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April 26, 2006

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Volume 60, Issue 10

Mechatronics to put SPSU in the spotlight

The proposed degree will combine most forms of engineering into one.

Cristina Wilson
Senior Staff Writer

A new program proposal for the addition of a Bachelor of Science in Mechatronics Engineering (MtrE) is currently under review. Professor Glenn R. Allen, Associate Professor in Mechanical Engineering Technology, has been working on this proposal for almost five years, and anxiously awaits its approval.

Mechatronics is defined as the "synergistic integration of mechanical engineering with electronics and intelligent computer control in the design and manufacturing of industrial products and processes." This new major will integrate Mechanical, Electrical, and Computer Engineering Technologies. Examples of Mechatronic systems consist of "aircraft flight control and navigation systems, automotive electronic fuel injection and anti-lock brake systems, and automated manufacturing systems including robots."

Integration of engineering fields is apparently the wave of the future. Allen states, "for a company that is building any kind of machine that has motion control in it that

integrates mechanical and electrical components, if you do not use the principles of Mechatronics today, you cannot be effective in the long run."

Currently, the proposal for a MtrE degree is in the preliminary stage of design. It is simply a concept of what SPSU would like to offer, but requires further approval by the Vice President of Academic Affairs, Dr. Zvi Szafran, and the Board of Regents

SPSU is interested in being the third university in the U.S. to offer a Bachelor's degree in MtrE. If successful, SPSU will be the first in the southeastern region to offer any program such as this. The Georgia Institute of Technology currently offers a Master's degree in this field, but no Bachelor's. Allen is confident that education in Mechatronics needs to be offered as a Bachelor's degree since many high school and college students are unable to find a major in their interest.

Of the other two colleges offering a Bachelor's degree in Mechatronics, only one is accredited by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology, and this

is California State University, Chico. Therefore, the U.S. can thus far offer only one accredited Bachelor's degree in Mechatronics compared to the 41 equivalent degrees across the world.

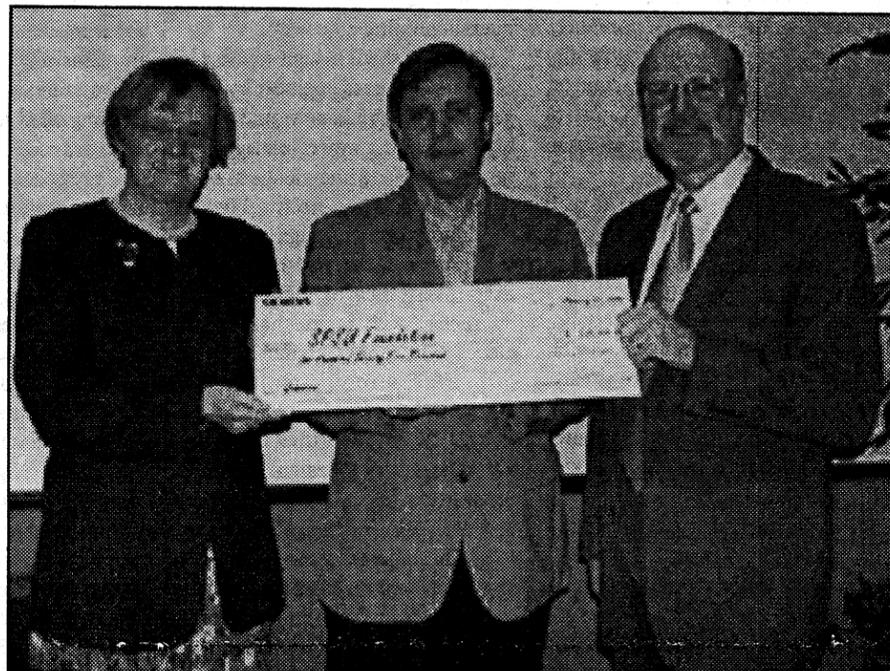
According to the preliminary proposal, Siemens Energy and Automation, based in Alpharetta, has "already provided \$225,000 in funding and \$250,000 in equipment in direct support of [Mechatronics]." The most recent grant of \$225,000 will be used in any way possible to further the development of this major at SPSU. Allen asserts that the grant money may partially go towards bringing in faculty who will start up the Mechatronics

program.

Siemens has donated \$250,000 by way of laboratory equipment including a "plastic injection molding system, nine manufacturing automation training systems, and SIMATIC Step7 automation and control software tools for the SPSU Computer-

Integrated Manufacturing Laboratory." The SPSU Alumni Foundation has also pledged \$10,000 to aid in equipment costs.

SPSU is uniquely qualified to offer this major since the university is already equipped with the **Continued on Page 2**

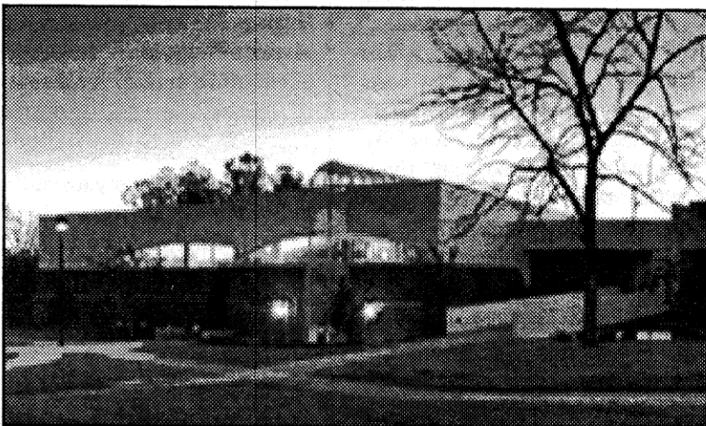


SPSU's new strategic plan

Karen Asay
Editor-in-Training

Since Southern Polytechnic's mission statement has been changed to allow for a broader range of majors, the 2005-06 Strategic Plan has taken on a new challenge that previous plans did not by making this one of their goals. The plan covers two additional on going goals of the university: increasing enrollment and creating a positive environment. These three goals are the focus of the strategic plan.

The first goal in the Strategic Plan is for Southern Polytechnic "to be more comprehensive in scope." The idea behind this goal is to add new majors to the curriculum to allow for choice by current and prospective students. This part of the plan has three objectives. One, the university wants to get the support of the faculty, staff, students, alumni, and the foundation for the new shift in majors allowed at Southern Polytechnic. Two, the university needs "to develop a series of academic programs." Three, the university plans "to improve current programs, add new programs, and delete programs."



Southern Polytechnic will start seeing the results of this goal by Fall 2006 because Architectural Engineering will once again be offered. Also, a proposal for Construction Engineering has been sent to the Board of Regents for approval. The administration expects it to be on the Board of Regents' June agenda. Two other programs that are being developed are Chemistry, which you can read more about in the article "Chemistry major may be coming to SPSU" by Cristina Wilson in the February 13, 2006 issue of The Sting, and Engineering Psychology.

Another effect of this goal is

some of the current majors will be renamed to clarify what the major is and make the names more in line with the names at other colleges. The name changes will make it easier for prospective students to find these programs as they search for schools. The majors whose names are changing are Management to Business Administration, Construction to Construction Management and International Technical Communication to English & Professional Communication. The class requirements for these majors are not changing; just the name is.

