Special faculty meeting studies the grades report

By Mike McNamee

Professor Michael McIntosh of MIT grading system, based on the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Grades, was discussed in a special faculty meeting yesterday.

Changes in administrative registration procedures, grade distribution, and rules for students who want to drop a course were discussed at the meeting, which lasted more than two hours.

The changes were proposed by the Ad Hoc Committee after more than a year of review of the grading system, and were summarized in the report the committee released last month. These specific recommendations were made by the committee, dealing with issues ranging from Drop Date to whether or not the grade of F should be eliminated from the system.

About 80 faculty members and 20 students attended the special meeting, which was called just last week to discuss the grades report. The topic had been scheduled on the agenda of the November meeting two weeks ago, but had been delayed to lack of time.

Much of the meeting was spent discussing proposed procedural changes in registration. Professor of Metallurgy Roy Kaplow, chairman of the grades committee, introduced the topic by explaining that the committee felt the current registration system "assumes that the student can make up his mind about what he wants to study before the beginning of the semester and won't change his mind after clauses begin.

Instead of this system, the committee proposed that students be encouraged to experiment with subjects they are not sure about, rather than trying to take more subjects than the system allows. The CEP also proposed that students be allowed to drop one subject at the time of the current Drop Date.

Grade inflation — the tendency of faculty to give higher grades now than they have in the past — was the second topic discussed at the meeting. While recommending that the current grade structure remain

Smith to chair privacy group

By Mike McNamee

A Standing Committee on Privacy, recommended by an ad hoc committee appointed to consider issues resulting from the new Buckley Amendment, was discussed at the meeting.

The five-member committee will be chaired by Professor of Electrical Engineering Arthur C. Smith, former chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Privacy. The committee would be expected to "gather information and develop policy alternatives to the Buckley Amendment," according to Vice President for Administration and Personnel for MIT.

Other members of the committee, according to Vice President for Philanthropy Judith J. Thompson, are: students Richard J. McCarty '75 and Alan W. Squier G, and DSR staff member Stuart D. McIntosh of the Center for International Studies.

The process of appointment was begun when the Buckley Amendment was passed, he added.

In a related matter, it was announced last week that Vice President for Administration and Personnel John M. Wynne will serve as MIT's senior administrative officer on privacy.