



Undergraduate Association Monthly Report to Undergraduates

November 2017

President

Sarah Melvin

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Past Month:

I have been working closely with the Student-Administration Collaboration Committee as they compile a report on the closure of Senior House and put forth recommendations to prevent similar outcomes in the future. I will be delivering the report to the Corporation Joint Advisory Committee (CJAC) in December.

I have also been working on developing best practices and guidelines for academic advisors including a better matching system and more frequent engagement from advisors. We presented these, as well as data showing dissatisfaction in advising amongst students, to the undergraduate officers. Moving forward we will be meeting with department heads and students in every department to implement changes on a local level.

I also met with the Division of Student Life Visiting Committee to discuss what students like and dislike about student life at MIT and what needs to change.

Current Projects:

I will be continuing these projects, and in addition I am working on a proposal for an on campus centralized wellness center. The center would be centrally located and include offices from S³, VPR, Student Disability Services, and a satellite office of Mental Health and Counseling.

I am also going to be looking at data on how financial pressures affect the major and internship choices student make. I will then meet with administration to discuss these issues and issues around the costs of summer internships and the financial burden faced by students on leave.

Vice President

Alexa Martin

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Past Month:

In the past month I have worked with David Randall, Peter Cummings, and John McDonald to finalize the details for the system for students to donate unused dining hall guest passes, which is called SwipeShare. The system will go live on December 4th and we will then begin a campaign to spread awareness of SwipeShare. The campaign will additionally let students know how to receive these meal swipes and if they are lacking any necessities they can go to S³.

I have also been working with other students, faculty, and Vice Chancellor Ian Waitz on developing a course for the spring on designing the first year experience. You can read more about the course here: http://ovc.mit.edu/fye_course/. It will be open to all undergraduate and graduate students and will count for Hass-E credit, and can also count towards a design minor.

I have continued working with other students, faculty, and administrators on implementing the on demand safe ride system. We met with the NABB Executive Committee and are now moving forward meeting with BTD. We are aiming to launch the pilot in the start of January and end the pilot after graduation.

Along with other students, I have helped in interviewing candidates for the new dining director on campus. We met with multiple candidates and provided our input on each. We also are currently in the process of negotiating the dining contracts and have finalized the RFP which includes a system for dining dollars and more flexible meal plans.

In the past month I also met with the DSL Visiting Committee along with other students and provided input on where there is the greatest need for improvements in student life at MIT moving forward.

Current Projects:

Currently I will finish helping in the launch of the SwipeShare campaign and piloting the on demand shuttle program before the end of the semester. I will also continue to work on the first year experience class and work on fitting the course into a broader initiative to implement the changes that are recommended as a result of the class.

I am also working with Sarah, the UA Committee on Education, Maryanne Kirkbride, and Vice Chancellor Ian Waitz to make improvements to undergraduate advising. We presented to the undergraduate officers on advising, areas that need improvement, and our suggested best practices driven by data from surveys. Moving forward we are going to meet with all of the departments in collaboration with students in each respective department to discuss the necessary changes to the advising systems and how we can achieve a positive change.

Chief of Staff

Mo Eltahir

Email: ua-chief@mit.edu

Past Month:

I helped solicit applications for the Dean of Engineering's Advisory Group and began reviewing those applications. I also finalized the UA Confidentiality Policy for UA Council vote.

Current Projects:

I will now begin the process of getting faculty approval for the UA Confidentiality Policy. This will begin with presentation to the faculty officers and then to the Faculty Policy Committee. I will also help the Office of the President staff a committee which will help MIT as it goes through a re-accreditation process.

Treasurer

Jonathan Coden

Email: ua-treasurer@mit.edu

Past Month:

Over this past month I developed a framework for allocating travel grants to undergraduate students. These grants will allow students to have unique experiences outside of the classroom that were previously unavailable to most students. I also worked with Vice Chancellor Waitz to secure a grant for Student-Faculty dinners, continuing a UA partnership that began last year with Dean Freeman.