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What's up with IT?

Dave Bachtel
Senior Staff Writer

For those who have had trouble getting on the wireless network at SPSU (or had problems with the wireless client that was being installed in the IT lab), the IT department has heard your pleas and wants you to know that things are beginning to change. New access points have already been placed in the student center, thanks to a \$40,000 allocation from the president's office. The old system currently in place will gradually be scrapped and replaced by the faster system that supports the A, B, and G versions of the 802.11 protocol. A new Aegis authentication client will be put on the IT department's website that will allow seamless setup and configuration of wireless settings for less technically adept users.

If you can't wait for the new version of the Aegis client to roll out or would prefer to try to 'do-it-yourself,' instructions on how to obtain and setup the SecureW2 client are available from tinyurl.

com/hhos6. The first of the new access points is already in place in the student center and has the network name of 'hornet.' When accessing the new network, you should choose 'WPA' as the encryption type. The old network is still accessible at various places on campus using the network name of 'spsunet' and an encryption type of 'WEP.'

The IT department is currently testing a newer version of web mail and invites the student body to participate in the test. The new version is accessible at webmail.spsu.edu. Signature and address book information has been carried over, but any other preferences need to be set. New funds have also been requested to increase the size of the student email quotas.

A new discussion forum has also been put up at forums.spsu.edu to assist students with questions and facilitate discussion. To login, utilize the same user name and password combination used to access the rest of the IT department services (mail, H-lab, wireless).

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Graduation!
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Mechatronics

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facilities, faculty, and experience of many other engineering technology programs.

SPSU has 3 robotic clubs on campus, and the student participation in these continues to grow. Allen states that the students in these organizations are "mostly enrolled in mechanical and electrical programs since there is not an offered degree focused on their interests." Mechatronics may be the degree that these students are looking for.

Many classes planned to be part of the Mechatronics curriculum are currently being offered at SPSU. Professor Allen expects that only 7 classes of the total 128 hour program will have to be developed specifically for Mechatronics, and 4 current courses will need to be modified. He notes that most existing faculty will be able to teach these courses, but the department will be forced to hire new staff as student population grows.

SPSU also is involved with numerous high school student outreach programs involving robotics such as the Georgia BEST Robotics competition and the FIRST Robotics Competition. The students participating in these activities are already aware of SPSU and their facilities, and the addition of the Mechatronics major will draw them to the university in the future.

The proposal addresses the fact that Georgia is "ranked 42 among all states in the number of science and engineering Bachelor's degrees conferred per 1,000 population of 18-24 year olds". This low number puts Georgia, and the southeastern region, at a great disadvantage since engineering companies in the area are forced to hire graduates from other parts of the country. Allen believes that bringing a MtrE Degree to SPSU will not only benefit the school by drawing in a large number of students, but it will benefit the state of Georgia by offering qualified graduates from the area.

The National Science Board has observed "alarming trends," stated in their 2004 publication of Science and Engineering Indicators, which include a "troubling decline in the number of U.S. citizens who are training to become scientists and engineers, whereas the number of jobs requiring science and engineering training continues to

grow." The report also estimates that the number of jobs in the U.S. requiring these skills is growing by about 5% per year compared to a 1% growth for jobs not requiring science and engineering education. This drastic increase in professional need, coupled with the lack of degrees offered by the state of Georgia, shows that students from SPSU interested in Mechatronics will have no problem finding work immediately out of college.

In fact, Rick Meyers, Siemens Energy and Automation's Vice President of Business Development, stated to Professor Allen that he would have "hired 20 Mechatronics Engineers in each of the last 2 years, if they [Siemens] could have found them. Instead, they have hired mechanical and electrical engineers and then put them through intensive internal training courses."

Allen sheds insight on the role of a Mechatronics engineer by suggesting that a graduate would possibly be more of a project manager; offering combined knowledge in both the mechanical and electrical fields. The graduate may design a solution to a problem, but will require the extra assistance of a specialized engineer (such as mechanical or electrical) to apply the idea.

Mechatronics majors can expect to be offered career choices in a variety of industries including job titles such as design engineer, software engineer, project planner, product designer, and project manager. The majors can choose to work in a large company, or a smaller one that requires the knowledge of both an electrical and mechanical engineer.

In reference to the proposal for a new major on campus, Allen maintains that "we are in a cycle on campus where it has to be approved by administration. There have still been some editing changes that have been requested." These changes have been requested by the Vice President of Academic Affairs, Dr. Zvi Svafran. SPSU has recently had a change of VPAA, from interim Dr. David Hornbeck to Dr. Zvi Svafran, and this switch has delayed the proposal by almost six months.

However, Allen insists that Dr. Svafran and President Dr. Lisa Rossbacher fully support the addition of the Mechatronics degree. Allen states, "I don't think it's an issue of if. I think it's an issue of when."

Strategic Plan

Continued from Front Page

The second goal in the Strategic Plan is to increase enrollment. The university's enrollment goals are to increase by 5% in Fall 2006, 6% in Fall 2007, and by 7% in Fall 2008. This part of the plan has four objectives. One, the university wants to increase retention, progression, and graduation rates. Some of the ways they plan to accomplish this objective are by providing stronger advising, increasing tutorial services and providing language support for non-native speaking students. Two, the university plans on increasing new undergraduate enrollment to 1072 in Fall 2006 and three, the university plans on increasing new graduate enrollment to 130 in Fall 2006. They plan to accomplish both of these goals by increasing public relations, providing "academic programs for which the current and future student demand exist" and "making class scheduling responsive to student needs." Another way Southern Polytechnic plans to increase the undergraduate enrollment is by building transfer articulation agreements with the Department of Technical and Adult Education (DTAE) and some two-year colleges. The last objective is to increase resources for maximizing enrollment. This objective ensures there will be resources available to support increasing enrollment.

The third goal is to "increase the sense of ownership in the success of the university among all members of the University community." This plan also has four objectives to accomplish. One, the university wants to "identify and articulate campus-wide values and develop a set of standards and practices to support these values." Two, the university will be encouraging "collaboration and participation across the campus constituencies." One of the ways this objective will be achieved is to "establish new ways of involving students, faculty, staff, and alumni in campus activities" like Culture Fest and Casino Night. Three, the university wants to "cultivate an atmosphere where open, timely, and clear campus communication are the norm," and four, the university will be developing "a more supportive physical environment for campus constituencies."

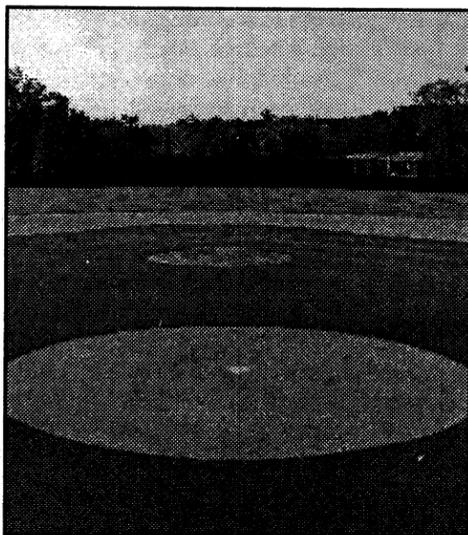
A draft of the Strategic Plan can be found at forum.spsu.edu. Students, faculty, staff, and alumni are encouraged to look at and comment on the Strategic Plan. The final draft will be finished by early May.

