**WHERE DOES YOUR MONEY GO?**

A closer look at SGA's Student Activity Fee tier funding system

**FOCUS**

By Sarah Turner  Contributing Writer

Did you know that a student-run committee was responsible for the distribution of over three million dollars that affected student life in a major way this school year? Did you also know that those dollars came from your mandatory Student Activity Fee (SAF) of $115 for the 2005-2006 academic year? The Joint Finance Committee (JFC) under the executive branch of the Student Government Association (SGA) is the committee whose major responsibility is the budgeting and allocation of the Student Activity Fee. The JFC is comprised of the vice president of Finance, the graduate treasurer, the undergraduate treasurer and student members appointed by the Vice President of the student government who are graduate students. The JFC's duties include creating a set of policies and procedures that act as a guideline for funding requests submitted. Most importantly, the JFC is in charge of producing a set of recommendations for the annual SAF budget that gives detailed information on how much money should be allocated to each student organization.

Micah Lucas, a fourth-year Architecture major from Tennessee who served as a committee member last year, chairs the JFC. As chair of the Joint Finance Committee, I also try to go out and find areas outside of campus that an organization can receive funding from,” he said. With only a few days before the release of the upcoming SAF budget for the 2006/2007 fiscal year, Lucas remains very busy. “My typical day includes reading and responding to tons of email about the budget and various bills,” he said. Lucas duties also include charting organizations, working with the budget and meeting with organizations that are requesting funds for review.

Several of Tech’s student organizations receive financial support from the SGA. These organizations are required to submit an application requesting funds and return it by the third week of the fall semester. The only way to receive funds is to submit a bill or budget at the beginning of the year, states Lucas. After receiving the applications, the Joint Finance Committee uses a hierarchical system to determine which organizations receive funding. From this, the JFC will then create a recomputed budget for the legislative branch concerning the amount of money these organizations can receive. Currently the JFC uses a tier system consisting of three different levels, with Tier I being the organizations with the highest priority, to rank student-based organizations.

The organizations ranked Tier I have first access to the funds from the Student Activity Fees. “These organizations are ranked Tier I because they reach out to each student on campus; the majority of students will utilize these facilities.” These facilities include the Student Center Operations Board and the Campus Recreation Center. According to JFC policies and procedures, these facilities are not required to charge membership fees.

Tier II is the next level of priority student organizations. According to Lucas, these organizations reach out to the second largest amount of students and are open to almost everyone. They have the ability to create funded positions for students and can request for their funds to be rolled over for the next fiscal year. Tier II organizations are DramaTech, graduate SGA, undergraduate SGA, Intramurals, the MOVE Office, the Music Department, ORGT, President’s Council, the Student Center Program Board, Student Publications and WREK radio.

Tier III organizations are given least priority. These organizations are

**Library unveils Resource Center**

By Joshua Cuneo  Online Editor

Students in the library can rest assured that the high-pitched whine of construction drills from the ground floor will no longer interrupt their studies. The construction is complete and a brand new Resource Center is slated to open for business on Monday.

Construction crews have transformed an old library storage room bordered by a row of vending machines into a sleek, open space dressed up with a postmodern flair. This new facility will be a one-stop shop for a variety of academic needs meant to supplement the services already provided in the Library West Commons.

“We are here to provide any assistance needed that enhances or assists the educational experience of students at Georgia Tech,” said Linda Cabet, the director of Information Technology Services at the Office of Information Technology, who helped oversee the implementation of the Resource Center.

While Tech waits for the Board of Regents to approve funding for the Undergraduate Learning Center (ULC), Cabet hopes that the Resource Center will give students a taste of some of the ULC services right now. Those services include advising, tutoring, tech support and printing, among others. Here’s the complete rundown:

**Tech Support**

All walk-in tech support will move from the Rich Building to the Resource Center. This includes hardware, software and wireless support as well as support for problems related to student accounts and printing quotas. Specialists will attend four specially designated workstations during all hours of the center’s operations.

