

in the news

INSIDE

Sometimes photographs are taken which we either don't have the space to run or which simply aren't appropriate to print by themselves. In this issue we have gathered a few of our favorites of that variety and made them into a year end photo essay.

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The Varsity Basketball team opened its season with two disappointing losses. However, the games show that the team is improving rapidly and should become a formidable opponent soon.

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EXCERPTS

Aspiring young journalists (like myself) find their sanity often challenged by the effort to build a good clipping file and follow in Woodstein's footsteps.

I've clambered across Stanford roofs at 11pm (led by a security guard), interviewed a Pet Rock and ridden inside a styrofoam octopus on a parade float, all in search of good stories.

But I'd never experience total disorientation until my internship last spring on a weekly newspaper in Washington.

The town had 4250 citizens and two papers. One had been publishing for about 70 years. Mine had been publishing about seven months, and I never did find out what its circulation was. I was the reporter and the photographer and I delivered a few papers.

I doubt a town can sue for character assassination, but there's no sense upsetting the local chamber of commerce by printing the name of the metropolis. Suffice to say it had: a) no pizza parlor, b) no movie theater, and c) no news.

— Dave Ansley
The Stanford Daily

Cambridge is a city of many persuasions: almost any night of the week various cults are chanting, plotting or exchanging stir-fry recipes over works. But it is only on Wednesday nights that a group of men meet at MIT for two hours of squidding, squopping, potting and occasional bristling or gromping. And they do it with the door wide open.

"Tiddlywinks is not for everyone," says MIT Tiddlywinks Team captain Charles Frankston. "It takes a certain kind of mind to appreciate the game."

— *The Boston Phoenix*

CEP urges delaying drop date decision

By David B. Koretz

The Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) voted yesterday to recommend to the faculty that a decision on the controversial Drop Date policy proposals be postponed until the Feb. 15, 1978 faculty meeting.

(Informed sources were in agreement that the CEP's recommendation is almost certain to be accepted by the faculty at its Dec. 21 meeting.)

The statement released yesterday read in full:

"The Committee on Educational Policy by unanimous vote agreed to recommend to the faculty that a vote on the Drop Date policy be deferred until the February faculty meeting.

"This action was taken in response to the concern expressed by some students that they would not have ample opportunity to express their views to the faculty if the vote were taken at the Dec. 21 faculty meeting."

Professor Robert Hulsizer, chairman of the CEP, told *The Tech* that the original delay (until the December meeting) was to

"give the community an opportunity" to have their views known by the faculty before the vote.

Hulsizer admitted that the delay "may have looked like a conspiracy," but maintained that the intent was to let students and faculty think about the proposal before action was taken.

The CEP and the Committee on Academic Performance have been discussing since October a proposal to limit to one the number of courses a student could drop after the fifth week of a semester.

Hulsizer contended that since students don't vote at faculty meetings, it is "irrelevant" when the meeting takes place if the students make their views known to the faculty in advance.

If the meeting were held in December, he added, it wouldn't matter, since there would have been time to influence the faculty's vote. It's just a "symbolic thing," he maintained.

"The effective way to influence the faculty," he noted, "is through the media and other means."



A fire of unknown origin broke out in this car parked on Vassar Street across from the west end of Briggs field. No one was inside the auto at the time of the blaze, which was visible throughout West Campus. Police are tracing the car. (Photo by Gordon Haff)

MIT investigates S. African stocks

By Mark James

MIT has begun to gather information on the South African involvements of the largest corporations in which it has invested, although Institute administrators have apparently received no protests about these holdings.

Several other universities in the area have recently received demands that they divest themselves of stock in companies doing business in South Africa, but only the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and Hampshire College have divested so far, and

their controversial holdings were minimal.

The calls for divestment have followed the recent wave of restrictions on free speech and movement instituted by the South African government against blacks. The protesters feel that efforts by universities to influence corporate policy are generally ineffective. University administrators have confirmed that divestment would merely transfer stock to another party and not be effective political action.

Special Assistant to the

Chairman of the Corporation Walter Milne said that the MIT Corporation's Advisory Committee on Shareholder Responsibility is drafting letters to the 50 or 60 corporations that compose about one-half of MIT's investments asking whether they are doing business in South Africa, and if so, what the nature of that business is and what percent of their total business lies there.

In addition, the letter asks what sort of policy statements the company has made concerning South African issues.

The Shareholder Responsibility Committee (SRC) advises the Corporation Executive Committee on investment questions related to social issues. Milne said that in the past the group had dealt with issues related to specific companies, instead of the broad issues involved in the South African case.

