

Dean for Graduate Education

The [Office of the Dean for Graduate Education](#) (ODGE) is an Institute-wide support and referral office that advocates broadly for the graduate community at MIT. MIT maintains a decentralized graduate educational structure and, hence, ODGE works collaboratively across the Institute with numerous administrative offices, schools and academic departments, individual faculty and students, and various committees. ODGE works with other units in the areas of diversity, personal support, community building, collation and dissemination of best practices, Institute-wide data collection and analysis, endowed and external fellowships, graduate admissions administration, immigration and international student advising, professional development, policies and procedures, and academic performance. ODGE comprises the Office of the Dean for Graduate Education, the [International Students Office](#) (ISO), and the [Graduate Student Council](#) (GSC).

The mission of ODGE is to support and serve individual graduate students, programs, and schools in order to make graduate education at MIT empowering, exciting, holistic, and transformative. We envision a graduate community of scholars whose members are ever more intellectually and socially engaged, valued, interactive, and rapidly connected to resources, information, each other, the Institute, the nation, and the world. The strategic plan of ODGE is organized around five key themes: support of educational innovation and excellence, competitiveness in graduate funding, administration and policy, diversity and climate, and the holistic graduate student experience.

Office of the Dean for Graduate Education Headquarters

Leveraging the efforts of a small office with a headcount of 11, ODGE headquarters accomplishes its goals by working collaboratively with other units. This entails key partnerships with the offices of the Dean for Undergraduate Education (DUE) and the Dean for Student Life, Resource Development, the Alumni Association, the Office of the Provost, the Ombuds Office, MIT Medical, Institutional Research (Office of the Provost), and MIT's academic departments and schools.

The dean for graduate education leads ODGE in its mission and areas of responsibility, providing a voice on behalf of the graduate community to the senior administration. In addition, the office provides centralized services to the student body with regard to personal support and advising, policy administration, student status changes, financial support, recruitment efforts, professional development, and various programs to support the graduate community.

International Students Office

The mission of the International Students Office is to help the international student population at MIT fulfill academic goals by providing services and support programs that facilitate adjustment to a new academic and cultural environment. The office assists students in maintaining their legal status in the United States, provides support for their dependents, and promotes students' interaction with and integration into the

MIT community at large. In addition, the staff of eight interfaces with all MIT offices, advocating for awareness in the community of issues relevant to MIT's international student population.

Graduate Student Council

The GSC works to enhance the graduate experience by promoting the general welfare and concerns of the graduate student body, creating new programs and initiatives to provide opportunities for growth and interaction, and communicating with the MIT administration and faculty on behalf of graduate students. These goals are accomplished through a structure of elected student representatives, standing committees, and officers. The student council is supported by two support staff employees.

Theme One: Supporting Educational Innovation and Excellence

As the central administrative office for MIT's decentralized graduate enterprise, ODGE strives to support innovation and excellence in graduate education through working on various committees, fostering information exchange and best practices among graduate programs, supporting new programmatic initiatives, and highlighting graduate student accomplishments. We maintain membership on Institute committees such as the Committee on Graduate Programs and the MIT Council on Educational Technology; we also sponsor ad hoc committees such as the Task Force on Teaching and Learning Spaces. In addition, ODGE supports monthly roundtables of the graduate administrators from each department and program and maintains graduate policies and procedures.

Support for Interdisciplinary Initiatives

Through the Graduate Student Life Grants (described later in this report), ODGE has been pleased to fund primarily student-led initiatives that foster connections and exchanges of ideas across departments. In the [Science Policy Bootcamp](#), graduate students participate in an intensive four-day seminar led by the director of MIT's Washington Office. The seminar introduces graduate students in science and engineering to the nuts and bolts of science policy. The Public Service Center organizes the [MIT IDEAS Global Challenge](#), an annual invention and entrepreneurship competition that awards up to \$10,000 per team for innovative service projects that positively impact underserved communities; dean Christine Ortiz served as a judge in 2012. The Graduate Association of Mechanical Engineers offers an interdepartmental seminar series involving graduate student presenters from different departments on a single topic; students present on personal projects, startup ideas, and so forth as a venue to network with other talented graduate students. An exciting new seminar series brought in leading experts on urban development in China from across the country to discuss topics of interest—everything from sustainable development to rapid urbanization and energy usage—over a meal.

Academic Integrity and Responsible Conduct of Research

In keeping with the values of the Institute, ODGE has promoted the critical need for academic integrity and responsible conduct of research (RCR) among the graduate population. The most comprehensive way to educate students on RCR is through formal training. MIT offers an online RCR course to all members of the community through

the Office of Sponsored Programs. Graduate students funded by National Science Foundation (NSF) and National Institutes of Health grants and fellowships are required to take RCR training; several departments also require such training of all research assistants, and selected graduate programs offer additional training. We have worked to raise the visibility of this training, and the numbers of graduate students completing it, through partnerships with departments and direct communications to students, including a letter from the dean for graduate education and a prominent link in an edition of the Student Life and Learning Student Digest from the chancellor and student deans. Visibility on all relevant web pages has been added or increased. The office will track the numbers of graduate students completing the training and strive to increase these numbers over time. ODGE is also participating in a revision of the MIT academic integrity handbook to ensure the availability of basic guidelines for all students.

Dissertation Boot Camp

The GSC continued to team up with the Writing and Communication Center and Community Wellness at MIT Medical to offer the popular Dissertation Boot Camp, which provides a focused environment and additional support for graduate students to work on their theses and build healthy writing habits. The boot camp includes exercise breaks and writing tips.

Committee on Student Entrepreneurship

Student interest in entrepreneurship has [exploded on the MIT campus](#), in particular over the last decade, and the results of these activities are astounding. Aside from the societal benefits of technology transfer, entrepreneurship activities have deep educational, professional, and personal development benefits for students and should continue to be fostered and supported by MIT. Students often seek guidance for engaging in entrepreneurial activities from faculty, department heads, and internal organizations and have indicated that they could benefit from knowledge and clarification of policies and procedures, guidelines, roles and responsibilities, and best practices.

Therefore, the dean for graduate education, together with the dean for undergraduate education and the vice president for research and associate provost, assembled the Committee on Student Entrepreneurship, which began its work in April 2012. The charge of the committee is as follows:

- To review MIT and peer policies and procedures, best practices, and resources (including RCR training) as well as the current literature relevant to student involvement in entrepreneurship and commercialization activities, with a focus on such areas as management and conflict of interest, engagement in outside professional activities, use of Institute resources, intellectual property, specific considerations for international students, and consulting privileges and restrictions
- To consider fairness and protection of both students and faculty, openness of research, peer and national best practices, and commitment to and impact on technology transfer and to propose any changes in policies and procedures to the Committee on Graduate Programs

- To create, for broad distribution, a relevant summary and frequently asked questions document clarifying relevant policies and procedures, guidelines, roles and responsibilities, and best practices

The committee has consulted broadly with faculty, students, staff, and departments, laboratories, and centers, as well as the International Students Office, the International Scholars Office, the MIT Office of the General Counsel, the MIT Ombuds Office, the MIT Technology Licensing Office, the MIT Venture Mentoring Service, and the Deshpande Center for Technological Innovation. It has also consulted with relevant MIT committees, such as the Committee on Intellectual Property, and is expected to submit a report in September 2012.

Highlighting Graduate Student Accomplishments

MIT is sometimes known as a “praise-free zone”; however, its graduate students have significant achievements on a daily basis. In order to celebrate the big “wins” and bring the community together around positive news, ODGE continues to report recent graduate student publications, students who have won fellowships and awards, and other notable items in our [news feature](#). In addition, we have created a new web feature called “[Student Snapshots](#),” which launched in May 2012. Each snapshot profiles a graduate student who has recently published or achieved a similar level of accomplishment and includes a smartly edited video interview with the student and his or her advisor, a news story elucidating some particulars of the student’s work, an audio file with the student sharing more of his or her own background, and relevant links. Profiles are tagged with keywords that are visible in a tag cloud.

