Graytak denies CAP crackdown

By Laurence Duffy

Recent comments by the Committee on Academic Performance (CAP) have been asking markedly increased numbers of students to leave the Institute are mostly off base, according to figures provided by Professor of Physics Thomas Graytak, chairman of the CAP.

Alf Geiter, a writer for the Boston Globe, said in an Apr. 26 article that the CAP "has been asking three times more students to withdraw from the Institute per term over the past year than in previous years." According to Graytak's statistics, the total numbers of undergraduates asked to leave the Institute in the calendar years 1970 through 1977 were 73, 66, 67, 70, 89, 123, and 154, respectively.

Although the faculty has received many objections against the CAP proposal to change the drop date, one that is not often used, one that is in keeping with MIT's tradition of flexibility and self-determination, knowing that you have a choice provides a safety valve. Its absence will be felt as regressive, though that is clearly not the intent of the faculty sponsors of the change.

In 1978, the Tech published an article about a proposed drop date change. The Committee on Academic Performance (CAP) was created by the faculty to address concerns about student performance and retention. The committee recommended changes to the drop date policy, which was traditionally the last day students could withdraw from courses without academic penalty.

The proposal faced significant opposition from students, who argued that the change would increase academic pressure and unfairness. Despite the opposition, the proposal was ultimately approved, and the drop date was changed.

This article from The Tech in 1978 highlights the debate over the CAP proposal and the tension between maintaining academic rigor and supporting student well-being. The article also reflects the broader context of academic performance and retention policies at MIT, which continue to evolve and be debated to this day.