New Course To Program Initiated; Hope To Increase Student Interest

The Chemical Engineering Department this year initiated a completely new undergraduate program leading to the degree in Chemical Engineering. Formerly one of the most rigid courses at MIT, it now places almost no restrictions on students, the third and fourth years being devoted to elective subjects with the stipulation that the student take 65 units of Chemical Engineering and 55 units in Chemistry plus the usual Humanities requirements. Students also take at least 85 units of an integrated professional minor in an departments other than Chemistry.

Need For Interest Cited
Professor E. R. Gilliland in an interview for The Tech, pointed out that the former program was undoubtedly the best possible program for a prospective Chemical Engineer. However, the Chemical Engineering Department, like all departments at MIT, is faced with the problem of sustaining the interest of the students. It was felt that the general monotony that often follows the freshman year might be eliminated by permitting the student to have a free rein in choosing his courses. Thus the number of required courses has been reduced and the student is allowed to take a professional minor in some other department to supplement his work in Course 16.

While many of the juniors have made "significant" changes in their programs, the people who will be most affected by the change are the present Sophomores, who have filled out tentative schedules of their planned courses of study for the next two years so that some preparation can be made in arranging sufficient sections in the necessary courses.

Fear Avoiding Subjects
One fear of the Chemical Engineering Department is that students will use their freedom to avoid certain subjects. For instance, Physical Chemistry is essential for all Chemical Engineers. Only time will tell whether a course such as this will be avoided by enough people to make this a "required" course.

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