

Nina Tandon
Statement of Interest for the position of Secretary of the Graduate Student Council
2005-2006 Term

It is with honor and enthusiasm that I accept the nomination for the position of Secretary of the Graduate Student Council for the 2005-2006 term. As the current representative to the GSC for Green Hall, MIT's only all-women dormitory, I have had the opportunity to advocate for graduate students in general, as well as for my fellow Green Hall residents. More particularly, I was active in the Advisor-Advisee relationship initiative; serving as one of the eight facilitators for the focus groups run in November 2004, as well as aiding in the planning of discussion topics and methods. I recommended the creation of an anonymous web portal for submission of personal experiences of graduate students and ensured that their stories be included as material in the focus groups' discussions. In addition, I helped coordinate analysis of the results of the focus groups with data from the Graduate Student Survey. I have also served as an advocate for my dormitory to the Information Services and Technology Advisory Board, through which I was able to move Green Hall up on the schedule to receive wireless internet access by nine months, and am currently involved in an initiative to improve the security of Green Hall, which lacks security cameras as well as a security desk, and has been the target of a recent theft. This February, I also hosted a GSC-sponsored skating party for Green Hall. In addition, I was also selected as the GSC representative to the inauguration planning committee for our new MIT President, Dr. Susan Hockfield, and have been active in planning that event.

My experiences as a representative this year were rewarding to me and gave me a sense of the potential that the GSC has to empower the graduate student body. I envision the GSC as a synthesis of voices united in our efforts to influence and improve life for graduate students here at MIT, with officers who facilitate our efforts and hone our voices into consistent messages with impact throughout campus. I see the role of Secretary as vital to the team of officers by facilitating contact between GSC members, their constituencies, and the MIT community.

Next year, by becoming Secretary of the GSC, I plan to increase my involvement as part of a team dedicated to advocacy for the graduate student body here at MIT. Through my role as secretary, I will work to improve communication between council members and their constituencies. I will also work to enthuse new members for their mission as advocates for their various constituencies, as well as strengthen ties between council members. By strengthening the awareness among council members of our purpose, strategy and past accomplishments, I hope to empower us to contextualize new issues with our experiences in the past, and increase the continuity of the GSC.

If we have not yet had a chance to talk, or even if we are already friends, I look forward to hearing from each representative about ideas for the future of next year's GSC and talking with you about how I as your Secretary could influence that future. I hope to have your support for my candidacy.