Civil Engineering: students find broad, interdisciplinary curricula

by Richard Parker and David Olives

With the continuing controversy concerning the alleged narrowing of many of MIT's departments, Course I, Civil Engineering, stands as a strong refutation to the charge. According to the MIT Bulletin, "Course I, Civil Engineering" is "one of the most independent and responsive to the public's wishes in serving human needs. Traditionally, the department has been a leader in the field. When a need developed outside the areas of analysis and design, we had to change to meet those needs."

The past ten years has seen a sharp re-directing of priorities within the department. Engineering alone means nothing. A further demonstration of the breadth of the department's approach to the criticism of civil engineering. Originally, the department centered around the field of civil engineering is such a vast field. Imagine one department concerned with building roads, dams, bridges, and other civil engineering tasks. The selection of the department's major courses now not only includes engineering alone means nothing.

A more comprehensive curriculum means that many students in the department are self-conscious about its ambiguity. As one student in the department stated, "I tell someone I am a civil engineer and I almost feel a need to further explain myself... today, 'Civil Engineering' alone means nothing.

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exploded: 'Last year 10% of the GNP was construction, yet only one-tenth of 1% was spent in research and only 1.5% of 1% is spent in basic research.' Faced with these figures, the Academic of International Civil Engineering has launched an attack in terms of quality. In the past, students were taught how to build dams and bridges as separate entities, for the human mind only understands things linearly. Now, though, we are beginning to learn how to deal with affected communities as a whole.

The undergraduate department itself is fairly close knit. Students majoring in Civil Engineering, there exists a comfortable rela-

In a word, Civil Engineering is the field charged with providing society with its constructional facilities.

- Dr. Peter Eagleson, Chairman of the department

Civil Engineering is designed to balance the problem-solving and problem-solving for a broad range of careers.

Within the department there exist five sub-departments. These divisional structures, transportation, geotechnique, materials and water resources act extremely as the miniaturization of the large. The term "Civil Engineering" is so encompassing that many students in the department are self-conscious about its ambiguity. As one student in the department stated, "I tell someone I am a civil engineer and I almost feel a need to further explain myself... today, 'Civil Engineering' alone means nothing.

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