However, the universities that received no federal financial assistance by the Fiesta Bowl to offer minority scholarships are a strictly private entity that can award race-exclusive scholarships with their own funds, the clarification states. Scholarships that have already been awarded, "whether in the current year or in a multi-year cycle," will not be affected in any way, the clarification states. Because of this restriction, the Education Department is providing a four-year transition period to establish the policy.

Vest opposes scholarship ruling

By Brian Rosenberg

A recent ruling by the United States Department of Education may prevent MIT from providing any scholarships awarded on the basis of race. The ruling, issued in late December, prohibits recipients of Education Department funds from participating in race-exclusive scholarships.

The ruling drew criticism from black political leaders and college administrators. Many people, including President Charles M. Vest, have called for its repeal.

"I wholeheartedly agree with the decision," said William Jordan, assistant secretary for civil rights in the Department of Education. "As a matter of policy, the Education Department cannot support race-based discrimination and we believe that this ruling is an appropriate step to assure that we do not discriminate against any group on the basis of their race." Jordan pointed out that the decision is a result of a July 1990 ruling by the United States Supreme Court for the "affirmative action program to increase minority participation in post-secondary education." The ruling in response to a decision by the United States District Court in the case of Grutter v. Bollinger.

"I do not believe that any student should be turned away from this institution because of their race," said President Vest.

The ruling by the Department of Education, issued in late December, prohibited the granting of any scholarships to students who are not race-exclusive. The decision was based on a federal court ruling in 1990 that prohibited race-exclusive scholarships. The ruling was upheld by the United States Supreme Court in 1992.

"The federal government could therefore be helpful by clearly and forthrightly reversing the recent ruling," said Jordan. "To turn away from the concept of affirmative action is just plain wrong." Vest said.

"There will be no change in the ruling's status until more study is done by the Civil Rights Office," said Jordan.

"The work of conservative black scholars has who have criticized affirmative action and government welfare programs also came under attack from Hooks. In their case, he said, a PhD stood for "phenomenal dunces."