MIT: Reward teaching ability

To the Editor:

It was with shock and disbelief that I heard of the recent decision of the mathematics department not to grant tenure to Associate Professor Frank Morgan. When I was making my decision to attend MIT, I was told that I would be taught by the best teachers in the world. Although all of my professors have been experts in their areas, few of them were excellent teachers.

They knew the material well, but I do not believe they conveyed it to the students as well as they could have. This year I was fortunate enough to have Morgan for 18.03 (Differential Equations), both as a lecturer and as a recitation instructor. His lectures were well-prepared and were the most informative and relevant of any I have attended at MIT. In addition, each lecture had a different twist to keep up student interest.

As a recitation instructor he was fantastic, and I have no doubt that attendance at his recitation was better than that at any other recitation class. Morgan is by far the best instructor I have had at MIT, and it isn't that the most important factor for the math department to consider if MIT wants to keep up its reputation as one of the top academic institutions in the world?

I do not know the details of his research or of the other factors that may have been involved in the mathematics department's decision, but in this case they have committed a grave injustice, not only to Morgan, but more importantly to the students who pay $17,000 or more a year to receive the best education they can get.

James Casamento '88

GSC survey will reveal concerns

To the Editor:

As a first year graduate student, the memory of housing, departmental, and other adjustment problems have prompted me to become an active member in the Graduate Student Council (GSC) survey committee. It is common knowledge that graduate students outnumber the undergraduates by about 4700 to 4500; however, the latter's student council gets nearly twice as much support as that of the former.

This is hardly fair representation, and it continues because graduate students lack the cohesive community to report their concerns to the administration. This is not surprising, since we spend our first term building advisors, preparing for qualifying exams, and the like. After this initial period, most become engrossed in research, leaving the problems of representation to others, who are also in the same situation.

This year, however, a group of dedicated students have composed a survey about the problems which continually plague graduate students. We hope that the survey data will shed some light on where the real problems are and to whom they occur. Our objective is to present the data as proof of the urgency for administrative action.

This survey will be at the academic departments and at the GSC office. Please take the time to complete it and to return it promptly. Much effort has gone into making the survey as painless as possible without sacrificing vital information.

This is the first real chance for graduate students to be heard in four years (when the last survey was done). Please complete it before getting too involved in your research. You might thank your self later.

David L. Wagger G Member, GSC Academic Projects and Policies Committee

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