

No Classes Monday

MIT's
Oldest and Largest
Newspaper



The Weather

Today: Mostly sunny, 76°F (25°C)
Tonight: Clear, cool, 56°F (13°C)
Tomorrow: Warmer, 80°F (27°C)
Details, Page 2

Volume 116, Number 43

Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Friday, September 20, 1996

Committee Plans to Revamp Institute Writing Requirement

By Venkatesh Satish
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

The Committee on the Writing Requirement will soon present to students a preliminary proposal to eliminate the current Phase I and Phase II requirement and replace it with a system that will place greater emphasis on communication skills in the undergraduate curriculum.

The proposal would require students to take a "communication-intensive" class each of their four years at the Institute, said Kip V. Hodges PhD '82, chair of the Committee on the Writing Requirement.

"This initiative to change the

writing requirement is motivated by our belief that MIT at the present time does not give our students the writing and speaking skills necessary for professional success," said Professor of Science and Writing Alan P. Lightman, a member of the Committee on the Writing Requirement.

The details of the proposal, which was endorsed by the Committee on the Undergraduate Program in May, will be finalized after students give their input to the plan this fall, Lightman said.

The finalized plan would then require approval from the faculty to take effect, Lightman said.

It would take approximately seven years to completely change the current system, so current students would not be affected by the proposal, Lightman said.

This lag time is mainly due to the sheer number of classes that need to be added to the curriculum, the care needed to create special departmental classes, and the time necessary to hire new instructors whose sole job would be to help students improve their writing, he said.

Students would take yearly classes

"The culture at MIT is such that

Writing, Page 11



President Charles M. Vest and Director of the News Office Kenneth D. Campbell speak at the Knight Science Fellowship reception.

Merritt Reflects on a Decade in Dean's Office

By Anders Hove
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

If you had asked him a couple years ago when he would leave the dean's office, Dean of Undergraduate Academic Affairs Travis R. Merritt would have told you, "when they have to carry me outta here." As it turns out, Merritt, who will retire this fall at age 62, will be leaving on foot.

While he will soon plant his feet elsewhere, Merritt has no plans to leave MIT for good. "I'm leaving the dean's office in the sense that I'll be officially retired from the Institute," Merritt said. "I'll keep my hand in and keep up and active with the dean's office as sort of an unpaid consultant, sticking my nose in where people will let me, or invite me."

Merritt changed his retirement plans for a number of reasons, including MIT's new early retirement plan. But the change was largely motivated by Merritt's desire for what he calls "a more full life."

"I'll spend more time with my family, with my four daughters who live in the Northeast, and my grandchildren. I'm looking forward to doing more of that. I also hope to do more scholarly and creative writing," Merritt said.

During his 10 years in UAA, Merritt has put off most travel plans, including an oft-proposed trip to the Greek islands. He has also missed a favorite hobby: creating leaded stained glass. "If I can get an apartment with room, I will take that up again now that I'll have time. I always told myself I didn't have time before."

Being dean changed vantage point

Merritt left the Department of Humanities in

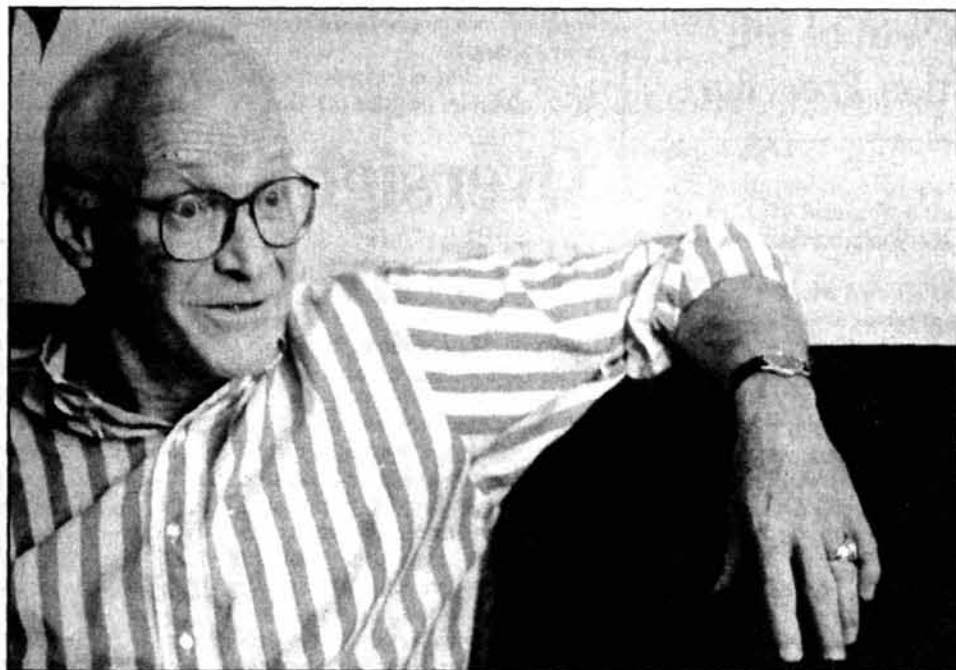
the mid-1980s to assist the dean's office with the new freshman advisory program. Because of his prior administrative experience, Merritt said he understood "that a lot of what deans do is go to meetings." Nevertheless, the change involved more than just a different title.

"I didn't know what it would be like to view an MIT education from the center of things," he said. "MIT is the most decentral-

ized education in the universe. Sitting over in Building 14, we thought we were 'it.' We were running our own little college. From the perspective of Building 7, it's possible to get a more complete picture of what an MIT education is and can become."

In spite of the broader view, the focus of

Merritt, Page 12



Dean of Undergraduate Academic Affairs Travis R. Merritt.

UAA Dean Search Proceeds

By Stacey E. Blau
EDITOR IN CHIEF

The search for a replacement for Dean of Undergraduate Academic Affairs Travis R. Merritt is underway, with a recent set of student forums providing the groundwork for the selection process.

Merritt will be retiring as of Oct. 1, although he will continue to be involved in some UAA activities.

The meetings centered primarily on students' ideas of the roles of the UAA office, although they also were intended as a way for students to voice suggestions on specific candidates for Merritt's replacement, said Dean for Undergraduate Education Rosalind H. Williams.

Most students did not make suggestions for specific candidates but instead talked about the qualities the future dean should have, said Merritt, who attended one of the meetings.

Williams said that the new dean should be in place by the start of next term. She currently has a list of about a dozen people under consideration for the position and is specifically "looking for a faculty member" to fill the post, she said.

Forums focus on student concerns

Many of the meetings focused on concerns students have about UAA and the areas under its purview.

Williams said that students discussed issues ranging from confusion over the mailing freshmen receive the summer before they come to MIT to the overall undergraduate academic advising system.

Students also commented on academic orientation during Residence and Orientation Week, the problems freshmen experience finding jobs in the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program, and the lack of academic credit classes offered during Independent Activities Period.

"What they were interested in was finding out what we thought of the dean's office and what they did — more what we knew about what they actually did," said Michael A.

UAA, Page 13

Over 600 Take Retirement Incentives

By Brett Altschul
STAFF REPORTER

Over 600 retirees — including 79 faculty — who accepted the special early retirement plan offered this spring will have retired officially as of Sept. 30.

The retirement plan was offered to faculty and staff members who are at least 55 and have worked a minimum of 10 years at MIT. The benefits of the plan include a \$500 per month stipend for people between 55 and 62 to last until they turn 65 and can receive Social Security benefits. There is also a separate one-time pension piece for all retirees equal to roughly one year of a retiree's salary and to be paid out in annuity, said Vice President for Human Resources Joan F. Rice. While the plan was aimed at

lowering the number of non-academic staff, it was not intended to decrease the number of faculty members, said Chair of the Faculty Lawrence S. Bacow '72.

"We have an aging faculty," Rice said. "You've got to be able to do the renewal" necessary to keep MIT a fresh and changing academic place, and turnover in faculty is part of that, she said. "It was a very good thing for MIT to do."

"The estimates of how many would elect to take the plan ranged from 40 to 80," Bacow said "There were some bets among the faculty on how many it would be."

Retirees stave off lay offs

The program's success prevented the administration from having to make a tough decision, Rice said.

"We probably would have had to lay off" staff had it been the case that not so many accepted the incentives, Rice. The high number of retirees "makes it less likely that we would have to be letting go people."

Many faculty members — a maximum of 49 percent — will be hired back by their departments to work part-time, Rice said. They will receive pension as well as a salary for their work, she said.

The arrangement will involve higher costs in the short-term, Rice said. It will take somewhere near but under 10 years for the Institute to break even on the costs of the retirement plan.

Rice said that it is important that faculty stay on to some extent. "You

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WORLD & NATION

Lawmakers Assured of Fair Probe Regarding CIA and Drugs

THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON

CIA Director John M. Deutch Thursday traveled to Capitol Hill to personally assure members of the Congressional Black Caucus that an independent investigator will pursue allegations that the CIA was instrumental in introducing crack cocaine into black communities in the 1980s.

The meeting, which lasted nearly an hour, seemed to satisfy members of the caucus. They said they have been receiving thousands of phone calls and faxes from their constituents on the issue since it was raised in a newspaper series last month.

"His willingness and openness seem to be pointing in the right direction," said Rep. Donald M. Payne, D-N.J., chairman of the caucus, as he emerged from the meeting in his office with Deutch and about a dozen caucus members. "But this is just a first step."

Deutch, who has strongly denied the allegations, repeated an earlier, written pledge that the CIA's inspector general would perform a full investigation and promised the inquiry will receive his full cooperation and access to agency records, according to caucus members.

The black caucus last week called for a congressional investigation after articles appeared in the San Jose Mercury News. The caucus also has asked President Clinton and Attorney General Janet Reno to launch probes.

Republicans Prevent Disclosure Of Ethics Report on Gingrich

LOS ANGELES TIMES

WASHINGTON

House Republicans Thursday fended off a Democratic effort to force disclosure of a preliminary report on alleged ethics violations by Speaker Newt Gingrich, R-Ga.

The 225-179 vote, split largely along party lines, killed a measure that would have required immediate public disclosure of a special counsel's initial findings in a two-year investigation of Gingrich's use of a tax-exempt, non-profit foundation to finance a college course that he taught in Georgia. Critics and political opponents argued that Gingrich acted improperly by using the money because the course was more politically partisan than educational.

While no one expected the measure — offered by Rep. John Lewis, D-Ga. — to clear the House, Democrats pushed for the roll call vote to compel GOP incumbents into a vote of support for Gingrich, who polls show is unpopular among many voters.

James Cole, the committee's special counsel, last month delivered a preliminary report to the Ethics Committee, which has not been publicly released.

House Minority Whip David E. Bonior, D-Mich., said at a news conference before the vote that Democrats wanted the results of the partial report revealed before election day on Nov. 5.

