Professors Take on as Many UROPs Despite Budget Woes

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good idea about what was going to happen, he said. In addition, most chemistry professors chose to split the cost of hiring a UROP student with the UROP office, to alleviate the pressure on the UROP office to provide fall funding, Stewart said. Stewart was pleased with the results. "I saw a lot of new professors take UROPs," he said. "Every one tried to help as best they could.

Assistant Professor Lones A. Smith, UROP coordinator for the department of economics, noted that the department has received about 50 percent more proposals this summer than last summer. Smith expects the acceptance rate to be higher than last year's. He attributed the rise to an all-time high number of junior faculty in the department, who traditionally hire most of the UROP students. Some students still searching

While most departments are greeting the UROP summer term with guarded optimism, students prospects are far from rosy. Many students will continue to search for UROPs into the early summer term. "My search had its ups and downs," said Richard T. Chang '97, who was not able to find a UROP by the new deadline, but is still looking. "My plans now are to get a part-time library job the rest of the time. Hopefully that'll cover the cost of room and board," he said. "I don't know if it's going to work out this way or not, though," said Chang, who is aware of other students in the same situation. "I'll look for a UROP until the deadline to cancel summer housing," he said, "if I don't find anything by then, then I will go home.

Fall prospects more bleak

While the one-time contribution of $1 million will ease the summer budget crunch, prospects for the fall term are dim. "For the most part, I will say that more people will probably apply for fall funding," Stewart said. While the new requests for the fall term will put further stress on UROP funds, Stewart believes that lower fall funding limits — $900 per student in the fall compared with $3,300 in summer — will help ease the strain. In addition, he expects more students will take UROPs for credit and avoid the intense competition for UROP office funding. "More students' professors believe that the faculty are not going to be hiring as many UROPers — there's just not enough money," Vezza said. Faculty will have to "work on clever ways of funding students... if not through the UROP program, then under other programs," he said.

Professor of Earth, Atmospheric, and Planetary Sciences James L. Eliott suggested exploring other research programs. For example, programs such as the National Science Foundation's Research Opportunities for Undergraduate Programs, provide "one very big opportunity," he said.

At any rate, "The main goal is to get the students involved in our activities and to provide them with the funds," Vezza said. "So if you find a way [to get funding] that's legitimate, we'll employ it.

"Let's hope that things will look good, and we'll be optimistic if we can," said Professor Gene M. Brown, the UROP coordinator for the biology department. "[UROP] is a very important area, and we'll try to take care of everyone," he said.

"You have to look at [UROP] as part of a learning experience for the undergraduates," he said. "That's what makes MIT a rich environment."

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