Faculty begins debate on grading

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

REPORT TO THE FACULTY

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON GRADING

MARCH 15, 1978

Drew Friery
(Student Representative)
Thomas J. Greytak
James R. Melcher
William R. Siebert
Zennon S. Zannetos

In case you were wondering…”

Rogers’ plaque mystery solved

Coffee shop proprietor Bob Gane indicates hitherto unexplained foliage. (Photo by Steick)

To the Editor:

From time to time The Tech has been good enough to clear up campus mysteries for its readers. Could you unleash information to the faculty for their consideration?

The line at the coffee and doughnut stand in the lobby of 77 Mass. Ave. was inordinate-

long the other morning. At a loss for reading matter, I whisked away the rough edges of the moment in study of the plaque directly behind the coffee and doughnut stand in memory of William Barton Rogers.

The problem is this: why is there a fern frond carved in relief below the head of the old gent? It looks like Asplenium platyneuron (Ebony spleenwort), but I may be mistaken. Can you settle the matter?

Can The Tech shed light on why The Tech lost its Faculty Representative on Monday night in a polling of the students?

To the editor of The Tech:

I wish to make a request for the release of information to the faculty for their consideration.

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By Jordan Hollander

The Ad Hoc faculty committee report on grading was presented for discussion at Wednesday’s faculty meeting, but no definite conclusions were reached.

Professor of Management Zennon Zannetos, chairman of the Committee, opened discussion with background remarks on his committee’s three proposals. He stressed that the committee was a “creature of the faculty” and functioning only to present information to the faculty for their consideration.

Zannetos said that despite discrepancies in grading policy, a “universal faith in grades” existed. The purpose of the committee’s proposals, according to Zannetos, was to provide more information about a student’s performance than the letter grade alone.

Placing a grade distribution on students’ transcripts and making available letters of commendation for five percent of each class raised faculty objections on the grounds that these measures would “penalize students by measuring them against each other.”

Professor of Humanities Sherri Turkle, assistant professor of humanities, said, “We’re running out highly technical and highly skilled people who are literally barbarians.”

Professor of Humanities Jonathan King further maintained that including grade distributions on transcripts would “penalize” students by measuring them against others.

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