Opinion

Will MIT computers need orientation?

By Gordon Hoff

As freshmen, you have been receiving a lot of advice lately. If much of the advice which you receive weren't contradictory, you would be in good shape.

Douglas, you've already been advised that freshman pass/fail means you don't have to do any work freshman year while you can get involved in a lot of different activities. You've probably also heard that if you don't study freshman year you will flunk out within six months. On one hand, you have been told that MIT is a cold atmosphere where everyone walks around at the ground, while, on the other hand, you have read about a myriad of sports and activities which no one can get more than a sampling of.

Regarding Pass/Fail—Freshman Pass/Fail exists because most people here are used to getting A's and want a sampling of. Most people have to do some minimal work to get by at MIT. However, in freshman year there are two things to keep in mind. First, it is pretty darn difficult to fail a freshman course, especially a course of notable exception is 8.02. Second, most freshmen courses are totally irrelevant to anything you will take later on.

As a junior in Mechanical Engineering with a reasonably good grasp of the material in general, I have had little or no use for most of MIT's core courses. I remember little or nothing from 16.02 and 10.00. I even remember that I never got a 1.0 on 1.04 here and there, but really teaches very little which you won't pick up in other courses anyway.

I took the biomedical option, 8.01 and 8.02, which was interesting but covered few of the points of the 8.01-2 option and I certainly haven't felt the loss. Even though I am no longer pre-med, I am still glad I took the more interesting, personal, and better taught course. In retrospect, I truly wish that I had been allowed to take some economics or management instead of some of the less useful core courses.

Regarding sports and activities—Besides your living group, sports and activities are probably the only way to get to know people around MIT. This, as no other reason, tells you the first five months or a year should encourage you to get involved in at least one activity or sport.

Student activities here cover an enormous range. They range from the "powerful corporations" like LSC to small "family businesses" like the Indoor Gardening Club and the MIT Rocket Society, which have only a few members. Perhaps most significant, new clubs are continually being formed by as few as five people.

In most activities you become only as involved as you want. There are people who spend a few hours a month on a single student activity and there are people who help run half a dozen different ones.

Almost the same situation applies to sports. Not only can anyone play intramurals, but many of the people on certain varsity sports had never pur chased a ticket in that sport before coming to MIT. So don't be hesitant about trying out for a sport you're interested in just because you weren't a star in high school.

I could spout advice on a hundred different matters, but I feel that the two things which I wrote above are the most important for now. Above all, get involved with course, activities, and sports which interest you. You will be the better for it.

Feedback

To The Editor:

I have a proposal for all students who are too busy with student activities to waste time on academic matters. This proposal will please the Institute Administration, since it will bring in revenue from people who otherwise might not be affiliated with the Institute.

Here's it:

MIT should offer a new program for non-academic students, call the Resort Plan. The Resort Plan allows a student to take advantage of all the niceties of the campus without having to worry about problem sets or their occurrence. Students would have the advantage of a lowered tuition (40% off), and in the administration, increased revenue from those who would otherwise be "taking it off." For an added fee, the Resort Plan includes a room in the housing system, and comes in American, Modified American, and European Plans. Successful completion of the Resort Plan is rewarded with a Bachelor of Arts from Harvard University.

How about it, folks?

John L. Shelton '79

Reader harps on Yes

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To The Editor:

I saw YES Saturday night at the Springfield Civic Center. It appears that Gordon Hoff made an error in his review in The Tech. Friday, September 1, while Jan Anderson did play a harp last year, he did not this year. The reviewer wasn't watching closely. He must have been blown away that late in the concert. What really happened is that Anderson mimicked in the center of his platform, arms outstretched, singing. Steve Howe, meanwhile, eschewed the sounds of a harp by plucking at the strings of an acoustic guitar. Close, but not the same thing.

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Resort plan helps "grease"

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