International Educational Innovation

In March 2012, the Office of the Dean for Graduate Education sponsored a talk on European science and research education by professor Hans van Himbergen, deputy-rector of international educational affairs at Utrecht University in the Netherlands and the university’s representative on the League of European Research Universities (LERU). Topics covered in his presentation included LERU doctoral education and career development activities and new means of cooperation to promote excellence in science education in Dutch high schools. In addition, Dr. van Himbergen discussed the drive toward promoting tailor-made education in small-scale settings, going beyond the traditional emphasis on acquiring knowledge and meeting strictly academic requirements.

With support from Dr. van Himbergen, LERU offered MIT a slot for a doctoral student to attend the League of European Research Universities 2012 Summer Doctoral School (“Beyond Open Access: Open Education, Open Data and Open Knowledge”) at the University of Barcelona. Computer science PhD candidate Ulric Ferner attended on behalf of MIT, joining 41 other students from all disciplines to identify and analyze challenges and opportunities brought to universities by the open scholarship agenda, including open access to education, data, and knowledge. Practical and interactive workshops allowed students to develop projects aimed at “opening” their research and educated them on the appropriate use of tools for knowledge and research sharing.

Dean Ortiz gave an invited presentation (“Past and Future of Graduate Education at MIT”) at the LERU conference held at the University of Zurich in Switzerland in October 2011. Also, in March 2012, she was an invited speaker at a seminar held at Imperial College London; her talk was titled “Graduate Education at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology: Towards a Networked Apprentice Model.”

Satisfactory Academic Performance for Federal Financial Aid Eligibility

As part of its program integrity rules, the US Department of Education imposed new requirements (effective for academic terms beginning on or after July 1, 2011) on higher education institutions with respect to satisfactory academic performance. Per federal regulations, graduate students are eligible to receive federal student financial assistance if they are enrolled at least half time each term and maintain satisfactory academic progress in their course of study. ODGE participated in a task force led by Betsy Hicks, executive director of Student Financial Services, to develop policies and procedures to meet the new federal rules as they pertain to all MIT students. These revised policies and procedures will be incorporated into the work of both the Committee on Undergraduate Performance and the Graduate Academic Performance Group and communicated to students on the appropriate office websites and in course bulletins.

Panel Discussion for Women on Academic Publishing

Under the initiative and leadership of a graduate community fellow, the office sponsored a panel discussion this past May on the broad topic of academic publishing. Four accomplished women experts presented: MIT professor Paula Hammond, the David H. Koch professor of chemical engineering; MIT professor Sangeeta Bhatia, the John J. and Dorothy Wilson professor of health sciences and technology and electrical engineering and computer science; Dr. Andrea Dupree, senior physicist at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics and past president of the American Astronomical Society; and Dr. Elena Porro, senior deputy editor of *Cell*, a preeminent life science journal.

The topic was extremely appealing to students, with 50 women registered and a wait list of 15. On the event’s feedback form, all of the participants noted that the topic was very relevant for graduate students, and 92% stated that the discussion was very useful.

Key areas of discussion included how to approach the paper-writing process (what to write first, what the outline should look like, the questions to ask and answer); how to handle collaborations and attendant authorship issues; how to manage or prevent writer’s block and decide when a paper is finished; what editors, reviewers, and readers do not like to see in a paper; the qualities in a paper that are compelling to journals; and what to do if one’s paper is not accepted for publication.

In addition to extraordinary work on the event itself, the graduate community fellow, at the request of the senior associate dean, created a list of resources on academic publishing that was distributed to participants. The intent was to ultimately expand this list and make it available on the ODGE website for all graduate students.

Due to the demand and the overwhelmingly positive post-event comments, this type of event was considered to be worthy of repeating every few years.

Teaching and Learning Spaces

In June 2011, the deans for graduate and undergraduate education, the associate provost, and the director of Libraries assembled a working group on the future of campus teaching and learning spaces. Its purpose was to propose a comprehensive future vision for these spaces. The group's charge was to accelerate pedagogical effectiveness, innovation, and learning; promote inclusivity, diminish barriers, and support a diverse and dynamic intellectual community; facilitate interaction, conversation, and collaboration; enable rapid access to information, resources, and technological tools; stimulate creativity and knowledge discovery; and provide inspiration.

The group included graduate and undergraduate students, faculty from each of the five schools, and representatives from the Department of Facilities, Library Services, the Office of the Provost, the Office of the Registrar, the offices of the Dean for Graduate Education and the Dean for Undergraduate Education, Campus Planning, and Information Services and Technology (IS&T). The group carried out its charge in the 2011–2012 academic year, submitting its final report and recommendations in March 2012. The dean for graduate education will continue to play an advocacy role as these recommendations are incorporated into the Institute's capital campaign and 2030 plans.

Technology in Education

Inevitably, technology has become a theme running through many of our efforts to support innovation and excellence in education. In addition to online RCR training and web-based news and resources, technology supports student communications and is growing ever more effective in online learning. In July 2011, Dean Ortiz co-facilitated a workshop for the Council for Graduate Schools on "Using Technology to Communicate with Graduate Students" (Monterey, CA). In May 2012, she presented at the "Online Learning for an MIT Education: At the Intersection of Residential Education and MITx" workshop in Cambridge.

Theme Two: Competitiveness in Graduate Funding

ODGE is responsible for administering external, endowed, diversity, and MIT presidential fellowships. Fellowships are attractive because they allow students to concentrate on their research without the distractions of a research assistant or teaching assistant position. With the uncertainty associated with the economic downturn, the number of graduate students applying for fellowships remains extremely high. In addition, ODGE participates in reviewing the graduate student cost of living and in setting graduate stipend guidelines.

Fellowships

ODGE administered over 680 graduate fellowships in FY2012 totaling \$32 million, both of which represented increases from FY2011. The increases were primarily due to the rise in the number of active NSF fellows (as noted below).

In FY2012, an additional \$300,000 in funding was devoted to diversity fellowships, expanding the highly successful collaborative multiyear support agreement within the School of Science and the School of Engineering.

More than 100 MIT Presidential fellowships were awarded, with a total disbursement amount of \$6.6 million. ODGE competitive fellowships provided \$1.9 million in support to a total of 33 students.

During FY2012, ODGE processed 451 external competitive fellowships at a total amount of \$20 million. The number of external competitive fellowships granted increased by 97 from FY2011, primarily due to the increased number of NSF fellows on tenure.

On November 17, 2011, the US House and Senate passed H.R. 2112, providing funding for the National Science Foundation. The president signed this appropriation bill into law on November 18, and the NSF budget was released to the Graduate Research Fellowship Program in February 2012. The NSF budget request to the federal government included an institutional cost-of-education allowance increase in 2012 from \$10,500 to \$12,000 per tenure year per fellow.

On April 26, the NSF announced that the new cost-of-education allowance rate applied to all fellows on tenure beginning in the 2011–2012 fellowship year. In consultation with the Office of the Provost, the Office of the Vice President for Finance, the Office of Sponsored Programs, Information Services and Technology, the Office of the Vice President for Research, and Student Financial Services, journal vouchers were processed prior to the FY2012 closing, and \$1,500 per active fellow was returned to department accounts, supplementing the NSF tuition shortfall.

ODGE also contributed to the acquisition of a diverse set of additional fellowship funds in FY2012, including two Clare Boothe Luce Foundation doctoral fellowships, four Howard Hughes Medical Institute fellowships for international students, one Schlumberger Foundation faculty for the future fellowship, five Presidential Management Fellows Program fellowships, and one Iraqi Women's Fellowship Foundation fellowship.

