Mr. Andersen

On Tuesday night, David Andersen won the runoff for undergraduate student body president. While next fall may seem far off in these waning days of the semester, there are several key issues that Andersen and next year’s Student Government Association should consider making priorities.

One of the most pressing issues is to strengthen the role of the SGA executive committees themselves and the role that student lobby and the Institute’s committees. The student lobby board, for example, needs to build on its success at influencing state policy. The lobby board is just one of the many committees that need to enhance their profile and visibility on campus, both to the student body and the administration. All students should be aware that anyone can join a committee and of the far-reaching impacts of committees’ work.

During the campaign, candidates suggested midterm course critiques, a reading day for finals and requiring professors to post grades prior to finals week, all of which are great ideas. However, right now we would simply settle for a “dead” Dead Week. While SGA should explore the other proposals, it’s not likely they can be implemented quickly, whereas Dead Week could be improved by the end of the fall. We realize SGA and the administration have worked on improving “Dead Week” repeatedly, but the fact still remains that Dead Week doesn’t give most students a chance to prepare for finals because projects, quizzes and even finals take place during that week.

Additionally, there needs to be a marketing push for the online book trade website. With book costs increasing each semester, more students need to utilize this site to cut down on costs. Until adequate advertising is done to make every student aware of the site and its capabilities to save them money, they’ll continue to spend exorbitant sums needlessly.

On the student life side, the creation of an online ticketing distribution system for sporting events should become one of the top SGA’s priorities for next year, as it was on Andersen’s platform. An online ticketing system would eliminate the hassles associated with the current ticketing system for basketball games and encourage more student attendance for other sports.

SGA should work with Auxiliary Services to expand the use of credit cards on campus, particularly at West Side Diner, as well as BuzzCard options in the vending machines in dorms and classroom buildings. It’s ridiculous that students have to rely on cash when BuzzCard use could be easily expanded. We don’t expect any of these goals to be accomplished by Andersen alone, but instead by a strong and unified SGA. Next year’s committees and chairs need to become driving forces for Andersen alone, but instead by a strong and unified SGA. Next year’s committees and chairs need to become driving forces for

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

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Discover more than just a high GPA

Rone colored glasses have already achieved cult status, but what about rose colored glasses? They’re not just romantic; they’re practical, too.

Alas, I began to realize that there was a lot for me to learn. And somewhere along the way, instead of me changing Tech, Ma Tech changed me. Instead of learning just about how to run a meeting or reserve room space, I learned of the past four years are reeling through my mind. As much as I’m aware of the site and its capabilities to save them money, they’ll continue to spend exorbitant sums needlessly.

Almost as importantly, don’t be afraid to fail: my fondness for the memories, people and value of my college experience has only been fostered by early disappointment. It’s good to be rejected at least once in the organization world, and a humbling academic experience is always good.

After my first year I seriously considered leaving the Institute to pursue an educational option that didn’t make me feel like I was diagosing my head with a brick bat. But I was already committed to studying abroad with the Brussels Summer Program, so I decided to wait until I returned before making a decision.

Choosing to study in Europe was the most influential decision I’ve ever made. Studying abroad made real the big world beyond Fret Drive, and that while my education at Tech will prepare me for some aspects of this world, the nonacademic sides of Tech are what are preparing me for life.

Seeing the Institute from a distance renewed and reinvigorated my determination to succeed. My priorities were realigned to reflect my newfound understanding of a “bigger picture”—one that included defining myself outside of a classroom.

Aside from forcing you to re-evaluate what you want from Tech, studying abroad also provides an opportunity to develop meaningful relationships with professors. There’s nothing like eating french fries in an open city square and seeing ketchup dribble out of a professor’s mouth to make you appreciate that they’re real people, too.

This is my favorite soapbox, the importance of taking an interest in those older people who get paid lots to teach us. Talk to your professors about their work. You never know when an opportunity to do undergraduate research will come your way—and take the time to frequent your TA or grader’s office hours. As a grader in the school of mechanical engineering, I can’t tell you how many lonely hours I’ve spent just waiting for students to show up during my office hours. Now that I’ve seen the other side, I wish I could go back and tell my sophomore self to suck it up and seek help when so much of it was really not that hard.

Leaving Tech with an education and a high GPA is not the total Tech experience; instead, it’s being involved and taking advantage of all the opportunities this school has to offer.

Discovering that these buildings and walkways are fertile ground for cultivating passion and finding what you love will make these some of the most valuable and memorable years of your life.

And finally, I wish this editorial and my college career coming to a symbolic close with it, snapshots of the past four years are reeling through my mind. As much as I’m not ready to reach the 800-word mark and leave my beloved alma matter, I’m prepared and excited, and now my time has come.
Dissent important not just student media

“We could all afford to embark on a mini-revolution every now and then…”
Daniel Amick
Editor-in-Chief

That number is staggering, even though including the drop, from 49 percent immediately after 9/11. Recent developments continue to erode respect for the press.

