Pass or Fail

To the Editor:

An open letter to Prof. Walter Ramsdell, Chairman of the Pass-Fail Committee:

During the past two years the Student Committee Educational Policy has been studying the relationship of the grading system and the educational process here at MIT. The committee has investigated grading systems at other colleges and particularly pass-fail systems. In numerous interviews with faculty members and students the benefits of pass-fail have been seen. Often, the student is given the opportunity to work with the professor on a topic of interest. Pass-fail has proven to be a more effective way of teaching and learning.

The proposal is to continue pass-fail for the future freshman of MIT. The proposal should be discussed with the faculty and students at large. It is suggested that the proposal be reviewed and approved by the faculty and students before implementation.

The Student Committee Educational Policy strongly recommends that an experimental pass-fail grading system be implemented at MIT.

Pete Meschter '68

By Jim Smith

In past columns I have discussed humanities as a major at MIT. What role should the humanities play at MIT, especially in the science major here, and what fulfilling role might they have? My definition is that of C. Wright Mills; that is, a construct that would allow an education which liberates a man from the cage of sheer numbers and make him a liberal, an educated person of independent imaginativeness.

Through acquiring the liberal arts (that is, the art of freedom), the student acquires the self-sustaining capacity for critical judgment of the world around him to become a member of society rather than just a mere tool.

The role that the humanities at MIT is to add this dimension to the education of students who are preparing to be scientists and who, left to their own devices, would pursue their career at the expense of the society. The humanities should be considered in the world of the drafting room or office.

The role of the humanities at MIT is to add to this dimension. To make the student aware of the value of the liberal arts as a major at MIT. What role should the humanities play at MIT, especially in the science major here, and what fulfilling role might they have? My definition is that of C. Wright Mills; that is, a construct that would allow an education which liberates a man from the cage of sheer numbers and make him a liberal, an educated person of independent imaginativeness.

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