

TechNews

STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF ILLINOIS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY SINCE 1928

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Our mission is to promote student discussion and bolster the IIT community by providing a newspaper that is highly accessible, a stalwart of journalistic integrity, and a student forum. TechNews is a dedicated to the belief that a strong campus newspaper is essential to a strong campus community.

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SUBMISSIONS

TechNews is published on the Tuesday of each week of the academic year. Deadline for all submissions and announcements is 11:59 p.m. on the Friday prior to publication. Articles, photos, and illustrations must be submitted electronically to the TechNews website at technewsiit.com.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The editors reserve the right to determine if submitted material meets TechNews’ policy and standards. For more information about our editorial standards, please email assteditor@technewsiit.com.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters to the editor may be submitted by anyone, but are subject to review by the Editor-in-Chief. All letters-to-the-editor become the property of TechNews upon submission. TechNews does not accept or publish anonymous letters or sto

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IIT confessional Facebook page returns

Hannah Larson
ASSISTANT EDITOR

It’s back!
The infamous “IIT Confessions” Facebook page was taken down earlier this semester due to complaints, and it was building a nasty reputation. A TechNews opinion article last January, called for the page to cease operation after it had published 500 submissions, and perhaps received many more. The article was concerned about the integrity of the student body, what these “confessions” said about incoming students, and what it implies about IIT’s morale, both within, and outside our institution of higher education.

The new incarnate, titled “Confessions of IIT Students,” was created on April 8, and claims to be run by a different group of people than “IIT Confessions.” They accept submissions through email (IllinoisTechConfessions@gmail.com), or through direct messages from a personal Facebook account to the page. This does not strike me as a way to collect “anonymous” submissions, at all. Facebook and email communication can reveal personal details that make it easy for someone surmise your real identity, not to sound overdramatic.

I have no idea whom, or what group of people runs this new page, but I can certainly guarantee that these submissions are far from “anonymous.”

Between the posts that clearly make no sense, there are several that are especially vapid.

Many concern relationships, most of which express disdain for the 70 to 30 male to female ratio on campus. The problem with all of these “confessions” is that the people who post them are under the impression that women are on campus, for their pleasure: whether sexually, visually, or relationship-wise.

Whether or not you deem the women on campus worthy enough for your fedora-wearing, neck-bearded, NiceGuy™ selves that is not why any woman attends IIT.

I know I sound like Fred Armisen’s feminist bookstore character, Candace, from Portlandia, but it’s true. If you came to college looking for a romantic experience, and expect the people around you to fawn over you, and serve you, in the form of relationships and/or sex, then why the hell did you come to IIT, let alone any university?

While traditionally the college campus is regarded as a horny mating ground for rambunctious co-eds, this isn’t “Animal House,” and you aren’t John Belushi.

I’ve always regarded IIT as a studious place, where we party just as hard as we study, but that’s no reason for some people to expect other people to be obligated to look and act a certain way.

Autonomy is so hot right now, (so hot.)

Other confessions suggested that IIT sorority members thought they were “better” than sorority members at state schools, some called women on campus “damn ugly” and suggested that men prioritize their preferences over establishing a meaningful connection with a potential partner.

As well as inherently misogynistic posts on this Facebook page, I’ve also noticed some that are attacking people’s sexual identities and gender expressions.

Post #169 begins with someone objectifying a potential date, and ends with a transphobic slur, “So I pick this cute ass girl at iit [sic] (everything looked all right. had nice boobs and alll [sic] right ass). We went to dinner, made out and had a pleasant data [sic] at the CTA...When we came back and started closing the deal, I got a surprise. She had some extra junk in front. Since then I am actively seeking therapy and have a huge trust issue with girls.



Confessions of IIT Students
April 24 near Chicago

Post #193: "people, I can feel you're awkward and asexual vibes as I approach campus....go drink more than a few drinks and get naked -thank you" ~Anonymous



Confessions of IIT Students · 600 like this
8 hours ago

Post #169: So I picked this cute ass girl at iit (everything looked all right. had nice boobs and alll right ass). We went to dinner, made out and had a pleasant data at the CTA... When we came back and started closing the deal, I got a surprise. She had some extra junk in front. Since then I am actively seeking therapy and have a huge trust issue with girls. GUYS BE AWARE. SHEMALES ON THE HUNT!~Annymous

Images courtesy of Confessions of IIT Students

GUYS BE AWARE SH***** ON THE HUNT!"

