Budget cuts already taking toll on schools

With new cuts being proposed and previous cuts already putting a strain on Tech's academic resources, the Technique takes a college-by-college look at how the administration is coping.

Committee plans reunion with hopes of solving sophomore slump

By Jay Reinbold Contributing Writer

Georgia Tech can be a rough place. Freshmen year brings registration, meeting new people and trying to fit in on campus; students who have left high school senior year causes a shock to the system. Sophomore year causes students to feel lost again. They have to do it all over again, which is the most difficult year of all?

According to Dan Porter, a member of the committee, sophomore year is the only year students tend to have a loss of numbers. This is due to students dropping out of college altogether or transferring. For students who remain at Tech, summer breaks show that they often have lower grades their sophomore year when compared to freshmen year.

Add in the Freshman Experience, students lose a lot of the friends they made during freshman year. Also, all though students have established themselves at Georgia Tech, sophomores begin to get further away from the people they knew.

“[The sophomore reunion will be] a place to... run into people that you knew freshmen year... haven’t had a chance to run into yet.”

Dan Porter
Sophomore Project committee member

College of Sciences

The College of Sciences, unlike the Ivan Allen College, is trying to avoid restricting classes. “Most freshmen and sophomores... have a large number of College of Science courses during their first two years here,” said Dean Gary Schuster. “If we were to limit access to the first-year... then probably we would probably not have students graduating.”

At the same time, the college is attempting to avoid employee terminations, a reality which may come true if the budget worsens. “We have no choice,” Schuster said. “Almost all of our budget is people.”

To that end, the college has scaled back on new hires and is using part-time and visiting faculty as well as replacements for faculty who are on sabbatical or have left the institution.

Ross Marklein, a freshman living in Folk hall, plays the bagpipes outside Ross Marklein, a freshman living in Folk hall, plays the bagpipes outside Ross Marklein, a freshman living in Folk hall, plays the bagpipes outside Ross Marklein, a freshman living in Folk hall, plays the bagpipes outside Ross Marklein, a freshman living in Folk hall, plays the bagpipes outside

College of Engineering

Through a majority of the research projects in the College of Engineering are funded by government agencies such as the Department of Defense and the Department of Energy, it is surprising to note that the cuts have not had a large impact on research funding. This, Dr. Narl Davidson, Associate Dean of Operations and Budgets at the COE, said proudly, “is a tribute to our fine faculty, researchers and graduate students.”

However, with a host of new programs consistently ranked in the nation’s top ten, the COE has one of the finest research and development programs, the COE serves as a barometer for economic fluctuations. Davidson admitted that things were difficult for the college at the moment.

“As a large portion of our funding comes from state revenues, a struggling state would imply a struggling college,” he said.

The college has its own “shock absorbers,” however, and student tuition, research programs and other sources of funding cushion the impact of the cuts.

However, the COE has responded to cuts by cutting down on the hiring of faculty support staff as well as curbing the recruitment of new faculty.

Davidson firmly states that “our clear goal is to make sure that the core functions of the college, such as teaching and research, are not affected.”

College of Architecture

Eric Trevena, Director of Administration at the College of Architecture, predicts a budget cut of about 2.5 percent for the college over the current financial year, although this hasn’t yet been officially confirmed.

Other sources of funding, such as endowments, should lessen the impact of the cuts, though the state remains the primary source of funding in this case.

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he decide to pick up the instrument? Well, like most things in life, it was all for the sake of a girl. "I hate telling this story, [but] there was this girl," he said. "She wanted to join a bagpipe band, and asked me if I wanted to do it, and of course I said yes." However, Marklein ended up with the instrument instead of the girl. "After two months she ended up quitting, but I stuck with it," he said.

And for him, bagpiping isn't just a quirky hobby. He also plays in the Atlanta Pipe Band, an ensemble which includes thirty pipers, drummers and dancers.

The group performs often, and in the past has played in the Fourth of July Parade, as well as at the Roswell Cultural Arts Center and the Clayton County Performing Arts Center.

So despite the fact that Marklein isn't Scottish, he does own the required bagpipe accessories, which, of course, include a kilt.

The band will also be competing at the Highland Games in South Carolina in the near future, which is one of the reasons why Marklein chooses to play outside: to get used to playing in the hot weather. In full Scottish garb, it gets very hot underneath the jacket, and he needs to get prepared for the hot weather at the Highland Games.

It typically takes seven years to become an accomplished bagpiper, but Marklein's only been playing for less than half that time.

"It will soon be three years since I started," he said proudly, though he added jokingly, "I don't know if I am behind or ahead." His musical repertoire includes traditional as well as contemporary pieces. He can even play "annoying theme songs of TV shows," but refrains from that because "it's distracting," he said.

The bagpipes aren't an easy instrument to play. It takes a great amount of precision and skill to play them. First and foremost, an enormous lung capacity is required to continuously squeeze the bag in order to force air through the pipes, while also playing the music with his fingers.

During parades and other group performances, Marklein must also memorize entire pieces of music, since there is no place to put it in front of him, and much like marching band, he has to know how to keep in step. "I can do the first three without even thinking now, but I still have to work on the last two," said Ross.

