1141 enroll in Class of ’86

By Charles P. Brown
September’s freshman class will be the largest entering class since 1975, according to Peter H. Richardson ’48, Director of Admissions.

As of yesterday, the class numbered 1141, and approximately 1130 of the 1909 admitted to the Class of 1986 are expected to register in September.

The Class of 1986 will contain about 270 women, a record number, but a lower percentage than last year. The proportion of minority students should be slightly higher than last year’s class, but not significantly, Richardson said.

Applications from women and minority students still do not reflect the makeup of the general population, Richardson noted.

“When I have twice the number of women applicants and twice the number of minority applicants, then we will be talking about success,” Richardson said. “That day is not around the corner.”

Richardson expects between 80 and 90 transfer students this year, more than last year’s 76, but less than the average over the past several years.

The Admissions Office hoped to enroll between 1073 and 1100 students in the Class of 1986.

“I admitted the same number [of applicants] as last year, and ended up with 100 more” acceptances this year, Richardson said.

Admissions officers thought many high school students would decide not to attend an expensive private university like MIT this year, because of uncertainty about the level of federal student aid available after Reagan Administration budget cuts.

“It is one of these years, we expected a higher percentage of the students we admitted,” Richardson noted.

More high school seniors enrolled when acceptance letters are mailed before the Institute’s spring break, Richardson observed. “This year” our letters of acceptance were mailed on March 17, the earliest ever,” he noted.

These seniors when we have mailed our acceptance letters after spring break there has been a significant decline in our yield,” Richardson said. “The cause of the drop is not clear...”

Spring break, he speculated, provides an opportunity for MIT students to talk to the admitted high school students.

“The minute they discover that MIT students are human, it reduces some of the anxiety,” Richardson said.

Course VI fears others top MIT

By Barry S. Sarman
MIT may lose its ranking as the premier electrical engineering school in the country, and slip to third in computer science, according to a report being prepared by the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (EECS).

The draft report says Stanford University’s program in very large scale integration (VLSI) may help it overtake MIT as the leading school in electrical engineering. Carnegie-Mellon University, the report says, may join Stanford in ranking ahead of MIT in computer science.

Professor Richard Adler ‘43, Associate Head of Course VI, said the report is available only to members of the EECS faculty.

EECS Head Joel Moses ’65 is preparing the report in response to a request by Gerald L. Wilson ’81, Dean of the School of Engineering, that all departments and laboratories in the school analyze their long-term needs and goals, according to Adler.

Wilson and Moses are on vacation and were unavailable for comment.

The report may be given to the Corporation Visiting Committee on EECS when it meets for a third time this fall, Adler indicated.

About a third of undergraduate majors at MIT are in EECS, the report states, but only a nth of the Institute’s faculty and graduate students are in that department, forcing EECS to devote more effort to undergraduate instruction than in the past to maintain the quality of its undergraduate programs.

The department’s computing equipment “is clearly inadequate” for its needs, according to the report. In the next two years, it claims, EECS will need at least 100 personal computers.

EECS should spend over $400,000 annually to replace educational laboratory equipment including computers, the report states, but spends only about a fourth of that amount.

Gifts of equipment “simply do not measure up to the real need,” it says.

Major developments in the fields of electrical engineering and computer science, including VLSI, robotics, and communications, require “a large investment of time, money, and faculty appointments” for the Institute to gain a leadership position, the report says.

While other schools are diverting resources to concentrate their efforts in electrical engineering and computer science, Moses’ report claims, “MIT is not able to retain its position.”

The draft says the department’s faculty has grown by 15 percent since 1977-78, “and new and revised...”