Cost of Living

This year the Graduate Student Council conducted a cost of living survey. Although these surveys have been conducted since 2003, recent efforts have resulted in particularly rigorous analyses, with models more closely reflecting the realistic cost of living faced by various graduate constituencies around the Institute. The process is also a high-profile example of the value of collaboration, as the GSC has partnered in the surveys with the Office of the Dean for Graduate Education, the Division of Student Life, Office of the Vice President of Research, and the Office of the Provost.

This year the GSC advocated for a 5.23% increase in graduate stipends based on data obtained from the cost of living survey, as well as registrar and enrollment data and the Consumer Product Index. This information showed that the Consumer Product Index rent number used to calculate stipend increases over the last four years was significantly

lower than the real increase in the greater Boston-Cambridge-Somerville area. The 5.23% increase is part of a two-year plan to bring graduate students' standard of living back to the level of 2007.

The increased stipend amount accounted for baseline inflation of 4.73% and included an additional two-year rental reconciliation plan that attempted to make up for underestimations of rent and compounded losses over the last several years. The senior administration set the stipend increase at 4.75%, representing the largest increase in recent history and amounting to approximately \$4.5 to \$5 million in additional funds that will go directly into the pockets of graduate students.

Theme Three: Administration and Policy

This year ODGE finalized the strategic planning process we began in 2010, renewing our mission and vision and defining five key themes as detailed above. We defined strategic priorities for 2012–2013 and reached out to key collaborators to share information and discuss plans. Among our collaborators were the ODGE Faculty Advisory Board, the dean for student life, the dean for undergraduate education, and departmental faculty members.

Staffing Changes

ODGE requested a graduate fellowships administrator position in the FY2013 budget proposal, which was approved. Search activities commenced in June 2012. The position's primary responsibilities are graduate fellowship acquisition; long-term strategic planning; communication, administration, and management, including responsibility for federal regulatory requirements; coordination and negotiation with external granting organizations; creating and managing internal selection and nomination processes; student advising and support; and stewardship. Some of these responsibilities are currently assumed by the administrative officer and the dean's assistant/coordinator of graduate education initiatives.

In April 2011, Sylvia Hiestand was hired as international student advisor to meet the needs of our increasing number of international students. This is an 80% term position through June 30, 2013. Hiestand has many years of experience advising international students, most recently at Wellesley College.

At the end of FY2011, the GSC administrative assistant position became vacant and remained unfilled for the summer of 2011. It was decided that instead of recruiting a new staff member for this position, the administrative assistant for Amgen and diversity initiatives would fill in as of September 1, 2011, when the Amgen Scholars program was transferred from ODGE to DUE (more on this transition below). In order to support diversity initiatives, a half-time diversity initiatives assistant was hired on a temporary basis. The half-time term position has been extended through the end of FY2013.

In September 2011, Jason McKnight filled the new position of assistant dean for graduate education. He brings to this position 10 years of experience in higher education and a master's degree in education, with a focus in the area of college student personnel administration. In his previous four years at MIT, he had served as a residence life associate for graduate students in the Division of Student Life, director of the Westgate residential community of graduate families, and dean-on-call.

Staff Professional Development

As part of our strategic plan, in 2011–2012 ODGE focused greater attention on the professional development of our staff. Going forward, we look to craft development plans for each individual. This past year, ISO staff attended and presented at the NAFSA (International Association of Educators) regional conference and served on the Government Regulatory Advisory Committee. All ISO staff attended the Spring Immigration Regional Workshop at Babson College, with two staff members acting as trainers.

ODGE support staff activities in the academic year included participation in “When Support Gets Personal,” which trains the participants to recognize common signs of student stress and distress, to be familiar with all of the support services at MIT, and to understand MIT’s confidentiality and communication policies; Title IX training; the new MIT Administrative Assistant Program (MITAAP); and “Teaching, Learning and Research: Preparation of the Nation’s Future Faculty,” a forum in Madison, WI, sponsored by the NSF Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning.

Development highlights for administrative staff included a one-day course, “Presenting Data and Information,” offered by Edward Tufte; a presentation at the 2012 National Conference on Race and Ethnicity in American Higher Education (NCORE) in New York City; and attendance at the NASPA-Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education Region 1 Conference (Sturbridge, MA) and the conference of the American College Personnel Association (Louisville, KY). One staff member took part in the Partnership program, a premier professional development and talent retention program in Boston; another completed the Managing for Excellence program, a cohort-based program for MIT’s experienced group managers that includes “360-degree feedback,” individual development projects, discussions on the roles of managers who excel at MIT, planning tools, identification of stakeholders, and articulation of deliverables and activities.

Two staff members received Infinite Mile Awards in 2012. Communications officer Heather Konar has taken on both innovative and challenging projects in support of the graduate community, one of which has resulted in a professional development portal for graduate students. Monica Orta, coordinator of the MIT Summer Research Program (MSRP), is always willing to take up a new learning opportunity or challenge to help move the office forward. She tirelessly contributes to the greater good and well-being of the team, enabling her colleagues to more effectively provide services to students, faculty, and administrators.

Government Compliance

ISO is responsible for and ensures the Institute's compliance with the strict regulations of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Department of State governing foreign national students at MIT. The following are some of the highlights in FY2012.

DHS released two new updates to the Student Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). These enhancements necessitated changes to ISO business practices involving batch registration reporting and a substantive revision of MIT's I-17 form, the government's document of record permitting foreign national students to enroll at MIT with an F-1 status. Academic programs (e.g., Master of Finance, Master of Science in Management Studies, System Design and Management, Executive MBA) and their respective start dates are now included in the I-17 form.

In October 2011 (based on ISO's lengthy application for MIT's recertification filed in AY2011), MIT's F-1 program was recertified by DHS for two years.

In February 2012, DHS established the SEVP (Student and Exchange Visitor Program) Analysis and Operations Center to improve SEVIS data analysis and to assess compliance and risk. As a result, ISO saw an increase in Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)/DHS inquiries and random site visits to campus as well as an increase in visa security clearances for incoming and returning students in "unclassified but sensitive areas of study."

Developing New Systems

SUNAPSIS

ISO's deployment of SUNAPSIS, a comprehensive web-based application that facilitates data integration between the MIT Student Information System (MITSIS) and SEVIS, continued to expand in AY2012. ISO now has nearly 1,800 students (2011 and 2012 international admits) whose records are completely digital. While the SUNAPSIS deployment was enormously successful overall, staff from IS&T, along with ISO's technical support specialist, had to program a number of data fixes and security features in MITSIS to enhance the functioning of the application. In addition, SUNAPSIS programmers at Indiana University began rewriting the software's browser to better accommodate ISO's use of Macs rather than PCs. SUNAPSIS 3.0 is scheduled to be released in October 2012.

Conversion of ISO paper-based files to e-files for students who matriculated prior to June 2011 was delayed as a result of DHS's revision of and subsequent pushback of the SEVIS II deployment to 2015. ISO now plans to begin converting files for the entire international student population to digital files in spring 2013.

Hourly Student Appointment Automation Project

The Hourly Student Appointment (HSA) system, which replaces the electronic Student Personnel Action Form, went live on June 6, 2012. The HSA project was led by IS&T with the collaboration of representatives from academic departments, Student Financial

Services, and ODGE. The system streamlined and automated the hourly student appointment approval process based on work hour and hourly rate limit policies and enabled cross-referencing of research assistant and teaching assistant appointments.

