

MIT Careers Office

The mission of the MIT Careers Office (MITCO) is two-fold: (1) to support students' career preparation, helping them develop the self-understanding, skills, life experience and confidence to reach their goals and (2) to assist employers and graduate schools wishing to attract MIT students and alumni/ae. The Careers Office provides counseling, self-assessment, career workshops, panels and symposia, recruiting, pre-professional advising, PhD transition groups, internships and other experiential learning, and coaching in job search skills and strategies. These resources help students transition from university to professional life.

Overview

Office visits and workshop participation both rose in FY2004 for the fourth year in a row. Staff had 3,214 appointments in FY2004, up 2% from FY2003. Walk-ins, 1,182, increased by 8%, while counseling appointments, 1,891, decreased by 7%.

Undergraduates accounted for 63% of student visits and graduate students accounted for 37%. Of the 1,621 undergraduate visits, 404 were by freshmen, 414 by sophomores, 372 by juniors, and 431 by seniors. Of 972 graduate student visits, 554 were by masters, and 418 were by doctoral candidates. We had 105 visits by postdocs (+81%), 454 (+28%) by alumni, and 52 (+30%) by MIT employees and others. Graduate student participation in both workshop/special events (up 78% to 1,468) and office visits (up 9%) accounted for most of this year's increased usage.

MITCO's 2003–2004 on-campus recruiting activity increased by 7.7%, though job creation has been much slower than expected. There were 442 employers who recruited through MITCO. Like last year, employers had fewer job openings, smaller college recruiting programs, and tighter budgets. Some employers maintained hiring relationships with MIT by posting resumé drops followed by phone interviews for first-round interviews, and participating in initiatives that maintained their visibility, such as summer internship programs, career fairs, career panels, and MITCO events like Employer Resumé Critique Week. Through our online recruiting system, job candidates submitted 36,072 resúmes, resulting in 6,295 interviews. Fifty percent of 2003–2004 recruiters were finance, consulting, biotechnology, or biopharmaceutical companies; and 34 percent were software and high technology and engineering companies. Manufacturing and consumer products, government, and nonprofit organizations made up the rest.

Accomplishments during FY2004

We implemented a new organizational structure that created teams dedicated to graduate students, undergraduates (including Preprofessional Advising and Freshman/Alumni Summer Internship Programs [F/ASIP], which are predominantly aimed at undergraduates), and employer relations. The reorganization also established a Leadership Team and distributed leadership and counseling responsibilities and opportunities more broadly than in the past.

MITCO launched a database management project that lays the foundation for flexible and reliable reporting capability, integrated information systems, and a systematic approach to metrics. We hired a consultant to develop three types of databases that are easy to maintain: information for students (salary and employer information, etc.), information regarding the business infrastructure of MITCO (trends, referrals, workshop attendance, satisfaction, program/service usage, employer recruiting, etc), and demographics. Most of the database will be online by August.

We identified and implemented an approach to self-assessment, taking into account the needs of MIT students, staff training, funding, and other sustainability issues. The Careers Office uses a career development model with self-assessment as its foundation, but had no prescribed self-assessment approach, and used standard self-assessment tools infrequently in counseling appointments. After in-depth research, we have identified and implemented the The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® and Strong Interest Inventory® as our tools of choice.

We introduced a new fee structure for on-campus recruiting as a first step in revenue generation. During a two-year pilot period, we will determine what effects, if any, this has on employer access to MIT candidates and level of recruiting activity.

We increased response to the Graduating Student Survey by 71%, up from 54% in 2003 and 46% in 2002. To achieve this, we linked our survey with the Alumni Association's "You Made it" URL, enlisted academic administrators, and improved outreach to graduates. Among 2004 undergraduate respondents, 48% plan to work, 44% will attend graduate school, and 8% are undecided.

Through F/ASIP (SP.800/SP.801), we achieved a high success rate in preparing freshmen and helping them find internships. Eighty-eight students submitted F/ASIP applications in FY2004, the program's seventh year. Sixty-two (70%) attended all required seminars and completed the first half of the class (SP.800). Eighty-two percent of students who completed SP.800 found internships in their chosen field. Internships include research in Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program labs, at Harvard Medical School, and at the VA Medical Center, as well as industry experiences at Lucent Technologies, Microsoft, Morgan Stanley, Aventis Pharmaceuticals, and Schlumberger. Interns are in 14 states and abroad in Israel, Hong Kong, and the Netherlands.

Through early, heightened visibility at Campus Preview Weekend (CPW) and mailing collaboration with the Academic Resource Center (ARC), we enrolled 87 out of 100 anticipated members of the 2004–2005 F/ASIP class by July 2004. This is much earlier than in the past.

