The recent rush trials of the Interfraternity Council Judicial Committee went unnoticed by most students. At an institution where harassment and discipline incidents often generate inexcusable controversy and discontent, the IFC should be lauded for a judicial system that works in a just and timely fashion. Although there are legitimate questions about the system’s ability to discourage rush violations, the open and generally fair process should be modeled for other institute dispute resolution processes.

The most impressive aspect of the IFC’s system is its continuing openness. Charges, trial, and sanctions are brought, conducted, and reported in public. The individuals and living groups convicted of rush violations must publicly affirm or deny responsibility for actions. Unlike other disciplinary preceedings at MIT, living groups are held responsible by their peers; an example of self-governance at its best. The IFC system also retains principled and equitable, and continues to encourage informal resolution of disputes between living groups. Not every living group may be entirely happy with the disposition of their individual cases, but the fact that only five of 13 convicted groups will likely appeal indicates that the system’s constituents do find justice. Even the current President was not sheltered from scrutiny: His living group was charged and plead guilty to a rush violation in which he was implicated.

Although the IFC system processes rush violations efficiently, the ability of the system to discourage violation remains suspect. Year after year, living groups violate long-standing and well-known rules such as the prohibition against bad-mouthing or hindering freshmen. Some living groups even budget for fines as part of their rush budgets. It seems that the positive actions of the IFC Judicial Committee are regularly being ignored. Because some living groups fail to learn the lessons of past sanctions, the IFC should explore other methods to ensure that the living groups do not repeatedly violate rush rules.

In the final analysis, the success or failure of judicial systems will be determined by their ability to enforce rules and dispense justice in an efficient, open, and objective manner.

Reasons concerning notwithstanding, the IFC’s judicial process seems to meet this standard and should serve as a model for student judicial self-governance.

Chitaley Correctly Appraised The Coop

The column by Raagun A. Chitaley ’95 on the Coop (“No More Excuses: The Coop Should Restructure Now,” Sept. 16) was right on the mark. As Director of the Lowell Institute School (MIT’s evening division), I became so frustrated dealing with their text-book department that I switched to Quantum Books. We now get service with a capital S.

Bruce D. Wedlock
Director of the Lowell Institute School

Students Should Demand Justification Of Card-Key System

I am writing in response to a quote by Campus Police Chief Anne P. Glavin in the recent article about the incident at McCormick Hall (“McCormick Insider Arrested After Trespassing,” Sept 23). She apparently stated for the reporter that “[the number of trespassing] incidents that have occurred over the years is down since the MIT Card (including the card-key system) has been in use.”

The introduction of the card-key system has been met with some controversy amongst students, perhaps because many students feel that it is being imposed upon us, without any analysis of whether it is the best of a number of different possible solutions. It is possible that Chief Glavin has access to some carefully-done studies which document that there is a causal relationship between the MIT Card and a drop in the number of trespassing incidents in undergraduate dormitories. However, to my knowledge, no such study has been widely propagated.

The introduction of the card-key system has in fact made it easier for me to enter other dormitories and visit friends. In my experience, students seem more inclined after the introduction of card keys to let people slip in after doors and even actively hold the door open for them. This may be because they, too, find it inconvenient to have to get out their MIT Cards and are therefore inclined to help others avoid the increased amount of inconvenience. For Chief Glavin to have made mention of the MIT Card in a positive light in the story seems odd to me, especially when the installation of the card-key system probably helped, not hindered, this particular trespasser’s entry into McCormick dormitory.

I recognize my experience is limited in scope, and I may be misinterpreting the motives of students letting me enter their dormitories behind them. I wish to note that this matter as well as others, students should demand more forcefully to see real evidence that the card-key system is doing some good, rather than simply blindly believe in authority. In this matter, even if such evidence is presented, some students may feel that the incremental benefit in security is not worth the increased hassle; furthermore, such evidence would have no effect on other legitimate concerns about installing a card-key system, e.g., privacy.

Prieg Huang G.

Opinion Policy

Letters and cartoons must bear the author’s signatures, addresses, and phone numbers. Unsigned letters will not be accepted. No letter or cartoon will be printed anonymously without the express prior approval of The Tech. The Tech reserves the right to edit or shorten letters. The editors reserve the right to edit or shorten letters after prior approval of The Tech. The Tech reserves the right to edit or shorten letters after prior approval of The Tech.

