

Program in Media Arts and Sciences

Graduate Program

A total of 141 students—61 master’s candidates and 80 doctoral candidates—were enrolled in the [Program in Media Arts and Sciences](#) (MAS) graduate program during the 2011–2012 academic year. The MAS graduate student community included 31 women, 52 foreign students, and six students from underrepresented minority groups.

During the year, 45 advanced degrees were awarded (36 master’s and 9 doctorates). MAS received 623 applications to the graduate program and offered admission to 55 new students (including 17 women), a 9% admissions rate. Forty-nine students (including 16 women) enrolled, an 89% yield.

In addition to supervising MAS graduate students, MAS faculty and research staff collectively advised and supported more than 25 graduate students from other departments, including Architecture, Biological Engineering, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, Mechanical Engineering, Materials Science and Engineering, and Physics. The program also enrolled students from the Harvard-MIT Division of Health Sciences and Technology.

MAS offered 36 graduate courses during AY2012.

Student Honors and Awards

Max Little (Human Dynamics) was named a TEDGlobal 2012 Fellow.

Dan Schultz (Information Ecology) was chosen as one of the first group of Knight-Mozilla News Technology Fellows.

Praveen Subramani (Changing Places) was one of five MIT students to receive a Fulbright Scholarship.

Arlene Ducao (Information Ecology), Daniel Smalley (Object-Based Media), and Yves-Alexandre de Montjoye (Human Dynamics) received awards from the School of Architecture and Planning’s Harold Horowitz (1951) Student Research Fund.

Christopher Fry’s (Software Agents) proposal, “Personal Rapid Transit Grids,” won the judges’ choice award for the United States in the Center for Collective Intelligence’s annual contest.

Undergraduate Program

The Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP) continued to represent the largest undergraduate presence in MAS and the Media Lab. More than 300 undergraduates from across the Institute participated in a wide variety of UROP research projects at the Media Lab, and many students pursued their undergraduate theses and advanced undergraduate projects under MAS faculty supervision. In addition, the MAS program offered eight undergraduate subjects.

MAS also runs an alternative freshman-year program, now in its 14th year. The students in the program participate in weekly Media Lab tutorial/laboratory sessions connected with two core freshman subjects, pursue Media Lab UROP projects, and take two MAS undergraduate subjects on design and research, one of which is an option for satisfying part of the undergraduate Communication Requirement. In AY2012 we had 53 applicants for the program (the most to date). We selected 28 students, more than 60% of whom were women.

Faculty and Staff

New Appointments

Sepandar Kamvar was appointed as associate professor of media arts and sciences. Kamvar received his PhD from Stanford University, created a startup company that was acquired by Google, and worked for four years as head of personalization at Google. Prior to being hired, he was a consulting assistant professor at Stanford.

Faculty Honors and Awards

Ed Boyden received several honors and awards, including the newly established A.F. Harvey Research Prize from the United Kingdom-based Institution of Engineering and Technology for his pioneering contributions to the field of optogenetics. He also received a \$1.5 million award from The New York Stem Cell Foundation and was one of three researchers to receive the Peri/UNC Neuroscience Prize.

Cynthia Breazeal was awarded a National Science Foundation collaborative research grant (with Yale University) for approximately \$2 million over five years.

Pattie Maes was selected as a recipient of the 2012 Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence Classic Paper for “Learning Interface Agents.”

Sandy Pentland received more than \$1.5 million from the BBN Technologies Corporation for his project “Mobile Reality Analysis for Psychological Healthcare.”

Mitchel Resnick received the Harold McGraw Prize in Education as well as the 2011 World Technology Award in Education.

Ed Boyden, Neil Gershenfeld, and Sandy Pentland presented at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, in January.

New Books/CDs

Tod Machover released a new CD, *...but not simpler...*

César A. Hidalgo published a new book, *The Atlas of Economic Complexity*, co-authored with Ricardo Hausmann, Sebastian Bustos, Michele Coscia, Sarah Chung, Juan Jimenez, Alexander Simoes, and Muhammed A. Yildirim.

Mitchel Resnick

Program Head

LEGO Papert Professor of Learning Research