The class of 1979, the largest ever to be admitted to MIT, had 1163 persons in it as of Monday, according to Sandra Cohen '71, assistant director of admissions.

The larger class size is a compromise between budgetary and academic considerations, and is intended to raise MIT's income in a time of fiscal crisis and continuing budget shortfalls.

It is expected that the academic and administrative structure of the Institute will not have to be enlarged to handle the increase of 121 students over last year's 1040. Class size has hovered around 1000 in recent years. The increased academic productivity is expected to soften the effect of recent budget cuts.

The decision to increase class size was made based in part on a good high school education.

Another problem facing the admissions office is the slowness of the summer melt. In each of the past five years, an average of 35 applications have been returned. Cohen said, "We thought perhaps with the bad economic conditions we would have a faster melt. We just don't know what's behind it. But we probably will fall within the range by the time school starts."

This year, the melt has been unusually slow, and in fact the class is targeted to be between 1030 and 1050. There have been less than 40 "melt" so far this summer, an unusually low number.

"We are not sure why the melt is so low this year," Cohen said. "We thought perhaps with the bad economic conditions we would have a faster melt. We just don't know what's behind it. But we probably will fall within the range by the time school starts."

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