Improving Graduate Admissions

During the summer of 2011, a detailed implementation plan was developed to realize the opt-in, centralized, all-electronic admissions system recommended by the Graduate Admissions Task Force in June 2011, building on the existing software developed by the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (EECS). A project team was assembled including IS&T, central admissions, ODGE, and the EECS faculty developers, professors Frans Kaashoek and Robert Morris. Institute-level financial support for the project team was provided, and 10 graduate programs were transitioned (in addition to the four graduate programs that already used the EECS platform). Over 9,500 applications and 33,000 letters of recommendation were processed by the EECS system in AY2012. The newly formed [Committee on Graduate Admissions](#), chaired by professor Dave Darmofal of the Department of Aeronautics and Astronautics, completed a survey of the 10 departments that transitioned during the last cycle. A brief summary of the survey results indicates no major problems with the EECS system; faculty and staff have been pleased and have adapted well, large improvements have been made in reducing manual labor, the review process has been streamlined, and the majority of the usage of paper has been eliminated. In addition, earlier admissions decisions have been facilitated and significant time and cost savings achieved. Graduate programs cited the great responsiveness of the EECS faculty developers throughout the transition and admissions process. Preparation for the next admissions cycle continues over summer 2012.

Website Content Management

During summer 2011, the ODGE website migrated from html to a WordPress content management system, which launched in September 2011. The new system allows greater flexibility of access for multiple contributors; it also dynamically builds pages from available content, enabling easier input by editors and allowing the user to filter content. These capabilities were vital in supporting strategic initiatives around professional and personal development (the Professional Development Video Portal) and in promoting educational excellence (by highlighting students' accomplishments through Student Snapshots).

Graduate Student Council Activities

Communication with the Student Body

The GSC addressed the need for clear and effective communication with students on a variety of fronts this year. With the support of a graduate community fellow, the GSC was able to conduct focus groups to provide insight on and support for better communication mechanisms within the broader student body.

Regular publication of *The Graduate*, a GSC graduate student newsletter, was reintroduced, and its visual layout, content, and distribution method were redeveloped. Also, the GSC website was redesigned for easy access; the site now allows for online

equipment requests for student groups, online applications for grants, and online payment requests. In addition, a new modular event management system was created that allows revenue collection for ticketed events via the CyberSource payment system.

GSC communication was further diversified by providing post-meeting summaries to the council, to be further edited by the representatives and sent to their respective constituencies. In addition, the GSC proactively made use of *The Tech* to disseminate news and information.

The GSC's announcement email list has remained the primary mechanism of communication for graduate student-related events and information. This year, the GSC made use of an email list of all graduate students to disseminate graduate community letters and information. The goal is to use this list for "State of the GSC" emails once per semester and as needed for important and expedient business of the council.

Internal Structure and Operations

The Graduate Student Council made many improvements over the past year to its internal operations. While for the past few years the number of council representatives had been declining, a successful effort was made this year to increase the number of representatives and improve the council meetings. The addition of an orientation for council representatives helped promote increased discussion and led to improvements in the way the council conducted legislative business. Additionally, the GSC modified its funding rules at the request of the General Council to expand funding of capital expenses, and a bylaws amendment was passed to authorize the Funding Board to conduct auditing of student group allocated funding.

Based on recommendations made over the past year, the GSC implemented a number of sustainability-related practices. A concerted effort was made to improve the financial well-being of the GSC by more than doubling the amount of money in the stabilization fund and increasing the financial solvency of the council through the creation of a budget that accurately reflects current costs and operations within all committees' budget targets.

This year the GSC welcomed aboard new administrative assistant Betsy Granese, who, along with Imani Ivery, has provided great assistance in the work, events, and advocacy of the council.

Finally, in order to help ensure the continuity of the GSC's efforts, the GSC Archives, which play a very important role as the storage house for the council's electronic records and information, were supplemented by the creation of a secure online wiki.

Institute Leadership

This year, the Institute had significant transitions within its senior leadership, including the chancellor, executive vice president, provost, and president. Accordingly, a greater amount of time has been spent on informing the upper administration about the GSC and current issues within the graduate student community through GSC-conducted orientation sessions and/or special advisory groups and meetings.

The search process for the MIT president provided a great opportunity for the GSC and the Undergraduate Association (UA) to offer informed and structured input on all aspects of the Institute. In order to capitalize on this opportunity, the GSC and UA formed a joint task force to serve in an advisory capacity in the search process. On this body, [chaired by six students](#), 10 undergraduates and 10 graduate students represented the MIT student community. They were responsible for soliciting feedback from the student community and producing a report and recommendations to the community.

A number of methods, including town hall meetings, focus groups, paper questionnaires, web forms, and informal discussions, were utilized to define the students' perspectives on the values of MIT, the important issues facing the Institute, and the qualities and experiences desired in the next president. Simultaneously, the joint task force researched nearly 300 candidates nominated by students and the task force with respect to the student-determined presidential qualities. Multiple undergraduate and graduate students reviewed each candidate, and a series of group discussions on the top 60 candidates' background, accomplishments, and ideology were held with the full task force after thorough research and discussion on the candidates by two independent groups consisting of two undergraduate and two graduate students.

The joint task force identified five key areas that students expressed as opportunities and challenges for MIT in the future, specifically MIT values and culture, education, student wellness and balance, campus planning and investment, and external relations. In accordance with this perspective, students noted their desire for the next MIT president to set priorities to address these challenges and opportunities.

The process provided a foundation for strong collaboration between the GSC and UA in addressing concerns affecting all students, and the report provided an informative student perspective that the GSC should continue to use and address beyond the search process.

Regional, National, and International Efforts

The GSC continued its national advocacy policy to align MIT student views and national needs through cooperative lobbying with the National Association of Graduate-Professional Students. The council made continued progress, including recruitment of sponsors on desired legislation, development of White House petitions, and responses to Office of Science and Technology Policy requests for information. In addition, the council conducted strong lobbying in Washington, DC, on issues such as tax exemption of graduate student stipends, open access to federally funded published research, higher caps on H-1B visas for advanced-degree holders, and funding of education and research. Through its legislative action subcommittee, the GSC demonstrated its leadership in these efforts and stood out as one of the nation's most active graduate-professional student governments.

In the fall, with financial assistance from ODGE, the GSC hosted the Ivy Plus summit for graduate-professional student governments, which was seen a great success. The Ivy Plus summit is the yearly meeting of the graduate and professional student associations

of Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Harvard, MIT, Princeton, Pennsylvania, and Yale. The summit was designed to facilitate communication and sharing of ideas between graduate and professional students from these institutions. Attendees convened to discuss current issues and initiatives that affect graduate/professional students.

Similar to last year, the GSC sent a representative to participate in the Kremlin Fellows Program. The Russian Federation's Federal Agency on Youth Affairs initiated the program during the fall of 2010 in an effort to directly engage the next generation of American leadership. The agency contacted the Open World Leadership Center at the Library of Congress to help identify young leaders from the United States to visit Russia.

Transition of the Amgen Scholars Program

The Amgen Scholars began in 2006 as a \$25 million, four-year program and has grown to a \$34 million, eight-year program through which selected undergraduates attend one of 10 prestigious universities for an intensive summer research experience in a scientific field. The program sites are the California Institute of Technology; Columbia University/Barnard College (a joint program); Howard University; MIT; Stanford; the Berkeley, Los Angeles, San Diego, and San Francisco campuses of the University of California; and the University of Washington. Participants are immersed in research directed by some of the nation's top academic scientists. As one of the 10 host institutions, MIT (through DUE) hosts 25 to 30 summer research interns each year in its Amgen-UROP (Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program) program.

ODGE served as the founding US program office for all of the Amgen Scholars sites. ODGE's initial four-year \$1 million grant from the Amgen Foundation to carry out operations as the US program office ended in 2010. In 2011, ODGE was awarded a phase 2 program office grant representing a four-year \$3 million commitment. After organizing a successful 2011 Amgen Scholars symposium, the US program office was transitioned from ODGE to the Office of Undergraduate Advising and Academic Programming (UAAP) in the Office of the Dean for Undergraduate Education. We look forward to continued success in phase 2 of the program.

Theme Four: Diversity and Climate

MIT's graduate students come from a wide variety of backgrounds and countries. In AY2012, 3,305 international students from 112 countries enrolled, reflecting an increase of 137 from AY2011. Over 700 spouses and children accompanied our international students, nearly all entering the United States under MIT's legal sponsorship. [First-generation students](#) are telling their stories, and they describe a broad range of economic backgrounds. MIT continually strives to advance a culture of diversity and inclusion and to ensure that MIT's graduate student population reflects the diverse talent of our nation.

