

Dean for Student Life

The Division of Student Life (DSL) at MIT showed remarkable progress in 2005–2006, both within the division, which is comprised of 14 departmental/divisional units, and throughout campus. This report highlights the achievements from units within DSL, including administration; Athletics, Physical Education, and Recreation (DAPER); Community Development and Substance Abuse (CDSA); Enterprise Services; Housing; Student Support Services (S³); Student Mediation and Community Standards; and Student Life Programs (SLP).

The academic year 2005–2006 brought collaborations throughout campus and among our division's staff. New partnerships were developed with students, and the connections between academic departments and student life were strengthened. Old lines blurred and long-established boundaries were crossed to allow for more positive and influential relationships among students, faculty, and administrators; stronger relationships with alumni; and broadening partnerships throughout the Institute.

These stronger relationships and collaborations have contributed to an enhanced sense of community, a more efficient use of resources, and an improved quality of life for the MIT community, particularly students. Collaborations continue to expand to academic departments, providing experiential education opportunities for our students. Of particular note this year is the new collaboration between the Public Service Center and the Department of Mechanical Engineering to develop a project-based freshman engineering class, 2.00B Solving Real Problems, which will teach design skills through service learning.

Student services have also been enhanced through cross-departmental collaborations. Student Support Services worked with MIT Medical, the Committee on Academic Performance, the Committee on Discipline, the Disabilities Services Office, attorneys for MIT, and faculty members to clarify issues relating to the whole student. Those collaborations allow comprehensive decision-making and enhanced overall case management on behalf of students in need.

One of the most notable occurrences this past year was the distinct increase in cross-cultural conversation and a heightened sense of community, even for historically underrepresented groups. For example, DSL helped strengthen the foundation for underrepresented student groups to support each other, which enhances MIT's overall sense of community. DSL added a new lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender (LBGT) coordinator role and one new graduate assistant each for the Latino Cultural Center, the Black Student Union, and LBGT issues. Also new this year is the Diversity Peer 2 Peer program and the Cross Cultural Communications Conference.

The Board of Chaplains expanded its interfaith work to include the Interfaith Student Council, Interfaith World AIDS Day, and the new Addir Fellows Program — all programs that promote conversations among students of Christian, Muslim, Jewish, and other faiths.

Two visiting committee reviews took place during the 2005–2006 academic year. DSL saw the completion of the third review from its visiting committee, and DAPER was reviewed for the 14th time. Both visiting committee reports were positive, reinforcing our sense of purpose and mission.

Endicott House celebrated its 50th anniversary of MIT stewardship this year. Events noting the occasion included a community block party at which Endicott House hosted the Weld and Endicott families (both former owners of the estate) and the printing of a book on the house's history, *A Home on Haven Street*. Endicott House was also recognized by the International Association of Conference Centers as the country's oldest university conference center.

An international conference for the Association of College and University Printers, hosted by MIT's Copy Technology Services, brought more than 180 guests to MIT and the Greater Boston area.

The Office of Student Conduct underwent a name change to become the Office of Student Mediation and Community Standards. The change reflects student and community needs and the expectations of the office.

Student Life Experience

Survey results from 2002 and 2004 showed a significant increase in satisfaction among undergraduate students in regard to their residential experience.

The Fraternity, Sorority and Independent Living Group (FSILG) staff sustained student satisfaction through active and ongoing consultations with 16 to 20 chapters. Topics included leadership development, membership development, officer training, and increased recruitment and retention options.



Technology lab pilot in Baker House.

Residential Life staff worked with students to enhance the undergraduate dorm residential experience. Efforts included leadership retreats, goal setting in Dormitory Council (DormCon), the Faculty Fellows Program, and a for-credit physical education pilot program in residence halls.

Housing and Information Services and Technology (IS&T) piloted a technology laboratory student collaborative project in NW30, Baker, MacGregor, and Burton-Connor. Students can use a shared interface and project work onto a screen to work collaboratively on academic projects.

The varsity sport health and vitality analysis process produced resources and used metrics to enable effective decision-making.

An online eligibility certification system for varsity athletic participation was developed and implemented to streamline work processes.

Campus Dining increased food options and variety and provided more community space for students through the addition of dinner service at Pritchett (to the benefit of 500 students at East Campus and Senior House), the new Pacific Street Café near Sydney-Pacific, and the transition to independent operators in Lobdell Food Court.

The office of Community Development and Substance Abuse significantly increased the scope and frequency of its programs to determine and improve their impact and efficacy as they relate to specific environmental features, student behaviors, and at-risk groups. Enhancements included the alcohol screening and brief intervention program, the MIT Party Safe training program, and the social marketing initiative of alcohol-free social events. The CDSA also focused and expanded its efforts to combat sexual violence through university consortia in the Boston area, advising the Student Committee of the Boston Area Campus Sexual Assault Coalition and coadvising and mentoring the student-led male college coalition EngageMEN. CDSA also coadvised the MIT men's XY Coalition against sexual violence coalition, and served on the Violence Against Women Act grant initiative sponsored by MIT Medical.