Over the last few months, three of the country’s television news anchors, Tom Brokaw, Dan Rather and Ted Koppel, have left their positions; one retired, two were forced out.

This week, a court rejected an appeal from two newspaper reporters who refused to identify their sources during a criminal investigation. If the Supreme Court upholds the ruling, the reporters could go to jail for contempt.

Recent events have contributed to new questions about the nature of journalism, basic concepts like press independence are too often misunderstood.

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Relish the changes and memories made at Tech

This coming August, after six years, I will finally be leaving Tech. I graduated with my bachelor’s degree last May, but stayed on for another year to work on my master’s (so at least I’m getting out with two degrees). Sometimes it’s hard to believe I’ve been here that long, and sometimes it feels like much longer.

There have been days when I wanted to run away screaming from this school and days when I never wanted to leave. Tech has been my home for a quarter of my life now, and the end of my career here will be a bittersweet one.

As an avid Tech sports fan, I know I will definitely be keeping up with our sports teams. And, I know that when I come home for Christmas next year, I will be attending all of the home basketball games.

I think it’s wonderful that we have such active alumni (even if I do wish they’d be a little louder at sporting events).

One of the benefits of coming to Tech is that we do have generous alumni who want to give back to the school that was such a big part of their lives for four (or five or six) years.

College is generally the time in people’s lives when they change the most—I know it certainly was for me. I was always quiet and shy and high school, but I became more outgoing as I participated in more organizations and other aspects of student life at Tech.

I know that I probably would have changed just as much at another college, but I didn’t go to another college, I went to Tech.

And I am proud that I graduated from a challenging school and my degree will be framed and displayed on my office wall (when I finally get a job).

Again, I don’t think we should forget it either. We will all eventually move on to graduate schools or jobs all over the country, and we should relish these new experiences.

After I finish my Master’s here, I am leaving to begin a graduate program in journalism at New York University. I couldn’t be more excited—I will be living in New York City, attending an excellent school and meeting new people.

The change from a technical school to a liberal arts school will be a welcome one—but I will always remember my time at Tech fondly, and from time to time I am sure I will miss it.

Even now, I get that tug on my heart when I pass parts of campus that are particularly nostalgic for me: my freshman dorm, the football stadium, the East Campusquad. I know a lot of people won’t miss Tech, and that’s okay, but I know a lot of people will, and, as trite as it may sound, that should be okay, too.

TAs from page 9

study showed that, on average, undergraduates’ final grade points in the class slid by 0.2 points when they had a foreign-born instructor.

So what do we do?

Legislators in North Dakota think they’ve hit upon a solution. At the end of last month, the state’s governor signed into law HB 1364, a bill that would allow college students to apply for a tuition refund for any course taught by an instructor that “does not speak English clearly and with good pronunciation.” Further more, the new law mandates that upon receiving complaints from at least 10 percent of students in the class, the dean of the college must reassign the offending professor or assistant to a non-teaching position. Rep. Bette Grande, R-Fargo, the bill’s sponsor, notes that it is a matter of upholding the transaction with tuition-paying students: “The No. 1 priority of higher education is instructing the student, the paying customer.”

It is easy to think of our situation here at the university in much the same way, particularly with the Board of Visitors announcing the annual tuition hike last week. In-state students pay roughly $700 per course; out-of-state, over $2,000.

It is utterly unacceptable to invest that much money for a class taught by a professor whom one cannot understand.

Yet the North Dakota answer is not without its opponents, many of whom say the new law is redundant, costly and comes with the potential for abuse by students trying to drop a class for other reasons, like a low grade. A teaching assistant at North Dakota State, one of the colleges affected by the bill, notes that foreign teaching assistants are “set up for failure. No matter how hard they try, their foreignness will always work against them and provide a convenient excuse for the students who want to resign from a class without taking the responsibility as a student.” Her complaint is substantiated by studies that have shown subconscious biases that impair students’ comprehension of foreign-born lecturers and instructors.

Clearly, the issue is not one to be solved by platitudes on either side. The North Dakota solution is be a good start, but we must remain conscious of finding a balance between measures to protect students’ education and making sure that education is enriched by broader points of view.

There is an indispensable place for international perspectives in the college setting, and many students at this school have been stimulated by their experiences with worldly and brilliant foreign teaching assistants. But while diversity of background is a goal toward which any modern university should be striving, we must be mindful of its more extreme consequences and approach issues like this one pragmatically and with students’ best interests in mind.

Blind adherence to dogma on either side, be it “diversity at all costs” or “speak English or go home” serves no one but rhetoricians. No doubt that’s something we can all understand, even without a TA-to-English dictionary.