

Chancellor

The scope of the Office of the Chancellor is captured by the phrase “all things students.” The Office has oversight responsibility for graduate and undergraduate education, student life, student activities, and student services. In short, the chancellor is responsible for ensuring that all MIT students have access to the resources, opportunities, and support they need to thrive as part of MIT’s learning community. In recent years, the purview of the Office of the Chancellor has expanded to include oversight of MIT’s ventures into digital learning. The Office of Digital Learning (ODL), established in fall 2012, reports jointly to the chancellor and the provost. The chancellor, together with the provost, advises the president and participates in strategic planning, faculty appointments, resource development, and the stewardship of Institute resources and facilities.

Former chancellor W. Eric Grimson welcomed students at the start of the 2013–2014 academic year and continued to work on previous years’ initiatives in student leadership development. In late October, Grimson was appointed to the new position of chancellor for academic advancement. Chancellor Cynthia Barnhart took office in February 2014, becoming the first woman in MIT history to hold the post. Chancellor Barnhart spent much of the spring engaged in a listening tour, including meetings with student groups, living groups, activity groups, faculty, staff, alumni, and others, to gain a broad perspective on student needs and to identify opportunities for enhancing student life and education in the coming years.

The MIT Student Body

During the 2013–2014 academic year, MIT had a total of 11,301 students. They came from every US state and territory and from 114 foreign countries. The 6,773 graduate students included 2,796 (41%) international students, with the most heavily represented countries being China, India, Canada, Korea, and Singapore. Approximately 8% of all graduate students (13% of US students) identified with a racial or ethnic group that was underrepresented at MIT. Women made up 31% of the graduate student population. Approximately one-third of MIT graduate students lived on campus.

Of the 4,528 undergraduate students, 10% were international students and 45% were women. (With women making up 48% of the freshman class entering in fall 2014, the largest female student representation in MIT history, the Institute’s undergraduate population is approaching gender parity.) Ten percent of undergraduates are international students, representing 60 foreign countries. Members of underrepresented minorities make up 24% of undergraduates; 16% will be the first in their family to complete a four-year college degree. Ninety-three percent of undergraduates lived in campus residence halls or in fraternities, sororities, or independent living groups (FSILGs).

Activities and Initiatives Within the Chancellor’s Office

The bulk of the activities of the Office of the Chancellor occur within the units led by the dean for graduate education, the dean for undergraduate education, the dean for student life, and the director of digital learning (summarized below and detailed in separate reports). During the past year, the Chancellor’s Office was directly engaged in the following broad-reaching initiatives involving all MIT students.

Building a Dialogue with MIT Students

To gain a better understanding of the issues facing MIT students, Chancellor Barnhart directly engaged with student communities across campus. In visits to residences, FSILGs, and dining halls, the chancellor began a dialogue that is fundamental to her approach of working together to understand challenges and define solutions that incorporate and address multiple points of view. In her first months in office, Chancellor Barnhart talked with hundreds of students who helped broaden her understanding and appreciation for the wonders and challenges of MIT student life. There is much work to be done, and the chancellor intends to fully exploit the famous problem-solving talents of MIT students to effect positive changes for the Institute.

Sexual Assault Prevention

When Chancellor Barnhart was appointed, President Reif charged her with understanding and addressing the issue of sexual assault and misconduct at MIT. This issue was a major focus of the chancellor's listening tour and remains at the top of her agenda. On the basis of input from students, faculty, and staff, the chancellor has begun to address community needs through improved education and outreach. Beginning this year, entering first-year undergraduates and graduate students were required to complete a new, expanded online training course that covers sexual harassment, assault, interpersonal violence and stalking, and the relevant campus policies, procedures, and resources. In addition, the existing freshman orientation program on sexual assault prevention was enhanced with a new, interactive version that explores questions around consent, communication, healthy sexuality, and bystander intervention. The chancellor has also encouraged student living groups, social groups, and sports teams to develop their own prevention initiatives. One such initiative is the Interfraternity Council's enhancement of its "Party Safe" workshop to include sexual assault bystander intervention and response training.

The Chancellor's Office also sponsored an online survey of undergraduate and graduate students, as well as recent alumni, to collect baseline data about the prevalence of sexual assault, attitudes toward it, and challenges to progress. More than 35% of students responded to the survey, which was conducted in April and May 2014. Analysis of the survey data was completed over the summer and a report is due out in early fall. The survey findings are expected to inform the chancellor's goals and priorities and will likely form the basis for productive community discussions of this important issue.

Enhancements to Student Life and Learning

In March 2013, Chancellor Grimson sponsored a student quality of life survey that gathered extensive information about students' perceptions of a wide range of services and activities. Those findings have begun to inform planning for enhancements to student life and learning. They also serve as a starting point for considering student needs and interests as the chancellor explores opportunities suggested by the report of the Institute-Wide Task Force on the Future of MIT Education. Working with students to develop a bold vision for the future of residential life and learning at MIT will be a focal point for the Chancellor's Office in the year ahead.