House Overrides Veto of Bill Banning Late Abortion Procedure

LOS ANGELES TIMES

WASHINGTON

In a stunning reversal, abortion foes in the House of Representatives voted Thursday to override President Clinton's veto of a bill that would outlaw a late-term abortion procedure denounced by its critics as infanticide.

In a 285-137 vote, House lawmakers rejected arguments that the ban would deny women who are experiencing crises pregnancies access to a procedure that could protect their health and future fertility. Opponents said the procedure is grotesque and brings a painful end to a life.

The measure is unlikely to become law, however, because the effort to override must also succeed in the Senate, where mustering the two-thirds majority required appears far more difficult. Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, R-Miss., said the upper chamber will vote on the issue as early as next Thursday but acknowledged that "it would be hard to override it."

WEATHER Farewell to Summer

By Marek Zebrowski

STAFF METEOROLOGIST

Astronomically speaking, this will be the last weekend of summer — the fall season begins officially on Monday. Appropriately enough, sunny and warm weather will close this week before cooler and stormier skies return to Boston next week, ushering in the new season.

A high pressure system positioned overhead on Friday will slowly move to the Southeast, giving us fair skies and pleasantly warm afternoons. Nights and early mornings will be chilly, especially inland, where winds will be light after dark. Meanwhile, a low over the Maritimes will re-intensify by Saturday, slipping in a backdoor cold front, accompanied by some clouds and cooler temperatures in lower east Maine. By Sunday, a large area of bad weather stalled over the Midwest for the past few days will progress eastward, spreading showers, followed by steadier rain early next week.

Today: Mostly sunny and pleasant. High 76°F (25°C) with moderate northwesterly breezes.

Tonight: Clear and cool. Low 56°F (13°C) in town, around 50°F (10°C) inland.

Saturday: Mostly sunny and warmer, with a high near 80°F (27°C). Some clouds to the North, with local sea breezes possible.

Sunday: Clouding up with showers arriving late in the day. Highs 65-70°F (19-21°C), lows near 60°F (16°C).

Spiro T. Agnew Remembered As One Plucked from Obscurity

By R.H. Melton

THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON

It was the new politics of Maryland, the friends of Spiro T. Agnew recalled Wednesday, that sent the Greek immigrant's son on a breathtaking rise from lowly suburban Baltimore to the halls of the White House.

And it was the Free State's old traditions — the ones involving envelopes of cash conveyed quietly to public officeholders — that marked him for political ruin even as he began that remarkable climb to power.

Until his death Tuesday of leukemia, Agnew maintained his principal residence in California, but to those who knew him best he was first and last a Marylander, who summered every year in Ocean City like thousands of other beachgoers in the state.

"I think he still considered himself a Marylander," said former governor Marvin Mandel, who played a decisive role in Agnew's capturing the governor's mansion 30 years ago.

Four years earlier, in 1962, the gods of politics smiled for the first time on Spiro Theodore Agnew, when a bitterly divided Democratic Party handed the Republican the keys to the office of Baltimore County executive.

Then, in 1966, state Democrats did it again, nominating a gubernatorial candidate many considered so unfit for the office that party leaders like Mandel defected and quietly helped Agnew. It was an important moment in the state's political life as Agnew — that would be Ted Agnew, progressive Republican Ted Agnew — showed that suburban government administrators, not just inner-city machine pols, could compete statewide.

"His initial mark was that he took suburban politics big-time,"

recalled journalist Frank A. DeFilippo, a former Mandel aide. "His was a totally different take on things."

But there was also that other side, a certain arrogance that installed the sauna and wine cellar in the executive mansion and sent the governor to the golf course every Wednesday afternoon.

"He was difficult to like," DeFilippo said. "He was a relentlessly middlebrow kind of guy, standoffish. He didn't like to work."

Agnew had a remarkably thin skin when it came to the news media, a testiness that went all the way back to the county executive days. Once, a journalist asked the politician how it was he stayed so crisp-looking all the time, to which Agnew replied: "I never cross my legs or lean back against the chair."

In 1968, after Nixon plucked him as his vice-presidential candidate, Agnew caused a flap when he walked to rear of campaign plane and asked about napping Baltimore Sun reporter Gene Oishi: "What's the matter with the fat Jap?"

"He was a petty politician," said Blair Lee IV, a Silver Spring developer whose Democrat father became governor after Mandel resigned in his own scandal. "He had the look. He clearly didn't have the integrity."

Agnew wasn't governor long enough to leave a deep imprint on state government—he prepared only two state budgets—and some Democratic critics still fume at the \$30 million shortfall he left his successor Mandel and the thousands of Marylanders he ordered trimmed from the Medicaid rolls.

Mandel, who was forced to raise the sales tax in Agnew's aftermath, takes a fairly generous view, praising his political moderation. "He didn't have the opportunity to get

his hands into the real operations of government," Mandel said.

Sometimes when he tried, the General Assembly blocked him. Once, when Mandel was speaker of the House of Delegates, Agnew tried to abolish the state censorship board by erasing all funding for it in the state budget. Mandel and other legislative leaders had to educate the new governor that he couldn't always do it his way.

The famous Agnew temper flared in the spring of 1968, when he lectured leaders of Baltimore's African American community after rioting rocked the city in the wake of Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination. But the public dressing-down caught Nixon's eye, and a GOP ticket was born.

In one of the turnabouts that keeps politics interesting, the Nixon-Agnew campaign failed to carry Maryland that fall, as Democrats used their old standby — walking-around money — to energize black voters for Hubert H. Humphrey. Legend has it that Mandel's money men spent \$14 a head to get out the vote. A jittery Nixon was furious at Agnew on election night, cursing him out for failing to carry even his own state.

"The very same people, the Democrats, who got him elected in '66 defeated him in '68," DeFilippo said. "The state had caught onto him."

Lee, whose family and career are steeped in Maryland politics, marvelled Wednesday at Agnew's life story, the swiftness of his success and the certainty of his final disgrace.

"Lightning kept striking this guy who never had a machine, an organization or a record," Lee said. "He was a little hustler out of Baltimore County who made it to the White House, with no anchor, no mooring, no core. Gives politics a bad name."

Oversight Panel Accuses Clinton Of Travel Office Fiasco Cover-up

By Robert L. Jackson

LOS ANGELES TIMES

WASHINGTON

With Democratic members staging a walkout, a Republican-controlled House committee Wednesday formally accused President Clinton of directing a widespread coverup of the 1993 White House travel office fiasco, including his wife's role in it.

At a stormy session at which members of the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee tried to out-shout one another, Democrats accused the panel's chairman, Rep. William F. Clinger Jr., R-Pa., of abusing his power by making a politically motivated attack on the president in the midst of an election campaign.

The committee's report requires no further governmental action and ends the congressional inquiry into the firings of seven travel office employees. But the report is expected to be studied closely by the staff of Whitewater Independent Counsel Kenneth W. Starr, who is investigating whether any White House aides gave false statements to Congress under oath in an effort to protect first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton in the travel office case.

With 24 Republicans voting to endorse the report after Democrats stalked out of the hearing room, the committee issued a report alleging that Clinton "engaged in an unprecedented misuse of the execu-

tive power, abuse of executive privilege and obstruction of numerous investigations into the travel office."

The alleged coverup was intended to conceal from Congress why the travel office employees were abruptly fired in May 1993, the report said.

The committee said travel director Billy Ray Dale and his colleagues were dismissed so that Harry Thomason, a Hollywood producer friend of the Clintons, and Catherine Cornelius, a distant cousin of the president, could seek a share of the government's travel business. The report alleged that Clinton and White House aides engaged in "a colossal damage-control effort" — obstructing the committee's two-year inquiry and delaying release of key records to hide the motivation for the travel office purge.

The president and his aides also sought to conceal that Mrs. Clinton had pushed for the firings, at Thomason's urging, the report said. "White House aides initially ... withheld information about Mrs. Clinton's involvement in the firings," the committee charged.

The first lady has denied responsibility for the dismissals. And Mark D. Fabiani, special White House counsel, attacked the report as "shoddy and unprofessional," declaring that "today's McCarthy-like charges by the Newt Gingrich-led Republicans

are as meaningless as they are political."

Rep. Henry A. Waxman of California, the panel's ranking Democrat, said before leading the walkout that the report made "unsubstantiated character attacks ... in a shameful and crassly partisan smear campaign."

"I don't approve of everything the White House did, but where is the specific evidence of wrongdoing?" Waxman asked.

Rep. Paul E. Kanjorski, D-Pa., charged that Clinger and other Republicans were trying to "attain political rather than governmental objectives by attacking the character of the President of the United States with conclusions unsupported by any evidence."

Kanjorski said the report is indicative of a highly political atmosphere on Capitol Hill that should come to an end. "Like horses, we should take it out and shoot it," Kanjorski said of the GOP-controlled Congress.

In calling for approval of the report, Clinger said it "demonstrates the failures of the Clinton White House to live up to the ethical standards they themselves promised to maintain."

Washington attorney Robert S. Bennett complained Wednesday that Thomason, his client, was never given a chance to testify before the committee in public to respond to the allegations against him.

Strife in Three-Person Presidency Threatens Peace Again in Bosnia

By Tracy Wilkinson
LOS ANGELES TIMES

SARAJEVO, BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

The Bosnian Serb member of a just-elected three-person presidency Thursday backed away slightly from his goal of uniting with Serbia proper but tossed up another batch of objections that will thwart Bosnia's new government.

Illustrating the complexity of forming Bosnia's postwar institutions, Momcilo Krajisnik rejected the idea of sitting with his presidential colleagues in Sarajevo — the capital under Muslim-Croat control that the Bosnian Serbs spent much of a 3-year war trying to destroy.

Many of Krajisnik's statements, the first since his election, were muted and careful. But he also exhibited a much lower level of cooperation than portrayed earlier in the day by Carl Bildt, the international coordinator of the Bosnian peace plan.

Bildt said he was confident that he could persuade the three presidents — a Serb, a Muslim and a Croat — to share power and work together as a handful of ethnically mixed government bodies are constructed here. But already, disagreements have emerged over where the

presidency should meet, how long its chair should serve and even over the term "government," which the Serbs reject.

Contradicting the West's interpretation of the U.S.-brokered Dayton, Ohio, accord, Krajisnik said he believed the chair of the presidency to which he was elected should rotate, meaning he and his Muslim and Croat counterparts would each be allowed to serve at the head for eight months. In fact, the two-year lead post is supposed to go to the top vote-getter in last Saturday's election, according to international officials in charge of executing the peace plan.

"It is unfathomable that a Muslim who was president for the last six years should be president for the next two years," Krajisnik said at a news conference in the Bosnian Serb stronghold of Pale, a ski resort nine miles southeast of Sarajevo.

Krajisnik said he thought the new presidency ought to govern from a building put up along the boundary line that divides the Serb and Muslim-Croat halves of Bosnia. He offered a much wider definition of Sarajevo than international mediators recognize. His includes Serb-held suburbs south of the capital.

