Community Critiques Cost-Cutting Ideas in Front of Task Force

By Ana Lyons

At community forums held on Thursday and Monday afternoon, students, faculty, and staff voiced concerns about MIT’s preliminary cost-cutting report. Many worried about the report’s recommendations, especially the proposals to increase undergraduate enrollment by 10 percent and to decrease the number of graduate students by 1,000. Staff were concerned about potential cuts to their retirement and health benefits.

The Institute-wide Planning Task Force and the Chair of the Faculty organized the community-wide forums to invite comments about the Task Force’s preliminary report, which names over 200 ideas aimed at reducing MIT’s spending by $100–150 million over the next two to three years.

Nearly 100 community members went to the Thursday forum, and 32–55 was packed beyond capacity with 150 attending the Monday session.

Members of the task force leadership fielded questions, including Provost L. Rafael Reif, Vice Chancellor Ellen S. Lerman ’72, VP for Finance Israel Ruiz GM ’01, Associate Provost Martin A. Schmidt ’88, and Chair of the Faculty Thomas A. Kochan, and addressed some of the audience’s concerns. The discussion was moderated by Professors Lawrence E. Suskind PhD ’73 and Susan S. Silbey on Monday and Thursday, respectively.

There were two forums, one Thursday at 6 p.m. in 10-250, and a second on Monday at 4 p.m. to ensure that “as many people as possible have the opportunity to attend,” the Institute-wide Planning website said. The event was advertised as “an opportunity to learn more about the Task Force recommendations and next steps, to ask questions, and to share your thoughts and ideas.”

Not many came with prepared questions, but discussion — initiated by an overview of the goals of the Planning Task Force — soon evolved into animated dialogue, covering a much wider scope.

One source of major concern was the idea to do away with guaranteed four-year housing for undergraduates. Students argued that living on campus is an important component of the student culture.

Community members also found fault with the proposal to increase the number of undergraduates by ten percent, or 400 students. Many were skeptical that increased enrollment costs-cutting report. Many worried about the report’s recommendations, especially the proposals to increase undergraduate enrollment by 10 percent and to decrease the number of graduate students by 1,000. Staff were concerned about potential cuts to their retirement and health benefits.

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Census Offers a Snapshot Tinted by Recession

By Elizabeth Maikin

WASHINGTON

The European Commission cited a series of damning e-mails to bolster its case that the record $1.5 billion fine it imposed in May against Intel was justified.

The documents, European regulators argued, show a pattern of intimidation that the company has used to keep its customers in a complex web of rebates and incentives aimed at hobbling AMD.

In one e-mail message, a Dell executive warned his boss that if Dell used chips from Advanced Micro Devices, the scale of retaliation by Intel would be so severe that Dell would “have to bite and scratch to even hold it” at 10 percent discount on price of the Intel chips.

The European Union antitrust unit on Monday released an unredacted version of the e-mail that had been published in part by the European Commission.

The documents, regulators argued, clearly show that computer manufacturers were using the Intel, which controlled 77 percent of the global market for computer chips, by buying from AMD, Intel’s only serious rival, with 25 percent.

Most Children Need Just One Shot Of Swine Flu Vaccine

By Donald G. McNeil Jr.

A single shot of swine flu vaccine appears to protect most children and teenagers nearly as well as it protects adults, federal health officials said.

However, young children who have never had the flu or a flu shot need two doses, they said. So, to fully protect them against both swine and seasonal flu this year, those children will need four shots.

“I am pleased to bring you more good news,” Dr. Anthony S. Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, told reporters on Monday in a telephone news conference about the trials of the new vaccine his agency is overseeing. On Sept. 10, he reported that adults without a single shot, rather than the two that many experts had predicted; the announcement effectively double the nation’s supply of swine flu vaccine and halved the workload.

Preliminary results of the next round of trials, in pregnant women, are expected early next month.

Most Babies Born Last Year Were Not Fully Covered by Health Insurance

By By James Kanter and Kevin J. O’Brien

WASHINGTON

More than one-third of babies born last year were not fully covered by health insurance, according to a study released Monday by the National Conference of State Legislatures.

The study was released by the National Conference of State Legislatures as a part of its “Babies and Health Insurance” campaign, which aims to ensure that every baby born in the United States is covered by health insurance.

The study found that 37 percent of babies born last year were not fully covered by health insurance, which is higher than the rate of uninsured children in the United States as a whole.

