

EECS REFS Program Application

EECS REFS (Resources for Easing Friction and Stress) serve an important role in the EECS graduate population. As an EECS REFS, you will be trained to mediate conflicts (between students) and serve as resources to graduate students in the EECS department. EECS REFS are not expected to find solutions to every situation they encounter; instead, they should direct graduate students in need to the professional resources and services MIT offers when necessary.

To apply for this position, you must do the following:

Interested graduate students will fill out the enclosed application form and return all three parts of the application together to the EECS Graduate Office in 38-444:

- Part I: EECS REFS Application – General Information (and Essay)
- Part II: EECS REFS Application – Student Petition Form
- Part III: EECS REFS Application – Research Advisor Consent Form

After submitting these forms, applicants will attend a meeting with existing members of the EECS REFS program to discuss their interest in an EECS REFS position. This meeting will be used to understand the applicant's interest in the program. In addition, applicants will be given a few scenarios to gauge their ability to handle common mediator scenarios.

Upon receiving a recommendation from existing EECS REFS, applicants must be approved by the faculty mediators of the EECS department.

Upon receiving EECS REFS Program Faculty Advisor approval, the applicant must attend mediation training (as provided by Mediation@MIT in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, c. 233, sec. 23C) before being established by the department as a member of the EECS REFS program.

Please return the general information form, your personal statement, the signature sheet and the advisor consent form together to the EECS Graduate Office (Rm 38-444) before Wednesday, November 8th, 2006 at 5 PM. If you have any questions, please email Sourav Dey (sdey@mit.edu) or Mario Valenti (valenti@mit.edu).

Application Timeline

Thursday, October 26th, 2006 at 5:30 – 7:30 PM, Grier Room (34-401B)

Interested graduate students attend an information session on the EECS REFS Program.

Monday, October 30th, 2006

EECS REFS Program application distributed to interested applicants via email. Paper copies of the application can be picked up from the EECS Graduate Office in 38-444 during normal business hours until Friday, November 3rd at 12 Noon.

Wednesday, November 8th, 2006 at 5 PM

Interested graduate students return the EECS REFS Application in its entirety to the EECS Graduate Office in 38-444.

Monday, November 13th to Friday, November 17th 2006

Applicants whom successfully completed the EECS REFS application will meet with existing EECS REFS to discuss their application and interest in the program. These meetings should last about 30 minutes.

Early December 2006

Applicants will be notified regarding the status of their application. Applicants may be required to meet with the EECS REFS Program Faculty Advisors before the status of their application is finalized.

Mid-January 2007

Approved applicants will meet with existing EECS REFS to organize the program for the Spring 2007 semester.

Late January 2007

Applicants will be required to attend the thirty hour mediation and conflict resolution training as prepared by Mediation@MIT. Applicants will be ineligible for the EECS REFS program until its completion.

February 2007

Applicants who finish the thirty hour mediation and conflict resolution will participate in the EECS REFS program for the Spring 2007 semester.

EECS REFS Roles and Responsibilities¹

EECS REFS serve an important role in the EECS graduate population. EECS REFS will be trained to mediate conflicts (between students) and serve as resources to graduate students in the EECS department. EECS REFS are not expected to find solutions to every situation they encounter; instead, they should direct graduate students in need to the professional resources and services MIT offers when necessary.

Every member of the EECS REFS program must equally share the responsibilities of the program as a whole. EECS REFS will be required to participate in regular meetings with the rest of the student REFS to discuss and evaluate the status and direction of the program.

Every member of the EECS REFS program will act as a Mediator/Counselor, Liaison, and Advocate for the students in the EECS graduate population. As mediators and counselors, EECS REFS will offer insight on questions facing graduate students in the department. As liaisons, EECS REFS will provide information about the professional resources MIT has to offer graduate students. Finally, as advocates, EECS REFS will inform the EECS REFS Program Faculty Advisors of issues and concerns facing the EECS graduate student population.

While seeking to fulfill these roles, each member of the EECS REFS program will have additional responsibilities. Although their role as graduate researchers supersedes their role as mediators, EECS REFS must be able to meet with graduate students from the EECS Department as the need arises. Note that if a participant of the EECS REFS program is unable to devote sufficient time to this position, they may be asked to step down from the REFS position for the semester. Trained EECS REFS can resume their position in subsequent semesters with the expressed permission of the EECS REFS Program Faculty Advisors. On the other hand, if a student requiring assistance is causing a member of the EECS REFS program to become overburdened (e.g., a specific student constantly comes to seek advice from the same mediator on a very regular basis), they must understand that though they act as a counselor, their primary responsibility is an EECS Graduate Student and thus to their research work. Therefore, EECS REFS in this position should contact the EECS REFS Program Faculty Advisors for advice when needed on how to deal with students of this kind.

In addition to their responsibility to the department as trained mediators, EECS REFS will be responsible for preparing and running social events in each of the EECS labs which focus on providing EECS graduate students opportunities to meet the EECS REFS. These events will also provide the EECS REFS with opportunity to provide and discuss MIT's professional support services and resources available to the graduate population. These events should occur at minimum once a semester in each of the EECS laboratories and could coincide with other graduate student events.