Office of the Dean for Student Life

In his seventh year as head of the Office of the Dean for Student Life (DSL), dean Chris Columbo welcomed the biennial Visiting Committee of the MIT Corporation. Visiting Committee sessions focused on the sources and effects of student stress and on the future of the FSILG community, including membership trends, facility conditions, and student behavioral issues. The Visiting Committee's final report recommended that "fundamental analyses of standards and rules pertaining to student behavior, self-governance and housing should be undertaken with the ultimate goal of forming an appropriate and consistent environment for MIT students."

The Visiting Committee's recommendation was especially timely, given the series of recent challenges and opportunities in the undergraduate housing system. These included issues of residential culture and governance as well as pressure on the availability of student beds. In October 2013, DSL and the MIT Department of Facilities recommended the demolition of Bexley Hall, the undergraduate residence that had closed in May for what was initially expected to be a multiyear renovation project. Additional inspections and evaluations found a degree of structural damage that would make renovation of the century-old building financially impractical. The loss of an undergraduate residence hall has forced the Institute to limit the number of entering freshmen. The class of 2018 is made up of 1,044 students, down from 1,135 in the class of 2016.

DSL accommodated all students displaced by the closure of Bexley Hall in other residence halls or FSILGs, but renewed pressure on the housing system came with the two-year suspension of Delta Upsilon's MIT chapter by the international fraternity's board of directors in April. An internal fraternity investigation had found inappropriate behavior at unsanctioned events in violation of fraternity policies. MIT supported Delta Upsilon's decision to suspend the chapter and is accommodating former members of the MIT chapter in campus housing.

MIT's Boston-based FSILGs all felt the impact of restrictions imposed by the City of Boston in October that set assembly limits equal to occupancy limits, effectively banning social events at all Boston FSILGs. The restrictions came on the heels of a highly publicized accident at Phi Sigma Kappa in which an MIT student fell through a rooftop skylight (but escaped serious injury). Representatives from DSL and the Association of Independent Living Groups worked with Boston officials to review all facilities and update occupancy limits.

Over the course of the past year, more than 60 DSL staff members engaged with students and non-DSL partners across the Institute in a strategic planning process for DSL and the FSILG community. The process resulted in several proposed enhancements to DSL's operations and infrastructure, including a new online student portal, improved staff and student training across a wide variety of topics, development of new channels for communicating with MIT parents, and a special event to make staff more aware of best practices for working with MIT's diverse student population. DSL saw several other major initiatives completed in the past year, including important advances in the areas of student development and support, residential life and dining, athletics and recreation, and religious life. Notable projects, services, and events for DSL from the 2013–2014 academic year are included in the separate DSL report.

Office of the Dean for Undergraduate Education

The Office of the Dean for Undergraduate Education (DUE) began the academic year with a new dean at the helm. Professor Dennis Freeman (Electrical Engineering and Computer Science) became dean for undergraduate education on July 1, 2013. Dean Freeman took office at a momentous time for undergraduate education, with MIT expanding its presence in online education and the Institute-wide Task Force on the Future of MIT Education beginning its work. Four DUE representatives, including the dean, participated in the Task Force Working Group on Education and Facilities, which focused on the future of residential education at MIT. Dean Freeman described the potential of the technological advances in online education as “not only improved access to content, but also the development of entirely new modes of interaction for members of the MIT community.”

In his first year in office, Dean Freeman worked with the DUE leadership team and sought input from key stakeholders, including students and faculty, to review and establish priorities. The resulting student-centered priorities are focused on enhancing the educational experience of undergraduates, especially in the freshman year, and reducing barriers to students’ academic and personal success.

The closure of Building 12 provided an opportunity for DUE to reduce barriers between students and support services. DUE completed a comprehensive space planning process that resulted in the creation of a Building 5 student corridor. Important student services are located in close proximity in the corridor, making it easier for students to access these services. DUE initiatives created new opportunities for student–faculty engagement, including six faculty–freshman receptions that brought together 86 faculty advisors and 283 students. DUE’s Office of Undergraduate Advising and Academic Programming also made significant advances in implementing the May 2013 faculty resolution that every freshman have a faculty member available to serve as an advisor or mentor. The number of faculty volunteering as freshman advisors rose to 142 for the class of 2017, up from 83 faculty advisors for the previous year’s freshmen.

In May, the dean welcomed the DUE Visiting Committee of the MIT Corporation. The visit was an opportunity to gain insights into the new dean’s priorities and DUE’s role in implementing the recommendations of the Task Force on the Future of MIT Education. Visiting Committee discussion topics included enhancing the freshman-year experience through more hands-on learning and peer teaching, incorporating more contextual learning and modularity, creating more mentoring opportunities for students, managing student stress around grades, and incorporating closed feedback loops into the admissions selection process.

Each of DUE’s 10 offices contributed to improving the MIT student residential experience in the past year. Notable projects, services, and events from the 2013–2014 academic year are detailed in the separate DUE report.