“Pretty much anything that the students (received) from going either in person to or calling the support center...is all going to be available here,” Cabet said.
Mentoring programs connect students to IAC faculty

By Jane Wong
Contributing Writer

Meeting a professor can help students know about economic development policy or feminist perspectives on science and technology over coffee. This may seem far-fetched for most Tech students, but not for the ones in Ivan Allen College (IAC).

Two schools in IAC have developed faculty mentoring programs for students. The School of Public Policy’s program is in its first year of existence. The program in the School of History, Technology and Society (HTS) is in the process of being set up and will be ready before the semester ends.

Public Policy’s Faculty Mentoring Program was created by academic advisor Elizabeth Miller in the spring of 2005 after she noticed that many of the undergraduates she spoke with expressed interest for increased contact and interaction with the faculty.

According to Doug Flamming, the undergraduate coordinator for HTS, faculty mentoring has been an ongoing tradition for the School of History, Technology and Society, whose faculty are familiar with almost every student in the major.

“The informal mentoring program will ensure that all of our majors are receiving the personal attention they need—beyond academic advising and beyond the classroom,” Flamming said.

Currently, both schools have a centralized academic advising system with one professional academic advisor. In the past, both have employed several faculty advisors, but a switch was made after frustrations arose from the administrative functions of advising.

Faculty mentoring programs allow the faculty to interact with the students in a traditional mentoring role. Faculty members are encouraged to discuss common interests with the students, have students participate in their research, suggest reading material and assist them in their career paths.

“This mentoring system will allow us to recreate that kind of small-group relationship without the complications of academic advising,” Flamming said.

Richard Barke, the undergraduate coordinator for Public Policy, explained why a mentoring program is so beneficial to the School of Public Policy.

“(Public Policy) is very multi-disciplinary, and the curriculum is highly structured. We don’t have a long list of prerequisites or a linear path through the curriculum. And with that flexibility, it becomes even more important for the students and the faculty to be communicating if the student has a particular career interest or interest in a particular type of internship or research,” Barke said.

In some majors, it would probably be pretty clear what the student should do to pursue that career track.
community a more intimate feel for the technologies available to them in the open market.

"They can come and take a look at the latest release as far as the hardware goes," she said. "Will it meet their particular needs as far as whatever it is that they want? When you go shopping for something, you're looking for a particular functionality in decent hardware, so those are going to be up here."

In the near future, vendors may also offer demonstrations and seminars in the Resource Center regarding their products.

1-to-1 Tutoring

The 1-to-1 Tutoring program will operate out of the Resource Center from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. every Monday through Thursday and on Sundays as well in the fall. Special desks for tutors near the back of the Center are outfitted with swinging dry erase boards and spaces for books and laptops.

Students will be able to schedule appointments with tutors ahead of time by visiting the Success Programs website.

Undergraduate Advising

The Resource Center will have full-time undergraduate advisors on duty until 9:00 p.m., with the possibility of later hours based on demand. Unlike departmental academic advisors, these advisors will not be major-specific but will focus on the general needs of undergraduates.

"Our intention is to bring to the students not only advising from the perspective of 'What courses do I need to take?' but also generic approaches of 'Well, I'm not sure I really want to be in this major, but I don't know what my options are,'" Cabot said. "'We help with' those types of 'career' decisions."

The advisors will be a mix of existing staff and new hires and will also encompass advisement for pre-mod-pre-law and pre-education students.

Conference Room

One feature that will still be under construction on opening day is a small conference room on one side of the center.

This will be an open-use room with approximately a dozen seats, a fold-away conference table, a dry erase board and the technology for conference calls. The room could be used for student group project meetings or small seminars.

"It's a small facility, but it's available if a group needs to get together and they're from both sides of campus," Cabot said.

Printing

Starting on Monday, all print jobs sent to Central PS will be delivered to a collection of bins immediately adjacent to the Resource Center. These bins will sit opposite a small shelf that students can use for sorting and organizing. Most importantly, the center will sort all print jobs according to students' last initial in a bin number based on their Spectrum ID.

"Students who are coming through the library can pick up print-outs, or, if they're upstairs working and they sent something to Central PS, they'll be able to do their pick-ups here," Cabot said.

