Americans would be driving off the lot in one year within a year. But take a look at what’s selling: While there’s been a slight uptick in the economy models that usually do well in a downturn, the biggest sellers have flash, flash and price tags that seem surprisingly out of step with the times. (Think high-end trucks, gas-guzzling SUVs and muscle cars.) The biggest gainer of all? A convertible—Chrysler’s Sebring, whose sales have almost tripled since last October.

Much of this boom, of course, has been driven by the industry’s well-publicized financing plans. But good deals are only part of the picture. Indeed, some of the industry’s hottest sellers even seem marked down. Instead, many buyers say they’re motivated by everything from confidence that the economy will bounce back, to panic impulses to buy American.

And then there’s the “seize-the-day” factor, with people suddenly deciding life’s too short to hold off on the car of their dreams. “Sept. 11 may have made us all feel a little more mortal,” says Jay Shoemaker, a San Francisco businessman whose wife is a flight attendant for United. He just traded his five-month-old old Mercedes for a fancier Benz that cost almost $180,000. Oh, and he’s also shopping for a convertible—Chrysler’s Sebring. This is hardly how buyers behaved during past downturns. During the great gas crisis of the mid-1970s, American consumers shifted to fuel-efficient compacts. In the 1993-94 slowdown, they bought fewer cars because of the sluggish economy and war in the Persian Gulf. But this time around, auto makers are hoping to prop up the market just long enough for the economy to regain steam. So they’ve rolled out one of the industry’s most extreme sales strategies—90% financing, a plan that lets buyers pay the vehicle price in

Behind the Buying Binge

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Hottest Gear On Campus? Books

By Gordon Fairclough

Here’s a novel audience for the book business: college students.

After a decade in which reading was considered about as hip as the Bee Gees, the under-$25 set is now buying books for leisure reading at three times the rate of the overall market. Young readers—even teens—are flocking to surprisingly hefty titles, from Jane Austen to memoirist Dave Eggers, whose prose some critics have compared to James Joyce’s.

Bookstores across the country report jumps of 20% to 75% in young buyers over the past three years. Industry analysts point to a host of new, rather unlitereary marketing tactics, from readings in goth discos to Hollywood tie-ins. Obsessiveness about college admissions has also helped, with kids trying harder to at least appear well-read. But perhaps the biggest change is in the readers themselves: This generation is more earnest, more studious and, well, nerder than its predecessors. “It’s a backlash against MTV culture,” says sociologist William Strauss, author of a recent book about the post-Generation-X set.

It wasn’t so long ago that the MP3 generation could scarcely be bothered to crack a book. Colleges saw a 50% drop in literature majors between 1992 and 1997, as Gen-Xers turned to the Web. But now that so many dot-com fantasies have gone bust, geeks chic has had to find new outlets.

“This generation has far more patience, is much more open to art and culture than any I’ve seen,” says Alison Reid, owner of Diesel Bookstore, in Oakland, Calif. Her fastest-sellings were the latest albums by heavy metal bands and punk rockers, but she’s been’mind-blowing things happen on campus. But there’s a whole new breed of bookstores that are catering to this new audience.”

What’s News–In Business and Finance

Amtrak May Face Revamping

An independent oversight commission, concluding that Amtrak won’t meet a congressional deadline to operate without federal subsidies by the end of 2002, began a possible revamping of the nation’s intercity passenger train system.

The decision, reached Friday by the Amtrak Reform Council in a 6-to-5 vote, said Amtrak is “not capable of delivering the improvements in passenger rail service that are needed.” The council now has 90 days to file an Amtrak restructuring plan with Congress, which has the final say on what happens to the system. The decision won’t affect Amtrak’s train service for the foreseeable future, Amtrak said.

Palm Loses CEO, Plans New Ads

Carl Yankowski, Palm Inc.’s embattled chief executive, resigned Friday, as criticissn.In the last several months, the company cut 9% of its work force amid declining sales and mounting losses.

The once-highflying company has been hit by the tech slowdown and the fumbled introduction of a new product line earlier this year. To revive sales heading into the holiday season, Palm is returning to television this week with an advertising campaign that could make or break its holiday season.

Odds & Ends

In a sign of the limited market for direct online car sales, CarsDirect.com Inc. is launching a service to allow consumers to buy cars through dealers instead of directly from the company....Billionaire Warren Buffett said he and others in the insurance industry made a “huge mistake” by not anticipating the need to collect extra premiums for terrorist acts....Smack Down: World Wrestling Federation Inc.’s president resigned and the company cut 5% of its workforce amid declining ratings for most of its shows. By Dan Arbour

The Wall Street Journal staff reporters
Shoshon Freeman, Karen Lundegaard, Jonathan Welsh and Daniel Costello.

Behind the Buying Binge

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Retailers are trying to get people back focusing on the benefits of the product rather than the size of the deal,” says Chrysler marketing chief James Schirer.

By Wall Street Journal staff reporters

Shoshon Freeman, Karen Lundegaard, Jonathan Welsh and Daniel Costello.

Continued from Previous Page

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How to contact us:
CampusEdition@wsj.com

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