opinion

Take pride in MIT's laboratory success

Freshmen and parents do not need to be told about MIT's world-wide reputation. Upperclassmen, however, who spend most of their time during the term worrying about how best to remain sane on the Beinecke, would be insensitive to their classes, often to do. It is refreshing to learn that professors do not spend their spare time devising further methods to inflict needless pain on their students, but are intimately involved in some important breakthroughs.

For example, a team of MIT scientists, together with researchers from the National Cancer Institute and Merck Laboratories, has made an important discovery concerning the genetic differences between a cancer cell and a normal cell.

MIT's reputation, to a large extent, rests on its research prowess. Research priorities should never be an excuse for shoddy teaching, but, paradoxically, a dynamic research environment helps fulfill MIT's primary mission of educating its students. While students often complain with good reason that professors ignore them in favor of test tubes, reading about one's alma mater in The New York Times does invoke a certain amount of something largely missing at MIT: pride.

SCC report makes several valid points

In its report to the Corporation Visiting Committee on Student Affairs, the Student Center Committee claims the MIT Student Center suffers from a lack of lounge space, outdated and poorly-utilized facilities, and excessive use by non-student groups. The SCC also states that the Julius Adams Stratton Building was conceived and built as a center for student life, as well as student activities, but it currently fails to provide an environment encouraging to student use of its facilities.

There is almost no lounge space in the Student Center. A pair of sofas and a pair of chairs in the fourth floor lobby, for example, do not a lounge make. Neither the Lobell Dining Room nor Twenty Chimneys provides a friendly atmosphere for social interaction, and the SCC's own Mucilin-House Coffeehouse — perhaps the only inviting lounge space in the building — is often overcrowded. SCC should use its financial resources to furnish, redecorate, and otherwise improve potential lounge space on the second, third, and fourth floors of the Student Center.

It is time to reassess the utility of facilities use in the building's basement, as well. If the barber, optician, and tailor shops currently use the basement, as well. If the barber, optician, and tailor shops currently use their spare time devising further methods to inflict needless pain on their students, but are intimately involved in some important break-throughs.

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