Cabot also said the Resource Center is not attempting to compete with the Student Center when offering services such as the conference room. The focus of the Resource Center, she said, is to provide students with more easily accessible academic services.

"The Student Center is where people go for socialization, and that's where some of the student organizations meet and have space already, so we don't want to replicate that," she said. "Ours really has somewhat of an academic focus in that we want to support activities and assignments that come out of the academic curriculum."

The center is very spacious, with most of the features and services encompassed in one large room with an open wall looking out into the hallway. The workstations divide the center into a Resolve system, which means, among other things, that the staff can adjust the opacity of the dividers by adding to or switching out the screens that comprise them. Also, the center is filled with colorful couches and chairs in sleek designs that complement the darker tones of the black and gray walls and ceiling.

Cabot said there were also plans to decorate the walls and outer hallways with examples of student artwork similar to those currently on display in the Multimedia Center.

Cabot said this new style as well as the services offered are very experimental and may change according to the recommendations of the students and staff. "It is important to be able to have individual spaces! Is it important to have eye contact? Is it important to be able—when you're in 1 on 1 tutoring—or advising—to have some more sound absorption?" she said. "Some of it is experimental from a programmatic standpoint, and some of it is experimental from a furniture standpoint."

The Center has operated on student input since its inception. The Library and Partners Student Advisory Council—a core of eight to 10 students who advise the library's administration—helped determine all aspects of the Resource Center from the services to the furnishings.

The council examined feedback from the Library West Commons and discovered that students enjoyed having many common services all centralized in one neutral location.

"What we have is a really unique opportunity to gather information and find out what works and what doesn't work so that we can make some adjustments," Cabot said. "It makes sense to me. I've been here for a long time, and I just think that it's... common sense. Why not bring it to where the students are?"
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allowed to pay for outside services but cannot create any student-funded positions. “Tier III organizations usually consist of exclusively student-led organizations such as cultural organizations,” Lucas said.

Non-competitive Tier III organi-
tizations must have at least $35 dues, whereas competitive ones must have a minimum of $35 dues. An organization is designated as Tier III if it is not considered a Tier I or Tier II organization. Some student-led associations, such as political and religious organizations, are not eligible to receive funding.

By funding political or religious organizations, Lucas said, Tech would be reflecting the group’s ideas. However, exceptions are made in certain cases. “Say for instance an organization wants to encourage people to vote. [SGA] may fund a voter registration drive. However, if the political or organization plans to influence voters and press their beliefs upon others, then SGA will not fund the event. We cannot support [that] group’s ideas.

“...If the political organization plans to... press their beliefs on others, then SGA will not fund that event.”

Micah Lucas
JFC Chair

The events SGA will fund must be non-partisan,” he said. Additionally, JFC policy states that activities with alcohol present and fraternal or social activities may not receive funding. However, there are some exceptions to this rule.

The organization CultureTech, for instance, was granted funds by SGA this year. CultureTech held a week-long international food festi-
vial that celebrated various cultures through the serving of ethnic foods. This event was open to everyone and had a diverse range of cultures represented.

Organizations may also submit bills which request a certain amount of money. These bills should include a specific but concise budget of how the organization plans to spend the money.

The bills are first reviewed by the JFC and then must be presented to both the Undergraduate House of Representatives and the Graduate Student Senate. A representative from the organization is also re-
quired to represent the bill in these meetings.

Lucas suggested that an organization can increase its chances of a bill passing by explaining in detail how funds will be used.

“An organization should be ready to present as much background infor-
mation as possible and be prepared to answer all of the questions that may arise. Be very informed about...” Lucas said.

“An organization should be ready to present... Be very informed about what you are requesting funding for.”

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or set of interests. In Public Policy, because it’s multi-disciplinary, it’s not so clear, so a [mentoring] program makes really good sense here.

Public Policy’s mentoring pro-
gram is only in its second semester but has already yielded positive re-
sponses from faculty and students.

Saira Amir, a senior Public Policy major, has found the program to be valuable and worthwhile.

She is paired with Barke, with whom she had not taken a class but was able to meet through the op-
portunity provided by mentoring programs. She said that Barke’s interests match hers.