Health and Safety

Housing partnered with other MIT groups to address a variety of possible and actual emergencies. Response plans developed and implemented included:

- A campuswide emergency response preparedness template developed by MIT for its community. This plan's proof of concept was observed and cited as a best practice example by city, state, and federal representatives.
- An ongoing Emergency Operations Center team. Key representatives and responsibilities of this team have been identified and understood. Housing is an integral part of the team.
- The Institute's Emergency Operations Center model and concepts learned were put into action this year. Housing successfully responded to such major emergencies as the Westgate water main flood, the Westgate fire, and the Westgate water contamination.
- The Environmental Health and Safety Management System within DSL was implemented by DSL's Environmental Health and Safety office as part of its preparation for an external pilot audit in November 2005 and final audit in April 2006.



Volunteers prepare for the medicine distribution simulation in April.

Student Support Services provided support to approximately 1,000 undergraduates and 54 graduate students. The total

number of student meetings numbered approximately 3,000, up 12 percent from last year. The increased use of these services follows a national trend that shows rising numbers of students seeking treatment and support for complex personal and mental health issues.

S³ staff members participated in an MIT community response group formed when MIT received a federal grant through the Violence Against Women Act.

Security in the residence system was improved through upgraded card access and security systems and infrastructure renewal projects, i.e. fire alarm systems. This project was supported and funded by the director of campus security.

The Task Force on the Undergraduate Educational Commons reinforced that the physical education requirement should remain a part of the General Institute Requirements.

OpenCourseWare in physical education classes was launched, with subjects that include archery, physical education for mechanical engineering, tennis, weight training, fencing, and physical intelligence.

Leadership

MIT athletes received 11 All-America honors and two additional Academic All-America honors in the 2005–2006 seasons.

The office of Community Development and Substance Abuse and the Office of Student Mediation and Community Standards cultivated and fostered student leadership in a variety of ways, including through new rules and regulations for DormCon and the judicial committees and as a means of self-governance within living groups. Examples include the mentorship of the InterFraternity Council's judicial committee chair and expansion of the Student Mediation Program with a weeklong intensive training program for mediators held during Independent Activities Period.

The office of Community Development and Substance Abuse helped students make the transition from reactive to proactive leadership. CDSA coordinated and advised three student advisory committees to identify and address critical alcohol and drug issues through education, orientation, and intervention. Students were offered opportunities to lead in addressing alcohol issues on the MIT campus through the Campus Alcohol Advisory Board. Programs implemented this year include MIT Party Safe, a social host server training in which 700 fraternity and dormitory residents participated, and a risk management education seminar in which 200 sorority women participated.

The CDSA also partnered with leaders of the InterFraternity Council and DormCon to develop and administer the Residence Exploration Survey to freshmen.

Housing led the graduate residential community to consensus on the NW35 project, the initial design of which had been controversial.

Students developed a new accounting structure for club sports, as well as a training program to build accountability and compliance.

The Office of Student Mediation and Community Standards worked with the Senior Counsel's Office to provide updated training for the Committee on Discipline.

The Division of Student Life assigned a representative to the newly created Student Information Systems Steering Group, which will shape the future of the Student Information System over the next 10 to 15 years.

Events

Resources were provided by DSL for an increasing number of large-scale and complex student-led events and leadership activities. Complex events increased this year by approximately 50 percent, compared with past years.

Students delivered a multiorganizational, weeklong series of events focused on empowering undergraduate women at MIT. The programs engaged the broad MIT community and reflect the culmination of years of relationship building, advising, and skill and leadership training. These activities also reflect the changes in MIT's campus culture.

Endicott House nearly doubled student bookings (from six events to 11). Most of these events focused on leadership development.

CopyTech provided expert advice and enhanced student resources for advertising large-scale and increasingly complex events. This work supports leadership activities, academic presentations, and entrepreneurial activities.

Community Development and Substance Abuse advised students on the development and implementation of Health and Wellness Week.

Process Improvements

The Division of Student Life improved its efficiency in addressing technology issues through a new partnership support model with Dean for Undergraduate Education Desktop Support. A new client relationship program with IS&T also helps by identifying issues at the department level.

The DSL departments provided improved community services, particularly to students, by leveraging new technologies. Accomplishments this year include:

- Streamlining the copyright process for faculty and student publications
- Automating TechCASH services to minimize the consequences of over- and underfunding accounts and to improve the convenience of managing one's own account
- Providing for the use of the MIT ID card as virtual collateral without surrender of physical card, in response to student demand

- Providing student organizations with the ability to use TechCASH for fund raising and ticket sales
- Upgrading the audiovisual technology in 24 classrooms on campus; 12 of the upgrades were completed by audiovisual staff
- Completing the five-year redesign of the Card Office, with streamlined policies and procedures and the integration of new technologies
- Replacing the event scheduling process online through the Virtual Events Management System
- Creating a new interactive website that allows students to share and receive information and engage other members of the community in their Hobby Shop projects

The Office of Student Mediation and Community Standards made several changes that improved and streamlined disciplinary processes. They developed a uniform letter to file system, which empowers faculty to hold students accountable. Also, there is now a single pathway for discipline processes, and records are maintained centrally. These efficiencies help to inform advisors, house managers, registrars, and Student Support Services of students involved in disciplinary processes. Updates to the student suspension process transferred this responsibility from the president.