"Pale is also Sarajevo," he said. "There are so many beautiful places in 'Sarajevo' where we can meet."

Krajisnik indicated he had given up, for now, the goal of uniting the Bosnian Serb Republic with Serbia proper. But he said reunification of the divided country was not in the cards. "Re-integration should be of something that was once integrated," he said.

Asked if he were the best man for the job, Krajisnik said there were many other more fit candidates "especially one man whose name cannot be mentioned." He was alluding to indicted war crimes suspect Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb leader who is banned from public politics but whose influence reigns.

Krajisnik accused the West — implicitly the United States — of rigging the vote count to give an advantage to Bosnian Serb opposition candidates, some of whom fared surprisingly well. But he said his nationalist Serb Democratic Party, or SDS, prevailed in the end by winning a legislative majority. "God saved the SDS and the Serbian people," Krajisnik said. "And whoever is against God and the Serbian people has to lose."

Nightline is currently seeking new volunteers. Call x3-8800 for more information.

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OPINION

Food Service Must Move Forward

Last spring the Department of Housing and Food Services announced a one-year extension of Aramark's food service contract with MIT. The justification offered at the time was that

Editorial

HFS was not prepared to start the bidding process. Now, HFS has announced that Aramark's contract will likely be extended yet another year, making for a cumulative two-year extension of Aramark's original five-year contract. These piecemeal extensions have been detrimental to the MIT community and food service customers in particular.

Each time HFS has extended the Aramark contract, they have offered the explanation that more time was needed to get the bidding process underway. First the vice president of operations had to set up a process for reviewing contracts and overseeing food services — namely, the nascent dining services review group. Then there was the time-consuming process of actually going out to bid. As it turns out, HFS hasn't even started soliciting bids for the MIT contract.

In addition to the delays, there has been essentially no discussion of what for many is the central issue of the Aramark dilemma: competition. Many students believe that MIT should at least experiment with allowing multiple vendors into the MIT market. Instead of fleshing out this idea, however, HFS appears

to have concentrated its attention on providing better oversight of Aramark's operations.

The fact remains that HFS had plenty of time — five full years — to set up a process and go out to bid. During those five years, Aramark faced mounting complaints about the quality of food and services they provide. Moreover, Aramark has been almost totally unresponsive to student leaders working to improve food service in dormitories. HFS lamely allowed the contract to run out without so much as starting the bidding process.

There is a distinct possibility that HFS has simply decided to cave to Aramark propaganda according to which MIT's market is too small for any contractor to serve well. According to this view, the complaints people have now would apply equally to any other food service provider.

At this rate, it seems likely that Aramark will continue to manage food services at MIT well into the next century. This situation could have been avoided if HFS had devoted adequate attention to the problem earlier. There is no good reason why the bidding process could not have started on time, with student input. The dining services group must act now to ensure that we are not listening to an explanation for another one-year extension next year at this time.

Letters To The Editor

Odor Problem Is Nationwide

Having just read Tuesday's column by Thomas R. Karlo '97 entitled "MIT Must Act to Prevent Student Odor," I remembered some graffiti that I saw in an elevator at Stanford University.

In one handwriting were the words: "Die CS non-bathers!" Right below that, in another handwriting: "It's my party and I'll stink if I want to."

Even at that bastion of beautiful people, sun, and fun, they have the same "problem" that we do. As a recovering nerd, I feel that we should give the non-bathers the space they need to be themselves.

Brian T. White '85

The Tech Should Be More Selective

After reading the sometimes funny — but mostly bizarre — column by Thomas R. Karlo '97 ["MIT Must Act to Prevent Student Odor," Sept. 17] on why MIT should act to

"prevent student odor," I could not help but recall similarly bizarre opinion articles that have emerged as of late. I recall two opinion articles by a news staffer at *The Tech* entitled "Recitations for Class Should Not Be Ignored" and "Planning Ahead Can Bring Unforeseeable Difficulties."

Both of these articles were frighteningly inane. Writing, like any form of expression, is a window into one's intellect. That is to say, if a person expresses something (especially in mass media like *The Tech*) to the public, then some mechanism inside of them must have approved of the content of the expression before the expression was made. When I pore over the two opinion articles I have referred to above, the adjective "frightening" seems most suitable to describe the mental mechanism that approved those two articles. I have no doubts that his position on *The Tech* as a news staffer helped those articles make ink.

The nature of some recently published opinion articles makes me wonder if these articles reflect poorly on *The Tech* itself. *The Tech* does state in its opinion policy that columns "are written by individuals and represent the opinion of the author, not necessarily that of the newspaper."

Be that as it may, I have a feeling that there is some sort of "screening" process at *The Tech* that determines which opinion articles make it to print and which articles do not. *The Tech* does reserve the right to edit submissions, so they must reserve the right to read them, too. And when fruitless articles end up on an editor's desk, why aren't they cast into the reject pile?

The nature of the articles that a newspaper prints does reflect (or so I think) on the newspaper. A person very well might decide whether or not to read the next issue based upon the articles in the previous one. Columns that stink far worse than any student who doesn't shower and ones by whiny sophomores expressing their dismay at not being able to plan classes into the year 2002 could be driving readers away from *The Tech*.

After all, it is those who read a newspaper that keep it in print. And so these reflections from a concerned mind will close on this note: The quality (or lack thereof) of articles in a newspaper reflects on both the author and the newspaper. For the sake of the readers, let's all work together on upgrading the quality of the stories we write and publish.

John A. Modzelewski '98

Student Life Group Needs Student Members

Column by Anders Hove
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

The deans' office is at it again. Sometimes it seems that the full-time mission of our friends in Building 7 is to set up committees with broad missions while allowing only token student involvement.

This time the culprit is Rosalind H. Williams, the new dean for undergraduate education. She's spent the last several months recruiting faculty members to pack the task force on student life and learning. No small job, given the blandly-stated mission of the group. The mission statement includes the following murky projects: to "review and articulate MIT's educational mission" and to "evaluate MIT's current educational processes and identify changes that would enhance or support the educational mission." If someone wanted me to undertake such a project, I'd head for the hills.

Surprisingly, however, Williams had little difficulty signing on nine big-name professors

from a variety of departments. Although the committee may be joined later by two students, MIT wasted no time in packing the faculty members off on a Cape Cod junket and bull session. Cushy.

I'm willing to admit that the esteemed faculty members chosen to sit on the committee are a lot savvier than most of their colleagues. I don't know many of the members personally, but I know that some are highly involved in the community, and that others have a good rapport with their students. Associate Professor of Political Science Charles Stewart III is even housemaster at McCormick Hall. So I can't say this group is completely out of touch with students. No doubt President Charles M. Vest and Williams found that these nine people were among the most qualified faculty at MIT to study issues related to students.

The fact remains, however, that this committee embodies the paternalistic and condescending attitudes held by the faculty and, it

appears, Williams herself. The committee was conceived and formed by administrators and faculty; it is packed with faculty. Its mission is to address issues of student life, yet none of the current members are students.

By way of example, just have a look at a map of where the committee members currently live. Only one lives in Cambridge. One third of the members live in Lexington. How many MIT students have ever even been to Lexington? As far as student life is concerned, Lexington might as well be Siberia.

Of course many faculty spend a great deal of time on campus. They work in labs, often with students. Sometimes they teach. A handful of them attend faculty meetings or sit on Institute committees. When they interact with other faculty they do so as colleagues, sharing information. When they interact with students they do so as imparters of information. There is little dialogue.

Hove, Page 5

Opinion Policy

Editorials, printed in a distinctive format, are the official opinion of *The Tech*. They are written by the editorial board, which consists of the chairman, editor in chief, managing editor, executive editor, news editors, and opinion editor.

Dissents, marked as such and printed in a distinctive format, are the opinions of the signed members of the editorial board choosing to publish their disagreement with the editorial.

Columns and editorial cartoons are written by individuals and represent the opinion of the author, not necessarily that of the newspaper.

Letters to the editor are welcome. They must be typed, double-spaced and addressed to *The Tech*, P.O. Box 397029, Cambridge, Mass. 02139-7029, or by interdepartmental mail to Room W20-483. Electronic submissions in plain text format are encouraged, and may be mailed to letters@the-tech.mit.edu. All submissions are due by 4:30 p.m. two days before the date of publication.

Letters and cartoons must bear the authors' signatures, addresses, and phone numbers. Unsigned letters will not be accepted. No letter or cartoon will be printed anonymously without the express prior approval of *The Tech*. *The Tech* reserves the right to edit or condense letters; shorter letters will be given higher priority. Once submitted, all letters become property of *The Tech*, and will not be returned. We regret we cannot publish all of the letters we receive.

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MIT Must Dump Old Ways And Work with Students

Hove, from Page 4

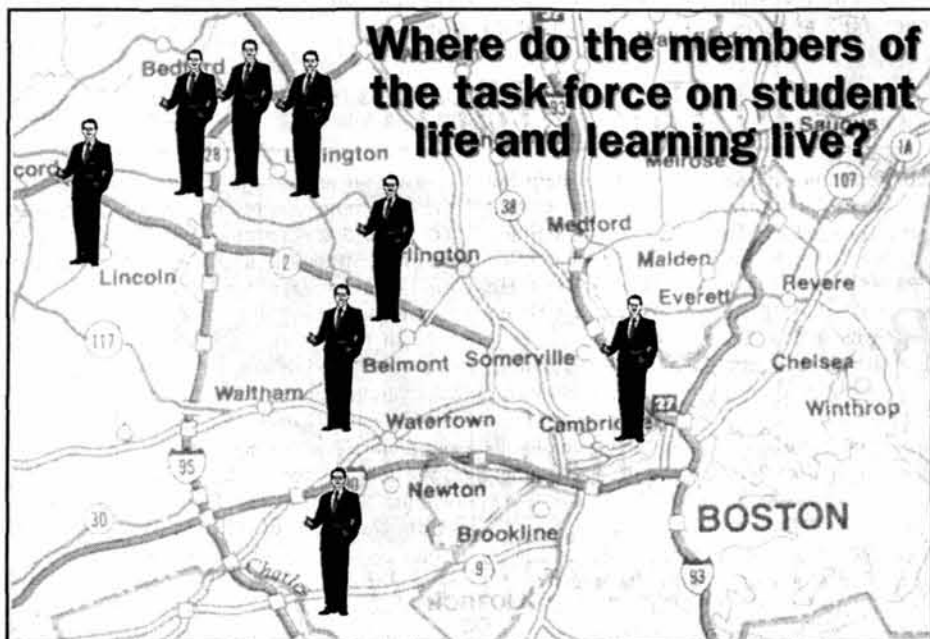
Williams does not regard any of this as a problem. She is sure that, with study, these faculty will come to understand student life issues. According to a Sept. 11 article in *Tech Talk* entitled "Task Force to Review Student Life and Learning," the committee will be chatting with some students right after it gets done meeting alumni, staff, and various Institute committees. How reassuring. The entire operation smells more like an exercise in anthropology than a serious attempt to bring the community together.