Hornets' baseballAyanna Benton
Staff Writer

The SPSU Hornets Baseball team knows how to bring excitement to the game of baseball. With their total number of steals over 60, fans can expect an offense that puts the defense to work. SPSU Head Coach Matt Griffin states that the team's style of play is, "Up tempo and scrappy," which is a style of play that will allow the fans to see good baseball instead of waiting on a team to hit a homerun. Though homeruns are good, Coach Griffin knows how to get points on the scoreboard and excite the fans.

April 19th the Hornets will

head to Georgia Southwestern in Tournament play at a chance for another GACC (Georgia-Alabama-Carolina-Conference) Championship. In his 3rd year as head coach and 7th year coaching at SPSU, Coach Griffin has experience with getting teams to the Conference Tourney. In the 2004 season the coach was able to win the GACC. Fans can view Hornet statistics online at www.naia.org.



Ayanna Benton / The Sting

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Any student paying Activity Fees is eligible to join *The Sting*, though final decision is made by the Editor-in-Chief. We prefer creative students who have passed English 1101. Come to our meetings Friday at 1:00 PM in A252, upstairs in the student center, or call (678) 915-7310. This includes YOU, all you so-called members that never attend. *The Sting*: It's not a job, 'cause a real job pays more.

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Graduation time

Cristina Wilson
Senior Staff Writer

Many students are awaiting the end of the school year, but none as much as graduating seniors. Immediately after finals, Spring Commencement will occur on campus for those students who have earned their degree and wish to celebrate along with their peers, teachers, and family members.

Spring Commencement exercises have been planned for Saturday, May 6th at 2pm in the Gymnasium. This semester, Southern Polytechnic State University will be honoring an estimated 225 students with degrees. 160 of these graduates will be receiving an Undergraduate's degree, while 65 will be receiving a Master's degree.

Dr. Lisa A. Rossbacher will open the graduation ceremony

with an introduction, and Mr. Bill H. Bolling, founder and executive director of the Atlanta Community Food Bank, will be the guest speaker. Mr. Bolling has frequently been named in Georgia Trend Magazine as one of the 100 Most Influential Georgians. After his speech, the Dean of each department will announce the names of his/her graduating students.

The President's Reception will immediately follow the ceremony across the street in the Architecture Building, where refreshments will be served. Brenda Farrell, Degree Program Assistant, requests that all students who wish to walk at graduation contact her to inform her of your decision. You can contact Mrs. Farrell in the administration building, or e-mail her at bfarrell@spsu.edu.



CJ Shrader, Chris Coylar, Syl Turner, CJ Shifflett, & Dave Bachtel are The Sting's graduates. Congratulations, guys!

Hornets' basketball

Ayanna Benton
Staff Writer

Men's Team

The 2005-2006 season for the Runnin' Hornets men's basketball team seemed to be no surprise to many as the Hornets went to yet another National Tournament in Kansas City, Missouri. Well, at least the season wasn't a surprise to Coach Jeffrey Jones, Head Coach of the men's basketball team, who knows how to win. Having helped Kennesaw State University win a NCAA Division II National Championship improved the coach's winning experience. Many would say that Coach Jones had big shoes to fill after taking over a program that consistently went to the NAIA National Tournament through the previous head coach Mike Helfer. Coach Jones knew that the expectations of others were not as high as his own personal expectations, this being noticeable when asked about the season. "As a coach you're never satisfied, but I was very pleased on how the kids played especially [in] probably the last 9 or 10 ball games of the year."

Not only does the coach help the Hornet players to be winners on the court, but he also helps them to become men off the court. Before and following every home game the Hornets have to dress in slacks, a collared shirt and a tie. To Coach Jones this was done to show that student athletes can be students first

as well as to change the image of his players in order to get away from the stereotype that many people have of athletes. "The men represent themselves, their family and the university," says Coach Jones and he wanted the image of his players to be a positive one.

The Hornets finished the season with a 22-11 record and will be losing five key seniors from the roster. Those seniors are: Dominique Holmes, Marc Reece, Derris Marshall, Justin Anthony, and A. J. Mastin. Having gone to the conference tournament, the returnee's for the Hornets will have the necessary experience to continue winning and get back to the tournament next season. So SPSU fans can continue to see exciting basketball from the Hornets with a calm demeanor from Coach Jones on the sideline.

Women's Team

The first season as Head Coach for the Lady Hornets could be seen as a bad one from an outside point of view. Instead, Coach Nate Teymer views the season as a great learning experience. With the team facing challenges like academic ineligibility, injuries, and pregnancy, the 2005-2006 season will be one Coach Teymer uses for future experience. Coming into the season Coach Teymer may have had high expectations from those around him but he didn't notice. The first year Head coach was only motivated by his own expectations. When asked

if he had trouble surpassing any previous expectations he stated, "No, I think from the outside, their expectations will never be higher than the expectations I put on myself." By having high expectations the Lady Hornets will be able to show their improvement and become a name that is associated with winning next season.

Though the Lady Hornets held a 5-22 record the team expects to bring more experienced and hard-working players into the line up. The team will be losing 3 senior starters, Marie "Rella" Stresing, LarVisha "LuLu" West, and Candace Jenkins. The team will have eight players returning back for another season. Having players returning that have experience with Coach Teymer's style and the Lady Hornets program will be a boost for the team. Players that know what to expect will be able to show the team's growth and experience in tough playing situations.

Next season, fans can expect growth out of the Lady Hornets. The team has faced adversity and will use the experience to move forward. Fans will be able to see "A good mix of talent and leadership," Coach Teymer says. Since his expectations of the team will be higher, the Lady Hornets will be able to be successful and just as Coach Teymer says, "Win and win the right way."

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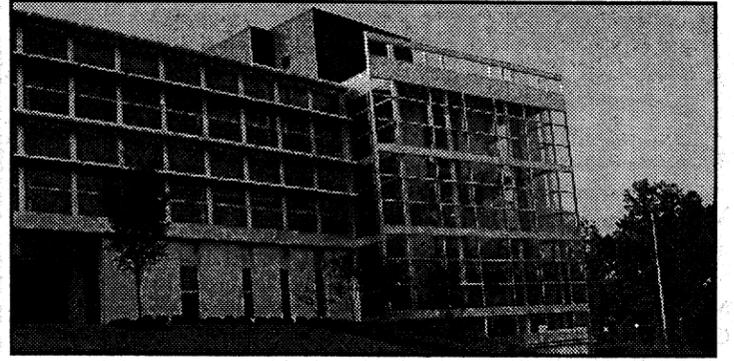
Rumors of Architecture tuition hike: False

Dave Bachtel
Senior Staff Writer

Rumors of a differential tuition increase for Architecture students have been circulating around campus recently. The Sting spoke with Dr. Ameen Farooq, Department Chair for Architecture at SPSU to see if the rumors had any merit. According to Farooq, no

such tuition hike is being planned, although the idea was suggested during a faculty meeting. The rumor might have originated because of system-wide tuition increases recently approved by the Board of Regents, which raises tuition for students throughout the system five to eight percent. "There's a process of achieving these types of things... [The

architecture tuition increase] was a proposal. Proposals can lead to speculation. It will take a lengthy process, were it to ever be approved. And then [the Sting] would have a story," said Dr. Farooq with a smile. He also indicated that Architecture students will have a voice, if a differential tuition increase were to be considered in the future.