The study also found that the rate of uninsured children is highest among children from low-income families, with 43 percent of children from families with incomes below the federal poverty level being uninsured.

The study concludes that more work needs to be done to ensure that all babies are covered by health insurance.

The study’s authors say that states can take several steps to improve coverage for babies, including expanding Medicaid, creating programs to help parents afford health insurance, and encouraging employers to offer health coverage.

One of the challenges states face is getting parents to enroll their children in health insurance programs.

The study recommends that states make it easier for parents to enroll their children in health insurance programs, such as by offering online enrollment options and providing information about how to enroll.

The study also recommends that states provide incentives for employers to offer health coverage to their employees.

The study recommends that states provide incentives for employers to offer health coverage to their employees, such as tax credits or other financial incentives.

The study’s authors say that states can also take steps to improve the quality of health care for babies, including by increasing access to prenatal care and improving the quality of care provided to babies in hospitals.

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The White House’s intervention in the race for New York governor is the latest evidence of how President Barack Obama and his top advisers are taking an increasingly direct role in contests across the country, but their assertiveness has bruised some Democrats who suggest it could undermine Obama’s appeal with voters tired of partisan politics.

The overt involvement of Obama’s team in New York, where they have tried to ease Gov. David A. Paterson out of the race, has made clear that this is a White House willing to use its clout to help clear the field for favored Democratic candidates and to direct money and other resources in the way it thinks will most benefit the administration and help preserve the Democrats’ majority in Congress.

The intense involvement reflects the tactics and style of the White House chief of staff, Rahm Emanuel, who helped Democrats win the House three years ago as chairman of the party’s congressional campaign committee.

While some party officials applaud the White House for its efforts — there is widespread concern among Democrats that Paterson runs — the actions are drawing alarm from some Democrats who believe they cross a line and run contrary to Obama’s oft-stated pledge to rise above partisan battles.

“The Democratic Party under Barack Obama did not come into office because of political calculation. It got there because of audacity,” said Rep. Joe Sestak, a Pennsylvania Democrat who ignored efforts by the White House to stay out of a primary race against Sen. Arlen Specter. “To be seen like you are selecting winners and losers in a party boss way will breed some resentment and in a longer term it won’t bode well.”

As Obama flew to New York on Monday, where he appeared briefly with Paterson, the White House played down any risks in becoming embroiled in state politics. “The hazards of the job,” said Robert Gibbs, the White House press secretary.

Karl Rove, the chief political adviser to former President George W. Bush, also aggressively intervened in state races to make sure Republicans were fielding strong candidates. But Rove faulted this White House for what he described as its clumsy handling of the situation in New York. “This was particularly ham-handed,” Rove said.

Gov. Edward G. Rendell of Pennsylvania, a former chairman of the Democratic National Committee, said he thought the White House was acting correctly in trying to shape the outcome of races. But he suggested that Paterson could recover if the White House gave him time, and said the Obama team had not handled this case well.

“The president is the head of the party and he has a right to express his opinion,” Rendell said. “The only thing I would have done differently is not let it become known. This can’t be helpful to the governor.”
Food Production Needs Improvement

As a campus group that spends a great deal of time and energy considering the challenges of how we eat as a global population, to the extent we can, as a campus, we were struck by the stark juxtaposition in Tuesday, September 15th’s paper between an article about the Clover food truck and a McDonald’s advertisement. Beyond the deep irony of placing an article about a food truck that provides our campus with fresh and healthy lunches next to an advertisement for the very kind of system that we are trying to work, we see a host of challenges. These challenges include whether and how to use synthetic chemicals in agricultural production; how to deal with the climate and sustainability issues; how to gauge the well-being of farmers and their employees; and how to create stronger market linkages between small producers and consumers, both in the developing world and in our region, and consumers that are looking for alternatives to mass-produced food items.

We acknowledge that McDonald’s supply chain employs many agricultural workers worldwide, and recognize that shifting such an entrenched trading relationship will take time. And, there is a shift in food production that is urgent and necessary, and we challenge institutions like MIT’s to lead toward a healthier food system.

We want MIT to be known for driving positive changes in the food system that lead to more healthy, satisfying choices. We urge MIT to take the first step and lead toward a healthier food system.

Ethan Solomon

MIT Admissions’ recent decision to drop the long essay in favor of three short essays on the 2009–2010 application is something of a mixed bag. As an applicant, I can understand why MIT might have an interest in a more multifaceted and genuine picture of potential students. But at the same time, it may deny students the opportunity to write beyond a short-essay prompt and beyond a 200 word limit. Both options have their merits, and clearly, it remains to be seen how effective the new format will be in providing a genuine and more meaningful responses from applicants.

