

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.

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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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Outrageous college expenses, required fees add up

Austin Gonzalez & Kyle Stanevich
TECHNEWS WRITERS

College is very expensive, no news there; sometimes students are lolled into complacency and forget just how expensive it is to get what they’re using. I long for the days when I did not have to pay \$110 just to turn in my homework. I really don’t appreciate six \$30 activity fees. I wonder which activities I participated in are worth more than \$30 tickets, other than to see the Sox. A \$300 Welcome to IIT “New Student Fee” is just icing on the already very expensive cake. But, it feels great to know that IIT has got my back with innovative technologies to save everyone time and money. Innovative technologies like that wonderful little site known as WebAssign.

To preface, buying books are one expense that no one ever looks forward to. In an attempt to save money, it is not uncommon for students to surf the internet and download any books they can find for free. Whether or not this is wrong is not my place to say, but with the high prices of textbooks, it’s not unexpected. Some students buy all of their textbooks form the bookstore; the final tally adds up quickly. One student paid \$300 for just one of her math books; of course she needed a second book that would have been equally expensive; even the used books are ridiculously expensive.

There might be an outdated version of the same book selling used for \$180, but that’s hardly an amazing deal. In addition, there are some classes with 5 or more “recommended” textbooks. If students are required to buy these already expensive books, what makes the bookstore or some professors think that students will buy these optional books? Books are a necessary evil that is understood. They are truly invaluable.

What really grinds my gears is that there are some departments who want us to pay to turn in homework. Using the internet to turn in homework is a scenario that sounds like a good idea. The students and professors are already hooked up to internet, plus it saves the environment by cutting paper waste. Immediate feedback on assignments is also an amazing opportunity to further classroom learning and involvement only possible in the past with one on one tutoring.

But every rose has its thorns; these websites require access codes that can only be obtained from a brand new physical book. Wonderful, students who need to purchase used books shouldn’t enjoy the same privilege that those who buy new get. They’re not excluded, no that’d be ridiculous, instead they get to spend \$75 to use the site for only a single term for that specific book. And if you have two classes with two different books? \$150 please. This is ludicrous. To turn in homework, which

is sometimes graded by completion, \$75 is a slap in the face. For those working to pay for their degrees, this amounts to a full day’s work or more. But there are always other options, like spending \$110 dollars so that you can have access to that site to do homework in that one book for a lifetime. Many students were worried that they’d have to pay the fee again, because so often are the books you need freshmen year used in later years. At least they were kind enough to give us the eBook with our purchase, right?

Fees add up quickly. College is already expensive to start, and having this system puts even more financial stress on students and families. Why is it that Blackboard and Piazza are free? Why is handing in homework from the book suddenly unacceptable? If administration would sit down and talk to well-intentioned students, I am sure that some of these ridiculous fees could be straightened out. This article is not taking stabs at any one person specifically, but just pointing out flaws in a system that is widely accepted. There are some very nice people who are willing to help students out with their problems. As students, call upon professors, administrators, SGA, and anyone else willing to listen to and act on this, unless, of course, you enjoy paying to turn in menial assignments.

Disclaimer: Not all administration is as horrible as depicted in this article.

Musing malls, festivals in Munich, Germany

Neesha Narayanan
TECHNEWS WRITER

Munich is one of those cities that gives off a very different vibe on entering it, unrelatable to other major German cities like Frankfurt, Berlin or Hamburg. It is a unique experience because the city has it’s own distinctive style that is evident in small things like the sidewalks, U-Bahn stations and the ornamentation on the houses along the main road. I could see the lavish taste in terms of lifestyle and cost of living, which I was not surprised by, as Bavaria is one of the richest states in Germany.

The moment we exited from the autobahn, I could see the famous BMW headquarters. The building was designed by Austrian architect Karl Schwanzer. The configuration consists of four cylindrical structures that are suspended from the central supporting tower, which makes the viewer feel as if the structure is floating. Also, it is one of the

few buildings that has been constructed from the top to the bottom. As I entered the city, I started to explore Marienplatz where I saw a cathedral towering on the horizon. It was the first time I had ever seen a church with a white interior and no stained glass windows. Right in front of this church was a beautifully maintained English garden. I saw many people enjoying the greenery and the beautiful weather.

Marienplatz is also the go-to place for shopaholics. There are two streets that lead to the northern part—one with rows of designer shops (you name it, they have it!) and the other with a mixture of trendy and comfy cafes, branded shops and a shopping mall. As I entered the shopping mall, I couldn’t help but notice the combination of hanging plants and light installations all over the ceiling. It was so beautifully done that it would make anyone want to go shopping!

Afterwards, I went to New Town Hall which is a huge, beautifully crafted building, built in Gothic Revival architecture style by Georg von Hauberrisser. The whole place

was always crowded, with people strolling around having a cup of coffee in the cafes in and around the place. It was where I saw the maximum number of tourists, as it is one of the major attractions in Munich.

I have always believed that going to any kind of festival will bring you closer to the local culture. One such event is the Oktoberfest. The Oktoberfest is an annual beer festival held in Munich, Germany.

You will see women wearing the traditional attire called dirndl, which is a light dress with a fitted waist and slightly circular knee-length skirt, and men wearing typical German lederhosen (leather pants). People book tickets as early as February due to the immense crowd.

The most important thing to remember is that you don’t get beer if you don’t have a seat, so don’t mind the expensive prices because the experience is worth it! The next time you go to Munich for Oktoberfest, wear the traditional attire, enjoy the beer and the people around!



Photos by Neesha Narayanan