Archives / The Sting

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Internal Affairs happenings and a farewell from the Chair

Naimah Shaw
Staff Writer

My term as your Internal Affairs Chair is winding down, as is my sojourn at Southern Polytechnic State University. To those persons with whom I was privileged to work with, I thank you for your support and encouragement. To those who tested my patience and strength as an individual and student leader, thank you for providing a challenging environment. To the student body, I hope that I served you well for the past year and to the incoming SGA, congratulations!

I hope that you maintain the same level of enthusiasm that you demonstrated during the campaign period. It was one of the most spirited events I have ever seen on campus and it is a reflection of the quality of individuals that you are. I am sure that under the leadership of Carolina Daza and Shyam Nana, goals will be accomplished and much needed change will be brought about.

As you set about on this journey, please remember the words of Mr. Peter Drucker: "Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things." Please remember that you are adults and petty differences must be put aside for the organization to move forward. People may constantly aggravate you but ignore them and do what you're supposed to do. Do not get drunk off of the power bestowed upon you by the student body and remember the ultimate goal of serving them over accomplishing personal goals. Please do not turn SGA into simply another pretty organization on your resume, but find some other compelling and enduring reason to be there—and if you can't, please leave and give some other person the opportunity of being there.

During the past year, my committee had recognized some organizations, made changes to the Constitution and tried to keep "up to date" with existing organi-

zations.

I will now summarize our accomplishments.

The following new organizations were added:

- SPSU Table Tennis Organization
- SPSU Boulderling Club
- SPSU Cycling Club
- MBA-Student Association (MBASA)
- SPSU Cross Country
- Kappa Alpha Psi
- National Panhellenic Conference
- SPSU Soft-Ball Club

The Constitution has been amended to reflect the following changes:

Article 5.1.3.1:

"The SGA advisor will check all SGA members' GPAs at the end of every semester. If any member fails to meet the minimum requirement as specified in section 5.2.1, he/she will lose 10% of their stipend for every 1/10 of a quality point. (For example: as stated, an executive member needs a 3.0 GPA, if that person's GPA drops from 3.0 to 2.9, they would lose 10% of their stipend). If a member's GPA drops below 2.0, they will be asked to have a meeting with the Advisor. The student will be asked to leave office if they are unable to bring their GPA back up to the minimum requirement of 2.0 before their probation time elapses (in accordance with school policies)."

Article 5.2

Qualifications for Office

"Any student enrolled in SPSU in good standing shall be eligible to run for any position of the SGA. A student in good standing shall be defined as any student who is not on probation and maintains a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher for officers or 2.5 or higher for Student Legislative Council Members.

"Students who are planning to graduate at the end of fall term of any given year should not be eligible for office due to the inability

to serve a full one year term. In order to validate that all candidates for office will be able to serve a full one year term in office, the SGA advisor shall check to see if any students have already petitioned to graduate before ballots are created for the election process. If a student has already petitioned to graduate, then they will be considered ineligible for office."

Article 5.2.1

GPA Requirements:

"Executive Council Members (President, Vice President, and Secretary/Treasurer) as well as the Chief Judge must have a minimum 3.0 GPA. Other Council Members are required to have a minimum 2.5 GPA."

Article 6.2

Qualifications for Office:

Any student enrolled in the Southern Polytechnic State University with a minimum 2.5 GPA shall be eligible for nomination by the President and appointment by the Student Council to a position on the Judiciary Committee. As stated in section 5.2.1, the Chief Judge must have a minimum 3.0 GPA.

The Stipend amounts have also changed. They are as follows:

- President- 80%
- Vice President- 70%
- Secretary- 60%
- Chairs- 25.2% (remained the same)
- Legislative Council Members- 16.79% (remained the same)
- Parliamentarian and Sgt-at-arms: 0%

I think that's a summary of the main things that have gone on within our Committee. If I missed anything, I apologize. Once again, I thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Internal Affairs Chair, it was a rewarding opportunity. Hats off to the incoming SGA. I'm looking to bigger and better things from your extremely diverse and well rounded council.

Tech Fee at SPSU

Cristina Wilson
Senior Staff Writer

The technology fee is a mandatory cost of tuition and fees per semester to attend SPSU. In November, 2005, the technology fee was increased from \$38 to \$75 per semester, making this fee the second most expensive SPSU students are required to pay.

The Board of Regents introduced this fee to "add value to the educational experience of the students," as stated by the Board of Regents guidelines for tech fee revenue. The tech fee encompasses much expenditure such as software licensing, hardware and networking, student laboratories, and student and staff training in networking and computer areas.

The technology fee is meant to further the technological needs of the students, and not the administration. However, very few students are aware that they can propose ideas for ways to spend the money. Many students are also unaware that they can become part of the committees that approve various projects for funding.

The approval process is fairly short, occurring over three months. Project ideas may be proposed by a student, faculty member, or IT infrastructure. Past approved student projects have included equipment for various student competition teams, including the Formula Racing Team.

A subcommittee is designed for each type of project, depending on who proposed the idea. The Student Government Association will accept proposals from students, the Center for Instructional Technology/VPAA will accept proposals from faculty, and the IT department will accept proposals from the IT infrastructure. Each of these subcommittees will determine if the proposal meets the Board of Regents' guidelines and will prioritize the list.

After the individual subcommittee has approved and prioritized their list, the proposals are sent to the Technology Fee Expenditure Review Team (TFERT) for final approval. TFERT will decide which projects are worthy of funding and will separate them into three

groups: definitely funded, should be funded, and probably not funded. Bill Gruszka, Chief Information Officer, suggests that the groups that will probably not be funded find the money from elsewhere, or resubmit their proposal next year.

TFERT is made of 10 members, including 5 students, 2 faculty members, 1 person from student services, and 2 from IT. The students have the majority of votes in approving projects to be funded by the tech fee, but unfortunately students rarely attend these meetings.

Approvals for the fiscal year 2007 are currently under review. The proposals have been through subcommittees and TFERT, and are currently awaiting approval from President Dr. Lisa Rossbacher. Once approved, these projects will receive funding at the turn of the fiscal year, July 1st, and funding will be applied according to priority.

Student involvement is severely lacking in submitting actual projects, as well as attending approval meetings. Ideally, a student from each college should be involved in the voting process, reducing the chance of a biased decision. However, even though the meetings are a short commitment – lasting only from February to April – students are rarely involved.

