

Chancellor for Academic Advancement

President Rafael Reif created the position of Chancellor for Academic Advancement in October 2013, naming Professor Eric Grimson to the post. This ad hoc position supports MIT's ongoing capital campaign, with primary responsibilities that include serving as liaison to link the campaign (including potential donors) with faculty and students, gathering information on departmental and School needs and goals, and providing strategic advice to the president and other senior leadership on campaign priorities and efforts, especially in interacting extensively with potential donors both nationally and globally.

Activities within the Chancellor for Academic Advancement's Office

As the campaign ramped up to its official launch in May 2016, the chancellor extensively engaged with deans of the academic schools, student life deans, the chancellor and the provost, department heads, and individual faculty members to gather information about department, School, and Institute needs and aspirations. This information has been used in consultation with senior administration to help articulate campaign themes, to identify and refine major initiatives for the campaign, and to set targets for categories of the campaign. Additionally, the chancellor has been engaged with departments and with individual faculty, gathering information to be used in discussions with prospective donors, and arranging for contact between individual faculty and donors as appropriate. The chancellor works closely with staff from the Office of Resource Development on these topics, often serving as a conduit between faculty members and development staff and between potential donors and development staff.

As identified priorities and needs for the campaign have emerged, ranging from capital projects, to scholarships and fellowships, to faculty support, to emerging research opportunities, the chancellor has worked with development staff and others to develop strategic plans for fundraising. These include strategic plans for specific projects, as well as strategies for cultivating critical donors.

Because a primary objective of the position is to engage the Institute with prospective donors—alumni, alumnae, students' parents, and others who are unaffiliated with MIT but who share its vision—the majority of the chancellor's time has been spent in meeting with such prospective donors. In addition to on-campus visits with such donors, the chancellor has traveled extensively to represent the president and the Institute to alumni groups, to individual alumni and alumnae, to parents, and to other friends of the Institute. Travel within the United States over the past year included visits to New York City, Connecticut, Long Island, Florida, Chicago, Northern California, Southern California, Seattle, Colorado, Austin, Atlanta, Cleveland, Washington, DC, and locations in the greater Boston area.

In addition to domestic travel, the chancellor has visited included London, Beijing, Shanghai, Hangzhou, Boao, Ningbo, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taipei, Bangkok, Manila, Sydney, Adelaide, Toronto, Vancouver, Venice, Kuwait, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, and Istanbul.

The chancellor held 372 in-person meetings with donors (compared with 175 in the previous year), including 104 visits with highly rated prospects (compared with 61 in the previous year). He also participated in 56 Resource Development or Alumni Association events, compared with 47 the previous year. Expectations are similar for next year's activities, as the campaign focus expands to new and ongoing donor prospects.

W. Eric L. Grimson

Chancellor for Academic Advancement

Bernard Gordon Professor of Medical Engineering

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