By Kent Pitman

Changes to the "form and substance" of tomorrow's freshman academic orientation have been planned in response to comments from members of the MIT community that the old program was not proving effective.

In previous years "the freshmen did not feel that they were getting any significant usefulness out of ... core orientation," R/O Coordinator Eric Sklar '81 explained.

According to Sklar, core orientation has in recent years consisted of talks which went into considerable detail about information which freshmen could just as easily look up in the Freshman Handbook.

Today's program will offer less of such detail, he said, while more time will be spent in small discussion groups for "questions on admission and matters of general nature. It will center upon "comments on requirements and why they are," said Sklar.

In a memorandum written late last month, Associate Dean Alan J. Lazarus, Director of the Undergraduate Academic Support Office, summarized the feelings of a group of concerned students and faculty who had just met to discuss the problem.

Among the agreements reached by the group were the shortening of the orientation lectures to a one-hour session, and the introduction of a set of informal discussion sessions immediately afterward.

The purpose of these discussion sessions will be to provide a more comfortable atmosphere for students to ask questions.

Sklar noted that one problem with the way things had formerly been done was that question/answer time was offered in Kneze - MIT's largest auditorium - as part of the main orientation lecture program. This caused awkwardness for those not used to talking in front of large groups and needlessly wasted the time of many who might not be interested in a given question.

By offering the question/answer time on a more informal basis in smaller groups, the planners of this event are hoping to better serve people's needs.

Also in the past, many students have spent their time in the Academic Midway which follows the orientation lecture program. "It is hoped that the question/answer session will allow the Academic Midway to be more of a place for exploration of courses and schools," Lazarus added.

Sklar pointed out that one reason the academic orientation had not been well attended in the past was that freshmen did not remember how it was for them, and give it very poor reviews.

Because of the format change, however, he expressed his hope that tomorrow's freshmen would have a much higher attendance.

Because of the last-minute nature of these changes, the rooms chosen for these discussions are not very close to Kneze. Lazarus said in his memo that plans for a more careful reorganization may be undertaken for next year's incoming class, in order to provide more comfortable facilities and perhaps some even more major modifications to the orientation's format.

The fraternity rush began with Friday's picnic & continued through the weekend. (Photo by Mary Ann Helferty.)

By Eric Sherman

Despite the new Massachusetts drinking age, this year's rush is going well according to most rush organizers.

IFC President Barb Hill '80 said that she was satisfied with rush and was not aware of any major problems. When asked about problems with the new drinking age, she replied that the freshmen were "trying not to antagonize anyone that freshmen drinking would bother."

Bob Mattos '80, IFC rush chairman, said that it is a little too early to tell how rush is progressing, but that there have been no major problems so far.

In fact, Mattos said that drinking still exists, but that it hasn't been emphasized as much as in previous years. He went on to say "Generally, if a freshman prefers to drink alcohol, he was not denied."

Dean Cores president Dean Philipps '80 concurred with Mattos' sentiments. He said that things are running smoothly and that although freshmen could still obtain alcoholic beverages, alcohol was "not pushed as much as last year." When asked about rush violations, Phillips had been no major problems.

The R/O center reported that as of Sunday afternoon, 1048 freshmen had arrived and checked in. Of the freshmen that have arrived, 207 are women. This means that the number of women in the class of '83 is lower than had been hoped for.

About two percent of the freshmen had not visited any fraternities by Sunday. The greatest number of fraternities visited by one person was 11. The greatest number of total visits made by one person was 24.

"Zeta Psi, a new fraternity at MIT, has been given special rush privileges for this year such as being able to extend bids early. As of Sunday afternoon, they had two freshmen accept bids," Mattos said that this is not necessarily a bad sign, since freshmen could be expected to be a day or two off in accepting any bid to see whether they receive bids from other fraternities.

In general, said Mattos, it is too early to decide how a particular fraternity's rush is progressing until freshmen begin to accept bids on Monday.

An unexpected turn to the rush this year has been the reaction of Belks. Instead of following tradition, Belks has posted the Institute and invited freshmen to drop by.

According to Steve Bradley, desk captain, Belks is holding neither a rush or an anti-rush.

"Some people we're being friendly to and some people we're still not being friendly to," said Bradley. "We're looking for people who feel they belong here."

One problem that Belks had was a lack of entry keys. Because of an error on the part of the locksmith, Belks did not have enough entry keys to fit the new locks that had been installed.

Dean Belks had requested that no freshmen be temporarily denied entry keys.

By Jay Glass

The Technology Community Association (TCA) will begin their series of sponsored MIT Red Cross blood drives today in the Student Center. The Blood Center will begin a two-day blood drive set by TCA at 400 pints. The drive will be offered tomorrow, with the blood donation goal for the two-day drive set by TCA at 400 pints. The location for the drive is the fourth floor of the Student Center.