Gruszka is hoping that motivation will rise in the future, and students will become more involved in the decision of what their money is funding. Any student who is interested in becoming a member of the TFERT committee should contact the SGA president, Carolina Daza

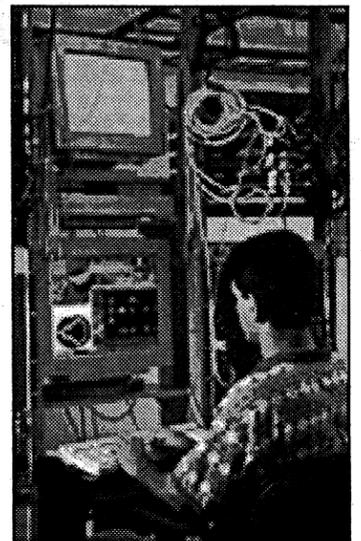


Photo courtesy www.spsu.edu

Dear Susan Dealing with a depressed dormmate

Susan Ristau
Licensed SPSU Counselor

Dear Susan,

My roommate is sleeping all the time, keeps the room darkened and is always in our room. I requested a single room but didn't get it since I'm a first year student. I'm the kind of person who requires a good bit of alone time and I'm going nuts trying to handle my roommate's mood swings. I talked to our R.A., but when she approached my roommate, the depression didn't come through to her so she let it go. I'm trying to deal with my own stuff right now at the end of the semester and it's rough right now. How can I get my roommate some help and take care of my needs, too.

Signed, Holed Up in Howell

Dear HUH,

While it certainly isn't your job to get your roommate to accept help, accomplishing this will absolutely make your life and her's more pleasant. And, everyone needs alone time, by the way. It's just the healthy thing to do, but it isn't the easiest when you have a dorm mate. What I suggest is try to find someone who can influence your roommate, like a friend or another R.A., or maybe the R.A. supervisor (Ashley at Ambling).

Your sad roomie needs to talk with a professional. You can always walk her up to the Counseling Center (Student Center, 2nd floor) so someone can help her. Also, make sure you

are getting assistance for your stressors.

1) Go talk to a counselor in the Counseling Center – it's free!

2) Find a place to be alone – even if it's a nearby park or the library.

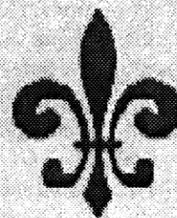
3) Spend time with friends.

4) Get some exercise – swim, run, bike, workout.

5) Have a good support system – this means family, friends, counselor, staff or faculty member you can chat with.

Remember, your roommate's happiness is not your responsibility but finding help for her will help you both.

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Our failing two-party system and what's wrong with it

Twila McConnell
Copy Editor

What are you? A republican, a conservative, a democrat, a liberal, a moderate, independent? What does any of this even mean anymore? I think one of the reasons people are currently so apathetic towards politics is because our two-party system just isn't working any more.

Oh wait, did I just knock the amazing, undefeatable U.S. Government? No. We were never meant to be a two-party system. Or at least we didn't begin that way. The founding fathers actually "believed that parties were a source of corruption and an impediment to the freedom of people to judge issues on their merits," according to Encarta encyclopedia. Even though two parties usually dominated the scene, third parties still had a fighting chance. It wasn't really until the 20th century that our current Republicans vs. Democrats really stuck. Sure, there was usually only two parties vying for power prior, but they never ran under the same name for so long.

It really wasn't until after the Progressive Party failed to get Theodore Roosevelt elected that third parties really died out. Currently you may have heard of the Libertarians or maybe the Green Party. But most people, i.e. Nader, are usually just accused of spoiling the votes for the party that isn't projected to win – recently, the Democrats.

But currently, who are the Republicans and the Democrats? Not someone who cares about you, or so many people feel. Especially after the last election where the Democrats

bumbled their way into a candidate that they should've realized wasn't going to be effective.

The most prevalent criticism of this two-party system is that it will "motivate candidates to run negative campaigns, pointing out the flaws in the 'other person' (usually the leader of the other party). Parties in such situations tend to stake out only those positions that appear necessary to differentiate themselves from their primary opponent, and not to concentrate on policies constructive or beneficial to citizens," says a Wikipedia article on the two-party system.

How can this not describe the current situation? We're so wound up in issues that have nothing to do with anything, issues that simply distract us from the serious issues that are really

at hand. Neither candidate for the last elections could speak proficiently on a plan for the national debt or unemployment or even the issues in Iraq. Kerry gave us high hopes with no backing and Bush threw us the same old bone. I don't ever really remember them talking about health care (or maybe it just wasn't a memorable enough debate to bother trying to think up).

Instead, last election's debates focused on gay marriage, abortion, and the ever present guns. These things don't affect everyone or the universal good of the whole United States. Gay marriage? Are you really affected in your every day life by two men or women having a civil union in a nice government facility? You can shut your door at night and go to your church every Sunday and probably

never come in contact with a 'married' homosexual couple in your personal life. And this is what our government and news channels feel is important?

Abortion contains the same type of issue. No one is telling you to get an abortion if you don't want one. Do a little research and you'll see what happens when abortion is made illegal.

Guns are a little different, but didn't we all love that ridiculous picture of Kerry hunting? No matter what, no gun law is going to be passed where someone is going to come into office and take away all your guns. Gun laws are really under state government jurisdiction, that's why they differ between states.

These petty issues serve as a distraction for candidates that really have the same or no opinion (or plan) for the

serious issues at hand. Most younger people are left thinking "they're all the same anyway, why does it matter?" And they are. They'll sell themselves out to win on both sides.

According to Encarta, this is actually another criticism of the two-party system, that it will "adopt planks of the other party's platform, leading to the appearance in some skeptics' minds of a one-party system" as a means of attracting voters. In essence forming what we have now: the Republicrats.

Honestly, I lean towards the left of the political and economic system not based on what it means in this country but on a global scale where left falls towards socialism and then communism and right falls towards capitalism all the way to anarchy. But it wasn't easy to figure that out, especially not with the way the parties and the media attention in this country portray them. At this point it's a game of the lesser of two evils: who will screw up least.

This is especially true in the last two elections which were clearly not won by landslides, as well as the low voter turn-out rates. This system has lead merely to stagnation and idleness. This is why we need a third party to rise up and mean what it stands for, to re-inspire this dormant system.

Honestly, arguments between Democrats and Republicans are essentially meaningless. Know what you stand for and why you stand for it and then decide which candidate represents your views best. As of right now, that's the best thing you can do in this two-party system.



We'll screw the people of the United States and we'll be best friends forever and ever....

Photo courtesy www.threadless.com

See ya SPSU, a farewell

Syl Turner
Layout Manager

I feel obligated to write a "farewell to SPSU" letter, so here it is...

Assuming I don't screw up these last few weeks of the semester, I should be graduating May 6th. I've had a decent time here at The Poly. I'm ready to move on though. There's no way I could stay here longer than necessary!

Academically, I think Southern Poly was great. I learned a lot in my computer science classes and feel prepared for the working world. Thank you for that.

Socially, however, I think Southern Poly was awful. I thought that making it to higher level education would mean that I'd be surrounded by smarter people than the losers from high school. Obviously, I was wrong. Southern Poly has some of the smartest kids I've ever met. Unfortunately, Poly also has most of the dumbest kids I've ever met. Actually, scratch that. Southern Poly has most of the dumbest kids IN THE ENTIRE WORLD. On top of that, they always think they know EVERYTHING, even when they don't have a clue. The ones who are annoyed by these kids know what I'm talking about. The ones who don't know what I'm talking about are the ones I'm talking about. I don't hate that many people in the world, but the few that

I hate, go to SPSU.

