Wrighton Stresses Diversity As Another Sign of Quality

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ranked fifth in student selectivity, and fourth in faculty resources. However, relatively low ranks of 13 and 23 in graduation rate and alumni satisfaction, respectively, slightly lowered the overall score. The Institute's fourth-place ranking is the same as last year, but represents a steady rise from seventh place during the past four years.

Wrighton said that the list has a few important implications, but that he would place emphasis elsewhere.

"I think this report is a useful guide... The criteria used in this list are not the ones we wanted to be at or near the top, but it would be a mistake to try to gear our efforts to achieve that," Smith said.

Smith said that the slight shifts in position over the last few years did not reflect real changes because the schools at the top are not separated by much.

Students feel rankings have slight problems

The overall reaction of the student body was somewhat mixed. Most people said that the rankings were valid, but criticized certain methods used in the ranking.

"It is not right to lump MIT with some of the other schools," said Richard Y. Lee '97. "I also have a problem with their student selectivity category. They ranked us fifth, even though we have a smaller applicant pool. Harvard, Princeton, and Yale get people who apply just for the sake of applying. Still, U.S. News is the most reliable set of rankings," Lee said.

"This report looks good statistically, but it doesn't tell you what it's like going to the school," said David D. Shue '98.

Other people did not really see the rankings as very important, although they found that the list did have some value.

Phillip J. Rowe '97 said, "It's fun to see MIT ranked fourth in the nation... These criteria are things that I looked at before coming here, but I wanted to be an engineer so this ranking didn't really matter to me."

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