I believe that the Institute would be better served by opening up these processes to the whole community. Faculty members have a lot to learn from students; furthermore, students have a lot to learn about managing their own lives. It is within the bounds of MIT's educational mission that the students be asked to work with the faculty in moving this organization into the next century. Instead of mak-

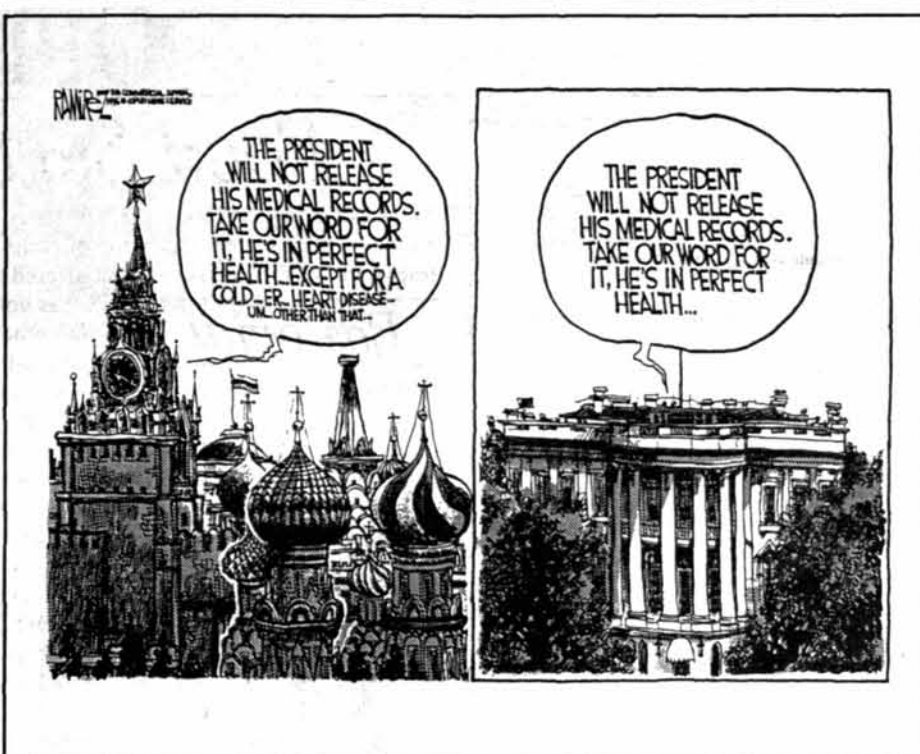
ing the students their partners, MIT has asked them to just put up with whatever the faculty or administrative departments paternalistically decide.

It's worth saying that the real reason this committee has been stacked with faculty has nothing to do with qualifications or information and everything to do with standard operational procedure. Williams and Vest are faculty members and administrators. They regard what happens at meetings of the academic council and faculty as real and everything else as peripheral. The institutional symbols and prestige are designed to place value on their place in this community. Small wonder that they should select from among their own group rather than from the community at large.

MIT may lead the world in science and technology. But as long as it clings to the sort of outmoded policy-making norms exemplified by the task force on student life and learning, MIT the university remains a 19th-century organization.



ANDERS HOVE-THE TECH



MARSHALL SAVAGE



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CAFFEINE

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- Elections will be held September 26-28th
- Question? email ua-comments@mit.edu

Presidential Task Force

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rllee@mit.edu

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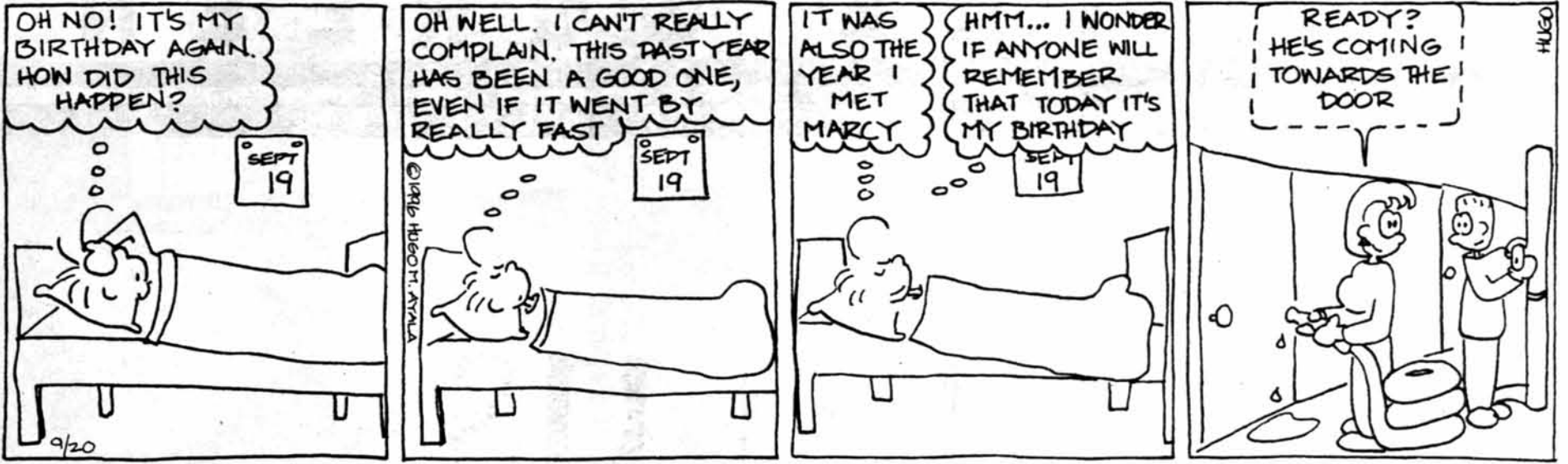
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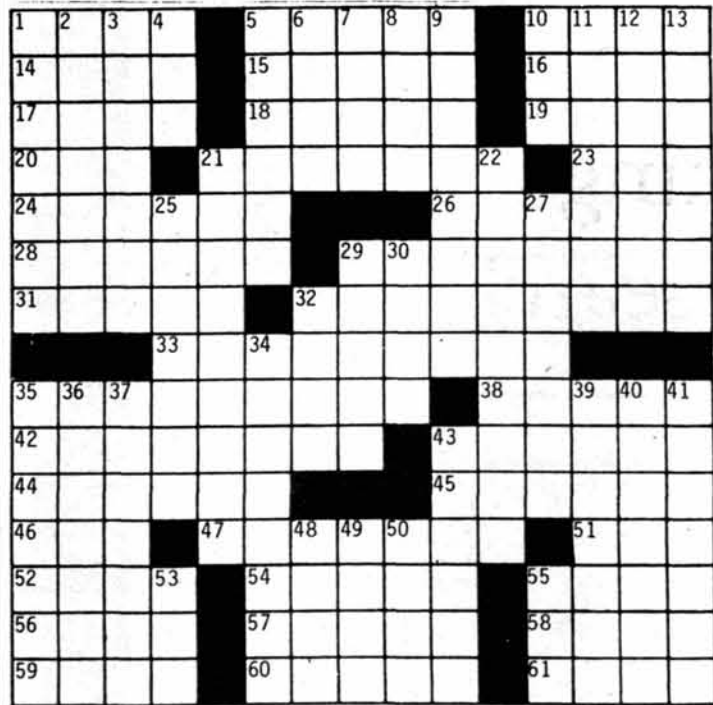
Room 6-120

Off Course

By Hugo



PUZZLE SOLUTIONS FROM LAST ISSUE



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- ACROSS**
- 1 Shaw's "The Apple ___"
 - 5 Onion form
 - 10 Military group member
 - 14 Construction member (2 wds.)
 - 15 Ham it up
 - 16 Concerning (2 wds.)
 - 17 Kipling's "Rikki-Tikki-___"
 - 18 State flower of New Hampshire
 - 19 Chinese border river
 - 20 Boxing great
 - 21 Dwindles, as a supply (2 wds.)
 - 23 Prohibit
 - 24 Destined for failure
 - 26 Stair parts
 - 28 Entangle
 - 29 Geological epoch (2 wds.)
 - 31 "Gone With the Wind" star
 - 32 Villain
 - 33 Terminus of 19-Across (2 wds.)
 - 35 Truthful
 - 38 Loud noise
 - 42 Like spoiled food
 - 43 Imitated a banshee
 - 44 Let
 - 45 ___ Christie
 - 46 Sturm ___ Drang
 - 47 Santo ___
 - 51 Sot's sound
 - 52 Office note
 - 54 Norse god (var.)
 - 55 Neither you ___
 - 56 The Emerald Isle
 - 57 Actor Nick ___
 - 58 Harte or Maverick
 - 59 High-speed planes
 - 60 Bum ___
 - 61 Rooney or Hardy
- DOWN**
- 1 Fortress
 - 2 Seafood dish
 - 3 Italian dish
 - 4 Part of TNT
 - 5 Hoodwink
 - 6 "___ the Mood for Love"
 - 7 Army officers (abbr.)
 - 8 Common Latin abbreviation
 - 9 Very proper
 - 10 ___ station
 - 11 Hungry ___
 - 12 On the loose (2 wds.)
 - 13 Advice
 - 21 Made double-sure
 - 22 RV
 - 25 Hungarians
 - 27 Missouri city
 - 29 Tonto's horse
 - 30 Hauls
 - 32 Unappetizing food
 - 34 Periods of relaxation
 - 35 Encyclopedia parts
 - 36 Levelers
 - 37 Let in again
 - 39 Wind instrument
 - 40 Negated a layoff
 - 41 Gluttony
 - 43 Former New York City mayor
 - 48 ___ court
 - 49 Inactive
 - 50 Ex-cager Thurmond
 - 53 Switch positions
 - 55 League for 50-Down

SOLUTIONS IN THE NEXT EDITION OF THE TECH

The Graduate Student Council announces:

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Senior House (Amherst & Ames St.)	8:01 am	9:01 am	10:01 am	11:01 am	7:01 pm	8:01 pm	9:01 pm
Ashdown House (Amherst)	8:04 am	9:04 am	10:04 am	11:04 am	7:04 pm	8:04 pm	9:04 pm
Burton House	8:06 am	9:06 am	10:06 am	11:06 am	7:06 pm	8:06 pm	9:06 pm
Tang Hall/Westgate	8:07 am	9:07 am	10:07 am	11:07 am	7:07 pm	8:07 pm	9:07 pm
Edgerton House/Random Hall	8:09 am	9:09 am	10:09 am	11:09 am	7:07 pm	8:07 pm	9:07 pm
Arrive Star Market (approx.)	8:30 am	9:30 am	10:30 am	11:30 am	7:30 pm	8:30 pm	9:30 pm
Leave Star Market (approx.)	9:40 am	10:40 am	11:40 am	12:40 pm	8:40 pm	9:40 pm	10:40 pm