Though he's been singled out because of his bagpiping abilities, he is much like any other incoming freshman. He hasn't quite figured out his major yet, which puts him in the same boat as most incoming Tech students. He is currently in aerospace engineering, but Marklein is quick to add that it might change to biomedical engineering, or something else.

As most people don't usually hear the bagpipe in their daily life, Marklein attracts a fair share of attention.

"I mean, really, who does that?" commented Cameron Davis, a PL in Folk. "I think it's kind of funny." But so far, with the exception of a few people who have enjoyed his tunes, "It helps make allies," said Marklein.

When he played for me during the interview, he attracted quite a crowd. Numerous people approached us to commend him. Also, while playing outdoors, Marklein has found that he is not the only bagpiper on campus—an other bagpiper approached him while he was playing. He hopes that his outdoor playing will help publicize the instrument.

However, if you're one of the few who happen to be studying when Marklein decides to bring out his pipes, or if you just don't happen to appreciate bagpipe music, you may be out of luck.

"The cops are on my side," said Marklein with a smile.

“Despite a few planned events, much of what the... Committee plans will vary from year to year.”

It's a good place to find people with similar interests to help put a program together," says Porter. Events such as these are expected to help rejuvenate friendships made during freshman year which may have cooled during the course of the summer.

These events could not only help keep past friendships alive, but make new ones as well. For instance, many sophomores may meet students in their same grade that they had never talked to before, additionally promoting class identity.

Sophomore Committee strives to be an all-inclusive organization, rather than just focusing on one group, such as Greeks or SGA representatives. The goal of inclusiveness is perhaps ironic, though, because by its very nature the Sophomore Committee is exclusive to sophomores.

The division between freshmen and sophomores, and sophomores and juniors will perhaps grow more distinct because of this organization. Whether or not this is a good thing remains to be seen.

However, the group maintains that the second year on campus is where help is needed most. Members of the committee are also looking into similar initiatives for juniors and seniors.

Until then, Sophomore Committee looks to improve the campus life of at least one group on campus, and make "sophomore slump" disappear.

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in their curriculum and must begin the difficult process of deciding on a major and what career options are available to that major.

The Sophomore Committee, however, hopes to change all that, or at least make the transition easier on returning students.

The committee presented a proposal for a Sophomore Project at last week's SGA meeting.

Their first event is to have a "re-union" for returning freshmen at Tech. It will occur Sept. 25 and feature a hot air balloon and a short address by President Clough.

The re-union, however, is more than just a carnival-style event.

According to Porter, "It's a place to hang out and get some free food and run into people that you knew freshmen year but that you haven't had a chance to run back into yet.

While the notion of free things may entice many college students to show up, Sophomore Committee plans to provide other events as well, including barbecues at a professor's house and academic help.

Despite a few planned events, much of what the Sophomore Committee does will vary from year to year. Members present ideas, much like in Freshmen Experience or Hall Council, to the committee, and if their idea is accepted then it is carried out.

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By Kristin Noell
Contributing Writer

In some respects, the Georgia Tech Library is better known for its brand-new technology than for its book collection. However, the library actually houses quite a bit of interesting literature, including a unique collection of rare books.

The books in the collection are occasionally shown to students as special lectures or used for research, but the library soon plans to make this collection more visible by moving it to a new gallery.

This collection contains several thousand books. A book is considered “rare” by its age, the importance of the writer, an association with someone important, the copy’s provenance or ownership history, or particularly fine printing or special binding.

The library acquired some 20th-century scientific and technological works before the authors became accepted authorities in their fields, and now these books and periodicals are protected because of the great importance of the authors’ work.

Although the library owns reading editions of many of the rare books, the rare copies “add depth to the collection,” said Rare Books Librarian Marilyn Williamson.

“We think it’s important to have these major primary works,” she said.

Longtime library director Dorothy Crosland started the collection in the 1950s when she purchased the first edition of Sir Isaac Newton’s Principia Mathematica, published in 1687.

In the 1957/58 Director of Libraries’ annual report, Crosland wrote, “The acquisitions policy of the Director of Libraries has never been to purchase rare books. So much material has been needed for the instruction program, graduate work and research that it seemed much more important to try and supply these needs.

“However,” she wrote, “the time has come when a few rare items would be valuable for display purposes and also for use of the faculty who teach the literature of chemistry, mathematics or physics.”

In keeping with this statement, the collection has grown slowly over the years through gifts and occasional purchases, and today includes many beautiful and important works.

However, none exceed the importance of Newton’s Principia, the collection’s cornerstone. The library’s copy includes a printed tract by Newton’s contemporary Edmund Halley, the noted mathematician and astronomer.

In addition to the first edition of the Principia, the Newtoniana collection also includes the second and third editions.

The third edition, which was published in 1726 when Newton was 82, was the last edition published during his lifetime.

Tech’s copy was donated to the library in 1984 by Dr. Henry C. Bourne Jr. This volume once belonged to Dr. Bourne’s grandfather, Henry Toole Clark, former governor of North Carolina.

In addition to these and other works by Newton, including the first edition of his Opticks (1704) the library also owns several volumes by his contemporaries about his work and his life.

