

Personal Statement for Vice President of Academics and Diversity
Daniel Weller

First, I would like to share with you why I would like to be EECS GSA's first VP of Academics and Diversity. Here in EECS, we are lucky to be working at one of the finest research institutions in the world, learning alongside almost one thousand other graduate students and faculty, each extremely talented, highly motivated, and with a breadth of life experiences both extraordinary and unique. I seek this position so that I may employ my experience and skills as a leader to build upon this special experience at MIT and address the many challenges that students of unique backgrounds face, from their admission all the way to commencement, and beyond.

Although I have been at MIT for under a year, I have already engaged in a variety of exciting activities here that prepare me for this position. As co-chair of the 6.Insight committee, I have worked hard with other dedicated volunteers to put together an amazing new seminar series about the different research areas in EECS. The first three seminars have been an enormous success, in a large part due to recruiting eager volunteers and student speakers. As an EECS representative to the Graduate Student Council, I have learned how graduate students can work on issues like the Pass/D/Fail option and housing rents. Finally, I have been working much of the year in the EECS GSA, helping to organize events like this year's visit weekend, and the upcoming Career Panel. In addition to these experiences, my most important qualification is my passion for developing new ideas, as evidenced by my involvement in 6.Insight, GSC, and the EECS GSA. I ask for your votes, so that I may have further success directing that passion towards advancing the mission of the EECS GSA, especially in the realms of academics and diversity.

As VP of Academics and Diversity, I will build upon the already successful lineup of events that have happened this past year. To accomplish this goal, I will recruit heavily throughout the year and form a core group of student leaders charged with organizing each major event. In addition, I will work with GW6, REFS, ACM/IEEE, HKN, GSC, MIT Alumni/ae Association, and other groups around MIT to host joint events, pursue new initiatives, and ensure that the interests of EECS students are well-represented. I will also work with Terry Orlando to get feedback about the first-year graduate counseling seminars, and along with other interested students, work to improve them further for the following year. Finally, I will work together with the other GSA officers to recruit new members and expand our role in the department.

Most importantly of all, I want graduate students to feel comfortable approaching the GSA with concerns or new ideas. Therefore, I will work with the rest of the officers to put together open hours for students to meet with GSA members, and I will pursue other ways to get more students involved. Together, we can make the graduate school experience more fulfilling for everyone.