And listen up, nerds! Just because you know how to play video games doesn't mean you know how to program. It also doesn't mean that you know EVERYTHING about ANYTHING! For example, I could be having a civil conversation with a fellow classmate about foreign policy when a freakin' nerd comes by and says, "Oh, you know, the war in Iraq is all about exporting sand seals. It's true! I read about it on these forums and this blog." Hey, nerd, YOU SUCK! Just because you read something on the Internet does not mean that it's true! Got that?!

I never expected SPSU to be like a "real college," especially since I commuted all 4 years. Thank God I never had to actually live here! I couldn't imagine being surrounded by these people all the time! It'd be awful...

Of course, I have to give some shout-outs to my favorite professors, so here we go:

Dr. Fadyn – I took him for like 4 or 5 semesters of math. I can't imagine taking math with any other professor.

Ms. Morrison – Her classes were fun and really kept me interested in CS. If you're a CS student and you've heard "Oh, don't take her, you've gotta do work in her class," then you know that person is dumb, lazy, and won't graduate

with a CS degree. You might have to work in her classes, but that's HOW YOU LEARN!

Bob Brown – I think he's kind of a jerk, but I got much more out of his classes than I would've ever expected. Again, he might give you a heavy amount of work to do, but it's worth it!

Dr. Carter – The most fun I had at SPSU were in his classes, especially Writer's Workshop. I'd recommend that class to anyone who likes to write! In fact, I'd recommend any student to take Dr. Carter for their English courses. He's a great professor and you'll definitely enjoy his classes.

All the CS professors I had were great. I can't think of an exceptionally bad one. I was very pleased with the program.

My biggest regret with SPSU was that I didn't get involved with The Sting earlier. I only got about a year and a half of Sting in me, but I had a lot of fun. I'd recommend it for anyone who doesn't want to pay for friends!

Well, I'm ready to leave this place and move on. Perhaps I'll return again, to get another degree or go to graduate school. But I don't want to be one of those old guys who still hangs out here, and nobody knows what my age is, and he's really awkward to talk to... that'd just be creepy.

SGA vindicator

Christiaan Funkhouser
Senior Staff Writer

So the SGA Elections have come and gone. Did you vote? If not, why? Was it because you didn't know the candidates or you didn't know what they stood for? If you did vote, why? Maybe you did what I did and not knowing what the candidates stood for you voted for people you knew, or based on what they had said in the past, or maybe you Facebook messaged someone. Sadly, no one that I voted for (to my very limited knowledge) won.

And not knowing or really caring about the SGA for the first three years I came here, with the exception of the budget, I never really kept a close eye on the SGA. In talking with former, current, and soon to be members of the SGA I've been told things about how this new SGA will be run, and I intend to hold the SGA to it.

So this isn't so much of an article as a warning to the SGA. I will be the thorn in your side, and I will do everything in my power to hold you accountable. If I see problems in the SGA I will bring it to public and write about it in the paper so that people who are attending this school will have a contact they can go to so they can get those tough questions an-

swered. Because, as my Spanish Professor says, if one person has a question there's a good chance a lot of people do.

The past SGA was wrought with corruption. Groups were given money with no real accountability, student funds (our money) was wasted for pizza parties, SGA refreshments etc. Members of the SGA served for the stipends and the benefits of the position, NOT a passion to help the students or the school.

From talking to students briefly during the SGA elections I've been told many things about what the students want...

- Responsibility with the student's money (not everyone gets HOPE)

- Be more attentive to students (you're supposed to represent us, not ignore us)

- Not to be a transparent government.

Or my favorite one edited for content... "We are a technology school, but ****, we're a pretty ***** technology school. The sign says, 'Georgia's technology university', but we're more like..."

Let's hope this new term I won't have to do much work, and there won't be many articles about the SGA from me.

Newly elected SGA members

Cristina Wilson
Senior Staff Writer

Student Government Association elections took place during the week of April 10-14, and SPSU will see the addition of many fresh faces next year. According to their official website, the SGA "represents the student perspective at Southern Polytechnic State University and works together to bring about positive changes for the Southern Polytechnic State University community".

Below is a list of the election results:

President:

Carolina Daza – 432 votes
Bill Elkins – 163 votes

Vice President:

Shyam Nana – 239 votes
Valerie Overcash – 174 votes
Kevin Moss – 154 votes

Secretary/Treasurer:

Amanda Palasik – 336 votes
Jackie Panzica – 195 votes

Council Members:

Yue Geng – 406 votes
Amanda Benson – 343 votes
Jarret Bell – 320 votes
Aisha Johnson – 319 votes
Eddie Macham – 288
Markita Maxwell – 284 votes
Tram Nguyen – 276 votes
Leo Cameron Felix – 275 votes
Elliott Bahr – 271 votes
Thao Tran – 265 votes
Julia Kofron – 262 votes
Max Terry – 253 votes
Spencer Morris – 250 votes
Yvette Lapura – 239 votes
Mayuri Patel – 231 votes
Sushma Patel – 216 votes

The new SGA members present a change that from the previous year, and hopefully new faces will also bring about positive relationships between the SGA and the student body. The newly elected members are quite diverse in their majors, interests, and age.

President: Carolina Daza

Carolina Daza is majoring in International Studies with a minor in Industrial Engineering, and is currently in her sophomore year

holding a 4.0 GPA. She came from Colombia to Georgia with a scholarship awarded by Rotary in 2004. Carolina is a secretary for the Institute of Industrial Engineers (IIE), an SPSU Ambassador, a previous SGA council member, a member of the International Students Association (ISA) as well as the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers, and she works in the SPSU Cafeteria. Carolina states that she will "offer my best to work with and for the student body."

Vice President: Shyam Nana

Shyam Nana is currently a junior Biology major at SPSU with ambitions to graduate in fall of 2007. Shyam is Charter President of the Indian Culture Exchange (ICE), member of the International Student Association (ISA), and has served as council member for SGA, also heading the Elections Committee before turning over the position to CJ Shifflett to run for Vice President. Shyam enjoys college football in his spare time.

Council Member: Yue Geng

Yue Geng is an international student at SPSU from China, and has been studying in the U.S. for a year and a half. Yue is currently the Social Director in the University Honors Program, and is also involved in the International Student Association. Yue states that she considers the responsibility of a SGA council member "to not only be a representative of students, but also a listener, a helper, and a messenger." Yue insists that "as a listener, I would like to be someone students could talk with about any issue they have. As a helper, I would like to devote my time to assist any student in any way I could. As a messenger, I would try my best to ask every student here at SPSU to get more involved with the campus activities."

Council Member: Jarret Bell

Jarret Bell is currently a freshman at SPSU and is majoring in Software Engineering. Jarret has previous experience with SGA, and is a member of the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) and the Residence Life Advisory Board. As a council member, he plans to

"establish SGA transparency to the student body, motivate the student body to participate in events, and improve communication between SGA and the students."

