Counsellors debate Negro admissions

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clearly indicated their fear that "superficial" characteristics are not enough for anyone to decide his living group for four years. The panel could only point to the small percentage of persons who actually discover that they are not in a living group and the large number who after six to eight weeks can truthfully say that theirs is the only living group to live in. Financial aid

An incident of misunderstanding and lack of communication took the effectiveness out of what was otherwise a very productive seminar Saturday morning. This session was concerned with MIT's procedures and policies of admissions and financial aid. Dan Kenneth R. Gedney, Director of Undergraduate Admissions, and Associate Director of Financial Aid Leonard V. Gallagher; a question-and-answer session followed the prepared talks.

Professor Gedney first outlined the Institute's selection procedures. The three-part process is designed to select students who are among the best in the nation, and take many factors into account. First, through a combination of indicators, test scores, and grades, the Admissions Office determines an entirely objective "scholastic index." This is infested in all ways to find out remarkably how the applicant would fare at MIT. The second step, second, also designed for impartiality, is a subjective evaluation of the applicant's non-academic activities and qualifications, to determine a "personal rating."

Third, and most significant, is the "roundup," the combination of the two ratings. In this procedure, the Admissions Office sets up a matrix on which each applicant's standing is determined by plotting both his Scholastic Index and his Personal Rating. In the past, Gedney said, in effect the rule has been that the sum of the two scores must be such that it indicates a certain quality in both scholastic and personal competence.

Gedney then discussed MIT's financial aid policies. The program, he said, is unique in several ways. It is entirely need-oriented, rather than being based on merit; the program covers every undergraduate that money alone shall not prevent him from attending the Institute once he is accepted; all aid consists entirely of scholarships grants and loans, and does not require students to accept jobs. Approximately 52% of all freshmen receive aid, he said, of 70% who apply for assistance. He pointed out in the past, the main reason for refusal of aid was lack of funds.

Black students

The troublesome misunderstanding arose during the question-and-answer period. Several counselors in the audience asked specific questions about admissions criteria; then Miss Brenda DeVaul, of Fisk University inquired about the definite racial situation at MIT. Black students, she said, having been offered admission to the Institute, were often uncertain about how they would be treated and accepted by the Institute community in general. She asked, not if the Institute were segregated, but how blacks were, in fact, treated; when she had asked the question at an earlier session of the conference, she felt she had not received a satisfactory answer. Almost immediately, other members of the audience expressed their beliefs on the situation in general, but Miss DeVaul said again that she had still not received an answer to her specific problem.

Within five minutes several counselors in the audience were debating various aspects of the issue; twice Dean Wadleigh tried to restore order, but was interrupted by repeated outbursts from the participants.

Miss DeVaul succeeded, after ten to fifteen minutes of argument, in presenting her question more clearly. Professor Gedney was able to effect silence, and answered, "We are here to answer," he said, "a white community...trying to understand the colored student...all minority groups. We do not have too much experience at it, but we feel all have been made at MIT."

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Once the question was understood by those at the seminar, Miss DeVaul said, the feel that Prof. Gedney's answer was "adequate for now...I'll hope for more in the future." The reply reflected, she felt, the type of awareness and perception for which she was looking.

The Seminar did present a significant amount of worldwide information concerning the Institute's policies on admissions and financial aid, but the misunderstanding and resulting disorder seemed to destroy the atmosphere of cooperation and communication which had been hoped for...