Let’s point out the obvious flaws; first, don’t take someone out on a date to the CTA, at least take them to a restaurant. Second, I won’t even mention the atrocity that is the grammar and spelling of this post. Third, (this is going to be a huge truth bomb) some women have penises, and some men have vaginas. Not everyone is cisgender (sex assigned at birth aligns with gender.)

The trans* community at IIT has little, to no visibility. According to Trans Student Equality Resources (TSER), 80% of gender non-conforming students experience verbal harassment in the past year because of their gender expression. While the Gender, Violence, and Resource Access Survey found 50% of trans* people have been raped or assaulted by a romantic partner.

Whether you would like to believe so or not, things like this happen on IIT’s campus. Stigma against the trans* community, and the rape culture in which we live in, promote outdated ideas like the existence of a gender binary (the idea that there are only two genders), when in fact gender and sexuality are fluid. Rape culture also leads to skewed data, because sexual violence is not often reported, or taken seriously.

I like to say that IIT does not discriminate against anyone due to his or her race, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, gender expression, et cetera, but I am apparently wrong. Transphobia is real, and it’s happening on this campus.

I won’t go on to scold this person anymore, or any other people who think this way, but they definitely deserve some education, because they obviously aren’t getting any worthwhile lessons at IIT.

Ways to combat transphobia in everyday life, include: calling people by their preferred name and gender, don’t compliment someone by telling them they look like “a real man/woman” or “you never would have known,” do not tell a third party of a person’s status without their consent, don’t fetishize those who identify as trans*, words like “tr*nny,” “sh*male,” “h*-sh*,” and “sh*m” are never okay to use, under any circumstances. For more trans* resources, visit transwhat.org, or for local resources, contact Chicago’s The Center on Halsted, at centeronhalsted.org.

Social steps to end transphobia have resulted in movements for trans* rights in the marriage and job equality bills across the nation, as well as a call for gender-neutral bathrooms to become the norm.

The trans* community was explicitly left out of the Obamacare bill, and it would have covered any transition procedures, but because of transphobia and discrimination, it was purposefully left out of the bill.

IIT (like many other institutions of higher education have already done) should plan for gender-neutral bathrooms in the new

construction that has been announced. Most buildings already lack an adequate number of female restrooms, and many are handi-capable, and are single-person bathrooms already. Proper signage, and acceptance promoted by IIT would help combat transphobia on IIT’s campus.

Another rude comment cited IIT’s “asexual vibes” in Post #193, “people, I can feel you’re [sic] awkward and asexual vibes as I approach campus...go drink more than a few drinks and get naked -thank you.” I will reiterate, people are autonomous. They are allowed to be attracted, or not attracted to people, regardless of sex, gender, gender expression, race, ethnicity, culture, et cetera. Telling people to binge drink to behave like society says they should is inappropriate, and stupid.

There are a few confessions that redeem this page.

One is a confession of a student’s love of BDSM (bondage and discipline, dominance and submission, sadism and masochism), and many other students commented and gave advice on the subject. It was a great display of an open, sex-positive conversation, happening at IIT.

Another was a Muslim student’s confession that they thought their homosexual friends were judging the confessor for his/her faith, when in fact, they were perfectly accepting and open to anyone that has different beliefs.

Post #246 suggests that IIT students should stop bullying, and speak up for others that have, or are being bullied.

This page is also a place for students to air their grievances with the administration; one post mentioned the confessor’s ill will towards the Athletic Department Director for his decision to change divisions (which past issues of TechNews have discussed.)

There are other Facebook pages that are far more informative, and positive about IIT. Like the “Illinois Institute of Technology: Admitted Undergraduate” page. With over 1700 members (whereas the Confessions of IIT Students page has 700 fans), this page is one where discussions and forums are posted. Positive and reactionary results have been started in this Facebook group, and I hope they continue.

When IIT Confessions was popular, I questioned the integrity of the people policing the page, and how the administration could be okay with terrible personal statements being associated with IIT, but now I realize it’s not these pages that are the problems, it’s the people who submit confessions. We eat in the Commons and Center Court with these people; we sit next to these people in classes. We allow them to think this way.

It’s the people who express nasty, judgmental opinions through these avenues only to show how terrible they really are; they’re the real problem.