Council Member: Aisha Johnson

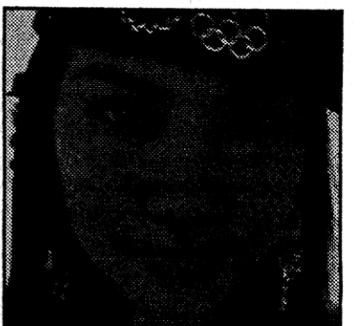
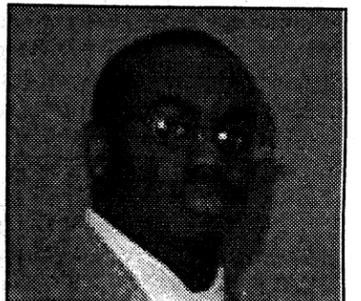
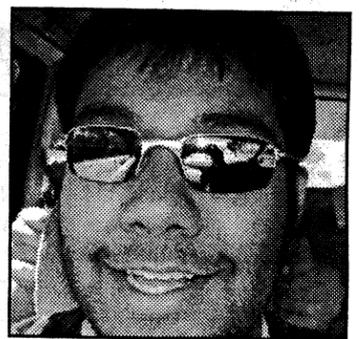
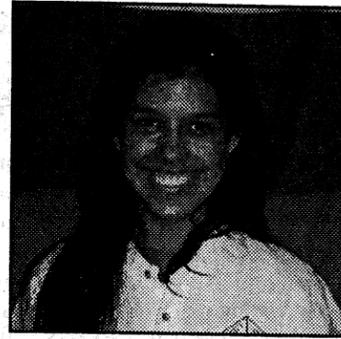
Aisha Johnson is a 27-year-old senior Telecommunications major holding a 2.73 GPA, with ambitions of a publishing career. Aisha is the Charter President of the SPSU Women's Lacrosse team, member of the International Students Association (ISA), The Sting, and the Outdoor Recreation Club. She has previously served on SGA as Parliamentarian and then Council Member, and has served in SGA subcommittees such as Budget and Finance and Internal Affairs. Aside from involvement in school organizations, Aisha has volunteered for Rock the Vote, the American Red Cross, and the American Stroke Foundation.

Council Member: Tram Nguyen

Tram Nguyen is striving to achieve a dual major in Biology and Mathematics. She is now in her junior year, and works on campus at the library and in several Biology lab classes. Tram is from Saigon, Vietnam, but has been at SPSU for a few years and is a very active member of the Honors Program. Tram would like to thank everyone who voted for her, and would like to see SPSU become more nationally and internationally recognized.

Council Member: Leo Cameron Felix

Leo Cameron Felix is an Architecture major at SPSU, and is currently involved with the American Institute of Architect Students (AIAS) as well as being an SPSU Ambassador. Leo is interested in promoting interaction among students of various majors on campus, and believes that "many of the majors offered by SPSU are closely related, thus, fostering a network between our students before graduation could be very beneficial in getting a 'leg up' as we each become professionals." He also supports "any organization that represents the diversity within SPSU's student body on an intercollegiate level (i.e. our club soccer



From left to right: Carolina Daza, Shyam Nana, Yue Geng, Jarret Bell, Aisha Johnson, Tram Nguyen, Leo Cameron Felix and Thao Tran.

team, honors program, etc.) and/or on an international level (ISA, study abroad programs, etc.)."

Council Member: Thao Tran

Thao Tran is in her sophomore year at SPSU. She came from Vietnam two years ago with the hope from her parents to "try to learn some English." Tram has had a wonderful experience with SPSU, and would like to give something back to the school by working on SGA and representing the student voice. Being an SGA member and an international student, Tram would like to "bring to SPSU more

and more activities in which we can enhance the benefit for both American students and international students." She acknowledges the value of peers at SPSU, and agrees that "the best way to learn is from your friends."

Other newly elected members not pictured above include: Amanda Palasik (Secretary/Treasurer), Amanda Benson (council member), Eddie Macham (council member), Markita Maxwell (council member), and Elliott Bahr (council member).

Upcoming Cruz'n Teke car show

Anthony Aksentis
TKE Event/Promotions Manager

Cars, food, music, prizes, and fun! That's what happens when you come to one of our annual car shows: Cruz'n Teke.

On Sunday, April 30th, 2006, The Xi Chi Chapter of Tau Kappa Epsilon fraternity will be hosting its annual "Cruz'n Teke" charity car show benefiting Alzheimer's research. As a collaborative effort between members and alumni, Teke chapters from throughout the nation have vowed to raise \$240,000.00 to the Nancy Reagan Research Institute by August 2006 after it was discovered that our 40th

United States President and unforgettable Frater Ronald Reagan had been stricken with the disease.

This year we'd planned on having it on April 8th, our campus orientation date, and the usual date we have the car show, but due to bad weather (thanks El Nino) we had to postpone the event to the April 30th date. This will be our 4th annual car show, and keeping with the trend, we hope to have a great time. Not only will there be tons of cars from Mustangs to Vipers, but we'll have food and music to keep the entertainment going. And what will a car show be without some vendors? (The answer is not good.) MacTools,

Napa AutoParts, and Butler Tire, to name a few, will be out there showing their products. And every car show has to have contests, and we do. There's a \$10 registration fee to enter a class and \$5 charge per extra class, so if you are working on a sweet new ride, bring her out and see if you win. Classes range from classics to imports, truck, audio, bike, and many more. Check out our website for more info: www.tkexichi.com/cruzn'teke.html

So get your car, friends, and family, and come out to have a great time (on the 30th) and know that you're helping make a difference in our world for the better.

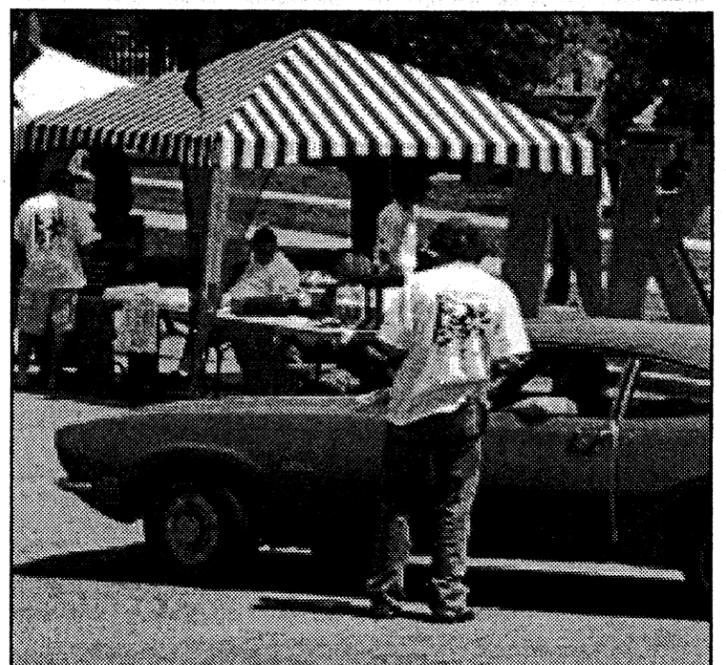


Photo courtesy TKE

The final Histories that Matter

The history of \$#@&*, and I don't mean swear words

CJ Shrader
Editor-in-Chief

Hello and welcome all to this 25th (roughly) and final installment of The Histories that Matter. For this final issue, I'm going to cover the histories behind the symbols for the dollar sign, the pound sign, the at symbol, the ampersand, and the asterisk. I was going to do the percent symbol, too, but trust me, it'd be nearly impossible to describe in words.

