Students balk at tuition increase

By Ivan Fong

Members of the Academic Council met with approximately one hundred concerned students Wednesday to discuss reasons for the recently announced 19.4 percent tuition increase. Students stunned their questions on why the tuition jump was 7 percent higher than the inflation rate, why MIT did not increase funding from private corporate research, and how students on financial aid would be affected. Associate Provost Frank E. Perkins '53 attributed the $1200 increase to rising inflation, higher priced academic support, and expanding programs. Academic support includes faculty salaries and is funded only in part by student tuition, and not fully by state and federal funding.

"I'm not sure that unnecessary expansion should be cut, although Perkins commented that it would 'be a mistake for an institution like this to stop growing.' Perkins added that if MIT had not aggressively entered new fields of study after World War II, "I doubt that MIT would be the leader in science." Raj Tahi '81 blamed the record hike in tuition on "the failure of the MIT management." He contended that last year's $900 rise was attributed to inflation, and thus accepted by the students. Tahi insisted on "justification of the increase," which prompted Director of Student Financial Services Jack H. Frailey '44 to pledge to prepare a tuition breakdown report.

Emphasizing that tuition finances only half of the true cost of an MIT education, Frailey defended the implications of the increase by appealing to the constant ratio between graduate starting salaries and the four-year cost of MIT. "I don't think the future looks good as far as prices are concerned, but you will eventually benefit," he commented. Nick Adams '83 contended that it was "unclear to squeeze the students," and that $2 million of the $6 million extra revenue due to the increase could be obtained from increased research revenues.

"Soft" sciences sold short

By Toni Zamparutti

The Reagan Administration has proposed major cuts in science funding, citing mainly economic and social science research, science education, and space exploration. If passed by Congress, the cuts "would have a serious impact," upon research and funding at MIT, according to Associate Provost Frank Perkins '53.

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has suggested reducing the National Science Foundation's (NSF) 1982 budget to $1.12 billion, 18 percent less than the figure proposed by the Carter administration. The majority of the NSF budget, $974 million for physics, chemistry, engineering, astronomy, and computer research projects at many universities, including MIT, would remain untouched. Among the cuts would be: a $57 million from the science education budget, a 42 percent cut; and a $25 million plan to obtain new research equipment for universities and to improve access of women and minority group members to scientific and technical education.

"We come out of Washington are disturbing," Perkins noted. "This looks like it might be a serious budgetary problem since it affects all the social sciences." Some important grants for the Linguistics and Philosophy Department might be reduced. If any reductions occur, the Institute will be faced with the choice of curtailing social science directing funds from other areas, such as tuition money.

Robert Albert, Dean of the School of Science, cautioned that some proposed cuts, saying, "I think it's too early to" please turn to page 15.

Affirmative action attempts outlined

By Stephanie Pella

MIT is updating its 1978 Affirmative Action Plan and the revised version should be available in "a matter of weeks" according to Vice President and Equal Opportunity Officer Constantine B. Samaras '57.

The 1978 plan set a goal of employing one woman and one minority faculty member in each department. Assistant Lucas and Office Dr. Isaac Colbitt called this figure "unrealistically low for the long term." Departments are responsible for achievement of affirmative action goals, although Colbitt noted that the new proposal centralized the process of setting goals by establishing a new forum in which departments will be involved.

Samaras said that MIT's progress in implementing affirmative action plans was equal to or better than that of other large research institutions, but added, "We are not satisfied. Never mind the plan — we're going to step up the performance."

Colbitt called MIT's success in attracting women and minorities "impressive," noting that 91 percent of the faculty were women in September, 1980, up from 17 members in 1970. A comparable level of minority representation on the faculty has been more difficult to attain, with only 19 black and 12 Hispanic members of the faculty in 1980. Women now constitute 9 percent of the faculty, and minorities, mostly Asian, 8 percent. The goal of one woman and minority faculty member per department has not yet been met.

In an updated Affirmative Action Plan announced February 5, Harvard University reported that 39 percent of its faculty members are minorities and 14.7 percent are women, both below the already set goal, in a rebalancing effort this month. The faculty-student committee proposed the creation of a "Harvard Foundation" to promote social interaction between minority and minority members of the Harvard community.

Dean for Student Affairs Shirley McKay said she personally felt that the "Harvard approach is desirable because it promotes understanding among all of the groups that make up the student body." She noted that there had been no discussion of any similar action at MIT. McKay said that, with respect to relations between minority and majority... (please turn to page 8)