

## **Dean, School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences**

The School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (SHASS) worked hard this year to strengthen existing programs and to expand the research and teaching mission of the School in innovative directions.

Clearly, the School's ambitions for the year were affected by the surprising financial crisis in the fall of 2008. Like every other entity at the Institute, the School needed to revisit plans for growth and rethink some preliminary commitments in light of decreasing expendable income. Nonetheless, the School was able to forge ahead with several initiatives that were modest in cost but important in impact, both within the School and the Institute.

A major activity during the year was a series of discussions about reducing our budget going forward, attempting to balance two concerns. First, we need to retire activities that are neither "mission critical" to the intellectual and pedagogical role of the School, nor deemed essential by students and faculty. Second, we need to protect and strengthen those activities that represent the School's distinctiveness and that put the School in position to have a high impact on the world. Discussions took place in sections and departments, at the School Council, and through the task force convened by Provost Reif. This was by far the dominant issue in the School during the year, and it will likely continue throughout the coming year as well.

Faculty in the School were awarded grants and fellowships to support research from a wide range of organizations, including the Guggenheim Foundation, the Mellon Foundation, the American Council of Learned Societies, the National Science Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Institutes of Health, the Social Science Research Council, the Carnegie Foundation, and the Pew Trust.

Pedagogically, the School continued to work with the other schools at MIT to redesign the General Institute Requirements (GIRs). Although proposals to change the Science GIRs were voted down, changes to the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (HASS) GIR were successfully approved in the spring. A committee has been established to implement those changes over the next few years.

Faculty continue to explore new topics and approaches to teaching, thanks to our Fund for Learning and Teaching Innovation. About eight new classes are currently in the pilot phase or are under design, with several more new classes expected in the coming year.

The School's efforts to rethink global education at MIT resulted in the creation of an ad hoc committee, the Council on Global Studies, chaired by professors Richard Samuels, from SHASS, and Dick Yue, from the School of Engineering. This very distinguished committee met throughout the academic year to discuss the challenges and opportunities of a robust and expanded emphasis on global education at MIT, and is issuing its report this summer.

MIT's most popular international program, MIT International Science and Technology Initiatives (MISTI), celebrated its 25th anniversary in the fall of 2008, which featured a set of presentations and a gala celebration. The number of students who participate in MISTI internships reached an all-time high—400 students in summer 2009—and the newest MISTI program was launched in Israel.

The School created two new programs for bringing postdoctoral fellows to campus over the next several years. One is supported by the Mellon Foundation and will bring eight humanities postdocs to campus over the next four years to study and teach about interdisciplinary approaches in humanities. The other program is supported by SHASS and the MIT Energy Initiative. The goal of the Energy and Society Postdoctoral Fellowship is to build strength in social science disciplines for the study of energy policy, regulation, and public understanding of energy issues.

The School completed an 18-month project to overhaul the practices and protocols governing the hiring and employment of “other academic” staff, particularly lecturers. Working with section heads and human resources staff, the School hammered out a set of new guidelines and organizational structures aimed at creating clear expectations and equitable working conditions for all lecturers.

### **Undergraduate Education**

All MIT undergraduates must complete the HASS Requirement in order to graduate. This requirement, which is overseen by the School, is the principal point of contact between SHASS faculty and undergraduates. Undergraduates who wish a deeper engagement with the disciplines represented by the School may pursue a major or minor in one of our departments or sections, or choose from among several interdisciplinary majors and minors. Among graduates in AY2009, 82 completed undergraduate degrees in the School.

As the interests of students admitted to MIT continue to diversify, the role of the School in the mainstream education of MIT's scientists and engineers becomes even more important. Having faculty members of national rank in the fields of humanities, arts, and social sciences ensures that MIT undergraduates receive the rounded education that they expect when they are admitted. The faculty of the School take this educational mission seriously, which is reflected in the high quality teaching evaluations received by our instructors and the continuing educational innovation that emanates from the various faculties.