First, there is a lot to like about the new essay format. Instead of one long, 500 word essay on one topic, students are prompted to essentially cover both of those topics in shorter, 200 to 250 word mini-essays. Also, a previously optional short essay was made mandatory. Many current MIT students will admit that the mix of one long and two short essays they faced on their applications — and the significantly more relaxed tone of the short essay — “Tell us about something you do simply for the pleasure of it…” This isn’t a trick question.” From an applicant’s perspective, these kinds of questions aren’t as onerous and probably result in much less polished responses than a long essay.

“Common Application” including supplemental materials, including a personal essay. But Restrict Freedom of Choice

The Tech Opinion page includes a wide range of voices and perspectives, and we strive to provide a space for all contributors to share their ideas and opinions. These pieces reflect the diverse range of views within the MIT community and are intended to foster open dialogue and engage readers in thoughtful conversations.

Letters To The Editor

Dear Editor,

I am writing to express my strong support for the new MIT Application essay format. As an MIT alumnus, I believe that this change is a positive step towards embracing the unique qualities and perspectives of each applicant.

First and foremost, the new essay format allows applicants to express themselves in a more open-ended and personal manner. Unlike the previous long essay, which was limited to 500 words, the new essays are shorter and more flexible. This gives applicants the opportunity to showcase their creativity and voice more effectively.

Secondly, the new essay format promotes diversity and inclusion by encouraging applicants to explore a wider range of topics and perspectives. This is especially important in today’s global and interconnected world, where diversity is essential for innovation and progress.

In conclusion, I urge MIT Admissions to continue to embrace the new essay format and to be open to further innovations in the admissions process. By doing so, we can ensure that MIT remains a place where people from all backgrounds and perspectives are welcome and can thrive.

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Sincerely,

[Your Name]
Steal My Comic

By Michael Ciuffo

Sudoku

Instructions: Fill in the grid so that each column, row, and 3 by 3 grid contains exactly one of each of the digits 1 through 9.

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Will We Spend Less? Forum Invites Ideas

Budget Cuts, from Page 1

would actually generate a profit for the Institute. They also questioned whether there would be enough teaching staff and academic support to accommodate the influx of students.

Concern Over Larger Class Sizes
One person pointed out that there could be hidden costs to scaling up. Some courses, such as Physics II (8.02) cannot easily be expanded without doubling the infrastructure. “If you increase the class size by ten, we’ll have to add another section,” he said. “We use the room in every hour of the week, so we’ll need another room.” He’d multiply the room cost by two, and that means more equipment and more staff.

A proposal for expanding summer session and opening it to non-MIT students was discussed, which could potentially bring in $5.6 million.

At the Monday forum, no one spoke against the idea, but on Thursday participants worried that summer session would drive up air-conditioning costs and burn out current MIT students.

“You will fry people. The tidal action of a break is critical to people that go at 112 mph.” said Edward J. Monarty ’76, who teaches outreach programs for the Edgerton Center.

The Task Force also proposed a “3+2” option that would allow students to complete three years at a different university and two years at MIT to obtain a Master’s degree. There were also “e-learning” proposals. Neither idea received major discussion or complaints.

Drop Date Could Move Up
Another major concern brought up was the proposal to move add and drop dates earlier in the term. MIT’s drop date is later than most peer institutions, and it’s not a small administrative impact; it’s not a small administrative decision, can be left at the end of October, Schmidt said.

Schmidt, one of the task force members expressing disappointment that the union was not directly invited to participate in the cost-cutting Task Force, said that “It’s very clear there has to be some kind of grandfathering for different kinds of [retirement] benefits.”

Concerns in changing co-payments for medical procedures, Head of MIT Medical William M. Ker- tyle said “we will be implementing co-pays for specialty services only, and not for students.” The additional co-payments are required by Massachusetts Mental Health Parity Laws, he said.

Union workers from Service Employees International Union Local 615 were also present at the Monday forum, in distinctive purple clothing. They read from a prepared statement expressing disappointment that the union was not directly invited to participate in the cost-cutting Task Force.

“Many of the recommendations contained in this report will impact our membership,” a Local 615 Union member said. “The union truly believes that open dialogue and transparency are in everyone’s interest.”

Schmidt, one of the task force coordinators, reminded community members that no decisions have been made. “This is just a [preliminary] report to summarize and discuss what the task force has recommended,” he said.

