



## OUR VIEWS Consensus Opinion

### So long, PAs and SAs

The new changes to the structure of the Housing hierarchy announced earlier this week signal a new era for the department—one in which professionals with at least bachelor's degrees will constitute a larger percentage of its staff.

These changes were the result of a comprehensive review led by Auxiliary Services; groups including faculty, staff, students and professionals outside of Tech examined the existing practices and how to improve them. Although it was good that students were even included in the review, many more should have been consulted; a large portion of these students should have been staff members of the Housing program. With their familiarity with the beneficial and detrimental aspects of the inner workings of Housing, student staff opinions would have been relevant, insightful and, for the most part, accurate.

The choice of review board members notwithstanding, Auxiliary Services must be applauded for its efforts in continually re-evaluating its programs to ensure their pertinence and effectiveness. It must be questioned, though, what the exact goal of these latest changes were—to improve Freshman Experience (FE) or to create more professional positions.

If the goal is to improve FE, then these changes may not have their intended effect. Granted, a certain number of excellent and dedicated peer leaders (PLs) do their job because they love it, not for the perks. For the rest of the moderately successful PLs, the incentives and chances to move up the hierarchy make the difference between wanting to stay on campus for another year in a freshman dorm and moving off campus. Eliminating the entire incentive program of moving up the Housing ladder to better positions including better rooms will turn away many qualified, good PLs who need compensation to make them willing to push aside some of their school work and other friends in favor of Housing responsibilities. Furthermore, the new 12 week class that PLs will have to take starting next fall will create an even bigger deterrent to qualified students applying for positions.

If, on the other hand, the goal of the changes is to create more professional positions within the Department of Housing, then the restructuring will most likely be successful. Since Housing is a typical starting ground for people with aspirations of eventually moving up into Student Affairs, then having more professionals in the department will give these new hires better job-growth opportunities. But if this was the true goal of the reorganization, then it should have been clearly stated, instead of the modifications being ushered in under the auspices of improving the FE program.

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

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By Matt Norris / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

## Ticketmaster system rips off average Joe

On Monday, I went to the Radiohead concert at Hifi Buys Amphitheatre. The concert was amazing because, as usual, Thom Yorke and the rest of the band rocked. The only part of the concert that wasn't great was the Ticketmaster surcharge I had to pay.

The right to purchase a ticket through them is \$6.90. Next, you have to pay so-called "facility fees" which vary anywhere from nothing to upwards of \$10. Then comes the delivery fees, which are free if you want to have your tickets sent in standard mail, \$2.50 to print them out on your computer or \$19.50 for two-day delivery through UPS.

That's right, you can pay \$2.50 to use your own printer, paper and ink to get tickets into which you just sunk a lot of money. But people do, according to a *New York Times* article published last month; over 30 percent of tickets sold are now printed at home. Ticketmaster sells a half-million home-printed tickets for sporting and entertainment events each month in North America.

Granted, printing out the tickets is convenient if you decide to go to the event the night before. Plus, Ticketmaster had to spend \$15 million to \$20 million to equip almost 700 venues in the U.S. and Canada with bar-code scanners that read and authenticate the tickets and computers to capture information such as what seats are filled.

However, since getting your tickets fast is so popular, the fee should go down once the equipment is paid for, especially if the system receives \$1.25 million in business each month.

My concert ticket came to around \$50 for a lawn seat after surcharges. The face value of the ticket was only \$36.50. Another recent concert ticket I purchased was \$20 and then I was assessed \$9.50 in surcharges. The surcharges were almost a 50 percent markup from the ticket's actual face



"Who can afford a \$1000 ticket? Not most loyal, long-time fans or teenagers who want to see their favorite idol."

**Kimberly Rieck**  
Sports Editor

value.

But it's not like I have much choice—nor do most consumers. Ticketmaster has a virtual monopoly on all ticketing in North America.

Last year the company sold over 95 million tickets. Most venues nowadays won't even sell tickets directly, they'll simply refer you to Ticketmaster. The outlet sells tickets for all sporting and entertainment events in the nation, online and in stores. The company sells 51 percent of its tickets through its website, and the other 49 percent comes from phone sales or walk-up locations.

And guess what? They're furthering their quest for world domination by aiming to take over the scalping business as well. Last month Ticketmaster announced that it would begin auctioning the best seats to concerts last this year through its website. The company will begin competing with brokers and scalpers for the highest price the market will allow.

"The tickets are worth what they're worth," John Pleasants, Ticketmaster's president and chief executive, said in the *New York Times*. "If somebody wants to charge \$50 for a ticket, but it's actually worth \$1,000 on eBay, the ticket's worth \$1,000. I think more and more, our clients—the promoters, the clients in the buildings and the bands themselves—are saying to themselves, 'Maybe that money should be coming to me instead of Bob the Bro-

ker."