ODGE serves as a catalyst for attracting a more diverse graduate student body to all of MIT's graduate academic programs and provides students with various forms of support so that they can succeed academically. ODGE's diversity programs and initiatives focus on underrepresented minority students, who primarily include African

American, Native American, Hispanic, and Hispanic American students. We have also sought to work with women, first-generation students, and students from small colleges in our recruiting and retention efforts.

We are guided in our vision by the 2004 faculty resolution that called for MIT to increase the percentage of underrepresented minority graduate students by a factor of three within a decade. Since 2004, we have made a number of strides toward reaching the goals of that resolution. The number of graduate school applications from underrepresented minority students has approximately doubled to more than 1,100. This increase in applications has led to a corresponding rise in the total number of underrepresented minority graduate students enrolled in our graduate programs—from 301 students (or approximately 7%) in 2004 to 494 students (or 12%) in 2011. Despite these gains, there is still much work to be done.

Our continuing strategy consists of two parts: partnering with academic departments to improve the quality of recruiting and mentoring and developing programs operated by our office to support diversity at MIT. Continuing on this course allows us to build on our work and evaluate its success.

The primary mechanism for recruiting applicants from underserved and underrepresented groups and for engaging departments and programs is the MIT Summer Research Program. This year brought together partners from minority-serving institutions for our Deeper Engagement Working Group. We have worked with departments to develop new initiatives such as the Biology Bridge Program for minority students (which recently graduated its first class of students). We have also consulted with the Department of Physics on its engagement with schools in the South and Southwest. ODGE plays a critical role in organizing MIT's presence at national recruiting conferences such as the Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students and the conferences of the National Society of Black Engineers, the National Organization for the Professional Advancement of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers, the Society for the Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science, the American Indian Science and Engineering Society, and the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers.

CONVERGE

CONVERGE, a graduate preview weekend, seeks not only to encourage the highest caliber students to apply to MIT but also to shift the perception of some potential students that MIT is a cold and unwelcoming place in which they cannot flourish. The CONVERGE mission is to increase the presence of underrepresented and underserved students in MIT's graduate programs. Since 2004, CONVERGE has brought nearly 200 students to campus. We did not host the CONVERGE program in the 2011 academic year but have plans for hosting it in the fall of 2012.

In fall 2011, we brought together strategic partners from institutions around the country to discuss our diversity work. In line with our commitment to continuously improving our recruitment efforts and increasing the representation of underrepresented minority students at the graduate level, we spent a day and a half working with our partners at

these institutions to determine the effectiveness of our programs from their perspective, generate concrete ideas that will move us closer to MIT's goal of increasing the diversity of its graduate population, develop and strengthen specific strategic partnerships with key institutions, and foster and encourage faculty research collaborations between these partners and MIT departments.

Our aim was to strengthen existing pipelines and create new ones so that we can significantly increase our influx of top minority graduate school candidates. There were 18 participants made up of both faculty and program administrators.

MIT Summer Research Program

The [MIT Summer Research Program](#) continues to be MIT's largest summer research program. It serves as a recruitment tool for underrepresented minority students while increasing awareness of and access to graduate education.

MSRP's mission is to promote the value of graduate education, to improve the research enterprise through increased diversity, and to prepare and recruit the best and brightest for graduate education at MIT. Since its inception, MSRP has seen more than 90% of program participants go on to pursue advanced degrees at institutions of higher learning. MIT departments admitted six former MSRP interns for AY2013, five of whom accepted the offer and will begin their program in September.

In 2012, 39 interns conducted research in 14 different departments. Nineteen new labs hosted MSRP interns, joining the more than 250 faculty members who have been key to the program's success since it began. In addition to serving as research mentors, these professors participate in intern selection, matching of interns with projects, and academic interactions.

MSRP is committed to fortifying and growing its collaborations throughout the Institute. This year the school deans renewed their five-year funding agreement with MSRP, thereby indicating their support for the program as well as their confidence in its success. Over the next year we will continue to explore best practices for securing intern lab placements, seeking greater input from the departments themselves. Additionally, we continue to work closely with the Department of Mathematics, which fully funds one to two interns each year.

The MSRP structure is unique and one that we believe other universities can use as a model for student success. As such, we presented the MSRP model at the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity in American Higher Education Conference in May. Our session, "MIT Summer Research Program—A Model for Recruitment, Retention and Professional Development of Underrepresented Students," addressed the three components—research, academics, and community—that make MSRP a particularly robust program. The session described how to incorporate current graduate students as mentors and advocates for summer interns, focusing on the students' professional development. More than half of the approximately 30 attendees provided feedback on the session, and it was all overwhelmingly positive; 76% of the participants indicated that the session was "excellent," the highest rating available.

Graduate School Clinic

The Graduate School Clinic serves as a preparatory workshop that teaches students how to plan their undergraduate trajectory so that they are the strongest graduate school candidates possible come senior year. The clinic's interactive format allows session participants to engage with MIT graduate students. Sessions offer tools for applying to graduate school, tips on obtaining funding, advice on selecting a school and advisor, and a host of other useful information. In addition to helping students individually, the clinic develops and strengthens relationships with minority-serving institutions, thereby increasing MIT's pool of underrepresented minority applicants.

During the past academic year, we conducted 15 clinics at universities across the nation, including Columbia University, Howard University, Florida A&M University, Morehouse College, Spelman College, San Diego State University, and Florida International University.

The clinic is an effective method for community building among underrepresented minority graduate students. Each year, the graduate community fellows who coordinate the program lead a training session that prepares graduate students to host the clinic sessions. This year seven new graduate students were trained, increasing the total number of graduate students who can run the clinics to 21. The clinic follows an apprentice model in which trained graduate students help new graduate students learn how to host a session. This helps us develop our materials through the advantage of various student perspectives.

We have begun developing an online version of the clinic that will allow undergraduates to keep better track of their goals and progress. We aim to launch the online clinic by next spring.

Alumni Engagement

Building on a model developed by a prior graduate community fellow, this year we extended our engagement with minority graduate alumni in key geographic regions (in particular Atlanta, GA). Our goal with alumni engagement is to identify and build relationships with this particular constituency in an effort to enhance our recruitment efforts. Last year, we were able to use the model to identify alumni in different cities and disaggregate them (by, for example, their MIT department and current employment). An asynchronous timeline allows us to quickly see which alumni were students at the same time and who might have connections to each other. These relationships have been used to further the conversation around various ways to engage minority alumni. One way was the alumni event we hosted at a historic restaurant near several minority-serving institutions in Atlanta. Our goals were to highlight the benefits of choosing MIT, build relationships among attendees (ODGE representatives, MIT graduate alumni, prospective graduate students, and administrators from Atlanta colleges), provide an opportunity for students to meet MIT's Atlanta-based alumni, reconnect MIT alumni with ODGE, and update attendees' contact information.

GEM GRAD Lab

In September 2011, ODGE co-sponsored the GEM (National Consortium for Graduate Degrees for Minorities in Science and Engineering) GRAD (Getting Ready for Advanced Degrees) Lab, a one-day event that provides underrepresented students exposure to the benefits of the research enterprise. During the event's first two years, it was hosted by Boston University; Northeastern University hosted the lab in its third year, and this year MIT and Harvard hosted it at the Broad Institute. Participants were able to hear from a range of speakers, including current graduate students, faculty, senior industry managers, and senior academic administrators. Dean Ortiz welcomed the 2011 group of 90 attendees. Sessions included presentations on topics that ranged from being successful in graduate school to understanding the fellowship application process.