Letters and 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 addressed to The Tech, P.O. Box 307029, Cambridge, Mass. 02139-7029, or by interdepartmental mail to Room W20-483. Electronic submissions in plain text format may be mailed to letters@the-tech.mit.edu. All submissions are due by 4:30 p.m. two days before the date of publication.

Letters to The Editor

Opinion

Letters and 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 addressed to The Tech, P.O. Box 307029, Cambridge, Mass. 02139-7029, or by interdepartmental mail to Room W20-483. Electronic submissions in plain text format may be mailed to letters@the-tech.mit.edu. All submissions are due by 4:30 p.m. two days before the date of publication.

To Reach Us

The Tech’s telephone number is (617) 253-1541. Electronic mail is the easiest way to reach any member of our staff. Mail to specific departments may be sent to the following addresses on the Internet: adInfo@the-tech.mit.edu, news@the-tech.mit.edu, sports@the-tech.mit.edu, art@the-tech.mit.edu, photo@the-tech.mit.edu, circinfo@the-tech.mit.edu. For other matters, send mail to general@the-tech.mit.edu and it will be directed to the appropriate person.

Chitaley Correctly Appraised The Coop

The column by Raagun A. Chitaley ’95 on the Coop (“No More Excuses: The Coop Should Restructure Now,” Sept. 23) was right on the mark. As Director of the Lowell Institute School (MIT’s evening division), I became so frustrated dealing with their text-book department that I switched to Quantum Books. We now get service with a capital S.

Bruce D. Wedlock
Director of the Lowell Institute School

Students Should Demand Justification Of Card-Key System

I am writing in response to a quote by Campus Police Chief Anne P. Glavin in the recent article about the incident at McCormick Hall (“McCormick Insider Arrested After Trespassing,” Sept 23). She apparently stated for the reporter that “[the number of trespassing] incidents that have occurred over the years is down since the MIT Card (including the card-key system) has been in use.”

The introduction of the card-key system has been met with some controversy amongst students, perhaps because many students feel that it is being imposed upon us, without any analysis of whether it is the best of a number of different possible solutions. It is possible that Chief Glavin has access to some carefully-done studies which document that there is a causal relationship between the MIT Card and a drop in the number of trespassing incidents in undergraduate dormitories. However, to my knowledge, no such study has been widely propagated.

The introduction of the card-key system has in fact made it easier for me to enter other dormitories and visit friends. In my experience, students seem more inclined after the introduction of card keys to let people slip in after doors and even actively hold the door open for them. This may be because they, too, find it inconvenient to have to get out their MIT Cards and are therefore inclined to help others avoid the increased amount of inconvenience. For Chief Glavin to have made mention of the MIT Card in a positive light in the story seems odd to me, especially when the installation of the card-key system probably helped, not hindered, this particular trespasser’s entry into McCormick dormitory.

I recognize my experience is limited in scope, and I may be misinterpreting the motives of students letting me enter their dormitories behind them. I wish to note that this matter as well as others, students should demand more forcefully to see real evidence that the card-key system is doing some good, rather than simply blindly believe in authority. In this matter, even if such evidence is presented, some students may feel that the incremental benefit in security is not worth the increased hassle; furthermore, such evidence would have no effect on other legitimate concerns about installing a card-key system, e.g., privacy.

Prieg Huang G.

Opinion

Letters and 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 addressed to The Tech, P.O. Box 307029, Cambridge, Mass. 02139-7029, or by interdepartmental mail to Room W20-483. Electronic submissions in plain text format may be mailed to letters@the-tech.mit.edu. All submissions are due by 4:30 p.m. two days before the date of publication.

To Reach Us

The Tech’s telephone number is (617) 253-1541. Electronic mail is the easiest way to reach any member of our staff. Mail to specific departments may be sent to the following addresses on the Internet: adInfo@the-tech.mit.edu, news@the-tech.mit.edu, sports@the-tech.mit.edu, art@the-tech.mit.edu, photo@the-tech.mit.edu, circinfo@the-tech.mit.edu. For other matters, send mail to general@the-tech.mit.edu and it will be directed to the appropriate person.