OPINIONS

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OUR VIEWS Consensus Opinion

Engineer more options

The Board of Regents needs to approve the addition of a bioengineering undergraduate degree. As the field has grown in recent years, Tech has lost talented applicants because there was not a program to accommodate them—so they went to other schools which could. Although beginning departments are often forced to start small, hopefully they will open it to as many students as possible—including Tech students already here. Biomedical engineering is the wave of the future, much as computer science was ten years ago. By starting such a program, Tech graduates could be making major breakthroughs in the coming years of biomedical technology.

‘Speed 3’ at Tech?

Some students had all-too-close of a look at road rage last week when a Stinger driver refused to stop the bus. It was not because there was a bomb on board, but instead because the driver went a little crazy. While this is the second occasion in the past month that could damage the Parking and Transportation Department’s reputation, it is actually an example of a bad situation that was handled appropriately. The driver was fired almost immediately, which was the correct response. If only all sections of Auxiliary Services could deal with their problems so effectively.

A little more net

Paul Hewitt has helped the basketball team realize its full potential, and his strong recruiting and coaching skills can make next year even better. This season was truly a rewarding one for the team’s seniors—and for Tech fans everywhere.

I was disappointed to read Carmen Jackson’s letter in the Technique on February 23. At the Intramural Department, we take very seriously any attack on the integrity of our employees. I am very disturbed at the remark that Intramural officials consistently make biased calls because I can assure you right now that the officials who work these games simply do not care who wins and who loses. They just referee the game to the best of their ability, night in and night out.

And yes, they referee to the best of their ability. I don’t know what standard is being used to judge our officials, but I can assure you that they DO miss calls, and quite frequently. Our officials are not perfect. In fact, the Georgia High School Association (GHSA) considers an official to be a top official if he/she simply gets more than 90% of his/her calls correct. At best, officials who work in the State Tournament for the GHSA get a little over 95% of their calls correctly.

We do not expect our officials to be of that quality, we simply ask them to work hard in and night out, and I think our officials do that. The fact that an official is man/woman enough to admit that he/she made a bad call in a game speaks to the integrity of our officials, the very integrity attacked in the letter.

Intramural refs among best in the state

Ms. Jackson, you are very lucky to be playing Intramurals at Georgia Tech. Last weekend we had the honor of hosting the 6th Annual Georgia Collegiate Basketball Championships, officiated by Intramural referees from across the state.

Tech’s officials were the best in the Tournament. Nine of the top 18 officials in the State were from Georgia Tech. Three of the top 5 were from Georgia Tech. And one of your officials was selected to represent the state of Georgia in the Southeast Regional Collegiate Basketball Championships at North Carolina.

Iraq topic for Buzz around Campus was inappropriate

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Have you noticed the recent rapid growth of new buildings on campus? In your opinion, what could this signify? Is it a sign of evolving fields? Build up or spread out? I’ll consider the pros and cons of both choices here, in this edgemonium fraught with difficulty, and their consequenc-

Establishing new programs, like the recent addition of bioengineering, could be an exciting strategy for Tech. But its wisdom in attracting a more diverse group of students in terms of intellectual interes-

Right now, Tech has somewhow small group of elite and renowned fields of study, such as mechanical engineering and computer science. It’s hardly difficult to find an extracurricular organization or competi-

But, there are a number of other subjects that aren’t as sup-

ers for these new buildings. The process of building more pro-

grams. The student experience also hinges greatly on how Tech will grow. As more colleges give rise to a larger number of minor degrees would naturally become available. Students will always want to venture outside of their home schools to enjoy the certification of a minor degree. If Tech chooses to simply improve our current schools, the potential for minor degree program development would certainly be re-

On the other hand, Tech doesn’t want to spend itself too much. Impro-

ving in this manner would unnecessarily reduce funding potential for currently established programs of study. In other words, contin-

uous growth in these programs with fewer resources is surely a challenge. Aside from reducing the basic real estateexpansion and recruitment costs, the profita-

bility, and student support would also suffer. Cur-

rently, so many students study computer science and mechanical engineering, it’s not hard at all to find a friend to help you out in these areas. 

Assuming the population doesn’t increase dramatically, the likelihood of our students changing their ma-

jors over to a newer and exciting field is pretty good progress. We could harm this concentrated sup-

port group. There’s also a lot to be said for spending a $250 tax break. To put it in perspective, NASA had already spent over $60 billion. Many stu-

dents come to Tech because they know it’s a powerhouse in certain fields, like mechanical engineering. They want to come to a place that’s known for producing engineers of a high caliber. Choosing the other strategy certainly wouldn’t restrict Tech from being this type of place, but the size and quality of these programs wouldn’t be what it could be. Problems arising from new programs would enable the de-

velopment of new courses inside cur-

rent colleges. Instead of establishing in entity school for nanotechnolo-

gy or computer music, the bioengi-

neering and computer science departments could simply double in support for these classes. While this would certainly pose infrastructure challenges for our current schools, it would benefit the schools more

The first hundred days of a pres-

idency is called the “Honeymoon period.” President Bush is really behaving like a honeymooner, flat-

tering the American people with
tokens from the beginning, from roses and candies won’t go straight back into the economy. The Reagan administra-
tion didn’t really have this mon-

etary support for these classes. While this would certainly pose infrastructure challenges for our current schools, it would benefit the schools more.