Current Projects:

My main goal right now is to launch the grant program so that it will be available to all students at the beginning of next semester. The next step will be expanding the travel grants program to give students and student group alternative sources of funding for non-traditional needs. These would fall outside of the traditional allocations provided by Finboard and would give students a new avenue to pursue enriching behaviors outside of the classroom.

Secretary

Kathryn Jiang

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Past Month:

In the past month we visited 9 different dorms and living groups asking for feedback on the freshmen year experience, ranging from CPW and the summer before getting on campus through navigating orientation, GIRs, advising, and major selections. We also asked the faculty at the November 15th faculty meeting their ideas for the objectives for the first year and how well we were meeting those needs. We've consolidated the top 10 things we've heard from each group to better prepare for the class.

We also brought on a new ASA/UA admin assistant to help with administrative and financial tasks, including processing committee reimbursements, tracking student-faculty dinners, and keeping the asa database up to date. We've also met with *The Tech* to discuss confidentiality policies.

Current Projects:

We are currently in the middle of a marketing push for the FYE course, since pre-registration opens December 1st. Over the next month, we will continue to address concerns we heard from students in the living group visits to the relevant offices around MIT, incorporate student feedback into the course, and work on finalizing the schedule, syllabus, class materials, and measurable outcomes. We will also be looking at the results from a series of student interviews and focus groups. For more information, please visit the course [website](#) and sign up for updates [here](#).

Assistant Officer on Diversity

Citlali

Email: ua-diversity@mit.edu

Past Month:

This past month we were able to build a student committee for a Latinx Fly-in Program. Working with Admissions, the OME, LAMIT, the LCC, and our new student committee, we're hoping to have our first program happen this upcoming spring, the weekend before CPW. If you or anyone you know is interested in working to make this happen, please email latinxflyin@mit.edu to be added to the student committee. After meeting with the Chancellor, she's now looking to allocate funds to pay for the students' flights.

Current Projects:

This month my efforts will be focused on the Latinx fly-in program and introducing some ideas with Bruke and Annie, the Committee on Community and Diversity co-chairs. The three of us have a meeting with Ian Waitz early this month to discuss aspects of freshmen advising and the adoption of freshmen diversity trainings, and later I will be meeting with Beatriz Cantada to gain some insight from ICEO for the Latinx fly-in Program. In order to help the Chancellor find donors for the program, Stu Schmidt in Admissions and I will be working to gather some compelling data in support of the program. Please reach out if you are interested in being involved with anything listed here.

Student Support and Wellness Committee

Sophia McGowan & Tchelet Segev

Email: ua-wellness-chairs@mit.edu

Past Month:

For the past month our committee has been focusing on two main projects: the mural competition for the hallway of MIT Mental Health & Counseling and establishing formal relations between FSILGs and MIT Mental Health & Counseling.

Mural Project: We received our submissions and are selecting our finalists. We have reached out to senior members at MIT Medical and Mental Health & Counseling for their feedback.

FSILG/MH&C Relationship: We recently held a forum inviting representatives from different FSILGs. The forum was focused on the current liaison program between FSILGs and clinicians at MH&C. We discussed the sustainability of the program and brainstormed ideas for it going forward.

Current Projects:

Mural Project: We are currently in the process of soliciting feedback from senior members at MIT Medical and MH&C. We hope to announcing our winner/finalists shortly.

FSILG/MH&C Relationship: In response to the forum that we held with different FSILG representatives, we are in the process of setting up a meeting with Dr. Singleton (Director of MH&C) to relay the feedback that we received and facilitate better relationships between FSILGs and MH&C.

Tutoring Center: This semester we have been exploring the idea of a campus-wide tutoring center that can be used by all departments. We have attempted to do this by talking to different departments and learning about their current tutoring models. We have found it difficult to get responses from different departments/tutoring groups and so will likely attempt a new strategy going forward.

Committee on Community and Diversity

Annie Abay & Bruke Kifle

Email: ua-cdc-chairs@mit.edu

Past Month:

Worked to identify projects and timeline/roadmap for the remainder of the semester and upcoming year. Our three subcommittees breakdown into the following categories:

- Collaborations
- Institute Events
- Policy

Current Projects:

TEDx@MIT - We are organizing a TEDx in collaboration with UA Tech with the theme being using technology to help communities.