Who can afford a \$1000 ticket? Certainly not most loyal, long-time fans or teenagers looking to get as close as possible to their favorite pop idol. So instead of people who enjoy and respect the particular band or team getting a once in a lifetime opportunity to see their favorite act up close, it'll be the highest bidder. Or fans will go to the poor house just to get a glimpse of their favorite artist.

It'll be just like Tech football games where most of the prime chair-back seats are empty because those seats belong to the biggest contributors and not fans. The "true" fans will be stuck in nosebleed seats, itching for a closer look the whole time.

Granted, eBay has had a thriving marketplace for tickets for many years, but it's not as though eBay is in the unique position of being the sole source for ticket sales. People usually turn to [ticketmaster.com](http://ticketmaster.com) first, before they'll buy from a scalper or through an online auction.

According to *Pleasants*, venue operators, promoters and performers will have a choice about deciding to participate in the Ticketmaster auctions. But who's going to say no? As long as the promoters and venue operators want to maximize profits, the artists will have to go along with it or lose tons of money if they want to take a stand.

Thus far only Pearl Jam and the String Cheese Incident have made

See *Tickets*, page 10

# Give students HOPE, but with new rules

Georgia Governor Sonny Perdue wants to kill two birds with one stone.

Bird one: the abysmally low average SAT score of the state's high schoolers, which, at 984, recently ranked dead last in the nation.

Bird two: a lottery-funded HOPE scholarship program that may run annual deficits as large as \$250 million within the next four years.

Perdue's stone: Make the SAT part of HOPE eligibility.

Perdue argues that by setting a minimum SAT requirement (somewhere around 1000) he will force students to take the test more seriously.

"The SAT is a solid predictor of collegiate success," wrote Perdue in a Monday column that appeared in the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*.

"More than 80 percent of HOPE scholars who score lower than the national average on their SATs lose their scholarship after their freshman year by failing to achieve a B average... For our scholars to succeed we need to increase their SAT scores," he wrote.

At the same time, 57 percent of Georgia high school seniors were eligible for HOPE last year, a ridiculously high number. The fund is paying out more than lottery revenues will sustain.

In recent months, debate be-



"Assuming HOPE is to remain merit-based, eligibility requirements must be raised."

**Daniel Amick**  
News Editor

gan to swirl about how to save the fund. Some proposed making the scholarship need-based. Others suggested raising the existing 3.0 GPA requirement.

Perdue's SAT proposal claims to solve the problem by reducing by 40 percent the number of HOPE-eligible seniors.

Opponents say that the SAT is culturally and racially biased. Any attempt to link HOPE eligibility and SAT score would disproportionately affect black students. White students score on average 1035, while black students average 852.

If Perdue's 1000-score minimum had been in place in 2001, only 1,500 black students in the entire state would have qualified. The proposal's detractors are already threatening to challenge any such measure in court.

I agree with Governor Perdue that SAT scores in this state are an embarrassment. Steps must be taken to raise them. I also accept that the high number of

HOPE-eligible students simply are not monetarily sustainable. Assuming HOPE is to remain a merit-based scholarship, eligibility requirements must be raised. But is an SAT requirement the best approach? No.

While I do not believe the SAT is an inherently racist test, one cannot ignore that black students, for whatever reason, make on average lower scores than whites. Thus tacking on a blanket requirement would be unfair.

Nor should the state simply increase the existing GPA requirement.

This would only invite further grade inflation and lead more grossly unprepared students to lose HOPE during their freshman year of college.

To solve this problem, I propose creating a variant of the Freshman Index now used by the University System of Georgia in undergraduate admissions. The Freshman Index adds

one's SAT score to one's high school GPA multiplied by 500. This formula weights GPA more heavily than a student's SAT score. A low SAT score does not automatically disqualify an admissions candidate because higher GPA could compensate.

A "HOPE Index" could be formulated in a similar fashion. In addition to SAT and GPA, a third variable could be added that would give credit to students who take college-prep classes rather than follow the easier tech-prep track.

The HOPE Index number needed to qualify for the scholarship would be based on the amount of money in the fund. Using modeling and forecasts, the state would have to fix a standard for each high school freshman class, so that students would have a constant target to shoot for.

Instituting an index accomplishes several objectives. It gives students a reason to take the SAT more seriously, but at the same time minimizes the test's racially or culturally biased elements.