Communications

The Division of Student Life improved communication to students and its other constituencies through a targeted and streamlined communications plan across the division, as well as in several individual departmental units. DSL formalized policies for clear communication of environmental health and safety requirements to both students and staff.

Student Life Programs provided incoming students with the first comprehensive MIT student handbook, which contains information relating to academics, medical, student life, residential policies, and safety.

Student Support Services served as a best practice model for international visitors from Tokyo and Kyoto universities.

The Department of Athletics, Physical Education, and Recreation systematized communications to improve image and increase accessibility and visibility with constituents, including the introduction of the first “brand” for MIT athletics.

The Board of Chaplains defined a group vision and mission to allow for a collective impact on the religious life of the MIT community. The board also worked with the Public Service Center (PSC) to raise awareness of MIT involvement in public service locally, nationally, and worldwide.

The Public Service Center developed its own strategic communications plan. PSC also hosted Impact, a conference on innovation, and created the Continuum Conference,

which focused on local math and science outreach. The PSC showcased graduate student public service by initiating the Involve Conference, and Public Service Center leadership cowrote articles on service learning in engineering for publications of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers.

Following Hurricane Katrina in Louisiana, the PSC led MIT disaster relief initiatives involving hundreds of MIT community members.

The Board of Chaplains also aided hurricane relief efforts; service opportunities included fund raising, shipments of aid materials, and service trips to affected areas sponsored by Hillel, the Protestant Student Organization, and the Intervarsity Christian Fellowship.

Community Development and Substance Abuse gained local, national, and international recognition for MIT's alcohol and other drug programs. Staff members made presentations to 42 colleges and universities, gave four seminars, consulted with 26 colleges and universities in Massachusetts and 53 others nationally, and provided a three-day training for students at 18 colleges and universities.

Finance

The Division of Student Life developed a capital budgeting plan that addresses major capital needs over five years and cites the resulting potential operational savings and efficiencies. DSL developed a model template to streamline future annual budget presentations to the provost and executive vice president, which will help highlight results achieved through prior budget allocations.

The Department of Athletics, Physical Education, and Recreation increased membership and fee-based program revenue by 12 percent and expendable gift incomes by 18 percent.

Teamwork and application of policy helped reduced vacancy loss significantly in both graduate and undergraduate residential systems.

Personnel

The Division of Student Life employs more than 400 personnel. In 2005–2006, the division added one faculty member, six other academic staff, 11 administrative employees, three service staff, and 10 support staff.



With a PSC grant, MIT student volunteers spent spring break repairing and rebuilding a house in Houma, LA, as part of the Lift House Project.

DSL redesigned its spot recognition program, now called the On-the-Spot Recognition Program, to enhance the atmosphere of appreciation through increased use of a program that's relevant to all personnel categories.

Student Support Services staff participated in training sessions on such issues as psychotic illness in young adults, bipolar disorder, working with students coping with grief and loss, and risk management for college administrators.

A new director of rowing/head coach was appointed on the recommendation of the Rowing Analysis Committee.

Space

The Division of Student Life restructured its space to create a single place where students can access many of the major services they require on a regular basis. Services and offices recently relocated to the Stratton Student Center (W20) include the Card Office, TechCASH, Parking and Transportation, Community Development and Substance Abuse, and Student Mediation and Community Standards. In addition, students can now access the Housing office more easily in its new location in E19.

The Department of Athletics, Physical Education, and Recreation facilities received a 96 percent satisfaction rating on the Senior Survey. The DAPER Facilities Master Plan was completed, including upgrades in heat, ventilation, and air conditioning, and new dasher boards in Johnson.

Conclusion

Throughout the year, the Division of Student Life and each of its 14 departmental or divisional units have gone beyond the traditional roles of providing for students' basic life needs. They have evaluated programs, made strategic improvements, and built bridges throughout the Institute with an eye toward improving experiences for students and the MIT community. New relationships with departments and their faculty, with students, and with other administrators have facilitated more experiential education opportunities, the beginnings of a student leadership development program, enhancements for underrepresented student populations, and an improved overall sense of community.

It has been an invigorating and promising year. Much has been accomplished and many new initiatives have been identified. The momentum we have gained from our accomplishments has given the division and its staff much to be thankful for and much to motivate our future efforts.

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Dean for Student Life

More information about the Division of Student Life can be found at <http://web.mit.edu/dsl/>.