Poli Sci history crucial in tenure cases

(Editors' note: This article is the second in a series dealing with recent, controversial tenure decisions in the Department of Political Science. The author is a junior in Course XVII.)

By Ed Grossman

II. Tenure in Political Science - A case study

The three tenure decisions in the political science department this year reflect both the policies of the department (already presented in a previous article) and the idiosyncrasies of the individuals involved. The decisions were made and should be considered controversial.

Tenure decisions may have long term consequences on the policies of the department as well as affecting the lives of those three men directly involved. One cannot adequately appreciate the controversial aspects and implications of these tenure decisions without understanding the history of the Political Science department and the roles the individuals have played in its short existence.

At the end of World War II, courses now taught in Psychology (IX), Economics (XIV), Industrial Management (XV), and Political Science (XVIII) were part of the curriculum of the Department of Economics and Social Sciences (XIV). At this time, Norman Padford (Professor of International Relations) was the only professorial appointment in the field of political science. At the prompting of Alfred Sloan, MIT decided to expand its commitment to the social sciences. In political science, this policy first led to the founding of the Center for International Studies (CIS) in 1952. The Center soon attracted a young staff of political scientists, including I.thiel de Solla Pool, Lucian Pye, and DanLexer. Encouraged by President Julius Stratton, a graduate political science curriculum soon developed there. In 1956, Course XIV began offering an S.B. in Economics, Politics and...