Participating in the National Conversation

In addition to the above-mentioned MSRP presentation at NCORE, ODGE participated in the local and national conversation through the following presentations by Dean Ortiz: "How to Succeed in Graduate School" (GEM 35th Annual Anniversary Conference and Gala and Professional Development Workshop for Underrepresented Minority Masters and Doctoral Engineering Students and Their Faculty/Staff Advisors), "Effective Strategies for Increasing Diversity" (Annual Materials Research Society Meeting, University Materials Council), and "Diversity, Technology and the Modern Research University" (annual meetings of the Council for Graduate Schools and the NSF Integrative Graduate Education and Research Traineeship Program).

Theme Five: Holistic Graduate Student Experience

Personal support, access to resources, work-life balance, and community are increasingly important to the academic, professional, and personal success of our graduate students. Furthermore, in addition to creating original knowledge at the frontiers of the field, today's graduate students also need the ability to recognize what this new knowledge means in a broader context, and they must possess a more extensive skill set to act on it for the benefit of humanity. Therefore, professional and personal development is needed to prepare graduate students for a range of career paths.

As a direct result of the work of the GSC and its partners, the graduate student career fair was the largest in MIT's history. Also, fall graduate orientation enabled greater interest and student participation, graduate student research policies moved forward through the GSC's advising initiative, student safety in the northwest corridor was improved, the cost of living increase proposal resulted in the largest student stipend increase in our history, and the GSC's signature event portfolio significantly expanded into community service, art, and cultural events. In addition, long-term initiatives were developed, including the GSC Task Force on Graduate Student Community Space.

Orientation and Mentorship

The 2011 fall graduate orientation program was one of the most successful to date, with more than 50 events planned in a one-month period, most within the first week of the arrival of new students. The schedule was slightly consolidated from past years, and a greater emphasis was placed on the quality of the events held and the overall cohesion

of a large event program. As a result, the GSC saw a significant increase in the demand for events. The GSC orientation events provided venues for social interaction and education on resources within the MIT community and were critical in helping students during their first few weeks at the Institute.

The GSC continued and expanded its successful mentorship programs, in which senior graduate students volunteer to mentor incoming students to assist them in adjusting to MIT. The international student mentorship program benefited more than 150 incoming graduate students.

In addition, the GSC continued its India pre-orientation program in collaboration with the Rai Foundation and had the largest number of students participating since the program's inception, more than doubling the number of students from last year.

MIT is legally mandated to provide immigration information to all new students and to verify that they are in appropriate legal status. Required orientation programming for all incoming foreign national students ensures that we fulfill this important statutory responsibility on behalf of the Institute. In collaboration with the Office of the Registrar and the MIT Card Office, incoming students are permitted to register and receive an MIT ID only after they have attended an ISO orientation. To accommodate graduate internationals who arrive at the Institute throughout the summer, ISO held daily immigration sessions in August 2011 so that students could more quickly participate in MIT community life upon their arrival. After participating in international orientation, graduate internationals join their domestic colleagues in the robust graduate orientation activities sponsored by the GSC.

Both the ISO and GSC orientations are important opportunities to establish a welcoming, supportive climate for our international graduate students from the moment they arrive at the Institute.

ISO is solely responsible for international freshman orientation. While only 10% of the undergraduates at MIT in AY2012 were international, they required ISO advice and services at a disproportionate rate compared to their graduate counterparts. ISO, together with DUE, explored ways in which freshman orientation becomes a springboard to supporting the Institute goal of keeping our international undergraduate population apprised of critical resources on campus throughout their studies at MIT. In AY2013, ISO will begin expanded collaboration with DUE's Office of Undergraduate Advising and Academic Programming so that international freshman orientation and general freshman orientation welcome, inform, and support our international undergraduate population prior to their matriculation at the Institute, focusing specifically on the many campus resources available to support them during their tenure at MIT. Dean Ortiz has provided funding for this purpose, beginning in AY2013.

Personal Support and Advising

ODGE continued to expand its efforts in the area of personal support for graduate and professional students. In the past year, we have added another staff member to advise and support students as well as manage critical student situations; we have played a role

in a number of committees, including the Committee on Discipline and the Chancellor's Committee for Student Support Issues; and we have established a course for future enhancements. The addition of Jason McKnight to the staff as the assistant dean for graduate student support and advising has allowed for quicker responses to inquiries and student and department needs and an overall increase in the level of support that can be provided. Furthermore, it has provided the senior associate dean with more opportunities for engagement on important committees and with other Institute offices, such as the Office of the General Counsel, that are essential to the work of ODGE. The senior associate dean was also able to begin a review of policies and procedures sorely in need of rethinking and revision.

The increase in student support can be seen in the presence of ODGE on the Risk Council, ODGE's facilitation of the chancellor's subcommittee on graduate student isolation, and the office's involvement in the execution of Title IX guidelines and the audit around reporting procedures being coordinated by the Violence Prevention and Response team of Community Wellness at MIT Medical. ODGE was able to engage in these opportunities while simultaneously continuing its other work as a result of the new staff addition. ODGE's involvement has allowed for enhancements in student support both within and outside the department.

Together, the senior associate dean and the assistant dean were able to respond to more than 500 requests for appointments and were able to serve hundreds more via email or phone. Additionally, faculty and administrators benefited greatly from the increased accessibility to support at critical junctures and in cases of student emergencies. Also, face-to-face meetings with faculty and department administrators were easier to arrange.

In the upcoming year, ODGE hopes to further its efforts through a variety of initiatives. One such initiative is strategic infrastructure changes such as the creation of a student information database. The database will be utilized to track and better serve students who use ODGE services. Another initiative being piloted is resource meetings with academic departments. This past year ODGE, in partnership with Mental Health and Counseling and Student Support Services, held a meeting with faculty and staff of the Department of Chemical Engineering in which resources and processes for student support were discussed. These initiatives and others will be highlighted in next year's report.

Student advising is at the core of ISO's responsibility to MIT's international students and their accompanying dependents. ISO is the only office on campus with immigration expertise in student regulations. On behalf of MIT, ISO has legal responsibility, and therefore immigration advising responsibility, for most of our international students and their dependents for as long as three years after graduation. The majority of ISO staff time, therefore, is spent on this critical function. In addition to immigration advising and assistance, ISO advisors have as many as eight appointments per day with students who seek advice about personal issues such as cultural adjustment, academic concerns,

worries about family issues, and political tensions in their home countries. Any personal issue affecting academic status and life in the United States has immigration ramifications for our students and their accompanying dependents. ISO provides them with a safe, comforting, and culturally sensitive resource. Because interaction with ISO begins long before international students' actual arrival in the United States and at MIT, ISO is well known to them and very often one of the first offices they come to with personal concerns. ISO remains well poised in this regard to refer students to the many other critical advising and counseling resources across the campus.

Graduate Student Life Grants

The Graduate Student Life Grants program is a request-for-proposal process that invites graduate students and others in the MIT community to submit creative ideas for funding. The key criterion is that each proposal offer concrete ideas for enhancing the community life of graduate students. The grants are one of the few sources on campus that will fund the proposal of an individual rather than requiring affiliation with a student group or department. While most projects run one to two years, seven proposals have earned some level of ongoing funding, and eight others have become an ongoing part of the Institute through other funding sources.

Of the 15 proposals submitted in AY2012, 12 new initiatives were funded. Projects were framed to encourage an artistic expression of science, to explore the developing environment of urban China, and to lure students out of their labs and away from their computers for social time, addressing the perennial issue of socialization within and across departments. Since the program's inception in 2002, 168 unique projects have been supported. The [Graduate Student Life Grants website](#) offers more detail on the funding process, as well as on project descriptions.

Graduate Community Fellows

Graduate community fellows work on projects and assignments that enhance the graduate community in unique ways. Each fellow reports to a staff member in ODGE or in a partner organization and focuses on a specific project. The typical appointment period is the nine-month academic year, and fellows work an average of 10 hours each week in return for a monthly stipend. This year the program added three new positions (Addir Interfaith Program fellow, Blacks at MIT History Project fellow, GSC communications fellow), bringing the total to 18 fellows.

