

My name is Obrad Scepanovic and I submit my candidacy for the position of Graduate Student Council (GSC) Secretary.

During my last eight years as an MIT undergraduate and graduate student, I have been involved in many different activities and student groups. I have rowed on the MIT heavyweight crew team for three years, during which time I learned discipline and the real meaning of teamwork. I have also been involved in the MIT Organization of Serbian Students for the past seven years in different capacities, organizing cultural, social, and academic events relevant to people from the former Yugoslavia and involving students from MIT, Harvard, and Tufts. Last year, I was one of the lead organizers of the 5th Annual Technology and Entrepreneurship Forum, a one-day conference that brought together student innovators, entrepreneurs, and venture capitalists to share ideas, learn from one another, and network. During the past year, I have also served as the Vice-President of Resources of Sidney-Pacific, managing the building and financial resources of this graduate dormitory while working closely with the other officers and committee chairs.

My involvement in different activities has given me a sense of community and direction and I truly enjoy being an active participant in the student body. I feel that getting involved in the GSC is the next logical step for me, as I hope to continue contributing to graduate student life at MIT at an even broader level. The position of Secretary is particularly appealing for me as I can take advantage of my dedicated work ethic, organizational, and communication skills. At the same time, the GSC Secretary position allows newer opportunities for me to learn and grow.

The key area I would like to focus as Secretary would be to improve communication internally within the GSC, with the rest of the graduate student body, and with the outside world. Particular areas where I would like to focus my efforts are publicity and the Graduate Student News (GSN) newsletter. In terms of publicity, I would like to set up a well-coordinated system where different GSC activities and initiatives can be advertised on time and reach the most students. I plan to work on collaborating with other student groups, particularly departmental student groups and representatives, to get the message across to students most effectively. In addition, I will be diligent in the more mundane and yet important tasks of a Secretary such as scribing meeting minutes, regular email announcements and archiving GSC's transactions. I will work with the Vice-President in actively recruiting departmental representatives and promoting the GSC mission. I also look forward to working with the staff of the GSN to further improve this very valuable publication. Particularly, I would like to see more articles directly relevant to graduate student life: how to apply for and get a job in academia/industry, where to find affordable housing in the MIT area, where/how to find a research advisor, etc. I plan to build a network of quality writers selected from students, professors, and administrators. My goal is to get every graduate student to regularly read and benefit from the GSN. Lastly, I would like to further our ties with the rest of the Institute administration and to expand our connection with other universities and the industry.

I look forward to working with the members of the GSC and serving the graduate student community.

Sincerely,
Obrad Scepanovic