The shuttle is a free service for all MIT students and families, sponsored by Star Market and organized by the Graduate Student Council. All times are approximate, however, the bus will allow AT LEAST ONE HOUR for shopping. You may request to be dropped off at ANY residence hall, not just those listed. If you ride regularly and would be willing to help with the sign-up list, or if you have any questions, please contact gjcoram@mit.edu. To add yourself to the grocery shuttle mailing list, athena%blanche.grochut-a_username

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mit medical



THE ARTS

ON THE SCREEN

— BY THE TECH ARTS STAFF —

- ★★★★:Excellent
- ★★★:Good
- ★★:Average
- ★:Poor

★★★ The Last Supper

Five liberal graduate students have an unexpected guest who, over dinner, manages to offend everyone at the table. After goading the students with the statement "Hitler had the right idea," he picks a fight and one of the students kills him. Seeing their action as a service to society, they start inviting over other conservatives they don't like — skinheads, anti-gay priests, etc. — to poison and bury in the backyard. —David V. Rodriguez. *Tomorrow at LSC.*

★★ Maximum Impact

When a man that looks exactly like him turns up dead, Jean-Claude Van Damme learns that he had a twin brother taken from him at birth and sent to Russia, where he grew up as part of the Russian mob. Van Damme, in an attempt to "understand the brother he never knew," follows his brother's trail, causing him to get involved in a confusing bit of mob politics (they're all fighting each other but we don't know why), and taking up with his brother's girlfriend. The story is a bit too sentimental and gets into a rhythm only once Van Damme learns his brother's true identity and decides it's time to start taking revenge. But this scene comes too late to make the movie worthwhile. —DVR. *Sony Cheri.*



Tom Cruise makes a daring escape in *Mission: Impossible*, showing tonight at LSC.



Jean-Claude Van Damme fights against a Russian brute without losing his towel in *Maximum Risk*.

★★½ Mission: Impossible

Never mind the title: besides the famous theme tune and the initial premise of the Impossible Mission Force, Brian DePalma's film version of the 1960s spy drama has very little to do with the TV show. IMF leader Jim Phelps (Jon Voight) presents his team with a mission to intercept a top-secret list of agents for sale to a worldwide legion of criminals, but when things go awry in Prague, superagent Ethan Hunt (Tom Cruise) has to weave his way through the various plots and counterplots to find a traitor within the organization. This is Cruise's picture, and, though much of the "team" is dispatched early on, the remainder of the big-name cast is wasted. Even though the film moves at a swift enough pace

so that you don't have time to dwell on the implausible plot details, the only memorable setpiece is Cruise's wire-suspended entrance into an impregnable, sterile CIA computer room. —Scott C. Deskin. *Tonight at LSC.*

★★★★ Trainspotting

Trainspotting tells the story of a group of Scottish heroin users. Already released in England, it has become the third-largest grossing British-made film and has received a large amount of criticism for not condemning heroin use. The story is told from the view of heroin users, without judgement, which makes the story feel completely genuine and totally fascinating. —DVR. *Sony Nickelodeon.*

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Dammed for Life

by Jessica Wu



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- Stephen Ashton, AMERICAN CINEMATOGRAPHER

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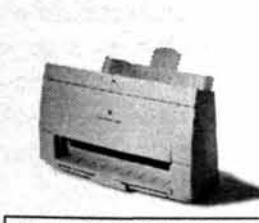
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Building Renovations Make Changes Around Campus

By Erik S. Balsley
STAFF REPORTER

A number of renovations to buildings around the Institute will mean not only structural changes but also the shifting around of the space that a number of departments

and other groups currently occupy around campus. While renovations in Building 7 are done and changes in Building 56 come to a close in December, the plans that have been in the works for several decades to tear down

Building 20 may actually be coming to fruition in only a year and a half. The renovation of the fourth floor of Building 7 is the last phase of the School of Architecture and Planning's plan to "move the Department of Architecture back to its traditional home," said William J. Mitchell, dean of the school architecture and planning.

When Mitchell arrived at MIT four years ago, he found "fragments [of the school] all over the place." He subsequently began work on developing a long-term plan to move the architecture department away from its location at the time, Buildings N51 and N52.

"Essentially, we tried to go back to the fundamental logic of the buildings and get modern services into them," Mitchell said. These services included better lighting and computer workstations for computer-aided design, he said.

School was systematically moved

The first phase of the project involved the renovation of the dean's office.

The second phase focused on the construction of studio spaces, faculty offices, and laboratory space for the Building Technology Program on the fourth floors of Buildings 5 and 10.

The third phase targeted the creation new space for the headquarters for the School of Architecture and

Planning on the third floor of Building 7. This included the construction of the Frank Stella conference room with Stella's mural *Loooomooloo*, which was donated by Elliot K. Wolk '57.

The final phase of the project created new studio space in Building 7 and provided exhibition and social space around the dome at the top of the building.

"These are excellent old buildings. With a little bit of judicious use we can rehabilitate them and make them extremely pleasant and functional for modern use," Mitchell said.

The space around the dome was designed to be social space for the school and is home to the new Architecture and Planning Cafe.

Part of the project was to make the dome visible from the fourth floor of Building 7. This was done to make it the "symbolic center of the space and school," Mitchell said.

Building 56 renovations continue

Meanwhile, renovations to Building 56 are continuing. After the work on Building 56 finishes this December, construction on Building 16 will begin, probably in February.

"Part of the reason for renovating Building 16 and 56 is to house some of the people from Building 20," which is scheduled to be taken down in the spring of 1998, said Director of Planning O. Robert Simha MCP '57. Most of the offices in the building are scheduled to be moved into Building 16 once the renovations there are finished.

Building 20 is being demolished so that MIT can take it down and "reuse the site more effectively and efficiently," said Nancy Joyce, project manager for Beacon Construction Company, which is the outside contractor for the project.

In addition to these moves the Department of Linguistics and Philosophy will move into the

offices of the MIT Press above the bookstore, Simha said. The offices of the MIT Press will move into leased space across the street in Cambridge Center.

The specifics of this part of the plan are still being worked out. The Department of Linguistics and Philosophy declined to comment until plans become finalized.

Buildings 16 and 56 used to house laboratories and offices for the Department of Biology. When the new biology building was finished and everything in Buildings 16 and 56 moved out, a third of the buildings was left vacant, Joyce said.

The ongoing renovation is the first phase in the larger project. The second phase involves moving the people in Building 16 into Building 56 and making changes in Building 16.

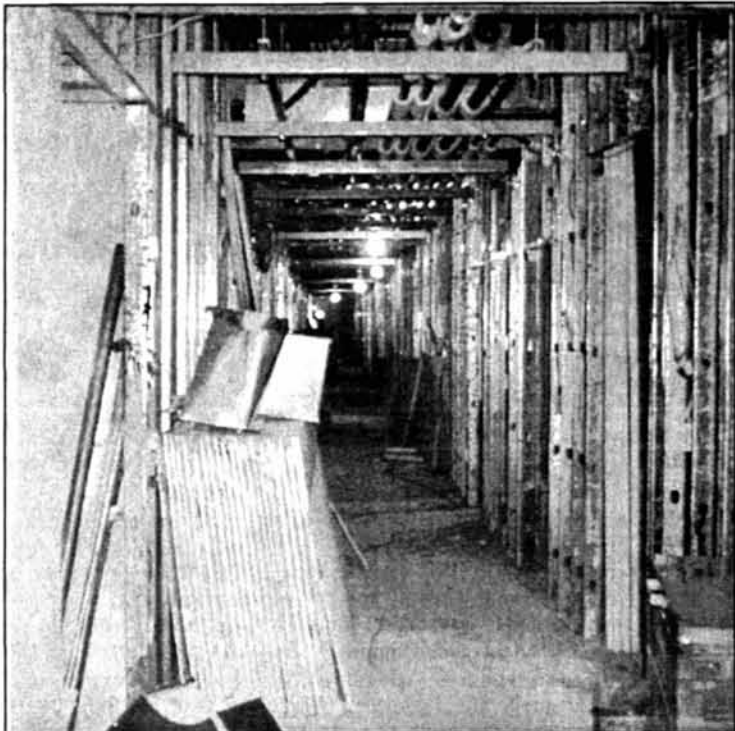
"It's been challenging and complicated to come up with a modular plan [for these buildings] because of the variety of uses involved," Joyce said.

This set of renovations "will probably be more disruptive to campus," as access to 26-100 may be affected, Joyce said. Currently, Beacon Construction Company is planning a tunnel through the area so that people may travel there.

Some of the features to be added during the projects are a handicap-accessible ramp in the basement connecting Building 8 and Building 16, and an elevator to connect the various floors of Building 8 and Building 16.

The new spaces in the buildings will consist of classrooms on the first floor, as well as laboratories and offices on higher floors.

Student lounges will also be constructed in Building 56. In addition to these improvements, a new 70-seat lecture hall is being built in Building 56, and one more classroom will be built in Building 16, Joyce said.



ERIK BALSLEY—THE TECH

The renovations in Building 56 begun last fall are entering their final stages. The construction should be finished in December.

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Alumni, Leaders Meet For New Task Force

By Stacey E. Blau
EDITOR IN CHIEF

A series of events starting today and continuing through the weekend with alumni and some current students will represent the beginning stages of the work of the task forces on student life and learning.

The task forces, an initiative of Dean for Undergraduate Education Rosalind H. Williams, are charged with examining closely MIT's educational mission and evaluating its

current educational processes. The task force is still in its very early stages, Williams said. Considerations like space and staff have yet to be worked out, although a number of faculty and administrators have been chosen to be part of the task force. No students are currently members of the task force.

Williams said that she has consulted Undergraduate Association President Richard Y. Lee '97 and UA Vice President Dedric A. Carter '98 to get students on the task force.

"The pressure is on students to get the students" on the task force now, she said.

"The task force will not get off the ground until students" are on it, Williams said. "The task force is not complete until students are there."

Events geared toward leaders

The events this weekend, aimed at getting alumni and student leaders involved in the task forces, will begin tonight with a workshop for student leaders. The events will be take place from from 7 to 8:30 p.m. in the Tang Center.

There will be various workshops for club and class leaders, educational counselors, reunion gift committee members, and students, said Project Manager for the Alumni Association Theresa J. Lee.

On Saturday in 10-250, Williams will moderate a presentation entitled "The Learning Community: Integrating Student Life and Learning at MIT," with members of the task force comprising the panel for the discussion.

The events are geared toward student leaders, according to Williams. Eleven of the 18 or so students scheduled to attend are actually freshmen.

Anyone else interested in attending the events should e-mail Lee at tjoyce@mit.edu.

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New Writing Requirement Will Stress Communication Skills

Writing, from Page 1

students put a lot of work and enthusiasm into their major field. If it isn't [made] clear that writing skills are important," then students will not improve those skills, Hodges said.

Students could theoretically satisfy the yearly communication class requirement in a number of ways, including taking specialized writing courses, seminars, or classes in their department that incorporate "practica," six-unit subjects that integrate communication skills with the material in a traditionally technical field, Hodges said.

