I shuddered as I read through the speech of Margaret A. MacVicar '86 on educational reform in "MIT's mission is to prepare leaders for a world based on technology," April 29). I admire the insight she sees in the short-comings of an MIT undergraduate education, but I asked myself, "Will changing course requirements and modifying core course materials have any effect on the quality of education?"

She said, "...freshmen may arrive more open to educational enthusiasm than when they leave here four years later..." Even freshmen are subjected to the same humanities requirements and lower course requirements. How can they be inspired if engineering and science professors will rarely talk to them unless the students are interested in the courses? If a professor is actually interested in students not grasped instantly? If teaching assistants do not care to know their students? Or if more than half of the students in classes are sleepwalking?

Student reactions to MIT's duals include the following:

1) Passive acceptance. These students do all the work and accept the "things the way they are."  
2) Extreme cynicism. Undergraduates skip classes and learn on their own, neglect unimportant parts of lectures and text books, work on their own, take classes or homework, try to be Wellesley classes or deep up the opposite to which the faculty and the student got involved in the debate. Never before had I seen such an enthusiasm in a classroom.

I also read a statement issued by the dean of Wellesley College. Wellesley seriously considers student opinion when it makes decisions regarding faculty reappointment, tenure and salaries, it said. Wellesley officially recognizes such opinions by issuing a Student Evaluation Questionnaire. I still wish they had printed at the blackest of the worst times.

When I first came to MIT, I believed that many of the shortcomings of an MIT education are inherent to college. Then I woke up.

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