Because all MIT undergraduates must take eight HASS subjects, including three HASS-Distribution (HASS-D) subjects, the School devotes considerable resources to overseeing the HASS Requirement, particularly the subjects licensed as HASS-D. The addition of the Communication Requirement has added to this oversight task, especially since the Subcommittee on the Communication Requirement (SOCR) has delegated to the School the responsibility for reviewing classes that meet the Communication Intensive in the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (CI-H) portion of the Communication Requirement. The HASS Overview Committee (HOC) bears direct responsibility for reviewing subjects that are proposed to fulfill the HASS-D and CI-H requirements. This past year, the HOC

was chaired by associate dean Kai von Fintel. Other members were associate professors Ute Meta Bauer (Visual Arts), Andrea Campbell (Political Science), Noel Jackson (Literature), Jeff Ravel (History), Agustin Rayo (Philosophy), and Patricia Tang (Music and Theater Arts), and student Tess Wise '10 (21F). Dr. Bette Davis, director of the HASS Education Office, served *ex officio*. Professor Sam Allen and assistant dean Kathleen MacArthur from SOCR were regular guests. HASS-D and CI-H licenses were granted for several new subjects, and numerous subjects were relicensed after extensive review.

This year saw the culmination of extensive efforts to restructure the HASS Requirement in light of the 2006 report of the Task Force on the Undergraduate Educational Commons. The associate dean worked with the Committee on the Undergraduate Program (CUP) and its Educational Commons Subcommittee on implementing the task force recommendations. The MIT Faculty voted on May 20, 2009 to change the HASS Requirement to specify that students, among their eight HASS subjects, will take at least one subject each in the three categories of humanities, arts, and social sciences. This streamlined HASS distribution requirement will benefit students, their advisors, and departments that can devote their energies to comprehensive curriculum renewal. The Faculty vote also moved oversight of the HASS Requirement to a new permanent faculty committee: the CUP Subcommittee on the HASS Requirement. Finally, the Faculty endorsed the experimental development of a set of first-year focus (FYF) subjects as part of the HASS education of MIT students. The SHASS dean's office will support curricular renewal and especially the development of FYF subjects both logistically and financially.

### **Affirmative Action**

While the numbers of women over the last decade have fluctuated, the total proportion of women among all SHASS faculty has remained approximately one-third. In AY2009, 52, or 32%, of our 162 faculty members were women, and in AY2010, after the departure of junior faculty member Sarah Brouillette (Literature), 51 of our 164 faculty members will be women, bringing the percentage down to 31%. However, we remain committed to increasing our numbers and hope to yield an increase during this year's recruitment efforts, despite the reduction in the number of searches we will conduct. Of the 52 women faculty in AY2009, 37 were tenured (representing 32% of the tenured faculty) and, effective July 1, 2009, an Asian American woman will join the ranks of tenured faculty in the School.

The School has had moderate success in recruiting minority faculty, and both the numbers and the percentage of minority faculty have been slowly increasing. The total number of minority faculty in the School in AY2008 was 24 (16%); in AY2009 we had 29 minority faculty (17%), due to the successful recruitment of five minority members, including two underrepresented-minority men. In AY2010 we will have 30 (18%) minority members on our faculty, after successfully recruiting an Asian American male junior faculty in Political Science. Of the five SHASS faculty approved for tenure this year (effective AY2010), one was an Asian American woman.

The School also remains committed to increasing minority representation within the administrative staff. After the hire of an African American man as a financial assistant in the dean's office during AY2009, we now have seven minorities (three African Americans,

two Hispanic Americans [one from Puerto Rico and another from the Dominican Republic], and two Asian Americans) among the 41 members of SHASS administrative staff. This is an increase from 13% in AY2008 to 17% in AY2009. Three of these minority staff members are in the dean's office, comprising 33% of its staff. We hope to further our efforts at diversifying our administrative staff by working closely with the departments and programs in the School and with the Office of Human Resources.

### **Honors and Awards**

SHASS faculty members garnered an array of honors and awards this year; the most notable are described here.

Abhijit Banerjee, Ford Foundation International professor of economics, and Esther Duflo, Abdul Latif Jameel professor of poverty alleviation and development economics, received the BBVA Foundation Frontiers of Knowledge Award in the development cooperation category.

The French government named Suzanne Berger, Raphael Dorman and Helen Starbuck professor of political science, Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur for her research and efforts to strengthen ties between MIT and French researchers.

Ford International professor of economics and department head Ricardo Caballero, along with coauthor Arvind Krishnamurthy, was awarded the Smith Breeden Prize by the American Finance Association for "Collective Risk Management in a Flight to Quality Episode," published in the *Journal of Finance* (2008 63[5]: 2195–2230).

