MIT opposes tuition tax credit bill

By Bob Wasserman

The MIT Administration has officially opposed any type of legislation which would provide tax credits for tuition expenses. MIT endorses instead President Carter's plan which would increase federal funds for existing student financial aid programs.

"We are of the view that the objectives of the Carter Administration are inextricable with the cures of college campuses," said John M. Wynne, Vice President for Administration and Personnel. "This plan is more responsive to student need," he continued, "and it makes use of current programs."

According to Associate Director of Student Financial Aid J. Samuel Jones, "MIT has everything to gain and nothing to lose" from the Carter program, which would boost federal educational aid by $1.5 billion.

Jones noted that the Carter plan would increase funding for the Basic Educational Opportunity Grant program, which currently supplies MIT students with over $20,000. If the Carter plan passes, "this amount could double or triple," according to Jones. The plan would also mean more work-study money for MIT students, he said.

The Carter plan could conceivably lower the student equity level," said Jones, "or at least hold the present equity level steady." This could be accomplished through the added funds appropriated by the Carter program, thus relieving the large pressure which financial aid places on MIT's unrestricted funds.

The legislation on tax credits for tuition currently before Congress would apparently go nowhere anyway from $150 to $500 per enrolled student.

The tax credit plan "favors public institutions over private ones," according to Wynne, and would "widen the gap" between the costs of private colleges and state-supported schools. Wynne also said that it is likely that "lower-cost institution would laugh at the tax credit scheme."

On the last note, Wynne felt that the Moylan-Packwood tax credit bill would "provide substantial inducements for private schools" on the secondary and elementary levels. This bill, recently approved by the Senate Finance Committee, would give families a $500 tax credit for each student enrolled in secondary and elementary schools as well as in colleges, thus making private school more attractive financially.

The passage of the Moylan-Packwood bill would be a "tremendous blow to public education," Jones said, and would "even play right into the hands of the Southern segregationists."

The Carter plan, although backed by a considerable number of influential Congressmen, is not certain to become law. Jones commented that there is a chance that the bill endorsing the Carter plan, sponsored by Sen. Claiborne Pell (D-R.I) and Rep. William Ford (D-Mich), could run into trouble in the Senate. If the bill were brought before the Congressional Appropriations Committee after passage of the Moylan-Packwood bill, Jones felt that "the Carter bill could get slaughtered."

CAP, CEP draft bill

By Mark James

Load limits for students who are on academic warning or are returning to MIT after a Negotiated Withdrawal will soon become the rule instead of the exception, Committee on Academic Performance (CAP) Chairman Thomas Gretyak '82 said in an interview Tuesday.

In addition, internal MIT records will now carry the notation "Required Withdrawal" instead of "Negotiated Withdrawal" for students who are asked to leave the Institute, according to Gretyak.

The external transcript will carry the same "W" for "Withdrawal" as before, and Gretyak added that the CAP has no plans to change this notation.

The CAP and the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) have been discussing the best way to limit the load of students in academic difficulty. At present the CAP limits students' course loads to 15 units, but during the last interview Gretyak explained that many students would like to make up for courses they have dropped or failed by overloading during the term after the difficulty. This action often leads to further problems, Gretyak stated. The CAP therefore plans to impose a limit of 45 units on students who are on warning or are coming back from a required withdrawal, unless a special exception is granted. The CAP and the CEP are now discussing the best procedure for granting such an exception, he added.

The credit limit proposal was originally made by a group of students led by Tom Potter '79 as an alternative to the CAP's drop proposal. Potter's proposal would have allowed students whose academic difficulty resulted from an overload. The change to the "Required Withdrawal" notation on internal records was made to reflect more accurately the use of "negotiated" withdrawals, according to Gretyak. The term "Disqualification," which used to appear on transcripts, has not been used since the CEP decided that it was too severe a penalty for students.

King seeks new term in state legislature

By Barbara J. Hill

The campaigns for next fall's local elections have already begun. One content taking place is the race for state representative involves two individuals affiliated with MIT: a professor and an administrator.

The Fenway-South End district of Boston is currently represented by Adjunct Professor of Urban Studies Melvin King, who has been at MIT since 1971. His first declared challenger is Alex Malcolm, '72, a graduate of the Sloan School of Management.

King, a liberal Democrat, is a member of the State Committee on Education. His recent major legislative efforts have been in the area of economic development. He is responsible for the establishment of numerous community development finance corporations — community groups which provide money to help develop small business — now funded with $10 million.

King's office has just completed a study of the 200-mile fishing zone, and is advocating agricultural use of public property and increased in-state consumption of Massachusetts-grown produce. According to King, the job situation is getting no better any. He also pointed out the need for expanded regional programs in housing, energy, and public transportation. He feels that Boston's responsibility to its residents needs to be clarified, and is working on legislation which would allow the state to assume such responsibilities should the city fail. Examples of this are garbage and snow removal.

King is in favor of continued rent control to protect fixed-income residents. When questioned on the rental tax, King responded, "I don't think anyone should have to pay tax on meals they prepare for themselves."

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The Fenway-South End district of Boston is currently represented by Adjunct Professor of Urban Studies Melvin King, who is also the Associate Director of the Community Fellows Program, is the incumbent State Representative for the Fenway-South End district. (Photo by Rob Mitchell)