Revamping Freshman Advising & Freshman Orientation through collaborations with Assistant Officer on Diversity & various senior admin (Ian Waitz)

Faculty Unconscious bias trainings

OneWorld@MIT 2018

OME - S³ Networking session / study break

Committee on Community Service

Kelly Barton & Joaquin Giraldo

Email: ua-csc-chairs@mit.edu

Past Month:

This past month we ran a card-making booth in lobby 10 to honor veterans for Veteran's Day. We also collected emails to be on our mailing list for community service opportunities. Another project we completed was our list of representatives from every dorm and living group. We will be holding a welcome & thank you dinner for them next Tuesday.

Current Projects:

Our movie night will be next Saturday, December 9th to raise awareness for hurricane relief funds. We will be selling snacks with all proceeds going towards these charities. The UA Community Service Committee will also be taking over the Together in Service initiative, previously hosted by the PKG, and we will be brainstorming and contact on campus and off campus groups in the following weeks to take part.

Public Affairs Committee

Elena Alberti & Ashti Shah

Email: ua-publicaffairs-chair@mit.edu

Past Month:

MIT Vote 2017 - helped with voter registration and voting at Kresge. Launched the TerraByte on Facebook.

Current Projects:

Continuing to publish weekly articles for the TerraByte.

Campus Planning Committee

Chukwunenye Anagbogu

Email: ua-cpc-chair@mit.edu

Past Month:

This past month we've been designing a new website for increased transparency of potential MIT initiatives that will be built over IAP. We've come up with a couple changes to the Student Center that we hope to get implemented over the next couple months. We've created and will be running MIT wide research to inform Campus Planning guidelines for completion later this year.

Current Projects:

Transparency website for increased feedback to students. Guidelines for administrative use in creation of all future campus plans. Short term improvements to the student center, in addition to long term steering.

Events Committee

Christine You & Ann Quan

Email: ua-events-chairs@mit.edu

Past Month:

The past month, we mostly focused on the preparation of Tech Twinkles, the tree lighting ceremony. We met with Graham and Peter to go over the physical logistics of lighting the trees on campus and met with the Chancellor to secure stable source of funding for future Tech Twinkles celebration. Our committee members have been organizing puppy labs, student group performances, catering, and Tech Twinkles swags for the event. We sent out a survey on SpringFEST to see student interest in potential artists.

Current Projects:

Tech Twinkles is our current main focus. The event will take place on December 6th with performances and refreshments. After that, we will start organizing SpringFest: choosing artist, getting security contracts in, and getting people excited for the events.

Marketing Committee

Clare Liu & Charleen Wang

Email: ua-marketing-chairs@mit.edu

Past Month:

In the past month, we released our request form for projects and have continually assisted committees that needed our help. Projects to note were: updating the TerraByte Facebook page for Public Affairs and advertising for the CoE Office Hours. We also worked on receiving software for all of our committee members and hopefully will hold some internal workshops so that everyone can get up to speed.

Current Projects:

We are mostly wrapping up our current projects, those being: new logo for the UA CommServ and advertising materials for UA Events for their Tech Twinkles event.

Technology Systems Group Committee

Michael Amoako

Email: ua-technology-chairs@mit.edu

Past Month:

We've established our core subcommittees who are each working on different projects including:

- Gaining feedback about and improving the MIT mobile application
- Organizing the Hackathon (described in current projects)
- Launching the on-demand shuttle system

We are still looking for people who want to join these sub-committees. If anyone is interested, please email me at: mamoako@mit.edu

Current Projects:

TEDx@MIT - We are organizing a TEDx in collaboration with UA Community with the theme being using technology to help communities.

MIT Mobile Application - Our subcommittee is finding ways to improve the MIT mobile application. A survey about this will be sent out very soon to collect information on student use. This will guide our development of pilot versions of the app.

On Demand Shuttle System - We are currently attending meetings with the coalition of administrators to launch the On-Demand Shuttle System, hopefully starting in Winter 2018.

