Specific purpose of Student Center unclear

By Tom Loredo

The Student Center was intended to function "primarily for students," though scheduling and allocation decisions are made through "joint cooperation between the Dean's Office and the SCC," according to Mei Chiu, chairman of the Student Center Committee (SCC).

Members of the SCC, the Dean's Office, and the Facilities Use Committee meet weekly to determine the allocation of the resources of the Student Center, according to Robert Holden, Associate Dean of Student Activities.

The Facilities Use Committee is an advisory committee to the Provost responsible for the determination of the use of MIT facilities by various groups on and off campus, according to committee chairman Dr. Louis Menand 3d. The SCC provides student input into the scheduling for Student Center space.

Conor Moran, Student Center Manager, noted that the use of the Student Center facilities by students, the administration and the community is monitored by computer. Holden said that though there is no rule governing the distribution of Student Center facility allocation, such data is used by the Dean's Office to enable them to be sensitive to whether the Student Center is satisfying the needs of the MIT community.

Menand described the allocation process as students and administration "always trying to accommodate one another." He noted that there is often negotiation between the SCC and the faculty regarding scheduling of Student Center space.

Holden said that "in terms of use," the Student Center is designed as a "series of functional spaces," but that the purpose of the building was intentionally made unclear so that its services could evolve to "enhance the quality of student life." He noted that the building "was not thought of as an academic building."

Menand said that the Student Center "is a building for students but sometimes is the only place something can be held."

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