

Associate Provost for Faculty Equity

The associate provost for faculty equity is charged with overseeing the Institute's activities and policies as they affect diversity of the faculty.

This year associate provost Barbara Liskov continued to work on improving conditions in faculty searches and faculty retention. There are now search oversight committees in both the School of Science and the School of Engineering. The committee in the School of Science is chaired by associate dean Hazel Sive. This committee reviews the invitation lists for each search at the time invitations for interviews are made to ensure appropriate inclusion of women and under-represented minorities among the invitees. The committee in the School of Engineering is chaired by associate dean Cynthia Barnhart. This committee consists of chairs of all the search committees within the School of Engineering; it meets regularly to monitor the searches and discuss best practices.

Associate Provost Liskov participated in meetings over the course of the year with MIT lawyers and with associate provost Wesley Harris to determine how best to handle affirmative action in faculty searches. The group met with representatives from the Schools of Engineering and Science, and also the Sloan School of Management. The group plans to continue these meetings this year.

This year Associate Provost Liskov met with many department heads to talk about the progress of junior faculty, especially women and underrepresented minorities. The purpose of these meetings was to ensure that junior faculty are being given a fair chance to succeed at MIT and that they are treated equitably with respect to a number of parameters, including research support, teaching load, and committee assignments.

Associate Provost Liskov hosted a series of lunches for junior women faculty. These meetings provided a chance for them to meet other junior women faculty outside of their department and to discuss issues that concern them. A major concern was how to combine work and family, including how to manage childcare. To help with this concern, Provost Liskov is working on modifying some of MIT's policies. She has put in place new admissions policies for the on-campus childcare facility in the Stata Center to increase the number of faculty children enrolled there. In addition, she developed a modest scholarship program that faculty can use to offset childcare for young children; this program is not yet in effect but the hope is that it will start in the coming year.

Associate Provost Liskov has also been working on the wording of promotion letters sent to faculty who have been granted tenure extensions. There is now standard language that will be included in every letter sent for promotions to tenure and to associate professor without tenure.

Barbara Liskov
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