Office of the Dean for Graduate Education

Over the past year, dean Christine Ortiz led the Office of the Dean for Graduate Education (ODGE) in making significant advances in each of the office’s five key

strategic areas: supporting educational innovation and excellence, competitiveness in graduate funding, administration and policy, diversity and climate, and the holistic graduate student experience. A few of the major initiatives are outlined below. Detailed descriptions of notable projects, services, and events from the 2013–2014 academic year are included in the separate ODGE report.

The Graduate Program Learning Outcomes Assessments project stands out among ODGE's major initiatives for the past year. In this, ODGE facilitated a year-long process through which each academic department and graduate program developed a plan for assessing the educational outcomes of graduate students. Together with the Office of Institutional Research and the DUE Teaching and Learning Laboratory, ODGE helped graduate programs to define clear learning objectives for their graduates, to identify or develop metrics for measuring success, and to create closed feedback loops for continuous improvement to degree programs. All departments and graduate programs submitted their learning assessment plans to ODGE in January 2014, and the plans have been posted on a wiki for graduate programs to access. As a result of the learning assessment process (detailed in the separate ODGE report), many departments have become more deliberate about best practices and strategic planning.

Another important initiative was the Institute-wide Working Group on International Student Support, convened and chaired by ODGE and comprises representatives from ODGE, DSL, DUE, MIT Medical, the Institutional Research section of the Office of the Provost, the faculty, and the student population. With international students making up nearly 30% of MIT's overall student body and 41% of graduate students, the working group focused on understanding the climate for international students, their evolving needs, the resources available to them, and best practices for creating a welcoming climate and ensuring cultural sensitivity. Based on an analysis of the 2013 Student Quality of Life Survey and peer-benchmarking, student focus groups and open forums, meetings with undergraduate and graduate administrators and with international student leaders, the group produced an extensive report that included nine specific recommendations, each with suggested pilot programs. See the separate ODGE report for more information.

This year marked the 10th anniversary of the 2004 faculty resolution that called on MIT to increase the percentage of graduate students from underrepresented minority groups by a factor of three within a decade. ODGE has made impressive gains toward that goal. Graduate applications from underrepresented minority students have more than doubled since 2014 and the number of minority graduate students enrolled at MIT has grown by 37%. ODGE supported departments' efforts to recruit the best minority students, with fellowships totaling \$2 million to 54 students from 20 departments and programs. In addition to fellowships, ODGE sponsors several programs (described in the ODGE report) that are designed to enhance graduate student diversity across the Institute.

The Committee on Graduate Admissions completed its oversight of a three-year transition process to a common online application platform for graduate admissions (GradApply). This year, 34 of the 37 MIT graduate programs, with a combined total of

15,692 applications, used GradApply. At the conclusion of this year's admission cycle, ODGE assumed management of the new application system and the coordination of admissions processes across graduate departments, a task previously handled by DUE's Office of Admissions.

Office of Digital Learning

During the past year, the Office of Digital Learning (ODL) conducted operations in its vital educational technology and support programs through *MITx*, OpenCourseWare (OCW), Office of Educational Innovation and Technology (OEIT), Academic Media Production Services (AMPS), and Distance Education units, while at the same time focusing on a broad organizational transition.

Under the direction of professor Sanjay Sarma, senior leadership, managers, and staff from all ODL units engaged in a strategic planning process that included a plan to restructure ODL operations into more streamlined and better-integrated units. Physical consolidation is already under way with the relocation of OCW and *MITx* to ODL headquarters at 11 Cambridge Center.

MITx launched 27 online courses that enrolled a total of 773,394 students in more than 190 countries. Students in 22 different massive open online courses (MOOCs) earned 29,601 edX certificates. Residential *MITx* continued to support the adoption of the edX platform for on-campus use by MIT faculty. By the end of the spring 2014 semester, 65% of enrolled MIT students had taken at least one class with a residential *MITx* component. *MITx* also collaborated with Institutional Research to coordinate research on the use and effectiveness of emerging digital technologies. The open sharing of data generated by *MITx* projects helps to stimulate research that will make the next generation of learning technologies even more innovative and effective.

OCW published new courses, logged record traffic, and generated more than \$250,000 in individual donations through online OCW fundraising campaigns this past year. OCW joined with *MITx*'s MOOC development to form a new Open Education unit. OEIT led ODL's collaboration with community colleges to develop curricula in areas such as advanced manufacturing and entrepreneurship and in online learning using edX and other MIT- and OEIT-developed technologies. AMPS, which had reported to the MIT Libraries, became a unit of ODL.

In June 2014, ODL was honored with a New England Emmy in the Outstanding Arts/Entertainment category for its production of *Awakening: Evoking the Arab Spring Through Music*, a performance documentary featuring the MIT Wind Ensemble. ODL also embarked on several other projects this year, including the redesign of the ODL website, opportunities to interact with students and faculty, and experiments with digital learning classes.

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