Overview in student government

One key word, overview, has been underlining much of the discussion about the student government revision. How much should the present committee overview, or the Finance Board, or the Student Center Committee, or the Public Relations Committee, or the Student Body Council? There are three things pertinent to the problem: the purpose of student government, the structure, or size, of a living group, and the practical meaning of the overview function.

Through student government, the MIT undergraduates control most of their own affairs: If necessary, the Administration endorses the Institute Committee overview Committee, or the Public Relations Committee, or the Student Body Council. But the various committees are merely a part of student government; in our opinion, its function is to act in lieu of the Administration. The Chief representative body in student government is the Institute Committee. It is the prime Finance function and the ultimate check on appeal in campus matters. It is the obvious group to exercise an overview function, if such is desired.

The problem has all the complications inherent in any large committee. It meets at least every two weeks; its size prevents quick decisions. This defines any overview might have as being confined to major issues and general policies. Individual incidents would need to be serious to merit Inscomm's attention. Different committees also demand different degrees of supervision. It is very important that the Student Center continue to be the coordinating committee for student government; in our opinion, its chairman should be placed on the Executive Council where he will be in close contact with the other top leaders; and the committee chairman should be subject to a recent Inscomm review by Inscomm in major decision areas.

On the other hand, some committees need little or no review by Inscomm. Judicial matters are now handled by living groups, and some part of the administration. Further review in personal matter may only prolong the problem of settling on a separate Board. The Finance Board handles many detailed matters, and most of its business is not feasibly subject to Inscomm review.

The greater problem then still remains: What government is entirely beyond the jurisdiction of Inscomm? The present Undergraduate Association Constitution gives the Board of Directors the main-year view actions "involving the general undergraduate body, or non-internal to a living group," and leaves to the undergraduate body a whole. To some extent, this means fitting the old by-laws of the Association for the new communication.

These changes will not be made hurriedly; student government leaders are carefully evaluating campus opinion before making a new proposal that the student body in many ways; we hope the undergraduates will express their feeling on the subject.

Time of change

Volume 84 of The Tech has had the opportunity to observe a period of emerging growth and change of the MIT community. Much of this growth has reached a completion. An example is the dedication of the Green Center for Earth Sciences in September. The Psychology Department appeared as a separate unit for the first time after a period of development in Course XIV. The Faculty has just devoted a major meeting of the entire student body to the review of general Institute requirements.

Other plans have been well under way in the past year. The Center for Advanced Engineering Study admitted its first students in September. The Student Center is rapidly preparing for its role and its influence in student life. The Material Sciences Building will begin operations in the fall. In student life, the Committee on Student Environment proposed long range plans for student housing. The Association of Women Students sponsored a symposium on the topic of "Women in Science," and the Student Center is reaching out to many parts of the country. President DeRemer appeared as an observer which may become a continuing tradition. Freshmen and Sophomores suffered through the first attempt of computer registration.

Student government is in the midst of the most complete consideration and revision of its internal workings. The student body in the past year has debated considerable political activity on campus. The past, Charles H. Townes was the first individual associated with MIT to receive the Nobel Prize. The Institute received $13 million in settlement of a patent litigation. It appears that the money received in the settlement has helped to hold off a tuition increase.

The heart is ruffed; a diamond apt to double West's overcall. With partner's suit should discourage these doubles, and much of their effectiveness is the ability to double, by bidding an opening bid, low. Doubles are for the safest contract.

Penalty doubles of overcalls should not be made merely on the strength of a double. With partner has opened the bidding, a diamond penalty doubled. In a contract, the partner should have some side strength, so that partner can have a successful bid, with a partner with three trumps to an honor and so forth, that partner cannot let the double stand, he will be able to find a side contract.

Penalty doubles should be based upon the strength of the other partner's prospectives. A prospective double should add his to the number he estimated functions of the group, it becomes evident that this huge size is all right. Fall Day will be helped by having representatives from all areas. Also, if the Secretariat sets up a good program on how to get involved in activities or get into interested in public positions, the group will grow.

The Student Center discussion was more complicated. The main points on this topic were that the plan of long from being able to define the powers it will have in the new center and what power or decision will be left to other groups. Consequently, members of Institute Center were most interested, had difficulty deciding what to do with the group. It was the general opinion that a separate committee was needed and that that committee should not have much power or decision, but that that committee should be able to spread the responsibilities of the Student Center to the present groups, and thereby get along without a special Student Center group.

Kibitzer

By Mark Robichaud

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