MIT seeks science/humanities synthesis

At the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, we have decided to make the most intensive review of the undergraduate program in 25 years. We haven’t forgotten that old adage, “If it ain’t broke, it don’t need fixing.” We do not think it is “broke,” but we want to be sure it’s in good shape for the tasks that lie ahead of us.

Many of us believe that a richer educational environment will be required for the undergraduates who will come into their prime early in the new millennium. The growing impact of science and technology on public affairs and human well-being will require that the people who shape or influence those fields appreciate the diversity and complexity of societies and human values and have the ability to understand and respect the economic, political, social, and environmental issues associated with technical developments and applications of science.

Some of us sense that our academic programs—in regard both to its already strong liberal-arts requirements and to many of its specialization courses of technical study—will not be sufficient in character and breadth for students in the years ahead. For that reason we have undertaken a (Please turn to page 6)