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HONDA

Aero symposium stresses creative student involvement

By Carson Agnew

One engineering department's experiment in education ended last Saturday on a successful note. The Creative Engineering Symposium, held last week on campus by the Department of Aeronautics and Astronautics, was an experiment in showing students what an engineer in industry really has to do, and how students, faculty, and engineers in projects to demonstrate the idea.

The program, conceived by several faculty members and students in the Aero Department, used two main approaches. First, problems solicited from the major aerospace companies were distributed to groups of students. Each group was to study the problem, and write a report in which it suggested innovative solutions to it. Problems ranged in scope from the design of a complete air-to-air missile system to work on heat-pipe applications.

Secondly, engineers and inventors were invited to present papers involving the creative solution of engineering problems. These were intended to show how useful solutions were arrived at by practicing engineers.

Not all parts of the program were equally effective. Few students, for example, attended the paper presentations. The reasons seemed to boil down to the pressure of other academic commitments—many students had to give the affair low or last priority because of the usual round of quizzes, midterms, and papers demanded by their non-Aero courses during the week. And one participant described this part of the program as "a typical Aero Department seminar in the fall."

"Not too late to join this year's program. It is good enough to be worth lobbying for." Steve Ehrmann, 

"The students seemed to enjoy the Creative Engineering Symposium. Steve Ehrmann's comment about the calendar plan applies to the whole program. It is a useful and constructive whole."

Overall, these work-shops appear so useful and promising that they will likely be continued. By Thursday, April 24, the Academic Seminar in the fall will be over. The Creative Engineering Symposium, called the program an experience in "problem-oriented—not solution-oriented" instruction. At Wilbur '69 said that too much of MIT's education was aimed at getting on engineering ability to solve a problem, and too little of it in teaching how to formulate the problem in the first place. Above all else, this seems to be the ability that was developed by the Creative Engineering Symposium.

Urban fellowship program sponsors summer projects

Tom Woodruff, Chairman of MIT Urban Action, has announced that applications are now being accepted for the MIT Urban Fellows Program. Applications for the program, which is both a community service project and an academic program, must be return-

by Thursday, April 24.

The program, financed by the Urban Systems Laboratory and by other Institute funds, has three major components: Summer fellowships for up to 15 Urban Action Fellows, continuing liaison work with city officials or community agencies in these areas to work out the structure of the Fellows' participation there. Fellows will receive Fellowships (likely in excess of $1000) for their summer work, which will last from June 16 to late August. Fellows will work full-time, except for one morning or afternoon each week during which individual groups will come to MIT to evaluate their roles with the faculty consultants. In addition, there will be a weekly evening session in which all the Fellows will meet to compare their experiences and to hold discussions with city officials or community leaders.

The academic seminar in the fall will carry 15 units, 15 of which comprise continuing community involvement through an action program or as a liaison between MIT Urban Action and the community.

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