Undergraduates will choose tomorrow among three teams vying for the top Undergraduate Association (UA) posts of President (UAP) and Vice-President (UAVP). This year of increasing tuition, threats to federal student aid programs, and protests over the admissibility of blind admissions is causing considerable concern among the 4500 undergraduates that he represents. While no student may be elected the student representative, these and other issues concern the unproven assumption that other sources of revenue can never keep up with inflation. A concerted effort to identify and implement alternative schemes for incurring non-tuition revenues could demonstrate that this presumption is erroneous. Such an attempt must be initiated now, in the wake of successful unity, to ensure that student concerns against further increases.

The vote will occur at a time of considerable campus excitement concerning the coming election. The UAP may speak at faculty and Academic Council meetings. An effective UAP will use these opportunities to present the various issues concerning the four undergraduate associations that he represents. While no student may be elected the student representative, these and other issues concern the unproven assumption that other sources of revenue can never keep up with inflation. A concerted effort to identify and implement alternative schemes for incurring non-tuition revenues could demonstrate that this presumption is erroneous. Such an attempt must be initiated now, in the wake of successful unity, to ensure that student concerns against further increases.

The UAP may speak at faculty and Academic Council meetings. An effective UAP will use these opportunities to present the various issues concerning the coming election. The UAP should only have in his hand a sheet of paper, a UAP armed with background research and intelligent arguments, may help to hold the increases to a reasonable level.

The UAP can play an important role in the decision-making process on other crucial issues as well. As Institute officials consider revising MIT's policy of need-blind admissions, the UAP must be prepared to defend the principle of equal access to an MIT education. If the Institute cannot continue to guarantee aid to all qualified students, it risks a loss of the diversity of its student body and the popular support of its alumni and donors. The UAP should take an active role in encouraging increased awareness of the school's financial information to MIT students. In addition, the UAP should be committed to lobbying efforts for the extension of student aid programs (through federal programs) and Administration budget proposals. The UAP should take the lead in organizing student efforts to influence legislation and gain public support for student aid programs. The UAP should consult with student leaders at other area colleges and universities to organize such efforts.

The UAP must use his voice to tell the faculty that students support the philosophy and substance of freshman year pass-fail grading. He must fight all attempts to water down the freshman year system, and must represent student interests in all aspects of educational policy.

The UAP should respond to the service needs of students through the special projects programs, but must not become so entrenched in pet projects that he loses sight of the more important issues confronting the Institute and the UA. The UA must benefit utilize the resources of the undergraduates on Institute committees. These committee members often provide the only student input to important decisions. It is essential that they truly reflect the views of the undergraduates population.

To the Editor:
MIT is becoming an expensive place to go to school. Last Friday, the MIT Corporation rubber-stamped the new $8700 tuition rate at their quarterly meeting. Afterwards, they attended the dedication of the new media buildings—a multimillion dollar project that MIT could afford simultaneously along with a new dormitory and an athletic center even while tuition was soaring to cover the costs of education here.

On that same Friday, I worked with the Dining Service crew that catered this particular dedication ceremony. We served some remarkably tasty hors d'oeuvres and punch to these same Corporation members. It was amazing to see how efficiently the Dining Service performed when working for someone considered important, as opposed to its relatively inconsequential everyday customers.

This staggering cutback and picked herring on silver platters. I had a chance to reflect on this strange paradox. How could a school supposedly so short of funds afford such excesses?

Rising tuition and the probable demise of an aid blinds admissions policy signal the end of an egalitarian phase in the history of MIT. For the last few decades, a relatively generous financial aid program has made an MIT education available to many qualified people who simply could not have afforded it otherwise. Unfortunately, this was an atypical phase. For most of its existence, especially prior to the second World War, MIT was an exclusive, elitist institution. Having worked for many of the Alumni Week class reunions. I could not help but note the remarkable absence of blacks, minorities, women, and foreigners from their ranks. They were invisible—uniformed in WASPs and the wealthy.

One of the reasons that MIT is leading school today is the diversity that this open door, aid-blind admissions policy makes possible. Unfortunately, sky high tuition bills are shutting out many potential students; the coming cutbacks in financial aid will undoubtedly hasten this process. Perhaps there really are sound financial reasons behind these policies, but a by-product will certainly be a less qualified student body. As the quality of the students diminishes, so will the quality and reputation of the institution. Genius, unfortunately, does not respect economic boundaries.

I suspect such arguments are hardly compelling to the MIT Corporation, however. There seems to be little disappointment that MIT is on its way to becoming an exclusive school only for those who can afford it. After all, there is a bit of pride in being an alumnus or alumna of a prestigious school, and prestige is frequently computed in terms of dollars. Unfortunately, the true measure of prestige—the quality of students that graduate from a school—is much harder to measure, but will probably diminish unnoticed as a result of these shortsighted financial policies.

I hope the Corporation considers this next year when they approve a new tuition figure in excess of $10,000.

Joseph Khalil '82

Opinion: Consider need-blind policy