“The Public Policy Mentoring Program is amazing. It brings the students closer to the faculty members with whom they share common interests,” Amir said. “It’s fun seeing that Dr. Barke has a lot of experience in things I am very interested in.”

Mentor from page 12
The residents of Pass Christian, Miss. still suffer from the mass destruction caused by Hurricane Katrina. Much of the town, including its city hall, still lies in a tangled mess of debris and belongings.

This was the scene witnessed during Spring Break by Dustin Reed, who traveled by car to Pass Christian along with 77 other members of a group sponsored by Campus Crusade for Christ. Reed, a graduate student in Civil Engineering and a member of Campus Crusade, served as the group’s leader. He organized the volunteers, who had signed up into smaller teams of eight, and assigned tasks.

Reed’s group was not alone in its effort to help Katrina victims. Another group organized by MOVE journeyed to St. Chalmette, La. to offer help, while the Wesley Foundation organized a trip to New Orleans, La.

Many members of Reed’s group were not members of Campus Crusade. However, Reed said, this did not hinder the group’s progress.

“About half the group was not involved in Campus Crusade in any way, shape or form. We had a lot of people who weren’t Christians,” Reed said. “It was cool to see a lot of people not feeling afraid of [holding different beliefs] but being able to work together to help people.”

One team member, Nicole Young, said she did not know Campus Crusades sponsored the trip when she signed up.

“To be honest, I had some hesitation,” she said. “I was nervous because I wasn’t a member; I was worried I wouldn’t fit in. As soon as I got in the car, though, there was so much instant bonding that went on.” Like many other students who went on service trips over the break, Young, a third-year International Affairs major, said she had a great time.

“The trip was just awesome. It was the best Spring Break I’ve ever had, without a doubt,” she said.

Team members left the morning of Saturday, March 18 and returned to Atlanta Friday, March 24 in the evening. They worked from about 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. each day, taking breaks for meals and a shower at the end of the day.

“We did a little bit of everything,” Reed said. “There was still a lot of work to be done. We did what needed to be done.”

Reed described some of the work he and others did at Pass Christian.

“One day I helped a guy—his name I can’t remember—up a mess of debris and belongings. It was cool to see a lot of people helping.”

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Debris and trash is still being cleared from yards in Pass Christian, Miss., a town hit hard by Katrina. Volunteers described the scene as astonishing, remarking that much work was still left to be done.

Whole house got blown away. We picked up tiles, trash and debris in his yard. One day I did dry walls and painted. One group spent two to three days looking through the yard of one resident who got pebbles and debris scattered all over her property. Everywhere we went, [residents] thanked us,” he said. At night, the group slept on the floor at the town’s local library. Reed said that 2nd Street, which contained many of Pass Christian’s residences, was in ruins.

“You would drive down the streets and there was nothing. The streets were all muddy; trees were all mangled and there was debris and trash in the trees. There was nothing but trash,” he said. "The only things standing were houses on concrete stilts. Furniture and cars were scattered here and there." One of the most astonishing things was the amount of work that still needed to be done for the community, Reed said.

"There is so much work that needs to be done; so many houses were destroyed, families were scattered. It was very surreal—it didn’t really hit me until the third day. You can’t put it into words and into pictures. You have to go down there and see it with your own eyes to even begin to grasp the magnitude of what happened," he said.

According to Greg Ashworth, a fourth-year Civil Engineering major and a member of Campus Crusade, Campus Crusade raised money for the event by various means, including donations from various organizations, the Residence Hall Association and the sale of Katrina relief bands. In addition to organizing fundraising efforts, Ashworth assured Reed in leading the group. The money raised from the sale of the bands, $1,200 in total, was donated to the residents of Pass Christian in the form of Home Depot gift cards.

"Spring Break is usually a time of rest. Here was a group of students that decided to go down and serve and work, and they came back more energized than a lot of people who spent their time resting," Ashworth said. "It was awesome to see how serving people energizes you."

"Overall I thought the trip was entirely successful," Reed said. "A lot of things that we as a ministry were really praying for—for unity and for people not to feel awkward—came true. We really saw that people were serving; they were all doing work and all got along."