¹ The "Roles and Responsibilities" section of this document was adapted from the "(Graduate Resident) Tutor Roles and Responsibilities" written by W. B. Watson on September 9, 2002. This original document can be found at: <http://web.mit.edu/slp/about/grt-roles.shtml>

Every member of the EECS REFS program will be required to attend the thirty hour mediation and conflict resolution training as prepared by Mediation@MIT. EECS graduate students interested in participating in the EECS REFS program will be ineligible until the successful completion of the training program. EECS REFS will be required to meet with one another once a month. In this meeting, the EECS REFS will discuss and evaluate the status and direction of the program while maintaining confidentiality (as discussed during training). These meetings will help to ensure that each member of the EECS REFS program is responsible in sharing the workload of the program, while promoting the exchange information about various concerns and/or issues affecting the EECS graduate population. At the end of this meeting, a brief report should be sent to the EECS REFS Program Faculty Advisors detailing the important issues discussed at this meeting. EECS REFS and the EECS REFS Program Faculty Advisors should meet at least once a semester to formally discuss issues facing the EECS REFS and EECS graduate students.

Finally, the performance of each member of the EECS REFS program will be assessed by the EECS REFS Program Faculty Advisors at least once a year. These evaluations will provide the EECS REFS Program Faculty Advisors with information allowing them to assess the performance of every member of the EECS REFS Program and make recommendations as needed. It will also allow the Faculty Advisors to assess whether the responsibilities of being a mediator are interfering with an individual mediator's class work and/or research. This "check and balance" will help to ensure that the EECS REFS program is serving the EECS graduate, and will also ensure that the mediators themselves are able to fulfill their primary roles as graduate students.

Part I: EECS REFS Application – General Information

Please return this sheet, your personal statement, the signature sheet and the advisor consent form together to the EECS Graduate Office (Rm 38-444) before Wednesday, November 8th, 2006 at 5 PM. If you have any questions, please email Sourav Dey (sdey@mit.edu) or Mario Valenti (valenti@mit.edu).

GENERAL INFORMATION

PERSONAL DATA

Last name: _____ First name: _____

Local Address: _____

MIT Office Address: _____ Phone: (Home) _____ (MIT) _____

Gender: _____ E-mail Address: _____

How did you hear about the position? _____

ACADEMIC HISTORY

Undergraduate Institution _____ Years Attended _____

Undergraduate Major(s) _____

Year entered Graduate Program _____ Laboratory: _____

Graduate Area: _____ Anticipated Final Degree (circle one): M.Eng. / S.M. / Ph.D.

PERSONAL STATEMENT

Please write a **short** personal statement that will enable those reading it to get to know you. Include information about your interests and hobbies, college and community activities, volunteer work, leadership experience and/or any other relevant information. Also, briefly explain your reasons for applying for the EECS REFS position. Your statement should be no longer than one page (about 500 words max), typed, on a separate sheet of paper.

Part II: EECS REFS Application – Student Petition Form

EECS REFS serve an important role in the EECS graduate population. EECS REFS are trained to mediate conflicts (between students) and serve as resources to graduate students in the EECS department. EECS REFS are not expected to find solutions to every situation they encounter; instead, they should direct graduate students in need to the professional resources and services MIT offers when necessary.

Applicants for the EECS REFS Program are required to obtain at least 10 signatures from EECS graduate students (with at least 5 signatures from students in their laboratory) indicating the signer's support of their will to participate in the program.

By printing and signing my name below, I support fellow EECS graduate student _____ as a potential member of the MIT EECS REFS Program.

Print Name Below

Sign Name Below

(1)	_____	_____
(2)	_____	_____
(3)	_____	_____
(4)	_____	_____
(5)	_____	_____
(6)	_____	_____
(7)	_____	_____
(8)	_____	_____
(9)	_____	_____
(10)	_____	_____

Please return this sheet with the other parts of the application to the EECS Graduate Office (Rm 38-444) before Wednesday, November 8th, 2006 at 5 PM.

Part III: EECS REFS Application – Research Advisor Consent Form

EECS REFS serve an important role in the EECS graduate population. EECS REFS are trained to mediate conflicts (between students) and serve as resources to graduate students in the EECS department. EECS REFS are not expected to find solutions to every situation they encounter; instead, they should direct graduate students in need to the professional resources and services MIT offers when necessary.

Applicants are required to obtain written approval of participation from their research advisor for participation in the program. Please return this consent form with the other parts of the application to the EECS Graduate Office (Rm 38-444) before Wednesday, November 8th, 2006 at 5 PM.

My graduate student _____
and I have discussed the essence of, and their will to apply for, the EECS REFS Program. This student is in good academic standing and is aware that the time spent as a graduate student mediator should not detract from his/her research and scholarly activities.

Research Advisor Signature

Date