Members of the committee are planning to hold a series of informational sessions starting in October at which students will be able to voice

their opinions about the proposal, Hodges said.

The first such meeting might be held in a large auditorium, and subsequent ones might be held in specific dormitories or independent living groups so students could interact with committee members in an informal environment, Hodges said.

"I am sure there are things we haven't thought of that the undergraduates can help us with," he said.

Alumni input sways committee

In conceiving its proposal, the committee considered responses from alumni regarding their education and preparation for the workplace, Hodges said.

Alumni "felt that although they

got a great technical education, they found they were at a loss compared to a lot of their cohorts in their jobs regarding communication skills," Hodges said.

"If in the long-run you want to do interesting things in science and engineering, you are going to have to convince other people what you're doing is important," said CUP Chair Charles Stewart III, associate professor of political science.

"It is the power of the language in grant proposals that get scientists funding," Stewart said.

Many humanities subjects currently offered do not give students enough feedback on their writing skills, Stewart said. So new subjects will have to be created or the old ones adjusted to fit the model out-

lined by the Committee on the Writing Requirement, he said.

Proposal will offer balance

"One of things we are very concerned with is that [students] are overworked. We don't want to just add another layer of work," Hodges said.

To accommodate the new writing classes, it would seem that some technical content in the curriculum would have to be sacri-

ficed, Hodges said.

However, "if you are clever in the way you do this, you won't have to take away much technical content," Hodges said. "We're not trying to subvert the things that MIT is good at" doing, he said.

For example, the practica would add only a few units to a student's schedule as an attachment to a technical subject to work on students' communication skills, Hodges said.

Biomedical Society Sparks Interest

By Shang-Lin Chuang
NEWS EDITOR

One year after the creation of the Biomedical Engineering minor, the Biomedical Engineering Society held its first meeting last week with about 70 students in attendance.

BMES, which is part of a national society, was started this spring because "there are lots of students at MIT interested in [Biomedical Engineering] and they don't know the huge number of resources that MIT has," said Isaac George '97, one of the founders of the group. "One way to help them is to have a student club."

Biomedical engineering includes any branch of engineering — including electrical, mechanical, and chemical — that is applied to solving problems in biology, said Associate Professor of Chemical Engineering Linda G. Griffith-Cima, who is one of the co-chairs of the minor. "The field's basic goal is usually a therapeutic one."

Director of the Center for BME Douglas A. Lauffenburger spoke about the different research projects available in the field at the society's first meeting.

BMES will hold its second meeting on Oct. 2, with another guest speaker.

BMES was started this spring by George, Melissa J. Lambeth '97, Hemant Taneja '97, and Hank M. Link '97. The society's faculty advisor is Professor of Mechanical Engineering Roger D. Kamm PhD '77, the associate director of the Center for BME.

Student interest in BME is up

BMES was originally started about four years ago, but because of a lack of interest, it faded out of existence, Kamm said.

The new minor helped to raise interest in the group again, Kamm said.

"The way engineering interfaces with biology is changing, and there is a huge number of student interested in this field," Griffith-Cima said.



SHANG-LIN CHUANG—THE TECH
Melissa J. Lambeth '97, Hemant Taneja '97, and Isaac George '97 founded the Biomedical Engineering Society.

"The goal of the society is to give students a forum to learn about what BME has to offer them from professionals in the field," Griffith-Cima said.

More than 200 freshmen expressed interest at the academic and activities midways during Residence and Orientation Week, Kamm said.

"The society's goal is mainly to provide services to students who are interested in BME as a career," Kamm said.

BMES will compile student resumes and send them to companies and will also create a list of Undergraduate Research Oppor-

tunities Program projects in the field of BME, Kamm said.

Students from all fields of engineering and science can join the group, Lambeth said. "There was a large percentage of biology majors present at the meeting. They see and understand the need to incorporate technology to their line of research."

"BME includes such a broad range of research, from molecular biology to all others. All majors fit right in," Taneja said.

People are confused about what BME is, and "one of our goals is to inform people of the possibilities this area of research can offer," Lambeth said.

Raw Sewage Burst Infects Charles River

By A. Arif Husain
OPINION EDITOR

Fecal bacteria levels in the Charles River peaked at more than 12,500 times the safe level for swimming last week, according to an article Sunday in *The Boston Globe*. The outbreak resulted from a blocked sewer line that clogged and then burst, diverting raw sewage and toilet paper into a storm drain, which leads to the river.

The highest concentration of fecal coliform bacteria was measured at the corner of Memorial Drive and the Larz Anderson Bridge, an area often used by Harvard University and Northeastern University rowing teams. Bacteria levels were 2,500 times the safe level for boating, which is higher than that for swimming.

The break was reported Wednesday of last week by a rower who noticed a foul smell. The pipe was plugged, and as of last Saturday sewage was no longer entering the river.

Kate Bowditch of the Charles River Watershed Association, an independent advocacy group monitoring the situation, said that based on their sampling, the leak did not affect the area of the river used frequently by MIT.

The MIT stretch of the Charles "generally meets state standards for boating during dry weather," Bowditch said. However, even without an accident like the rupture last week, "a storm like [Wednesday's] will cause the river to be polluted for the next two days," she said.

The recurring problem occurs because of the old-fashioned Cambridge plumbing system that combines storm water with untreated sewage. When storm runoff becomes too great for the system to handle — as after a heavy rain — certain designated points, known as combined sewer overflows, permit diluted raw sewage to leak out into the river. There are 11 such overflows in the MIT area.

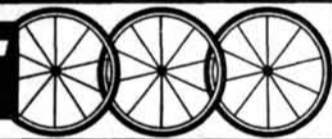
MIT Crew Director Stuart Schmill '86 said that the frequent leakages have not posed much problem. "It doesn't smell too nice, but unless it's very windy, we don't get splashed that much, so the water doesn't pose much of a health problem," Schmill said. "No one has gotten sick here because of it."

The use of the CSO devices violates the Massachusetts Clean Water Act, Bowditch said. But the Environmental Protection Agency is working closely with Boston and Cambridge authorities to eliminate them.

"It's incredibly expensive," Bowditch said. "It's probably going to be until 2002 before they have successfully eliminated all CSOs."

Last week's contamination was the fourth major such incident this summer, with prior outbreaks observed in Newton and Milford.

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Merritt Aimed to Improve Teaching, Manners at MIT

Merritt, from Page 1

the first half of Merritt's dean's office work had more to do with operations. He helped run the freshman advisory seminar program, administer the Independent Activities Period, and coordinate Residence and Orientation Week.

R/O was perhaps the most draining. "R/O took incredible energy — partly working with students and partly hold yourself back so you don't run roughshod over students and impose your will on them," Merritt said.

Teaching is his biggest concern

Undergraduate teaching is Merritt's passion. His work at the dean's office gradually shifted during his tenure to efforts to improve the quality of undergraduate teaching.

In seeking this end, Merritt has worked with the faculty on redesigning the freshman program and trying to reward good teaching. Merritt believes one of the biggest remaining problems has to do with the lecture format of teaching.

"A lot of teachers and students don't know how to learn collaboratively. [Many times] it means passing knowledge through a tube to the students. That's hard to beat because there's a real foundation in fact for treating education that way. One of the things that MIT's founder William Barton Rogers

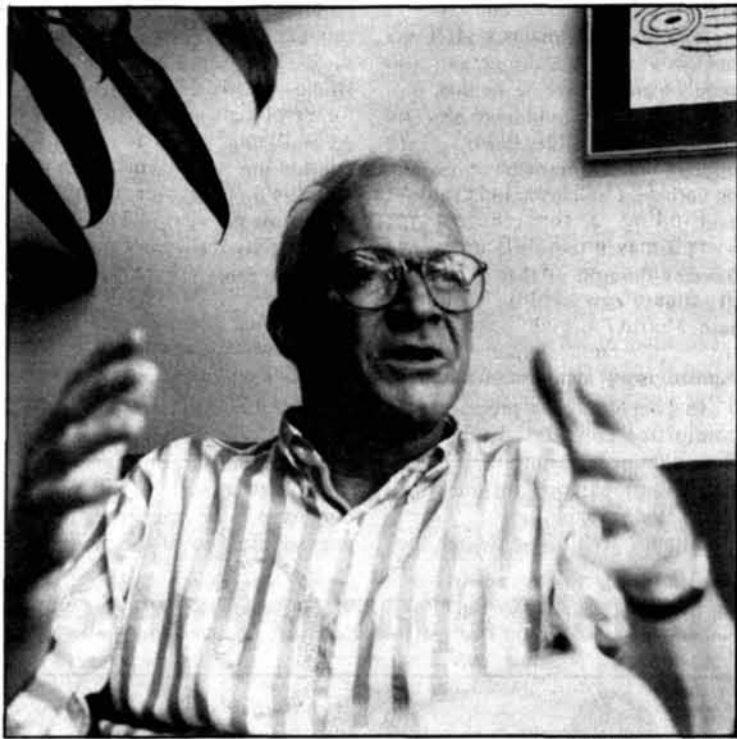
talked about was this teaching device called a lecture. Now they've become dominant."

While there remains much to improve about undergraduate education from the standpoint of administration and faculty, Merritt feels there is room for progress among students as well. "Students don't fight back," Merritt said. "They're conditioned to think the faculty are gods and that they're too busy to talk to undergraduates."

Merritt has been at the forefront of several efforts to improve both the quality of teaching and the format of classes. Merritt helped found Concourse, an alternative freshman-year program, as well as the Freshman Advisory Program. In spite of these changes, Merritt is not satisfied with the freshman experience.

"I'd like to see something done to shake MIT students out of their intellectual passivity, especially during freshman year," Merritt said. "There's not enough to write home about. The recitations are not small enough; it's exposition. There's not enough feeling among undergraduates that they have a stake in their education."

Merritt has floated several ideas for correcting these problems, including a "college" of MIT, improved incentives for teaching, and the "very small group movement," a proposal for shrinking class size on the model of tutorials



GABOR CSANYI—THE TECH

Dean of Undergraduate Academic Affairs Travis R. Merritt.

in the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science.

Teaching was one of Merritt's biggest concerns when he left the literature section of the humanities department for the dean's office. "I have pangs of regret and misgivings" about leaving" literature, Merritt said. "But I'm not going to

be banished from the Institute in terms of teaching on a volunteer basis."

Nostalgia for the humanities core

One of the major difficulties with the humanities program has been the low level of difficulty, Merritt said. Aside from a few papers, he finds, most classes in the field amount to little more than glorified bull sessions. Merritt attributes this to the belief among humanities faculty that the rest of MIT is already intense enough for students. Humanities faculty do not provide the sense of their subject as a systematic field of study, he believes.

"The people who teach humanities, arts, and social sciences subjects have not understood that when you're playing in a hardball league, you have to play hardball," Merritt said. "They play minister or angel of mercy, so [their subjects] are like a cultural side dish, a respite."

