HUMANITIES EXPANDED . . .

MIT Reviews Science Curriculum

By LAWRENCE ELLZEY

“Everything at M.I.T. is always in flux . . . If you ever freeze it, you’re dead.” Thus is Rolf Eliassen, head of the Civil Engineering Department of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, was quoted in an article in the February issue of Fortune magazine.

The article undertakes to present the widespread changes taking place at M.I.T. in the science and engineering curricula. Emphasis is being put on more basic science for engineers, as well as on radical changes in the very concepts of engineering.

THE OFTEN-DEBATED question on just how much basic science an engineering student can stand without losing out on the inherently practical nature of engineers is commented on by M.I.T. educators. Their views range over the entire spectrum of ideas on this subject; nevertheless, almost everyone concedes that more basic science is needed.

The economic, political, and social aspects of education are not being neglected at the technological institute. It was generally agreed that the student today is more mature and, because of stiffer admission requirements, “more competent intellectually than his counterpart in the past.

GORDON STANLEY BROWN, Dean of Engineering is quoted: “As a natural result of the greater interpenetration of science and the humanities today, and the greater cosmopolitanism on the campus, which harvests students from all over the world, the students and their teachers show more interest than they used to in the extracurricular arts and in social values.”

In this area, Aldous Huxley, as Visiting Professor of Humanities, delivered six lectures to packed auditoriums. The School of Humanities and Social Sciences has also been strengthened by the practical coupling of its disciplines and talents with technical resources in the area of research.