Tech needs to classify its growth in order to improve

The President shouldn’t be catering to frivolous whims but be engaged in the serious process of long-term planning.

Becca Cutri-Kohart
Campus Life Editor

“Tech would become more of a true technology institute and less of a trade school if it focused on building more programs.”

Matt Flagg
Online Editor

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Centralized government does more harm than good

In her February 16 editorial, Christina Freyman seems to be implying that the founding fathers did not implement centralized control over local issues because of the inherent inefficiencies of long distance communication during that time period. Advocates of limited government reject that argument. We contend that the founding fathers recognized just the opposite; that centralized government leads to gross inefficiencies and massive corruption. As Thomas Jefferson once said, “It is not by the consolidation, or concentration, of powers, but by their distribution that good government is effected.”

Classic liberals and modern conservatives agree that our system of education needs improvement. However, we believe that the benefits of a free-market are the best way to implement this change. By privatizing the existing system through a program of vouchers and personal choice, the elements of competition, the "invisible hand" as Adam Smith dubbed it, will accomplish this necessary reform. I encourage all of you to visit the Milton and Rose D. Friedman Foundation for School Choice located at http://www.friedmanfoundation.org/ to learn more about this very important issue.

Michele Gherstner
michele@recsolutions.com

I would like to thank the Technique for presenting an opinion on the Ferst Center. "Lack of student-friendly events hinders Ferst Center," in the February 23 issue. It gives me the opportunity to inform everyone of all the positive occurrences at the Ferst Center.

I invite the entire student body to the Ferst Center Student Open House, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Tuesday, March 13. $15 rush tickets will be sold for all remaining events starting at 11:30, and there will be entertainment provided by two a cappella groups, Sympathetic Vibrations and Nothing But Treble. Buzz and WREK will be there as well. There will be giveaways, tours, booths for student arts groups, and food and drink.

Second, the Ferst Center now sees the students as its most important commodity. The $15 rush ticket program offered two weeks prior to each event allows students to view prominent artists cheaply. What is often not said, though, is that Student Government used to help fund the Ferst Center in return for cheaper student tickets, which used student activity for money. During this time, student ticket sales averaged at 20-25% of the entire house for each show, a remarkable number. When the SGA funding disappeared, and student sales dropped to 0% during the 1999-2000 season, Rosalind Meyers, the Associate Vice President for Auxiliary Services, found funding for the $15 ticket program from an outside source, Coca-Cola. Student ticket sales began to rise again this season, with 20% of the audience for the February 27 and 28 performances of Aida being students!

Another important contribution comes from President Clough. He understands that the $15 rush ticket program is only a means to an end—securing a permanent endowment for cheap student tickets. He is now funding a full-time development director, which the Ferst has never had, to search for this student endowment. He will also fund the Ferst Center at $500,000 per year until the endowment is in place.

People who work in the arts business know that an arts center like the Ferst will never make money, and it is a further struggle to make ends meet with the necessity of having affordable student tickets. Everyone to whom I have spoken sees the number one priority as making sure students are involved with the theater, and securing an endowment for student tickets.

Perhaps the most important recent contribution comes from the interim Ferst Center director, Andrea Hoffer. When she was developing the 2001-02 season, she had a poster solely for the purpose of wiring down student suggestions for shows. She takes the time to check the artist fee for every student suggested artist, and if the fee is reasonable, she books the show. This is unprecedented and is exactly what the Technique student editors need—more student-friendly shows. Andrea also searches for artists willing to provide master classes or perform with student music groups. If you have a show that you feel other students may like, all you have to do is talk to Andrea and she will look into your suggestions.

Another positive is the Ferst Center Student Advisory Board, whose purpose is to promote the arts throughout Georgia Tech by collaborating on programming, student initiatives such as offering pre-show performance opportunities to student groups, and co-sponsored events with other student organizations. The 2001-02 season is truly a joint student/staff effort, as the Ferst is trying to get many student suggested artists, such as Jim Brickman, Penn & Teller, Rockapella, Cabaret, and many others. The Board conveyed concerns about student ticket pricing and the lack of student collaboration with programming early last Fall, and by the end of the semester, the situation had changed drastically. A student series offering guaranteed low student prices is a definite for next year, and the shows will be selected by fellow students, ensuring that the series is student-friendly.

As of February 22, eight of 20 shows have sold over 80% of the house, which is astonishing in the arts industry, with all but three breaking even or better. That partially comes from a redirected marketing strategy led by the new Marketing Manager, Sharon Ahmed. This strategy is more student-oriented—hence the additional ads in the Technique, the Student Center, and Student Services Building. This came despite the cancellation of shows last September, which was hailed as a disaster. The shows were cancelled because those types of shows did not sell in the ambitious 1999-2000 season. The point is that shows were cancelled because they were not going to sell. Over $710,000 has been made in ticket sales this year, which vindicates the show cancellation strategy. Further, the major management groups that represent hundreds of artists are still willing to sign with the Ferst, because they understand that this year is a revaluation period. Being deeply involved with the Ferst Center, I am confident that soon the entire student body will agree with me in saying that the Ferst Center is there as a resource for the students, and that it is acting with students’ interests in mind.

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