Law makes hazing a crime

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Byfield, MA, Sherwood said. "In the last ten years, 200 to 300 organizations are likely to press for laws to prevent hazing incidents where a major casualty results," he explained.

The new law will be effective in preventing hazing incidents, Sherwood predicted. "National and local fraternities will fear criminal and civil prosecution," he predicted.

MIT had no input into the text of the law, although the Institute was aware that the law was pending before the legislature, Sherwood said.

"Hazing legislation has come up annually for about the past five to ten years and has been reinitiated each year," Sherwood said. "There was actually some prior to that passed this year."

Sherwood was concerned about the difficulty of requiring every student to sign for a copy of the law. He would also like to revise the language of the law to make the definition of hazing clearer, he said.

Currently, the text of the law has a discrepancy over who is affected by the law, Sherwood pointed out. One section of the bill defines hazing as an act committed solely with fraternities' "pre-initiation activities." However, another part of the law describes hazing as a broader crime of physical and mental abuse, Sherwood added.

Sherwood is one of four administrators from private universities appointed by the Massachusetts Board of Regents to the Board of Regents Committee on Hazing. The committee will aid the Board of Regents in promulgating the law and smoothing out inconsistencies and administrative problems caused by the law, the dean continued.

Administrators from Boston College, the University of Massachusetts, and Framingham University are also members of the committee.

UA resolution calling for tenure policy study

(Editor's note: The following is the text of the resolution on tenure passed by the Undergraduate Association Council on Jan. 25.)

We, the members of the Undergraduate Association Council, feel that the Schools of the Institute have not given sufficient emphasis to teaching ability in promotion and tenure decisions.

Noting that MIT is an educational as well as research institution, and whereas section 2.21 of Policies and Procedures: A Guide for Faculty and Staff Members, specifically calls for "review and evaluation of teaching and other contributions" as an integral part of the academic appointment process, we are distressed at the recent failures of MIT to award tenure to faculty members whose truly exceptional teaching ability has been acknowledged by the MIT community through various distinctions such as the Everett Moore Baker Foundation Award for Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching.

Furthermore, we resolve that the Undergraduate Association Council and the Student Committee on Educational Policy shall investigate the current appointment procedure, and do further call upon the faculty and administration to investigate and evaluate this process with an emphasis on the role of teaching ability.

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