Opinion

Campus difficult for the handicapped

To the Editor:

On Feb. 27 The Tech published an article on the way in which MIT is accommodating handicapped students. "MIT accommodation systems" is the title of the article. It is obvious that the article was not intended to be a comprehensive survey of the problem, but I should like to make some further comments that were not expressed.

I am a graduate student and I have two small children. Since I walk across campus, I know a lot of places where people with physical disabilities have problems. I am particularly concerned when there is a problem there because these are wheelchairs and ramps everywhere. At MIT it is a different story.

I have discovered that many of the ramps and stairs are rough and uneven. The campus is crammed with roads and alleys, each having its own unique arrangement of stairs and ramps. I have been a ramp from the curb to the bottom of a hill on one side and a ramp with a black on the other side.

In the winter, when snow is shoveled off the walkways, it is piled on the curb, often creating bad ramps. Frequently there are craters that are not covered in front of the ramps and often they are campus police or MIT vehicles. Sacks are not usually visible from the bottom of the ramp.

I have two small children in a wheelchair, have no choice but to go home and try again another day. It doesn't do much good to offer these students extra help with their classes until some of the barriers are removed so they can get to their classes in the first place.

Laura Nielsen

Reminders demand MIT requirement

To the Editor:

The recent flurry of attention concerning Phase I of the Institute Writing Requirement for the Class of 1987 has been effective in communicating the administration's seriousness in enforcing the requirement. However, the administration has not conveyed a consistent message - that writing and the social sciences are still valued at the Institute.

It seems unnecessary and impractical to have to remind students of the requirement. A requirement is a requirement. The Writing Requirement became an Institute requirement in 1983. It is now a requirement like any other requirements - they must be obeyed.

It has become nothing less than a circus. It is listed in the MIT Bulletin and the semesterly Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences Guide. It is listed; along with all other requirements not yet completed, at the bottom of every other person's grade report.

Anyone who neglects to meet it must assume the responsibility for the error. That person will not simply and promptly not graduate, just as he or she would not graduate if there was any other requirement. It is now that person's problem.

A similar situation is that of the Air Force's ROTC branch allows limited service," Feb. 24.