Dollar sign (\$)

The \$, or dollar sign as it is known in the olde countrye, is a pretty interesting symbol in that it is not entirely known where the symbol originated from. Well, it's as interesting as a symbol can be, which probably isn't that much to a normal person. As such, we'll take a look at just a few of the theories, including the most commonly accepted one.

The most plausible theory for the origin of the dollar sign refers to a shorthand way of writing the symbol for pesos. In early America pesos were a very common currency among the colonies, and the abbreviation for them was simply a P. If there was more than one peso, then it was a P with an S superscript. The theory states that, as time progressed, hurried scribes would superimpose these two symbols (and with a little skewing of the P) an S with a line through it was born.

Another interesting theory states that the dollar sign is merely shorthand for the abbreviation US, for United States. Place the U on the S, drop off the bottom of the U, and you have two bars running through an S, which is also the sign for a dollar. It is suspected that neither symbol (S with one bar or two bars) is older than the other, and both have always been used throughout history.

A third theory states that the symbol merely came from the abbreviation for a shilling. In old English, a stroke through a letter was sometimes used to signify that that letter was an abbreviation. One of the most popular cases of this is the British pound, abbreviated £. (The L stands for libra, the Latin word for a pound of weight. Well there you go, a little mini-history to help you on your way.) Since shillings were abbreviated with just an s, the dash through the letter could eventually be turned vertical to look like a dollar sign.

My personal favorite theory has to do with slavery. The Spanish word for slave is based off of the word for nail, since shackles worn by slaves were locked in place by shoving a freshly forged nail into rings or loops into the end of the shackle and then the nail was bent while still hot. The word for nail is clavo, and the word for slave is esclavo. If you take the "es" of esclavo and put a nail through it, you would get the dollar sign, \$ (or s-clavo). Since slaves were seen as property and therefore wealth, this symbol

began to represent currency. Or so the theory states.

Pound (#)

The pound symbol has a simple history. Remember when I said items used to have lines drawn through them to show that they were abbreviations for something? Well, lb, an abbreviation for pound, had a line drawn through it. Through many years of (mis)use, the symbol was eventually shortened into the # we are so familiar with today.

At (@)

The at symbol is another symbol derived from the British standard of drawing a line through a letter to denote it as an abbreviation. In this case, an a with a bar above or through it was used as an abbreviation for any unknown word that began with a. @ is merely the cursive (more commonly known as sloppy) form of that symbol.

Ampersand (&)

In Latin the word for "and" is "et." If you merge these two symbols together (e and t), you get a symbol that was a precursor to the one we are used to today. Over eight centuries, this symbol was sloppily shortened further into the ampersand symbol we are familiar with today.

It's interesting to note that there was a time when the ampersand was taught as the 27th letter of

the English alphabet. The word "ampersand" most likely stems from this usage. When a child would recite the alphabet, the child would recite all the way to Z, and then say "and per se and," which meant "and the symbol which by itself is and." Children, mindlessly reciting this, most likely compressed "and per se and" into the word ampersand, which we use today.

Asterisk (*)

The asterisk is merely a symbol meant to look like a star. The name "asterisk" even comes from the Latin word for star, astrum. The asterisk is a created symbol (not one that was created over time like the previous ones I've written about) used by printers during feudal times to indicate a date of birth. It was created then only for that purpose, and, for whatever reason, has survived until today.

The only real note about asterisks is that the star used to have six points. Over time, however, and with the help of sub-standard typewriters, the symbol was changed to only have five points in most modern typefaces.

The final farewell

I'd like to finish up this final Histories with a little me time, since I decided not to be one of those kids (or, especially, editors) that writes a long farewell article. The Histories are what really kept me in The Sting to start, and so it makes sense for me to say my farewell in them as well.

I've been writing for The Sting for nearly three years, and Editor-in-Chief for half that time. Through all my years here, I'm not going to say it's been easy. And it hasn't always been fun. And the pay wasn't that great. And it was a lot of unnecessary stress.

But through my years here I've made lots of good friends and even pissed off a few people. I've tried my hardest to improve The Sting and I hope future editors will do the same. I've learned a lot about the school and about what's going on around me. I even learned a thing or two about journalism.

In the end, I just wanted to thank everyone: the staff, my readers, my friends, my family, my ladyfriend, the administration, the faculty, and even my homeboy Jesus for being there through this unusually long tenure of Sting-dom. I'd also like to throw out a final call for anyone interested in writing to check the Sting out. With many of our writers graduating, we could really use you.

Finally, I'd like to thank everyone who sent in a submission to The Histories that Matter. And by everyone, I mean no one, because over the course of three years not a single student sent me an e-mail asking me to write a Histories over any topic. Now, your opportunity is gone. Good luck looking things up on your own! Thanks, jerks.

CD Review: Steve Hofstetter's
Cure for the Cable GuyEric John
Web Manager

I should preface this article with the fact that this is not a music CD. Steve Hofstetter is a comedian, and in most cases the title "Cure for the Cable Guy" has nothing to do with the content of the CD. This in no way however detracts from the overall comedy in the CD. I'll break this up into my overall feelings. I'll start with the bad, and end with the good. As an overall rating, I would say that his routine is very much worth the time to listen to it. You'll laugh, be enlightened, and at least have something to do for about an hour.



Photo courtesy www.observationalhumor.com

There are a few things about Steve that you will notice off the bat. In the first couple of tracks, he is definitely lacking in transitions. He'll let the laughter go, and then just pause and jump into the next joke. This is tolerable, but at the same time slightly annoying. The worst of his transitions, however, is how he will go from the joke to a serious topic about the joke by saying "but no" and then saying what he really thinks. This is probably what I consider the most aggravating thing in his routine. The routine and the jokes themselves are quite entertaining, and some of them are downright hysterical. But then others are jokes I have heard used by just too many people. For instance, on track 10 he uses the "ATM machine" joke talking about acronyms. I personally have heard it too many times for it to still be funny, but he does add a few twists to those well-known jokes.

Now for the good points, and these are numerous. You really have to start at the beginning of the CD, mainly so you hear Steve's introduction about himself. If nothing else, you will have an idea of where he is com-

ing from with his jokes. He uses a wide variety of comedy in his routines, and also brings up important topics. Oftentimes he discusses politics, religion, and real-world issues and actually makes very valid points on them during his comedy routine. This is part of his comedy, because he states that we have to deal with these issues, and we can also laugh at the things we do. Perhaps my favorite joke of his is when he is discussing poker and how we should have poker as an Olympic game. It's probably one of the best comedy routines I've listened to since I first heard Dane Cook.

If you are interested in the CD, or just finding out more about Steve Hofstetter, you can check out his website at www.stevhofstetter.com. There you can also purchase his CD/DVD combo of "Cure for the Cable Guy," which is definitely worth the price. I recommend watching the DVD first, because a couple of his jokes are sight gags and they just don't translate to the CD very well. Steve Hofstetter's CD is definitely worth a listen if you have the time and a sense of humor.

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