The state can raise requirements, but in a fairer way that gives students more leeway in the way they meet them. While an index approach is not perfect, its incarnation in the Freshman Index is widely accepted as a fair standard for comparing students.

## BUZZ Around the Campus What are you doing for fall break?



**Vickie Cherry**  
INTA/ML Junior

"Going to the beach and having 'good wholesome fun.'"



**Esinam Glakpe**  
ChemE Sophomore

"New Orleans, baby!"



**John Story**  
Undecided COE, Freshman

"Going home and sleeping in a comfortable bed."



**Jananzek Ahmed**  
CE Sophomore

"Hanging with my brother in Atlanta."

Photos by Andrew Saulters

### OUR VIEWS Hot or Not

## HOT-or-NOT



### Mmmm...donuts

Hoorah for Krispy Kreme!! The haven of glazed goodness has finally reopened its doors on Ponce de Leon, and not one day too soon. With the new renovations, the Kreme boasts a donut theater in the viewing area where patrons can watch the donuts being produced. It will be nice to once again see the "Hot and Fresh 24 hours a day" sign glowing brightly and invitingly from the store's front window.



### Zoom zoom

The bikers on this campus are getting crazy and daring. It seems as though there are more bike riders on campus this semester than ever before—and they like to ride rapidly down sidewalks, disobeying traffic laws and weaving throughout pedestrians as if they made up a constantly moving slalom course. Perhaps these daredevils need to be reminded of the importance of signaling their intentions in advance.



### Make like a tree...

...And leave. For fall break, that is. Unless you've been living under a rock, you too are looking forward in anticipation to our upcoming respite from the drudgery of classes and studying. Here's the perfect opportunity to escape from stress and surround yourself by some other exotic locales—like Birmingham.



### Los Bravos

Cry a solemn tear for the baseball team Atlanta has almost always been proud to call its own. The Braves' loss to the Cubs earlier this week means that they have upheld their sad tradition of losing quickly in the post-season. Maybe the Braves should take note from Tech—at least we beat Auburn this year.

### YOUR VIEWS Letters to the Editor

## Auction on eBay exciting

Imagine my surprise to see my company on the front page of the September 12, 2003 *Technique*. (I receive the *Technique* by snail mail so it's usually late.)

I am the Manager of the Usability Group at eBay and was excited to see that Georgia Tech would be offering auctions on eBay.

This gives alumni from around the world the opportunity to bid on Georgia Tech items to which they would otherwise not have access.

I was saddened to see your depiction of eBay in the consensus editorial. I was surprised at your lack of understanding of what the eBay site is about. The example you used [a kidney being sold on the auction site] hap-

pened four years ago and was halted the moment eBay became aware of it.

eBay is currently the sole source of income for over 100,000 people. There are over 16 million items up for sale today and not one of them is a kidney. We are also one of the few companies who had both the technical and business insight to successfully (and profitably) use the Internet.

Fortunately, I will not be deterred from my desire to hire Georgia Tech graduates this year. I will not let one thoughtless editorial sully the name of what I believe to be one of the greatest

See *eBay*, page 10

"I was saddened to see your depiction of eBay in the consensus editorial."

### Letter Submission Policy

The *Technique* welcomes all letters to the editor and will print letters on a timely and space-available basis. Letters may be mailed to Georgia Tech Campus Mail Code 0290, emailed to [editor@technique.gatech.edu](mailto:editor@technique.gatech.edu) or hand-delivered to room 137 of the Student Services Building. Letters should be addressed to Tony Kluemper, Editor-in-Chief.

All letters must be signed and must include a campus box number or other valid mailing address for verification purposes. Letters should not exceed 400 words and should be submitted by 8 a.m. Wednesday in order to be printed in the following Friday's issue. Any letters not meeting these criteria or not considered by the Editorial Board of the *Technique* to be of valid intent will not be printed. Editors reserves the right to edit for style, content, and length. Only one submission per person will be printed each term.

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### Coverage Requests

Press releases and requests for coverage may be made to the editor-in-chief or to individual section editors. For more information, visit <http://nique.net/stuorguide.pdf>.

## A global trek with view from Tech

# Engineering world peace: take a hint from past efforts

As Israel's Jewish population celebrated its holiest holiday 30 years ago, Egypt and Syria launched an unanticipated invasion of the Jewish state. Though surprised, Israeli forces repelled the attack and advanced into Syria by the time a cease-fire ended the conflict.

On Monday, as Jews around the world again celebrated Yom Kippur, Israel's forces crossed into Syrian territory, using F-16 jets to bomb what its government called a terrorist training camp. Syrian officials, of course, claim the site was merely a refugee camp and nothing more.