Better MIT hackathon:

The UA Committees on Innovation and Technology have been planning a **makeathon for improving student life at MIT**. From Coffeehouse Lounge to SaveTFP to Borderlines to Medlinks finals snacks, **student-run projects can improve our lives in small but meaningful ways**. If you've ever had an idea to improve life for yourself and those around you (but don't know where to start) then this event is for you!

Admins from all offices will be there, we'll have plenty free food, workshops, support and be giving out substantial grants, to help us all to build a better MIT. **We'd like to hear what ideas you might have**, and the types of workshops or resources you'd benefit from.

Let us know in this survey: http://mit.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_ezcvbwavK7EkNVj

Alumni Affairs Committee

Loewen Cavill

Email: ua-alumniaffairs-chair@mit.edu

Past Month:

Have been meeting with the Alumni Association discussing possible larger plans and shorter term possibilities for alumni events and mentorship programs. Established a partnership with the Student Alumni Association to jointly organize speaker series. Have a student alumni brunch coming up next week with a female founder of a Quantitative Trading Firm.

Current Projects:

Currently working on our MIT alumni student banquet dinner organized by individual's interests (probably will have next summer due to funding). Organizing an event with professors and alumnus for students regarding the health of our planet. Setting up a dorm room study break to foster more intimate connections with local alumnus. Developing new events to connect with alumnus on a more personal level.

Innovation Committee

Malte Ahrens

Email: ua-innovation-chairs@mit.edu

Past Month:

Committee firmly established, we moved into working groups working on three core projects: social spaces, innovation week and the better MIT hackathon. We also have four minor projects have been working on, on the side.

Current Projects:

We have three core projects:

Social spaces – developing space on campus for the community to play, meet, collaborate, build, learn, rest and be inspired. Short-term involves retrofitting existing space; long term is looking at for-purpose space

Innovation week – establishing a CPW-like week for students and the MIT community to gather, get inspired, and help bring ideas to the world. Organizing speakers, workshops, and other events for Feb '18

Better MIT hackathon – running a makeathon to improve student life at MIT. Organizing a weekend (Feb 17th to 19th '18) a weekend in which students collaborate with administrators, faculty members, internal MIT organizations, and student organizations to prototype novel projects that improve student life at MIT. This is in collaboration with the UA Committee on Technology

And four side-projects:

MISTI-PeaceTech exchange – supporting a collaboration between MIT MISTI and PeaceTech Lab that we started back in '15 that will send students internationally to help peacebuilding efforts with tech. Past projects included building a platform for discussion on the new Somali constitution, developing an entrepreneurship program in Chhattisgarh, India to help reconcile a Maoist insurgency, developing geoanalytics in Agedez, Niger to better understand migrant flows up north into Libya (and onto Europe), supporting open government initiatives in Moldova, etc. Work at the moment is on finding alternate funding to deal with a \$1 million dollar shortfall

Co-sponsoring seminar series with MIT GovLab on “data science to help solve social problems” – next event is Thursday 12/7 noon-1:30p in E53-482 on *using data science to monitor health plan compliance*

Techcash – making it easier to pay with Techcash on campus and, ultimately, improving vending machines and other offerings to better serve the MIT community

Rebuilding University of Mosul's library – the University of Mosul's library, once filled with a collection of books and maps and manuscripts dating back centuries, was mostly destroyed over

the last years of IS occupation. We're helping organize logistics for shipping twenty tonnes of donated books to Mosul

Involvement Committee

Nikhil Bhatia

Email: ua-involvement-chairs@mit.edu

Past Month:

Some changes to our committee, working on planning two more events before the end of the semester (one study break, one end of year party).

Current Projects:

We are trying to set up two more events before the end of the semester. We are planning to have one more study break for the UA with food and desserts in the UA Office, similar to the previous study break. We are also planning a end of year event on Wednesday, December 13th; 4pm — on the last day of classes, where we'll have lots of food/drinks and most likely host it off campus as well.

Special Projects Committee

Szabolcs Kiss & Jason Seibel

Email: ua-projects-chairs@mit.edu

Past Month:

We have gotten hold of Living Pink Survey materials, code, and resources from LGBT Services and alumni who worked on the Survey in 2012. We have also acquired a coffee table and picture frames for the UA office space.