A copy of the Task Force’s report is available at http://tech.mit.edu/VI29/VI11/[Preliminary-Report].pdf. Comments, which can be anonymous and are screened before publica- tion, can be left at http://ideabank.mit.edu.

The final draft of the report will be released to the public at the end of October, Schmidt said.

John A. Hawkinson contributed reporting to this article.
The 3rd Korean Film Festival

KGSA (Korean Graduate Students Association) Presents

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Showtimes:

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Free Food
Free Admissions
The nationally-ranked No. 9 MIT women's cross country team put on a dominant display en route to a first-place finish at the UMass-Dartmouth Invitational Saturday. Tech had four harriers among the top 11 finishers in a meet that featured many of the top squads in New England, including a number of New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference (NEWMAC) schools.

Jacqueline M. Wentz '10, the Cardinal and Grey's top runner a year ago, returned to form after sitting out last weekend's Engineer's Cup race. Wentz was the top overall finisher, a feat she accomplished twice as a junior, breaking the tape 19 seconds faster than her nearest competitor with a time of 17:40. Maria J Monks '10 was next across the line for the Engineers, completing the 5-kilometer course in 18:08. Alina E. Gatowski '11 (18:31) and Brooke C. Johnson '13 (18:32) finished back-to-back in 11th and 12th place respectively. Only two teams, Rowan University and Keene State College, had a second runner ahead of MIT's fourth best. Chandler L. Burfield '13 added valuable points with a 33rd place showing to round out the scoring for Tech.

The Cardinal and Grey earned a total of 60 points to finish ahead of runner-up Brandeis University. This is the second consecutive year that MIT has captured the UMass-Dartmouth Invitational.
Framingham State Rally Past MIT Football, 20-16

With 27 seconds remaining in regulation, Brandon Holbrook hauled in a 27-yard pass to give visiting Framingham State College a 20-16 victory over MIT on Saturday. The decision marked the second year in a row in which the Rams have registered a come-from-behind win over the Engineers.

MIT got on the scoreboard midway through the opening quarter on a drive that was set up on a fumble which was forced and recovered by Alexander F. Rubino '10 at Framingham State’s 22-yard line. The Engineers got as close as the five-yard mark but had to settle for a field goal from Peter W. Gilliland ’12. A defensive battle ensued as both sides combined for 83 yards over the next six drives.

The Rams nearly evened the game at the 8:03 mark of the second quarter, but a field goal attempt hit the right post. Following a punt by the Cardinal and Gray, David Leach grabbed a 14-yard pass and added a 14-yard run to move the ball to MIT’s 21-yard line. Then, James McCarthy was brought down just shy of the end zone. On his third try, Leach plunged in for the touchdown giving Framingham State a slim 7-3 lead which would hold for the rest of the half.

The Engineers quickly regained the lead 2:22 into the third quarter. On a third-and eight, Kyle T. Johnson ’11 sprinted for 13 yards and later threw a 32-yard strike to Michael P. Fitzgerald ’10 for another third-and-long conversion. On the ensuing play, Johnson found Nathaniel C. Forbes ’12 for the go-ahead touchdown from 12 yards out. Both sides struggled to move the ball until Leach’s 18-yard run moved the chains to MIT’s 12 yard line at the end of the frame.

Coming out of the break, Franey’s pass was intercepted by Brian P. Doyle ’11 at the eight yard line and returned it for 28 yards. DeRon M. Brown ’10 recorded a 14-yard run, but after a pair of incomplete passes, the Rams’ Corey Steele intercepted Johnson’s toss and brought it up his own 45 yard line. Facing a fourth and seven from MIT’s 39, Franey set up to receive the snap to punt but threw to Anthony Kelsey for a 12-yard gain. Leach followed with a 26-yard scampier as Franey capped the drive with a quarterback sneak to give Framingham State a 14-10 advantage with 9:43 left to play.

Back-to-back catches by Forbes of 13 and 25 yards moved the Engineers to MIT’s 12 yard line, but a pair of incomplete passes, the Rams’ Corey Steele intercepted Johnson’s toss and brought it up his own 45 yard line. Facing a fourth and seven from MIT’s 39, Franey set up to receive the snap to punt but threw to Anthony Kelsey for a 12-yard gain. Leach followed with a 26-yard scampier as Franey capped the drive with a quarterback sneak to give Framingham State a 14-10 advantage with 9:43 left to play.

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