MIT has never been much of an average college. As much as some students and some administrators would like it to be, the term "Deed of Students" type character (not any more, that is) who crack a few jokes and down a few beers or a few beers, I will frankly acknowledge that we can probably do without those students. (I don't even want to think of college environment. But one part of the average college experience that I sorely miss is the dining hall. MIT is remarkably weak in dining services, and this has been a matter of student complaint and concern from the time I have been at MIT. Baker and Next House are the only dormitories with dining facilities; MacGregor's dining hall has since become a Kwik-e-Mart and a corner. The transformation of MacGregor's dining hall destroyed any chance that I had of ever socializing with people from my own entry and dormitory. Eating dinner together had become a ritual of sorts: going to the right side of the dining hall over dinner, and hanging out well after we had finished eating. Half-price strawberry shortcake and warm sodas was an excuse for staying an extra half hour to determine the country of origin for the food I was eating: discussing why people from the Midwest call sodas pep, pop. In my mind, at least, MacGregor is the one part of the college experience we need. Thankfully, the closing of the MacGregor dining hall does not mean that we never have the opportunity to eat together. Many people from my entry come eat together at the same time. Baker dining hall. And we socialize in other ways, of course. But it's not quite the same. With a dining hall in the dorm, there are fewer excuses for not eating together. People didn't worry about having to trek to Next or missing a meeting or phone call. The dining hall was just a hop, skip, and jump away. Some may argue that Next is not all that further, but distance is not the point — the real issue is having a common gathering place within your living group. A bit of history about the dining hall mess. The dining hall mess is located on the second floor of the Physical Sciences Center, on the side of the road said "Last food for 25c. The reason we refer to a college that has a dining hall refrains from catering college food. A year later, the dining halls have closed and now people complain about Lollidish in the same way. Baker dining hall, now student-run, seems to be on the right track. The lack of demand for pressure-cooked turkey breast and powdered potatoes (just like Moms used to make) is one half of the vicious cycle. I heard turbine Professor Robert M. Seaver repeat several times about a customer who appreciated a dining hall's food service. He appreciated the service. I will freely admit that some independent living groups have a checkered history of customer service. Although keeping the quality and service at satisfactory levels is a must, we must weigh the costs. If we can keep the food service at a reasonable level, it would be a positive step. But how can dorm residents be brought back into the dining hall? I don't think they will. I think they have to be forced. MIT will have to use the incentive of the memory of students in dorms, and make eating dinner in the dining halls mandatory for anyone who lives in a dormitory. Perhaps dinner Sunday through Thursday is a good schedule. Only then will the dining halls have any chance to have enough demand to encourage students to eat there. Opinion Policy Editorialists, presented in a distinctive format, are the official opinion of the Editorial Board, which consists of the chairman, editor in chief, managing editor, executive editor, and opinion editors. Discursive, marked as such and printed in a distinctive format, are the opinions of the signed members of the editorial board choosing to publish a disagreement with the editorial. Columns and editorial cartoons are written by individuals and represent the opinion of the author, not necessarily that of the newspaper. Letters to the editor are welcome. They must be typed, double-spaced, and not exceed 150 words and be submitted to The Tech, 35 Massachusetts Ave., Room 7222, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Mass. 02139-7029, or by interdepartmental mail to Room 7222. Electronic submissions in plain text format may be submitted to letters@tech.mit.edu. All submissions are due by 4 p.m. two days before the date of publication.

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