Current Projects:

We are hoping to evaluate the LPS materials and determine a course of action in the remainder of the semester, and distribute some tasks to LGBT organizations by the beginning of the Spring Semester. We are in the process of procuring large prints from Technique to put in our new frames for the UA office.

Committee on Education

Jingwei Ma & Noah McDaniel

Email: ua-education-members@mit.edu

Past Month:

Office hours: CoE launched CoE Office Hours, which are offered every Monday evening at 7:30pm, for discussion about academics with snacks. We have helped students with violations, career advice, IAP course selection so far.

Subject Evaluations: We drafted a survey to ask for student input on how the current subject evaluations can be improved as well as reasons students fill out and do not fill out subject evals.

Last week, we met with the Registrar's Office to talk about the survey draft and ways subject evaluations can be more useful for students in picking classes.

Advising: We have also been preparing a survey on academic advising, and met with the Vice Chancellor to discuss new initiatives in advising.

Major Selection: We met with UAAP to offer suggestions for improving DEX and discuss details on timeline, how to work with departments, and event planning.

Current Projects:

Violations: We are currently looking into the feasibility of a system to better address issues with a class that don't violate term regulations.

Subject Evaluations: We are working with the Registrar office to finalize our survey about subject evaluations, which will be sent out at the beginning of next semester. Potentially, next semester, we will also collaborate with them to work on developing mid-semester evaluation.

Advising: We are working with Sarah, Alexa and MaryAnne from MindHandHeart on implementing advising practices at department level in five departments.

Major Selection: Preparations for the Major Selection Fair are going well, we are in contact with almost every department in coordination with UAAP to plan events and schedules.

Financial Board

Zach Schmitz

Email: ua-finboard-chairs@mit.edu

Past Month:

Finboard has focused on improving its approach to auditing student groups over the last month. In addition, we've been working on organizing the phase-in of the updated Pilot Program for the beginning of the Winter Cycle which will involve about 60 student groups.

Current Projects:

The Funding Application for the Winter Cycle is now open to student groups. We will be looking over allocations in 2 weeks and opening up Appeals over Winter Break. Finboard is finalizing its audit of 2 randomly selected student groups and will get into contact with those groups in the next few weeks. I am working with my vice chair, Marla Odell, and the UA treasurer, Jon Coden, to refine and implement the new Pilot Travel Grant. I've also been working on refining the phase-in of the new Pilot Program.

Sustainability Committee

Soma Mitra-Behura & Mingshi Yang

Email: ua-sustainability-chairs@mit.edu

Past Month:

We've been ramping up our large community garden and have split up tasks with the aim of having a proposal by the end of this semester. Our other subcommittees have all continued progressing in their respective goals.

Current Projects:

Trashion Show is happening this Friday (Dec. 1st) and will be featuring our largest number of designers to date as well as a professional artist who specializes in making art from trash. Our Outreach subcommittee has held several events including a Splash class and a Sustainability-themed Escape the Room. They will also be hosting a Climate Reality speaker and teaching Somerville High School students about sustainability in the near future. The Garden subcommittee is ramping up progress on building their green wall in an indoor space. Our Compost subcommittee is relabeling to Zero Waste and are working with multiple dorms for composting. They are also currently running the Trash on My Back Challenge to encourage awareness about the amount of waste humans produce on a daily basis. Our Special Projects subcommittee will be meeting with the Director of the ESI, Prof. John Fernandez, to discuss the development of a new sustainability program to begin in the new dorm. UA Sustain is also in talks with UGE's Climate Action group to collaborate and possibly start a new subcommittee dedicated to encouraging better climate policy that includes endorsing carbon pricing.

Student-Administration Collaboration Committee

Allie Stanton

Email: ua-sac-chairs@mit.edu

Past Month:

This past month we have been working on the report on Senior House that will be delivered to the Corporation Joint Advisory Committee (CJAC) in December. We have discussed the recommendations with various administrators and the UA Council.

Current Projects:

We will be holding an open "town hall" style meeting to discuss the recommendations of the SAC report on Senior House.