We provided support to 153 MIT applicants to medical school (up 19% from 2002), including 65 undergraduates, 6 graduate students, 71 alumni/ae, and 11 non-degree applicants. Acceptance rates were 82% for undergraduates, 83% for graduate students, and 66% for alumni/ae. The national acceptance rate for all applicants was 53%. The average GPA for accepted undergraduates was 3.70/4.0, and the average MCAT score

was 32.87. A total of 110 MIT candidates (18% of whom were seniors) applied to law school (up from 103 last year), and 81% were admitted.

We created and collaborated on new programs to help Prehealth applicants expand and explore graduate study and career options. These included an Underrepresented Minority Medical Professionals Panel (with the newly formed Minority Association of Prehealth Students), MD Alternatives (a panel of MIT alums, local professionals, and prehealth advisors who earned an MD but do not practice clinical care), an MD vs. MD-PhD vs. PhD panel, Introduction to Allopathy – The Unique Philosophy of Modern Western Medicine, and Teaching Doctors the Chemistry They Ought to Know.

We achieved a record level of graduate student participation and demonstrated our commitment to this population by creating a team dedicated to serving them. These efforts were embraced by graduate students and by the Dean for Graduate Students, who helped to fund our programs for the second year in a row. Program highlights included an Academic Careers Series co-sponsored with the Provost's Office and the Graduate Student Council (638 students attended), a Graduate Student Career Symposium (350 students attended), Opportunities Outside the Laboratory for PhDs series (400 attended), two special Independent Activities Period programs – Manager, Researcher or Professor and Research Careers in Industry – (200 students attended), and a talk by an MIT alum from IBM Watson (95 students attended).

The office raised the understanding of graduate student issues by creating a model of graduate student development and presenting it to faculty, students, and staff at MIT, and at national conferences.

We presented a workshop by Dr. Valerie Young on The Imposter Syndrome, a sense of intellectual fraudulence, perfectionism, and chronic self-doubt, which has surfaced strongly in career counseling sessions and small group interactions with students. This event drew 250 students, staff, and faculty.

We collaborated with Career Fair coordinators, student groups, and the Dean for Undergraduate Education on efforts to strengthen MIT Career Week, gain Institute recognition for this event, and set a policy for the future.

The office provided guidance and support to StartingBloc, a start-up venture whose mission is to prepare young leaders for social enterprise careers. With Sloan faculty and staff, and StartingBloc leadership, we developed program concept and marketing materials, leveraged MIT resources, and hosted a symposium, Globalization: Fair Versus Free Trade.

We expanded activities for freshmen, with an aim toward getting to know them early in their MIT career and educating them about our services. Our efforts included new Choice-of-Major workshops, heightened visibility at CPW, a spring Choice-of-Major fair, and Orientation, collaboration with ARC on the First Year at MIT website, and a self-assessment workshop (audience was 85 percent freshmen). Five MITCO staff served as freshmen advisors.

Lastly, we contributed to Institute initiatives. Deborah Liverman continued her participation on the Martin Luther King Breakfast Planning Committee. John Nonnamaker worked with an Institute-wide data team to design surveys of graduate students and alumni. Hannah Bernstein, John Nonnamaker, and Elizabeth Reed were members of the Dean for Graduate Students' Collaborative Network. Elizabeth Reed served on the Committee on Discipline and the Council on Family and Work. Marilyn Wilson worked with faculty and staff on the Environmental Education Initiative.

Staffing Changes

The past year brought four internal promotions, three departures, and two new staff members. Julie Cecil was promoted to assistant director of F/ASIP, Shonool Malik to associate director for undergraduates and preprofessional advising, Tamara Menghi to assistant director of preprofessional advising, and John Nonnamaker to manager of graduate student career development. Marilyn C. Wilson's title changed to senior career development counselor in recognition of increased counseling and freshman advising responsibilities. MITCO welcomed two new staff members. Malaika Silcott, who distinguished herself as a career assistant during the 2003–2004 academic year, was hired as a career development counselor, through the DUE Diversity Fellowship Program. Heather Bois Bruskin joined us as F/ASIP and preprofessional coordinator in June, coming from University of Virginia. Three staff members left for new locations. Mary Sullivan, former career development counselor, relocated to Maine in October. Alisa Tongg, assistant director of F/ASIP, moved to Shanghai in November. Jason Wall, assistant director of employer relations, left for California in April 2004. We have redefined the structure and role of the employer relations team, and are in the process of filling an associate-level position.

Elizabeth Reed
Director

More information about the MIT Careers Office can be found on the web at <http://web.mit.edu/career/www/>.