Merritt regrets the disappearance of the humanities core, a system of basic subjects taken by freshmen.

With Lack of Workers, Pritchett Cuts Hours

By Dudley W. Lamming

The student-run Pritchett Snack Bar located on the second floor of Walker Memorial has been forced to reduce hours because of a shortage of workers.

"We're only open about half the time because we are severely understaffed," said manager Alvar Saenz Otero '98.

The diner, which has usually been staffed by 30 or more people, has only 15 employees this term.

The chief reason is that not enough students have applied for the jobs available, Saenz Otero said.

"The problem is that it's the start of the term," Saenz Otero said. "Unfortunately, many of the freshmen don't realize yet that they need money. This year's freshman class is just not participating."

Lack of staff brings short hours

This is the first year in recent times that Pritchett has had trouble attracting new workers. The problem has been aggravated by the graduation of an unusually large percentage of workers and the departure of several juniors, Saenz Otero said.

"We lost about 10 seniors, and several other students stopped working here for other reasons," he said.

As a result, the Pritchett grill is open from 6 to 11 p.m. Monday to Friday and from noon to 11 p.m. on weekends.

The convenience store is still open full time until 1 a.m. Monday to Friday and from noon to 1 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

Saenz Otero, along with Daniel

The system gave freshmen an idea of the humanities as a systematic, organized discipline, like physics.

"Like the Nile, it had a main course to it. That began to fall apart — just as the Nile goes into a delta — back in the 1960s. There's no sense of what MIT believes an educated person ought to know."

Academic R/O shaped by tenure

Given his concern with education, it's no surprise that Merritt has also been an advocate of increasing the importance of academic R/O. Merritt helped develop many of the orientation programs that have become symbols of R/O Week. One program, Project Move Off Your Assumptions, or MOYA, was named for Merritt's colleague Moya L. Verzhbinsky.

"She calls in from time to time to see if we still do it," said Merritt. "The question for me is whether what we're doing is really exciting and carries novelty, and I don't think we really have an answer. So we enliven it with running the marathon and Tech Trek. It needs to be more like dance. There's not enough excitement."

Widely known for Charm School

Merritt is perhaps best known on campus for founding Charm School, a day-long program held during IAP. The activity actually grew out of a since-disappeared R/O program on sexual issues, "How to Give a Woman an Orgasm."

"The idea was to release some of that awareness building from its R/O confines," Merritt said. "The thing for me is to get students engaged in things that are good for them."

The popularity of Charm School has led to heavy local and national news coverage, as well as requests from other schools for information on the program. Merritt, however, is more concerned with the health of the program at MIT.

"There should also be a sustained student infrastructure. We need a student organization that will sustain it and keep the faculty involved," Merritt said.

Only Half of Staff to Be Replaced

Retirement, from Page 1

need some sort of continuity" and a transition, she said.

"Previously, the retired professors were given the title of professor emeritus and senior lecturer if they continued teaching," Bacow said. "We wanted a way to retain retirees as part of the intellectual community."

Staff members can not be hired back in that way, Rice said. "We're pretty much holding that we can't have more than a 50 percent replacement" for staff, she said.

This will mean to a large extent consolidation of work in departments. For now, "it feels like more work" for fewer people in many

affected areas, Rice said. "They feel stressed out because there is a lot to do."

But many of the changes being made through the re-engineering process are supposed to be cutting out time-wasting activities, Rice said. In the long term, this should reduce the inefficiencies of the old system, she said.

Some departments more affected

"Some departments are impacted more heavily than others," said President Charles M. Vest.

Some other areas around the Institute, like Physical Plant, were especially hard-hit by retirement. Over 150 people from Physical Plant are retiring, although "they

have a large contingent" to begin with, Rice said.

However, the departments that had more retirees generally had more eligible faculty members, Bacow said. The percentage of professors who retired was reasonably uniform, he said.

"Faculty positions will be filled carefully by departments and schools, using their normal careful search processes over the next several years," Vest said.

The replacement will take place over the next five years, with professorships gradually being filled as the part-time professors depart permanently, Bacow said.

Ahmet Isik contributed to the reporting of this story.

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Re-engineering Will Affect Changes in Dean's Office

UAA, from Page 1

Behr '98, who attended one of the forums.

Behr suggested one service the office could offer students in academic trouble might be "some place with big flashing red arrows that said, 'If you're in trouble, go here,'" he said.

Behr also mentioned the idea of extending the associate adviser system that exists freshman year into the system for upperclassmen.

Replacing Merritt may be tough

There was some discussion of can-

didates at the meetings, but mostly in a general way, Williams said. It was not about "here's the person who should replace Travis," she said.

Some students did have ideas on specific candidates, though. "We thought that the housemasters would be perfect" candidates, Behr said.

Finding a replacement for Merritt may prove difficult in that his position was "defined so much in terms of personality," Williams said. Merritt has a number of special ties to programs — like the freshman advisory seminars — that have defined his tenure as dean.

His job requires an ability to interact with students on a number of levels. "It's really not something where you place a job description for a replacement, she said.

Williams said that she will be considering whether or not to have additional forums for input on the selection process. "The student forums were really very successful," Williams said. "There was a lot of discussion... a lot of feedback."

Re-engineering to shape UESA

The past two years have seen considerable turnover in the Office

of Undergraduate Education and Student Affairs and now UAA, which is a part of UESA. Williams took office a little over a year ago and Dean for Student Life Margaret R. Bates arrived just last winter.

The big changes do not bother Williams. "The turnover is nothing unusual," she said. These are offices "where people start out and go on to other things."

The offices will experience some degree of restructuring as a result of the re-engineering process, Williams said. When considering the offices' future direction and any

changes that may be made, "we don't want to get ahead of the decision-making process" of re-engineering, she said.

"Re-engineering is going to have some effect on the shape of the office," Merritt said. Hopefully, it will mean changes that centralize mechanical processes and paperwork in the office and allow deans "more time to sit down face-to-face with students," he said.

In the mean time, the process itself is "drawing people from the office" to actually participate in re-engineering, Merritt said. "That's



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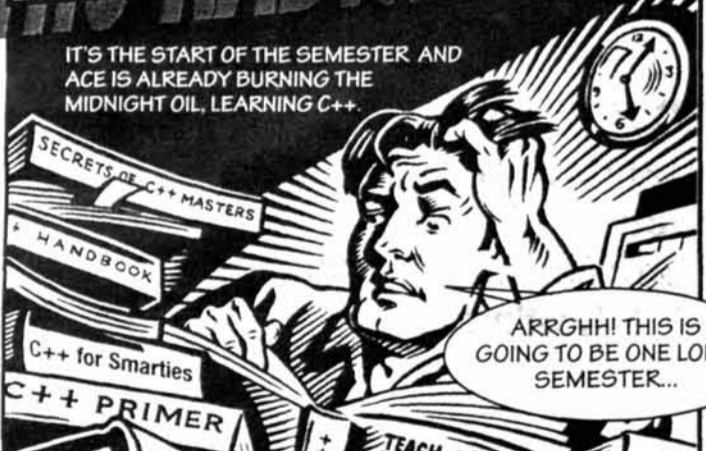
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Announcements

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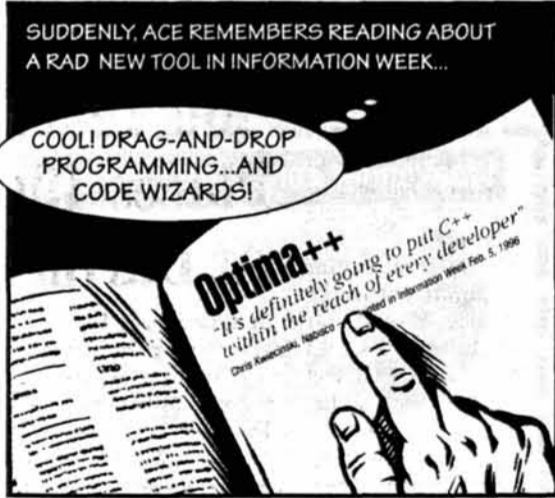


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Women's X-Country Trounces RPI, WPI

By Lauren Klatsky

TEAM MEMBER

The women's cross country team began its season last Saturday with a spectacular performance that earned them the coveted Engineers' Cup.

Having lost the title last year to Rochester Polytechnic Institute by a six-point margin, MIT definitively avenged their opponent by a score of 23-43. Worcester Polytechnic Institute placed last in the tri-meet with 69 points.

The meet took place under sunny skies at Saratoga Springs State Park in upstate New York. After previewing the course before the race, the women felt confident they could handle the flat but challenging terrain. MIT jumped out in front from the start and held onto the lead until the finish. Janis Eisenberg '98 was the overall winner with a time of 19:08.

MIT's second finisher was Lauren Klatsky '97 who took third

place with a time of 19:33. Not far behind was Shue-Fen Tung '00 who crossed the finish line after 20:00. Debbie Won '00 and Robin Evans '99 were the two final scorers for MIT in seventh and eighth places with times of 20:47 and 20:52.

The harriers' depth was demonstrated by Eve Phillips '98, Leah Nichols '00, and Tanya Zelevinsky '99 who rounded out the top eight within the first 12 places.

Coach Joe Sousa thought the team had some outstanding times for such an early part of the season. In fact, Eisenberg had a school record on the RPI course.

Sousa said that "the team has adapted well to the rigors of our training program." With many returning veterans and some talented newcomers, the women look forward to an impressive season. MIT travels to the UMass-Dartmouth Invitational next week.

Baseball Demolishes Wentworth 13-3, 7-4

By Joel Morales

TEAM MEMBER

After setting the MIT record for most regular season wins last year with a 20-12 record, the Engineers started off the fall season right where they left off by sweeping Wentworth Institute of Technology 13-3 in the first game and 7-4 in the second.

In the first game, pitchers Joel Morales '99 and Randy Graebner '00 combined for 12 strikeouts,

holding Wentworth to only three runs. The Engineers were led at the plate by Baldemar Mejia '97, who had three hits and three runs batted in and by Morales, who had a three-run homer and four runs batted in.

Eddie Rivas '97, Steve Vetere '97, Pete Gustafson '99, and David Pihon '00 also joined in on the offensive attack. In the second game, pitchers Tyler Pope '99 and Jason Szuminski '00 allowed only four runs.

The Engineers were led at the plate by Chris Albrecht '00, who had two hits including a three-run triple in the bottom of the sixth to put the team ahead for good. Nate Burnham '00, Ethan Goetz '00, and Jack Gallagher '99 also contributed at the plate. Catcher Paul Collins '98 picked up the slack, catching both ends of the doubleheader while knocking out a few hits.

The Engineers are away this weekend at Babson College, where they will play a twin bill at noon tomorrow.

Harriers Disappoint In 7th Place

Cross-Country, from Page 16

(42nd, 27:10), Chris McGuire '00 (44th, 27:12), and team captain Dan Helgesen '97 (58th, 27:38), rounded out the team's scoring five.

