Students with AP Credit Agree
That MIT Classes are Different

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students may not be as prepared. However, problems
with classes could be due to a number of other rea-
sons unrelated to placement, Artin added.
"It depends on individual cases. Certainly there
are people who should not waste their time on first-
year classes," Artin said.
One rationale behind MIT's placement system is
that students can choose to have a free class slot
freshman year, Enders said. Students can then focus
on their major and pursue a more interesting sched-
ule, Enders said.
Students' goals vary
Students agree that MIT classes are taught differ-
ently from high school classes. "In high school, there
wasn't as much emphasis placed on the theoretical,
and definitely it didn't go as in-depth as the courses
here," said Eric Y. Mai '98.
For that reason, some have chosen to retake
courses. "I am taking Concourse chemistry because
I felt that it would teach me some things
that I didn't learn in high school," said Pietro
Russo '98.
On the other hand, retaking courses may just
hold students back. "I could have placed out of
18.01, but I took 18.014. Instead, I feel like I'm a
term behind everyone else," said Daniel J. Weber
'97.
Students who decide to take a higher level class
would rather finish the core earlier than repeat the
same material.
"I would be having an easier time in that class
[18.01] than I am in 18.02, but I like the idea of get-
ting ahead in my schedule," said John S. Resse '98.
"I'm glad that I placed out of 5.11, because I won't
be wasting time taking a class in an area that I will
not continue to study."
"If I were forced to take all these courses for a
whole term, I think I would be bored to tears, even
though MIT focuses on problem solving," said Teh-
Hwan Yong '98.

Departments evaluate placement policies
While no immediate changes are foreseen in the
chemistry, mathematics, physics, and HASS poli-
cies, the Department of Biology's policy on placing
out is still subject to review, Matsudaira said. The
biology requirement was only instituted one year
ago.
"It's too early to tell. It's something we have
to think about later," Matsudaira said. "I think for
now, it's okay."

Despite the possible disadvantages, Artin, Field,
Matthews, and Ritvo are in favor of the current sys-
tem.
"It's likely that the high school course is different
from MIT's calculus. Even if that's the case, I don't
think it's worthwhile for other students to take it
over," Artin said.
"Someone who gets advanced placement will
spend their time profitably," Field said. "We're
doing it about right."

In the end, the professors feel that placing out of
classes is still the choice of each student. "It's up to
students to decide," Field said.

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