Conference examines "The MIT Experience"

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...all activities were open to all members of the MIT community. Although we have not stated that, it has always been our policy," he said.

Workshop discussions

There were "workshop opportunities to maximize exchange between speakers and students," Cohen said.

In the morning session on "A Skill in Social Interaction: A Need for Success," Campus Police Officer Ted Lewis said, "Being successful calls for a vision - a way of communicating with the bricks." Something in our subconscious causes us not to succeed; fear, which stands for negative reinforcement is acceptable as long as one has an attitude that "if you don't believe I can do it, let me show you I can do it," said John Seattle '80, a panelist on the plenary committee.

Five panelists discussed issues of personal development at one of three workshops held Saturday afternoon. The discussion began with a comparison of MIT to other undergraduate universities. Three of the panelists were graduate students who attended undergraduate institutions other than MIT.

The workshop on professional development, David Tribble '64 described the key qualities necessary for success in work professions: confidence, diplomacy: providing constructive rather than brutal criticism, judgment - learning to think like the people you talk to: aggressiveness, communication; and execution of bureaucracy. "I think there are a lot of people left by the wayside who never graduate or who never catch up," said Kyle Thomas '86, one of two attendees at the Professional Development Workshop.

"Do professors really care about undergraduate education?" asked Tina Adams '86, a member of the workshop's panel.

"We've become a lot more comfortable with not doing well," Adams added.

Gray sees MIT in future years

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That was the major theme discussed on the second day of the conference. "As far as role models to MIT students, minority students can be the role models," he explained. The speakers hope to "remove the isolation and maintain a proper perspective."

In the past year, the conference "concentrated on problems outside of MIT. This year, we thought we would look at minority students at MIT successful students by looking at MIT education," Cohen said. The conference would also examine the role of minorities in the MIT culture. This includes learning how to get things done, and how to interact with faculty, staff and others, Cohen said. This includes building self-confidence.

"Not only do we want to increase the yield of minority students, but we want to see minority students graduating and moving successfully on with their careers," he said.

Cohen described several important skills: gathering information from people around you, salvaging mistakes gracefully and learning to present your work and yourself.

Gray said the role of minorities at MIT is a "proper perspective." He believes MIT students should strive for "education of self-confidence," the ability to learn without formal teaching. Achieve this objective at MIT, he said.

The most important skills MIT can teach are hard work and thinking analytically, Gray said, citing a recent alumni survey. Technology changes quickly and what we learn at MIT might soon be outdated. Critical-thinking skills will remain useful throughout life, he concluded.

Approximately 100 people attended the speech, sponsored by the Lecture Series Committee.

Petition against SDI research

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...on campus... As a group, we don't have to take a position, as individuals we do. I signed that pledge. I helped to circulate that petition." Lin agreed: "Our main orientation is an educational group. I do not try to hide the fact that I am opposed to SDI, but the DSU aim not be to partisan. We encourage the expression of all .opinions at a view of our meetings."