Fellows continued to conduct vital work for ODGE in the areas of programs for women, including the Path of Professorship workshop and assembling a guide for healthful eating; diversity initiatives such as the Graduate School Clinic, building stronger connections with MSRP and CONVERGE alumni, and developing networks of minority alumni; the Graduate Student Life Grants program; programs for international students; highlighting graduate student accomplishments; and graduate student orientation. More details are available at the [Graduate Community Fellows program website](#).

Support for Graduate Women

Path of Professorship

Since it was first offered in 2005, Path of Professorship (PoP), a one-and-a-half day workshop that provides insider information, tools, and encouragement to advanced graduate and postdoctoral women who aspire to academic careers, has served close to 400 future faculty women. In fact, our preliminary research indicates that more than 40 former workshop participants are currently tenure track faculty, with several more in positions as instructors, lecturers, or faculty scientists in university settings. Also, it is noteworthy that 2011 was the first year that two faculty presenters had been PoP participants as graduate students.

This year's event was held in October at the Bartos Theater and the Faculty Club, where 62 graduate and postdoctoral women came together to benefit from the experience, wisdom, and accumulated knowledge and advice of 25 women faculty and one professional trainer in the area of effective presentation strategies.

The faculty presenters represented diverse institutions including MIT, Harvard, Wellesley, Boston University, Brown, Olin, the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Cornell, Northeastern, and Tufts. The participants were equally as diverse, representing various academic departments primarily in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Due to the popularity of the workshop, participants were required to apply and were selected on the basis of time until beginning a job search and responses to several short essay questions.

The topics covered included types of institutions, building networks for success and support, balancing work and other areas of life, and applying, interviewing, and securing funding. Each topic generated considerable discussion and questions, with some participants acknowledging that they were not aware of the broad range of institutions they could consider. Some said they were encouraged to hear how women faculty manage to find time to “have it all” — personal and professional joy — while others enjoyed the conversations with their peers as they reflected on what they heard over the course of the workshop and shared their own hopes and fears. The participants' sentiments are expressed in the following feedback:

Incredibly useful and resourceful. I really appreciated the sheer number of panelists communicating on sensitive subjects.

These sessions were great for me as I'm starting to think about applying. Great women and great role models.

Also, a member of the PoP planning team who had just graduated said, “I have had a great experience at MIT, and the Path of Professorship was an important part of it. Not only did I get a lot out of the PoP professionally, but I am thankful to have been a part of a wonderful team of women.”

Graduate Women's Group

Throughout the academic year, approximately 50 women attended the monthly Graduate Women's Group lunch gatherings held in the Cheney Room. These gatherings were an opportunity for graduate women across departments to convene and share experiences, serve as thinking partners for one another, and simply relax in a safe and comfortable environment. The events were cohosted by Alicia Erwin of the Student Activities Office, Zan Barry of Community Wellness at MIT Medical, and ODGE senior associate dean Blanche Staton.

At some of the lunch gatherings, speakers, both staff and students, addressed topics ranging from healthy eating and sleeping to stress management and accessing MIT resources. In addition, the gatherings have often been a place where students have reached out to their administrative hosts for advice and support.

Graduate Women's Reading Group

A small but devoted group of 22 women graduate students convened throughout the year (including summer) to discuss books and build community. The group has consistently been a source of support for its members, providing a refuge from the intensity of academic and research life and catalyzing friendships among like-minded women. The students read one book per month, and books are ordered and paid for by ODGE. When asked to articulate the value of the group, the group's student leader submitted the following statement on behalf of the participants:

The reading group allows them to meet students from other departments. Some students enjoy the opportunity to have readings and meetings that aren't related to work, which provides balance. Others [like] that the group allows them to pick up books...that they never would have otherwise seen. Others [relish] the opportunity to talk about something [they] have read. A lot of people then share the books with friends or their spouses.

Professional Development

Task Force on Graduate Student Professional Development

Today's graduates are in need of an increasingly sophisticated skill set including, for example, oral and written communication, cross-disciplinary collaboration and the ability to work in diverse teams, global and cultural awareness, knowledge filtering and assessment, teaching, critical thinking, open-ended problem solving, leadership and project management, and contextual appreciation. MIT offers a range of outstanding professional development opportunities that are distributed across the Institute and sponsored by various student support offices, student groups and clubs, schools, and departments. These events and activities are highly popular and effective, and often the demand greatly exceeds the capacity. The results of the MIT [2011 Enrolled Graduate Student Survey](#) indicated that there is room for growth in many areas of professional development. In response, the dean for graduate education assembled the [Task Force on Graduate Student Professional Development](#), which had the following charge:

- To collect, review, and summarize desirable skill sets, both discipline specific and transferable, for MIT graduates in various disciplines and employment sectors (through alumni surveys, focus groups, current literature, etc.) and to identify core competency areas
- To map current MIT professional development offerings to the identified skill sets and core competency areas
- To identify best practices within and outside of MIT in the area of professional development
- To provide recommendations for formulating a comprehensive, coherent set of offerings by, for example, building on best practices, exploring synergies, addressing gap areas, and allowing for a balance between discipline-specific and transferable activities
- To propose options for supporting and collaborating with graduate programs and connecting professional development activities to curricula
- To report on potential opportunities to leverage online platforms to provide professional development content and enhance in-person professional development activities

The task force began its work in February 2012 and will report to the dean at the end of the calendar year.

Support for Individual Students

ODGE has proactively sought to provide high-quality professional development activities for graduate students, including targeted support for local events such as the GWAMIT (Graduate Women at MIT) Leadership Conference and the MIT-China Innovation and Entrepreneurship Forum. Support was also provided for prestigious international conferences and workshops including the 61st Annual Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting in Germany (attended by three students), the MIT-Imperial Global Fellows Program transferable skills conference (held at MIT and Imperial College London) (20 students), the LERU Summer Doctoral School (Barcelona, Spain) transferable skills conference (one student), and the National Research Foundation of Singapore international summit (five students).

Graduate Student Council Programs

The academic and professional development work of the GSC continues to experience rapid growth. Similar to other areas of the GSC, programs were refocused to ensure that the portfolio of events and advocacy properly fulfilled the council's mission. In the area of academic policy, the GSC's advising initiative continued to consolidate and build upon the success of prior years. Recommendations on advising policies continued to be made to departments. The GSC worked with departments in determining their standard timelines for graduate students to choose advisors, since timelines vary by department. Also, first-year students were provided with information from the advising initiative to improve their relationships with their advisors.

The GSC added a women's mentoring program and held two flagship events targeted toward women: a fall leadership conference and a spring empowerment conference. Furthermore, general leadership development activities were conducted, with various Institute-wide speakers and mentoring of students through leadership self-assessment workshops.

The 2011 MIT Career Fair, organized jointly with the Class of 2011 and the Society of Women Engineers, was a tremendous success. With over 300 companies and more than 5,000 students attending, the fair was the largest student-run event on campus and one of the largest career fairs in the country. The employer-to-student ratio of the fair is approximately five times higher than that at the career fairs of MIT's peer institutions such as Harvard and Yale, a testament to the student-run model.

The GSC travel grant process was redeveloped and streamlined to provide for a more fair assessment metric. The travel grant continues to act as a financial safety net, enabling dozens of students to present their work at academic conferences when departments cannot meet these needs.

PRO-DEPOT

A user interface was launched in February 2012 to give students 24/7 access to the Professional Development Video Portal (PRO-DEPOT), the comprehensive video library of professional and personal development content we began to build last year. PRO-DEPOT dynamically sorts videos into the following categories: Balance & Resilience, Collaboration, Communication, Entrepreneurship, Ethics & Integrity, Inspiration, Leadership, and Your Career Path. The body of content continues to grow, and the categories will be modified according to the work of the Task Force on Professional Development.