Regardless of the target's legitimacy, and whether the killing of 19 civilians by a Palestinian suicide bomber the previous week justified the strike, its occurrence leaves the latest hope for Israeli-Palestinian peace derailed.

Events of the previous weeks already had made the so-called "road map" backed by the United States, European Union, United Nations and Russia look like a dead-end street. Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas resigned. Israeli cabinet members openly talked about expelling or eliminating Palestinian President Yassar Arafat. Palestinian terrorist groups restarted their violent activities. And Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has continued to build a security wall and settlements through disputed parts of the West Bank.

With this latest event, not only

is the "road map" in jeopardy, but the stability of the entire region also remains questionable. Peace looks to be again delayed, if not entirely unattainable. In looking at history, however, one flicker of hope remains. Just five years after it invaded Israel, Egypt made peace with the state and normalized relations with it in the Camp David Accords, the 25th anniversary of which was celebrated just a few short weeks ago.

On the afternoon of September 17, 1978, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin signed the blueprint for the first peace treaty between Israel and an Arab nation. Engineered by Institute alumnus and former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, the treaty remains intact today, and, according to Carter, neither side has violated a word of it.

How, just five years after violent conflict occurred between these two bitter rivals, did a nuclear engineer turned peanut farmer turned politician from Plains, Georgia mediate such a peace? And how could the lessons from that success translate

into peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians today?

"With strong leadership, determined mediation that's trusted, a balanced role between Israel and the Palestinians and good faith, I believe we could still see peace in the Middle East in our lifetime," said Carter on the anniversary of the Accords.

These prerequisites to peace stated by Carter on the anniversary were present when Sadat and Begin forged the Camp David peace, but none exist today as we examine the current Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Neither side is willing to compromise and negotiate to obtain peace, and even if the two sides somehow made it to the negotiating table, it is unlikely that either would adequately trust the other to pursue successful talks.

Furthermore, in casting the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as part of the global war on terrorism rather than as a battle for land and legitimacy as it has often been viewed, the Bush administration abandoned its ability to act as a neutral arbiter in the conflict.

When combined with the administration's doctrine of preemptive strike, Israel now finds itself with considerable room to operate.

Still, the Camp David experience reminds us that we cannot allow

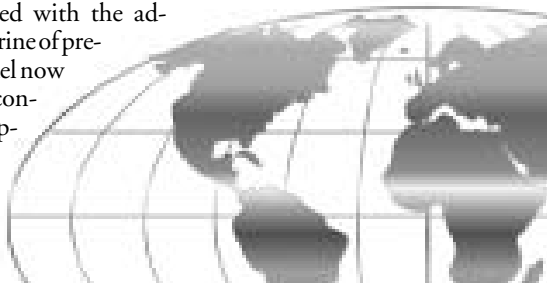
the perceived hopelessness of today be an excuse for failing to act.

Georgia Tech students can relate better than most to this type of issue. As engineers, (and by the way, I consider everyone at Tech a quasi-engineer, or at the least an analytical problem solver) we can often see a problem's solution and what we need to arrive at it before we actually see the process by which we will reach it. We start working, start over, and then restart again—each time proceeding with a sense of hope that this latest attempt will be the one that finds success. So goes the craft of engineering.

Regardless of whether or not Carter was thinking like an engineer when he initiated the Camp David Accords, this type of thinking is exactly what the current standard still requires and exactly the type of thinking that members of the Tech community employ. Hopefully the situation can be resolved before we current undergraduates would be in the position to aid in crafting the peace process, but if it persists, we will be ready.



**JODY SHAW**  
COLUMNIST



## Tickets

from page 8

high profile protests against Ticketmaster. Pearl Jam stopped touring for years because of them. The String Cheese Incident filed a lawsuit in August, alleging that Ticketmaster is a monopoly because the company is trying to prevent the band from selling its tickets directly to fans without the surcharges.

When the auctioning system goes into effect, Ticketmaster will receive flat fees or a percentage of the winning bids, depending on what the company decides with the operators of each event.

The auctions will cause all tickets to go up in price. The auctions will be giving Ticketmaster, promoters, artists and venues a clearer picture of what an event's market value is. If prime seats start selling for hundreds of dollars more, then it will cause the ticket prices of all seats to go up. If the monopoly isn't broken up soon or if more artists choose not to speak up, then my advice to you is to start saving your pennies now if you plan on heading to that next show or game.

## eBay

from page 9

schools in this country. I would suggest you do the same and at least research a company before saying it would be "heinous" to use its product.

**Kelly Braun, PhD**  
Computer Science, 1984  
First Woman Editor, *Technique*  
kelly@ebay.com