3 courses look for heads

By Bert Halstead

Three of MIT's twenty-four departments will have new heads next fall. The Department of Urban Studies and Planning has finalized the process of choosing a new chairman, and the Departments of Architecture and Mechanical Engineering should choose new heads by June.

Search committees in the three departments are at work considering candidates for nomination. The Department of Urban Studies and Planning involved, following decisions to resign made by the heads of these departments earlier this year.

The search committee of the Department of Urban Studies and Planning has finished its work, and has sent its list of recommendations to the MIT administration. The leading candidate has been notified, according to Professor Lloyd Redwin; Redwin declined to disclose the name, for fear that it might upset the "delicate negotiations" in progress, but said, "There is no way to stall this will be any problem."

In the Department of Mechanical Engineering, "the search is on," according to Associate Dean of the School of Engineering James D. Bruce. The current department head, Professor Ascher H. Shaprio, has held that post for eight years now, and is resigning so he can devote more time to teaching and research. The search for a new chairman "is being handled by the Dean of Engineering, according to Bruce, with advice from the department's search committee, and should converge within two to three weeks.

Professor Stanford Anderson, chairman of the search committee of the Department of Architecture, says the primary criterion for choosing the new department head is "excellence within or his or her own area." Next, he should have administrative capabilities and be willing to participate in the governance of the School of Architecture and Planning.

Search process

The search committees, composed of faculty within the departments and representatives from the Schools, began work last fall. The scheduled resignations of the current department chairmen in June. After considering candidates at MIT and at other schools, the search committee in each department reports to the Dean of the School involved and to President Wiesner with a list of candidates for the post.

The MIT administration then approaches the first candidate. If he is unavailable, MIT will attempt to hire the next candidate, and so forth.

Considerations

Raney is in his fourth (Please turn to page 5)

Student Center gets new Videobeam TV

By Dave Danford

Packed into a small room in the Student Center standing is the doorway, peering through the curtained windows, a mob of fifty or more watched the Bruins play on a new and very different TV set Sunday afternoon.

The special attraction, other than the Bruins, bringing them to the television lounge was the 8 1/4 x 5 2/3 foot screen of the Videobeam projection color television.

According to former Student Center Committee Chairman Steve Wallman, the television was placed in the TV lounge about three weeks ago. Wallman said that it was purchased from Advent Corp, for $2495 and is presently in the lounge on a six-month money-back trial basis.

Wallman pointed out that a new conventional color TV for the lounge would have cost over $800 anyway, so the committee decided to try the more spectacular Videobeam TV to see if it was practical.

The picture is sensitive to fingerprints on the screen and to fouling around with the projector," said Wallman. "We're hoping that people will obey the signs and stay out of the roped-off projection area.

The NBA championship series was perhaps the event that first brought hordes of people to see the Videobeam. In view of the student reaction to basketball on the big screen, Wallman characterized the TV as an "overwhelming success."

One student who claimed not to be a pro basketball fan commented, "The TV made watching a basketball game exciting. People were screaming and jumping up and down," Praising the realism of the system, he continued, "It even smelled like a gymnasium."

A new, talking computer has been developed by engineers in MIT's Department of Electrical Engineering (ELE) which can pronounce any word or string of words in the English language.

The remarkable thing about this computer is that it has not even seen a word before to be able to pronounce it; the computer is programmed with a learned pronunciation rule to pronounce each word in much the same way a person does.

When a word is typed into the computer, it first pauses for several seconds to analyze it. Across its display screen flicker hundreds of different characters, each representing the complex pronunciation rules that are built into the computer's memory, and to attempt to keep up with the words that enter our language continually."

Allen believes that it is better to give the computer a basic understanding of the rules of pronunciation, so that the knowledge the computer has will be useful for a much longer period of time.

All words are composed of a relatively few (approximately 11,000 atomic units or "phones") which do not change over long periods. Using these morphs, a computer can (Please turn to page 7)