Lister career development associate professor Christopher Capozzola, professor of philosophy Sally Haslanger, and associate professor of anthropology Stefan Helmreich received the first annual James A. and Ruth Levitan Awards for Excellence in Teaching.

Michael Scott Cuthbert, assistant professor of music, was awarded a \$100,000 grant from the Seaver Institute for his research project "music21: a Computer-aided Framework for Musical Analysis." The project will produce a set of tools for sophisticated musical and statistical analysis.

Esther Duflo was named the International Chair for Knowledge Against Poverty at the Collège de France. Professor Duflo was also awarded the Prix Luc Durand-Reville by the Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques in France. The Prix Luc Durand-Reville is an annual prize to reward work on assistance from France or Europe for economic development in the Third World.

Professor of economics and MacVicar Faculty Fellow Jonathan Gruber has been inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Paul Joskow, Elizabeth and James Killian professor of economics and management, received the 2009 United States Association for Energy Economics Adelman-Frankel Award "for unique and innovating contributions to the field of energy economics."

Professor in writing and humanistic studies Robert Kanigel received a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship in creative arts.

Shigeru Miyagawa, Kochi-Manjiro professor of Japanese language and culture and section head for Foreign Languages and Literatures, was awarded the Franklin R. Buchanan Prize from the Association for Asian Studies.

Associate professor of anthropology Heather Paxson is the first recipient of the Belasco Prize for Scholarly Excellence from the Association for the Study of Food and Society, for "Post-Pasteurian Cultures: The Microbiopolitics of Raw-Milk Cheese in the United States," published in *Cultural Anthropology* (2008 23[1]: 15–47). The prize recognizes a peer-reviewed article that exhibits superior research, a unique perspective and methodological approach, and novel insights for the study of food.

Mitsui professor of economics and president of the National Bureau of Economic Research James Poterba took office as president of the National Tax Association in November 2008, and was also elected vice-president of the American Economics Association beginning in January 2009.

Susan Silbey, professor of anthropology and section head, received the 2009 Harry J. Kalven Jr. Prize from the Law and Society Association. The award is given in recognition of a body of scholarly work, and goes to individuals who have demonstrated empirical scholarship that has contributed most effectively to the advancement of research in law and society.

Jing Wang, S. C. Fang professor of Chinese language and culture, was awarded a two-year grant (2009–2011) from the Ford Foundation in Beijing for research on "Chinese NGOs in the Web 2.0 Environment."

### **Fundraising**

New gifts and pledges for FY2009 totaled \$50,950,033. Some highlights included a substantial new gift of core support for the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab, a \$1.2M foundation grant for new postdoctoral fellows in humanities and humanistic social studies, and a \$5M pledge in support for a new professorship in contemporary Africa.

### **Faculty Promotions, Administrative Changes, Retirements**

In AY2009 we had one retirement, two resignations, and made 10 new faculty hires within the School. Elisha Gray II professor of economics Peter Temin retired from MIT, and we lost two faculty from the Literature Section: Peter de Florez professor of humanities Henry Jenkins to the University of Southern California; and assistant professor Sarah Brouillette to Carleton University. On the up side, five faculty members in the School, including an Asian woman, were promoted to tenure this year, effective July 1, 2009: Christopher Capozzola of the History Faculty, Ian Condry of Foreign Languages and Literatures, Edward Flemming of the Department of Linguistics and Philosophy, Nick Montfort of the Program in Writing and Humanistic Studies, and Lily Tsai of the Department of Political Science.

The School was successful in recruiting a total of eight new members to the faculty for AY2010, along with two full professors in Political Science, Ben Ross Schneider and Kathleen Thelen, whose appointments were approved in the fall of 2008 and who joined us February 15, 2009. Of the eight new hires, seven will join us on July 1, 2009, and one will join History as an assistant professor on July 1, 2010. Of the faculty joining us next year, one will join as associate professor with tenure (Eric Goldberg, History), and another will join us as associate professor without tenure (Martin Hackl, Linguistics and Philosophy). The remaining five will be assistant professors in Economics (Mihai Manea), History (Christopher Leighton), Linguistics and Philosophy (Julia Markovits), Political Science (Jens Hainmueller), and Writing and Humanistic Studies (Vivek Bald).

**Deborah K. Fitzgerald**  
**Kenan Sahin Dean**  
**Professor of the History of Technology**

*More information about the School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences can be found at <http://shass.mit.edu/>.*