Gabe White '00 from San Diego was perhaps the most pleasant surprise, recording a lifetime best of 27:57 for five miles and finishing as the team's seventh man after being 13th just a week before.

Head Coach Halston Taylor expressed disappointment in the team's performance. Having put together the most challenging season schedule in 15 years, Taylor felt that the team has the talent to succeed at this higher level of competition.

"Things should improve dramatically in the next two weeks. If not, it will be a very long season with the schedule that we have," Taylor said. "I know we have a good team, but they have to develop more pride when it comes to letting teams run all over you."

The Engineers will get their chance to rebound this Saturday when they travel to Lewiston, Maine for a tri-meet with Bates College and Tufts University. Tufts, ranked 23rd in the nation in a pre-season Division III poll, won the Amherst Invitational on Saturday, while Bates finished 9th at Dartmouth.

Golf Team Places 19th At Dartmouth

Golf, from Page 16

The team experienced several major transitions over the summer. The team lost a couple of good players with last year's graduating class. A solid group of new freshman has joined, and a basis for future development is definitely in place.

Coach Jack Barry retired after having been with the team for more than 20 years. Assistant Coach Joe Kuchta temporarily took over the responsibilities as coach.

At the same time, the team has been lucky to find Bob Hayes as a new assistant coach and presumably head coach in the future.

Hayes has played a lot of golf, and at one point he contemplated going pro. He has also had a significant amount of teaching experience.

PAKSMIT Conference on 50 Years of Pakistan: Lessons from the Past, Prospects for the Future

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Ambassador of Pakistan to the US

Professor Eqbal Ahmad

School of Social Science, Hampshire College

Professor Anwar Syed

Dept. of Political Science, UMass Amherst

Dr. Kimat Gul Khattak (Rtd. Major)

President Pak. Assoc. of Western Mass., Regional Counselor APPNA

The conference will discuss Pakistan's social, political and economic situation during its 50 years of independence and expectations for the future. Foreign policy issues including the Kashmir dispute and nuclear policy, and domestic policy issues such as political stability concerns will also be discussed.

Saturday, 21st September

11:00am-3:15pm

Wong Auditorium

MIT

Bldg. E-51 Tang center, 70 Memorial Drive
(near Sloan School of Management)

Session I : 11:00am-12:30pm - Keynote speaker: Ambassador Maleeha Lodhi

Lunch break : 12:30pm-1:15pm

Session II : 1:30pm-3:15pm - Prof. Eqbal Ahmad, Prof. Anwar Syed, Dr. Kimat Khattak

Light lunch will be available during lunch break.

For further information, contact Rizwan Gul (rgul@mit.edu, 617-576-4702).

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SPORTS

Women's Tennis Drops One to Skidmore, Beats Tufts

By Erik S. Balsley
STAFF REPORTER

The women's tennis team played its first home match this past Saturday, losing 8-1 against a strong Skidmore College team in a non-conference match. The team came back with a 5-4 win against

Tufts University on Tuesday.

In spite of the initial loss, the Engineers showed the strength on which they hope to build throughout the season.

Because of inclement weather on Saturday, the games were moved from the tennis courts along

Amherst Street to the J.B. Carr Indoor Tennis Facility.

A women's collegiate tennis match consists of three doubles matches and six singles matches. Each match won earns a point. In order to win the overall match, a team must win five of the nine points.

Sixth player Neda Ramirez '00, earned MIT its one point by defeating her opponent in straight sets 7-6, 6-3. The other players on the team also put in strong efforts against the aggressive Skidmore team. First player Mealani Nakamura '00 and second player Michelle Youn '00 in particular played well in their first matches for MIT with scores of 6-4, 6-1 and 6-4, 6-3 respectively in their matches.

Nakamura was able to hold her own well against Skidmore player Jamie Levine, who competed in last year's NCAA Division III National Championship.

Given that the lineups for the doubles matches were announced the afternoon of the match, the matches were played well and the players were able to hang on to Skidmore for most of them.

"Skidmore is a tough team to play as a first game," said coach Merilee Keller. In their previous two matches, Skidmore has beaten the University of Vermont (9-0) and Saint Lawrence University (5-4).

"They're a hard-hitting, aggressive team," Keller said. She said she was pleased with how the MIT players "hung in there pretty well."

The players also appeared satisfied despite the loss. "The team is playing quite well," said team member Nora Humphrey '98. But "we may need to touch up and refine a few things," she added.

Keller expressed similar sentiments. The team is still "a little rough at the edges," she said. "If we had played [Skidmore] at the end of the season, we would have been better," she said.

Team co-captain Sarah Kringer '97 said she thinks that "the team shows a lot of promise." She added that the team has a lot of good freshmen who will add depth to the team.

The match was also the first for Keller as head coach of the women's team. She comes to MIT after coaching the Harvard University and Brown University junior varsity teams.

Keller said that she enjoys coaching at MIT and finds that her players have "pretty good attitudes" toward tennis. They also have a "good perspective on tennis and academics," she said.

Team beats Tufts 5-4

After meeting Skidmore on Saturday, the team faced a traditionally strong opponent, Tufts University, on Tuesday at home. Once again because of the persistent rain, these games were also played in the indoor tennis facility.

The team played very well and ended up winning the match 5-4. The first doubles team of Nakamura and Humphrey won their match earning MIT its first point.

First player Nakamura and second player Youn once again showed their strength and won their matches in straight sets. Fifth player Kringer easily beat her Tufts opponent.

Facing tough opponents, both Humphrey and Ramirez lost their matches in straight sets. Although she lost her match, team co-captain Lily Koo '97 played three tough sets against her opponent.

The team will have their next home match today at 4 p.m. against Colby College.

Brocoum Not Too Shabby at 9-4 In Wild Week in the NFL

Column by Chris Brocoum

There are few things in my life that I truly regret. My failure to put any money down last week and call 9 out of 13 games breaks my heart. Of course, as I

A WORD ON SPORTS

said before, I am a sportsman and not a bettor, and I therefore derive my satisfaction simply from the fact that I was right a whole lot more than I was

wrong. I am a modest man, a 9-4 week means only, in the words of Ali, "I am the greatest."

Enough gloating — on to the important stuff, like the fact that Dallas lost to Indianapolis. Why is it I get the feeling that Barry Switzer's relationship with Jerry Jones might be headed down the toilet? I mean, if Washington has a better record than Dallas...

More important stuff: Pittsburgh blasted Buffalo. Despite being gutted through free agency after... um... losing the Superbowl, the Steelers are starting to click. Kordell Stewart and Jerome Bettis were looking good.

The other great surprise of the week (barely a ripple compared to Dallas capsizing, but important nonetheless) was the way Green Bay stomped San Diego in what had been billed as a close game. The way Green Bay is playing, the Packers have declared themselves the team to beat in the NFC.

Disclaimer: Few things in life ever live up to expectations, and therefore all those of you expecting another 9-4 week might have to settle for a lousy 8-5. The picks, week four:

New England with a new-looking Drew Bledsoe and a new-found offense will easily dispatch of the struggling Jaguars.

Philadelphia looks good, especially with Rodney Peete and Ricky Waters getting things together last

week. Look for the Eagles to soar higher than the Falcons.

I know the Bills looked bad Monday night against the Steelers, but Dallas looked worse. Buffalo will pull out a low scoring game over the Cowboys (disclaimer: This is, of course, a matter of principle more than of logical rationale).

In a toss up, I take Detroit over da Bears just because I think Barry Sanders is going to have a crazy game.

I like Minnesota. Unfortunately, Green Bay is on a roll. Take the Packers.

Denver will be led by a heroic John Elway against Kansas City in a battle of undefeated teams in the AFC West.

New Orleans will beat Arizona.

The Jets were formerly the only team bad enough to be mistakenly labeled as New Jersey. The Giants continue to amaze me. The N.J. Jets are inept. The N.J. Giants are inept.

The Raiders will look downright great against San Diego.

Washington is a surprising team. Watch the 'Skins surprise St. Louis this Sunday.

San Francisco, Carolina. Hmmm...

Seattle will barely escape the wrath of... Tampa Bay?

Monday Night special: The Colts played a gutsy game knocking off the Cowboys, and Miami seemed to struggle against the N.J. Jets. I must take the Dolphins, however, because of the Jimmy Factor.

Season record: 9-4

Author's note: This column is written in good faith and good fun. It is not meant to offend anyone in particular too much. With this in mind, I would gladly address comments, questions, and complaints at jondoe@res.HARVARD.edu.

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SRI International

Men's Cross Country Places 7th at Dartmouth

By Thom S. Hunter

The men's cross country team opened its season with a modest seventh place finish in the Dartmouth College Invitational on Saturday.

Division I powers Dartmouth and Boston University finished first and second with 50 and 59 points, respectively, with defending Division III national champion Williams College taking third with 91 points. MIT's score was a disappointing 185.

The Engineers, who had looked very good in the previous weekend's annual Alumni Race, were

caught napping in the early going and found themselves having to fight their way through the large field of 130 runners, many of whom were not to be caught.

Mike Parkins '99 led the team with his 22nd place finish, clocking 26:26 over the hilly five-mile course. Parkins, the winner of the Alumni Race, worked his way past at least 40 opponents in the final three miles.

Arnold Seto G followed quickly in his wake, taking 28th place, just 12 seconds behind. Leif Seed '99

Cross-Country, Page 15

Golf Team Finishes 19th At Middlebury Tournament

By Morten W. Hoegh

TEAM MEMBER

The varsity golf team opened its fall season at Middlebury College in Vermont this past weekend in the annual Duke Nelson Tournament. The team finished a modest 19th out of 25 teams.

Middlebury College has its own on-campus course, which was in very good condition. There were some tricky holes, but in general the holes were rather short.

The greens were small and not elevated and, because of the rain, quite soft. In other words, the condition of the course invited the players to come up with some low scores.

The big surprise of the tournament was freshman Craig Talbot '00. On Saturday, in excellent weather and playing conditions, he played the par 71 course in 80 strokes. This was well above everybody's expectations, and promises well for the future.

Jay Grayson '97, the new team captain, came in with 82, Young E. Kim '98 shot 88 and tournament-debutant Dan Henderson '98

pleased everybody with a solid 89. Morten W. Hoegh '98 suffered from a bad cold, and his score did not count. The combined score of 339 after day one put MIT tied in 13th place out.

The weather on Sunday worsened slightly but still does not explain the worse scores produced by the Engineers. Talbot was still the low man with 85, Kim and Henderson both shot 88, but Grayson ended up with a disappointing 93. The players had lost some of the short touch compared to Saturday, but that does not fully describe the difference in performance.

The team score on Sunday was 354, producing a total of 693. This placed MIT at 19th place overall. Skidmore College won the tournament with an impressive total score of 598.

The Middlebury tournament was slightly disappointing overall but nevertheless ensured the golfers that the team has the potential to be strong this year.