Students may not be aware of the Tech library’s rare book archives, which include a first edition of Newton’s Principia Mathematica and has now grown to include several thousand books.

“It’s really great to see the expressions on the students’ faces when they see these books.”

Marilyn Williamson
Rare Books Librarian

The library also owns a first edition of Joan Blaeu’s Grand Atlas of the World (1664-1665). The nine-volume atlas is in Dutch and has hundreds of beautiful maps and extensive descriptions of the world as it was known in the 17th century.

Another beautifully detailed book in the collection is Carl Schramm’s Historischer Schauplatz, which con-
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A notable early book on engineering is "The Thesaurus of Invenimenti e Macchine" by Jacques Besnier, published in Italian in 1582. Also, around the time of Georgia Tech's centennial in 1985, the library purchased its two millionth book, Charles Babbage's "On the Economy of Machinery and Manufactures," which was published in 1832. Understandably, the collection, which includes works in probability dated as early as 1619, is tightly focused on the history of science and technology because of the focus of the curriculum at the Institute. However, Georgia Tech also owns an extensive collection of science fiction and early architecture books, and there are several subject collections named for their donors in the archives.

Occasionally, library staff finds surprises in the collection. For example, they recently rediscovered an overlooked and almost forgotten group of unique 19th-century literary works with highly detailed fore-edge paintings, which are only visible when the edges are fanned. Clearly, the collection is very valuable and must be well cared for. Currently all of the rare books are stored in a locked room away from public view and under proper humidity and temperature conditions. They are only removed when the need arises and must be handled with cotton gloves. Some of the books, such as the "Principia Mathematica," are occasionally displayed for classes.

"We’re excited about getting them into a place where people can see them more readily because they’ve been invisible for a long time."

Marilyn Williamson
Rare Books Librarian

In addition to preparing to open the new Neely Gallery, the library is also planning to digitize many of the volumes in the collection to make them universally available outside of the library. To access the first digitized book from the collection, follow the links on the library web page (www.library.gatech.edu) through Archives to Collections to Rare Books.

The book, entitled "An Illustration of Mensuration of Solid Geometry," is a text by the 18th-century mathematician John Lodge Cowley.

For more information on the digitized books or the rest of the collection, contact Jody Lloyd Thompson or Marilyn Williamson in the Archives and Records Management Department in the Library.
Budget

In its efforts to combat this, the COA has been forced to eliminate new initiatives that were planned, as well as defer end-of-year maintenance of equipment and computer upgrades.

In addition, program marketing and promotions have been reduced, as well as travel budget for faculty. As a last resort, the College might even consider the elimination of certain elective courses and limiting enrollment, though that remains the last, drastic option.

Trevena sums it up by saying that “we are trying to work through the reductions, at the same time, maintain the College’s momentum. We are keeping our basic goals of teaching and research in mind and are taking steps to ensure these areas aren’t hit.”

College of Computing

The College of Computing has taken a slightly different approach to dealing with the cuts. Faith Diehl, Director of Administration at the College of Computing, said that while the administration is still examining the numbers, few programs or employees have as yet been affected. The college plans to make a percentage cut across the board and let each department reprioritize as it best seems appropriate.

“This approach, we think, puts the decision in the hands of the people closest to the activities being impacted,” she said. Each department head better understands which cuts will minimize the economic impact in its area.

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Faith Diehl
Director of Administration,
College of Computing

The administration has been eyeing the various programs and services offered by the college with talks about curtailing the lowest-priority options first.

But the college has reaped benefits from the cuts as well: an increase in graduate student applications. “If students don’t have a job, they go back to school, and what that’s done is increase the quality of graduate students,” said Diehl. “We have a larger pool to choose from.” In addition, the college’s TA pool has had to compensate for the smaller budget. For example, this semester the college’s TA pool to choose from.

“[We’re] looking at everything. It’s impact is placing on the entire college. We're not in a recession, we're in a recovery state of the recession,” reminded Schuster. “The rate at which that recover occurs will determine how long the current budget problems persist.”

In the end, he said, “If we do things right, we'll be in a position to be even stronger when the economy turns around.”

Both Davidson and Trevena see the possibility of future cuts. While Davidson agrees that the recession seems to be ending, he also points out that fact that growth isn’t as strong as it should be. Trevena sees the state of Georgia getting better, but still some tough times are ahead for the COA.”

Diehl is predicting a two-year turnaround on the budget cuts, since the state budget often falls roughly two years behind the federal budget, and the federal budget is already showing signs of recovery.

“Our direction from the provost is that these budget cuts are for this year,” said Diehl, but the news from the state is that the budget cuts may last through this year and next year.

Diehl also brought the interesting point that budget cuts may actually be beneficial, in that they provide “an opportunity for colleges to examine how we do business.”

In the end, Schuster posited an question for the Tech community.

“So how are the students going to help?” he asked. “That’s an interesting question. They’re part of the community, too.”

CS2130 students Derrick Johnson, Axel Abellard and Ifiok Udowana study for a test in the CoC. In response to the budget cuts, the College of Computing has reduced their pool of TAs, making 2130 recitations optional.

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