Baker Foundation to Evaluate Advising

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advising systems need to be improved, Kim said. Some departments have already initiated improvements, but Kim hopes to bring up advising in all departments to a certain level. "Our tentative plan is to focus on a few departments and provide a "game plan" for improvement, Kim said.

Programs such as the training program for advisers in the physics department and the innovative sophomore seminars in chemical engineering are laudable efforts to improve academic advising, Kim said.

CHRISTIAN NICE/TECH STAFF PICTURE

Expectations differ

Margaret S. Enders, associate dean of undergraduate education and student affairs, agrees that there is room for improvement in academic advising. "I personally think the system could be better," Enders said.

More programs addressing such topics as post-MIT life and low-level training for advisers would be beneficial, Enders said. However, she also believes that the expectations of advisers may need to be renewed and altered in some cases. "I don't think that MIT can expect every faculty adviser to be everything a student wants," Enders said. "Some students don't want someone to do anything other than sign the form. Other students need a lot more guidance."

"I have mixed feelings about how he wanted to be advised. Sometimes, with forms, you just want them to sign it without saying much; but sometimes, if they have advice, they should give it to you," Mireles said.

Enders suggested some of the answers could be on the student to seek out other resources in addition to their advisers, such as the undergraduate office in their department or the Undergraduate Academic Affairs Office. Many questions can be answered better by administrative faculty directly involved with the question than by the academic adviser, she said.

Kim disagrees, saying there is a debate of whether students should be led by the hand or should be more independent. Student opinion will be revealed in the survey, she said.

"I like the fact that the Baker Foundation is doing something about it. I think out of it, probably, you'll see people paying attention," Enders said.

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