To date, our staff has produce over one hundred issues of Technician, including one special freshmen issue and two tabloid inserts to preview football and basketball season. But in addition to keeping the presses running, we have also made great strides towards reaching the goals we outlined at the start of our term.

In April, we sat down and named four distinct categories for improvement during our term: training, recruitment, staff motivation and coverage. To date, this is our progress towards reaching these goals and the actions we have taken to achieve them.

**Training**

Though most of our training was held in the fall, we are going to continue finding ways to train our staff this semester.

In October, a number of our editors went to Dallas, Texas for a national college media conference. They were given the opportunity to participate in workshops and panels with fellow journalists and experts in the field. Each member came back better trained and filled with ideas for the spring semester.

During the first weeks in February we will be holding news reporting workshops with Dr. Thomas Lisk in the English department. Two one-hour sessions will teach the fundamentals of reporting and editing.

We are also continuing “mini-training” at each sections weekly meeting to zero in on specific mistakes. Already, these sessions have encouraged news reporters to develop graphics for their stories and have pinpointed mistakes in photos for the week.

**Recruitment**

On Sept. 3, Technician held its semester “Open House” to recruit new members. Over 40 students turned up and each section has seen between 3-10 new staff members as a result.

To compensate for semester turnover and keep our doors open, we will be holding another Open House on Jan. 29. To prepare, staff members have visited classrooms, distributed list-serve letters and ran house ads.

**Staff Motivation**

Staff motivation is one area where we have dropped the ball. We’ve organized staff contests each month but have not been consistent in generating enthusiasm. We’ve also had a hard time coordinating prizes that will motivate staff members. One of our goals this semester is to improve that process.

On a brighter note, however, we have continued our “Monthly Mingle” tradition that invites the entire staff into the office for pizza once a month. We’ve also organized a staff dinner and party to continue fostering a “family” atmosphere in the office.

**Coverage**

During the first semester we focused on expanding our coverage by implementing beats, revamping the “features” section and developing new sports ideas. This semester our focus will be improving that coverage. Quality vs. quantity.

Our first step was to create a “Page Two” design for the news section. National and international
briefs, wire stories, a campus calendar and the police blotter run each day in this section. We’ve received a great deal of feedback from students that these sections are well read.

The news section has also created a “Technician Investigates” series that will look into major issues across campus. The first story, which focused on book prices, was well-written and received. Sports has also begun focusing on sports issues in addition to sports coverage.

This semester we will be focusing on improving story organizations and ledes, better meetings coverage and more features stories in the Diversions section.

**Other Significant Actions**

By meeting time we hope to have a new Web site up and rolling. This site will have a new design and include archives, ad rates and staff information. It will also boast a search feature and a daily poll. Plans for online photo galleries are in the works.

Technician has also had a great showing in the nation, taking home a fourth-place finish in an on-site competition in Dallas for a football season preview “Red,” and second-place finishes in “The Best of Collegiate Design.”

**Problems Ahead**

As mentioned before, we will be focusing on improving our staff motivation and the quality of our coverage.

A looming problem in sight is April turnover. We are aware that a large deal of our staff is leaving - especially on the design side - so we will be focusing on training and preparing for those changes.

Money, as everyone knows, is always on our mind. We have cut more positions on the editorial side but will still be brainstorming creative ways to raise more money.

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