

Institute Community and Equity Officer

The [Institute Community and Equity Officer](#) (ICEO) was established in July 2014, with the appointment of Professor Edmund Bertschinger. The new position replaced the previous dual position of associate provosts for faculty equity. It is intended to help MIT to make practical progress on the subjects of community, equity, inclusion and diversity, for the entire MIT community including faculty, students, postdoctoral researchers, and staff on campus and at MIT Lincoln Laboratory. The ICEO reports to the provost.

Matters of equity, diversity, and inclusion at MIT are distributed across many offices, including the Human Resources Department, the Division of Student Life, the offices of the Deans for Undergraduate and Graduate Education, the Ombuds Office, the undergraduate and graduate student governments, and the Postdoctoral Association. The ICEO serves as a thought leader and supporter of these distributed efforts, a focal point for organizing MIT-wide activities, and a hands-on practitioner who disseminates and supports the implementation of best practices.

The ICEO continues three activities previously undertaken by the associate provosts for faculty equity:

- Administering the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Visiting Professors and Scholars Program
- Participating as equity officer in faculty annual salary review
- Representing MIT in the MIT-9 group of vice provosts for faculty equity

The ICEO consolidated the budget and oversight of several activities spread across the offices of the provost and president: the Martin Luther King, Jr. breakfast celebration, the MLK Leadership Awards, and funding for and reporting of the Committee on Race and Diversity.

The appointment of the ICEO came with the charge to develop and lead a strategic planning process engaging the entire MIT community, leading to a mission statement reflecting two objectives: deepening the sense of inclusion based on MIT's shared values, and helping all members of the MIT community to appreciate and leverage their diversity of experiences and backgrounds. The plan should also articulate a set of achievable goals and the means for assessing progress toward these goals. The ICEO spent much of the first year meeting with community members to gather ideas for a report and a strategic plan responding to this charge.

As a result of the ICEO listening tour and an all-campus notice about MIT's harassment policies and complaint-handling procedures, concerns about departmental climate and abrasive conduct were heard from several groups. The ICEO advised several department heads, deans and other senior administrators on how best to address the challenges.

The MLK Visiting Professors and Scholars this year were:

- Professor Modupe Akinola (Columbia University), hosted by the Sloan School of Management
- Professor Erika Camacho and Professor Steven Wirkus (both from Arizona State University), hosted by the Department of Mathematics
- Dr. Sophia Inunza Cisneros and Dr. Chanda Prescod-Weinstein, hosted by the Department of Physics
- Ta-Nehisi Coates, hosted by the Comparative Media Studies/Writing Section
- Dr. Karilyn Crockett, hosted by the Department of Urban Studies and Planning
- Professor Julio D'Arcy (Washington University), hosted by the Department of Chemistry
- Miloon Kothari, hosted by the Department of Urban Studies and Planning
- Professor Jason Sello (Brown University), hosted by the Biology Department
- Professor Christopher Rose (Rutgers University), hosted by the Department of Aeronautics and Astronautics

Each visiting professor or scholar gave a public presentation and built a lively community around their presence on campus. Ta-Nehisi Coates gave a public reading of the opening chapter of his book under preparation, *Between the World and Me..*

In addition, during FY2014 the ICEO undertook the following activities:

- Met with student survivors of sexual assault and participated in the MIT Title IX Working Group
- Advised the Human Resources Department in the creation of educational materials on presenting sexual harassment to be given to all new employees
- Organized an orientation event for new academic department heads
- Trained School of Engineering search committee chairs on unconscious bias
- Served as executive sponsor of the African, Black, American and Caribbean Employee Resource Group
- Served as a cluster facilitator in MIT LeaderShape, an undergraduate leadership development weeklong program that took place in January 2014
- Spoke at the Institute Diversity Summit in January 2014
- Participated in numerous conferences and retreats on diversity, equity, and inclusion at MIT and nationally
- Served as co-chair of the Committee on Race and Diversity and as a member of the Office of Minority Education Faculty Advisory Committee

Edmund Bertschinger
Institute Community and Equity Officer
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