Having only met once this fall, the advisory group has not yet made any decisions related to South Africa, Milne noted, but he added that the group will

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"Semi-seriously" under consideration

EE Department may limit enrollment

By Kent Pitman

The Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (EECS) is discussing the feasibility of limiting entrance into the department, according to department head Wilbur B. Davenport, Jr. Davenport told *The Tech* the topic is being considered "semi-seriously" as a means of ensuring the quality of education in the EECS department in light of the rapid inflation that has been affecting the department in recent years.

Davenport noted that the total number of undergraduates who designate Course VI as their major has gone up steadily, while the total amount of money available to the department has remained the same or decreased slightly over the same span of time.

There are two issues involved, said Davenport:

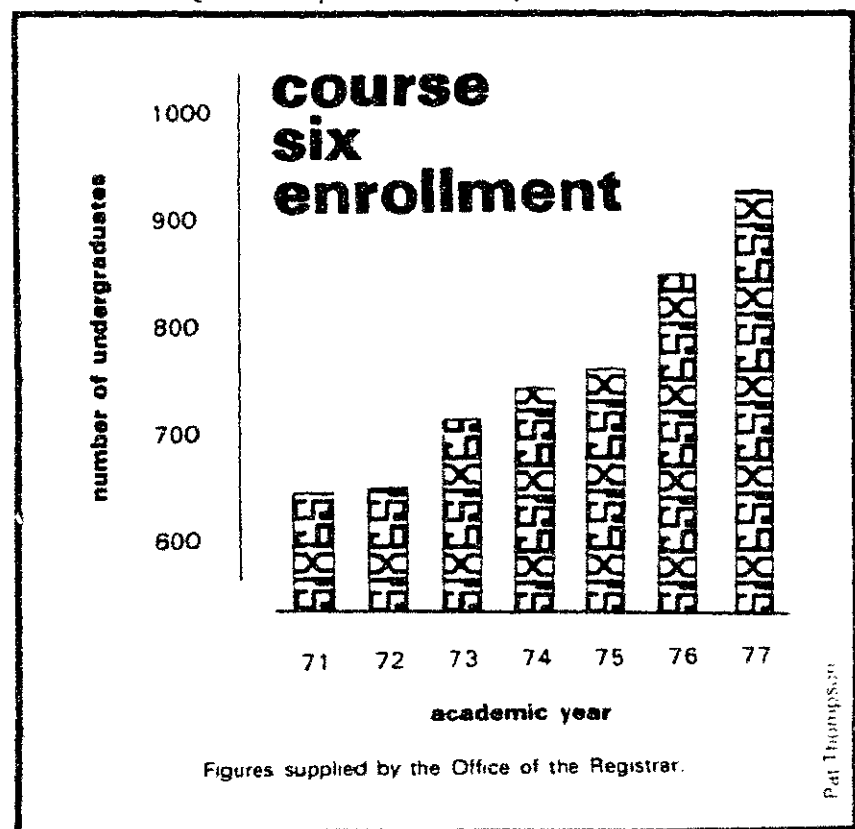
- How does the department match its available resources with its responsibilities for proper education?
- 916 undergraduates have selected Course VI as a major — almost a third of the total who have designated majors. How can this growth be checked?

Andrew Eisenberg '79, head of the Course VI Student Faculty

Committee and a student member of the department's Undergraduate Educational Policy Committee, was also concerned about the deteriorating quality of education.

"In real terms, resources have been decreasing," he explained.

Ten years ago, there were 650 students in the EECS department which at that time had from 110 to 117 professors and over 40 assistant professors. Now there are almost a thousand students but only 97 professors and 17 assistant professors.



Eisenberg cited a "ten percent growth rate in the number of students entering department each year over the past two or three years" as one of the reasons that the EECS Department had asked MIT for an additional \$500,000 funding in its budget for the next fiscal year.

Both Davenport and Eisenberg noted that anything as drastic as a limited enrollment into the department would require the approval of the entire faculty.

Dean of the School of Engineering James D. Bruce confirmed this notion, stating that "The Institute policy is that students can elect their majors without restriction," and that to alter this policy would probably mean a change to the rules and regulations of the faculty.

Bruce added that in his opinion, "It is wrong to limit the enrollment because that is one of the great things about MIT — that students have the opportunity to select their majors."

However, noted Eisenberg, if outright changes did not occur, the department could resort to more "indirect means" for maintaining a quota if necessary. He gave grade deflation as an example.