Global Fellows Summer Program

In May 2012, ODGE and the dean for undergraduate education cosponsored the second MIT-Imperial Global Fellows Program conference an intensive four-day workshop focusing on introducing students to the importance and development of transferable skills. The workshop consists of three major programmatic elements:

- A series of interdispersed practical lectures that offer a framework for transferable skills, including relevant research in areas such as cognitive learning and contexts for how skill sets relate to each student's particular field and work.
- Small-group collaborative exercises and experiential activities in which the concepts learned in the lecture component are used to reinforce skills and "add experience and coherence." For example, students form groups of three to five members to develop interdisciplinary research proposals and posters that draw on each member's expertise and interests.

- Feedback and reflection, with time set aside each day for students to process and discuss what they have learned. Students give each other feedback on their communication and leadership styles, allowing for a better understanding of how students fit into the group, relate to their peers, and make themselves understood.

The program accepted 20 PhD students from Imperial College London and 20 from MIT; the workshop was hosted in London. Participants developed the professional skills required to launch and manage a successful research career, with an emphasis on creating and sustaining successful international research collaborations.

International Programs

Kailath

The Kailath International Student Fund, established in 2002 by a generous endowment from professor George Verghese and Dr. Ann Kailath, provides support for specialized ISO programming that would not otherwise be possible. In AY2012, Kailath funds supported, among other events, on-campus presentations from Social Security Administration representatives and local immigration attorneys tailored to the needs of the international student population. The fund also sponsored the now traditional three-week “ISO Haven” in December, which provides food and a place for international students to take a break from end-of-term projects and exams.

International Freshman Mentor Program

This program, currently in its 14th year, has become a mainstay of freshman orientation. The program matches incoming international freshmen with international upperclassmen long before their arrival in the United States. Strong bonds develop between student and mentor, beginning with email correspondence while the student is still at home and continuing to airport pick-up and yearlong mentor-organized activities. The mentor program is now staffed and organized entirely by volunteer students, who bring tremendous enthusiasm and creativity to the program.

Host to International Students Program

The Host to International Students Program has remained vital in providing new students with supportive emotional and social ties to MIT community members and their families. More than 200 students and community members participated in AY2012. With limited resources in terms of both funding and staff time, the program currently is available only to international undergraduate students. ISO hopes to offer this invaluable program to incoming international graduate students in the future when resources become available.

Jeanty International Teas

In AY2012 ISO, with continued funding sponsorship from Roger Jeanty '72, was able to offer two teas, one celebrating Halloween in October and one celebrating spring in May. More than 175 students and staff attended each of these enormously popular events, which promote conviviality and community across the many cultures represented at the Institute. Our goal is to invite more domestic students to the teas in the future.

Graduate Student Community Space

As a result of concern among graduate students regarding the spaces available to them, the ongoing work of the Walker Memorial Assessment Team, and the desire for a stronger graduate community, the Graduate Student Council established the GSC Task Force on Graduate Student Community Space, an ad hoc committee whose goals were to:

- Gain a better understanding of the current state of graduate student space at MIT, both quantitatively and qualitatively
- Explore what other institutions are doing to provide effective student spaces
- Create a coherent vision of an ideal future for MIT in terms of student space
- Provide data and lessons learned to the Committee for the Review of Space Planning, the Task Force on Teaching and Learning Spaces, and other space-related entities across the Institute
- Advocate for interventions that enhance the quality and quantity of student space across MIT

The task force was focused on realms beyond the formal laboratories or offices in which students interact, study, and satisfy their academic needs. These are the highly important but often neglected territories in which ideas are born and bodies and minds recharged. They range from quiet nooks with a handful of desks to large halls for major events.

The task force gathered information through a series of forums and focus groups with students and the broader community, collected data from visits to community spaces at peer institutions, and remained informed on Institute plans via conversations with the Office of the Executive Vice President, the Office of the Provost, the city of Cambridge, and the Faculty Policy Committee.

The task force established an understanding of the problems and concerns with the community spaces on campus and described the need to address the quality and quantity of spaces to a number of MIT deans and administrators. The task force was envisioned as a vehicle to begin conversations around the idea that such spaces could and should be planned through collaborations among administrators, faculty, and students.

Housing, Safety, and Transportation

As the [MIT 2030](#) project developed plans this year for Kendall Square, the GSC played an advocacy role to ensure a voice for graduate student concerns, in particular the impact on housing in the area. In the coming year, the GSC expects significant and sustained outreach from MIT leadership to ensure that student voices are heard and needs are considered collaboratively.

Safety has remained a pivotal issue within the graduate student community, given that many students walk home (off campus) late and alone. This year, the GSC led a major study to design, optimize, and propose a new shuttle line to the Parking and Transportation Committee. The council conducted a data-driven analysis to quantify the quality of current MIT shuttle lines and modeled off-campus populations to determine a new shuttle line that would maximize the service to off-campus students. Also, the council leveraged residential data to optimize the coverage of the shuttle line so that it can best serve the graduate community. This optimized line has the potential to substantially increase service and safety levels for off-campus graduate students whose needs are not met by current transportation options.

Mapping residential data indeed showed that current shuttle lines do not serve part of the off-campus community and that there is a substantial service gap in current transportation options (including MBTA). The proposed shuttle line was shown to be less costly on average than existing lines, and, most important, it was shown to provide high levels of service to the off-campus graduate community. More generally, the GSC has developed an innovative quantitative approach to optimize shuttle lines to best serve graduate students.

Additionally, the GSC successfully advocated for safety improvements within the northwest corridor, including completion of the railway crossing, addition of lights along Albany Street, and the designation of a police officer for this area.

GSC Student Activities

The GSC's student life and activities included orientation, social events throughout the year, and advocacy on topics critical to graduate student needs. Student social activities were reprioritized and diversified, and strategic new events have been created. The student life advocacy topics of the GSC significantly expanded in the 2011–2012 year.

The GSC funding board awarded approximately \$130,000 to over a hundred student groups in the past academic year. Hundreds of events were made possible because of this funding, with an emphasis on on-campus events and clubs that promote interdisciplinary interactions.

Other core GSC activities encouraging work-life balance included the council's annual ski trip, during which approximately 600 students enjoyed an Independent Activities Period (IAP) weekend at Sunday River in Maine; the annual 600-student Grad Gala, which sold out for the fifth year in a row; and various other sports and off-campus leisure activities. In addition, outreach opportunities were expanded through grants made available by the GSC for graduate students and through programming work with Massachusetts middle schools. Also, cultural and arts events were expanded to include art and gallery events at MIT and beyond. Finally, the GSC's off-campus efforts, made possible by funding from ODGE, grew significantly to include more than 30 small-scale events held around the Boston, Brookline, Cambridge, and Somerville regions. This represented a 300% increase in activity over previous years.

The Muddy Charles Pub is a focal point and meeting place for many graduate students, and this year the pub continued its cultural Muddy Mondays series, offering food and drink from around the world in partnership with student groups from the featured country. Also, recent renovations have given the beloved pub a new and improved look.

ODGE Support for Student Group Activities

ODGE is pleased to contribute financial support for many student group activities. Substantial annual funding is provided annually to ARCADE (Assisting Recurring Cultural and Diversity Events), which in turn funds many individual events, and to the Sidney-Pacific/Ashdown brunch series, where the officers of both residences supply a robust yet cost-friendly brunch to on- and off-campus graduate students on Sundays, building community over pancakes. Other annual funding supports the TechLink Orientation Dinner, Jazzlink, and a minority student graduate luncheon. Additional support this year went to an African Students Association fall retreat, an awards banquet for the Arab Student Organization, the Persian Students Association and the drumming group Rambax, a science writing IAP project, and Club Sports, which provides a strong organization for graduate student participation in organized athletics.

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