Staff categories studied

By Mike McNamee

A group of administration committees is now considering a thorough review and reclassification of the job categories of more than 600 members of the MIT staff.

The review, which began over the summer and will probably be completed by the end of this semester, is a study of salary administration, job responsibilities, and career paths for members of the Administrative, Library, and Academic Administration Staffs.

The employees are at the next-to-highest level of the MIT administration, "right up to the level of the Academic Council [a body of administrators that sets broad policy for MIT]" according to Vice President for Administration and Personnel John M. Wynne.

While the review is considering job responsibilities and salary levels for the staff members, "one is not be doing anything different as a result of the report," Wynne said in an interview last week.

Rather, the review is aimed at reclassifying job categories, for example, a person in the Finance Aid office will be able to tell what job is comparable to his in Physical Plant. Wynne explained that this will aid employees in planning their careers and make "horizontal promotions" easier to carry out.

Another major purpose of the review is to ensure equity in salary levels for comparable jobs, by establishing a salary range for each job level and holding and holding employees in such jobs to those salary levels. This does not mean, however, that employees who now are making more than the top salary in the range for their jobs will have salary cuts; such employees will just be "red-slippered," or held at their current salaries until the range for their job catches up with their salary.

MIT also wants to ensure, Wynne said, that its salary structure is comparable to the salary levels in the Boston area and to salary levels at colleges across the country. "We have a continuing, on-going check on this just through the process of hiring people," Wynne said, "but we want to make a thorough review anyway."

Wynne said that salary administration at MIT in the past "has been largely a matter of negotiation. "The employee negotiates with his supervisor for a salary, and the supervising director for a larger budget with the administration, and so on," he explained.

"While those negotiations have always been constrained by the amount of money available and the levels of other salaries at the Institute, we feel that a more systematic approach is needed," Wynne said. "One side benefit, he said, was that salary equity for minority-group employees could be assessed by the review, thus putting the Institute in a better position in its Affirmative Action planning.

Wynne termed the process of the review as "a peer review." (Please turn to page 7)

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