

MIT Professional Education

MIT Professional Education (MIT PE) marked its seventeenth year as the umbrella organization (under the School of Engineering) for all the nondegree professional education programs at MIT that serve science and technology professionals globally. All MIT PE programs (Short Programs, the Advanced Study Program, and the International, Custom, and Digital Plus [or Blended] Programs) deliver practitioner-oriented learning programs to working professionals, adhering to MIT's motto, *mens et manus* (mind and hand), while also enhancing MIT's leadership and influence. Teaching MIT PE programs also allows faculty members to enhance their connections with the global practitioner community, influencing faculty research and the content of courses for students at MIT. MIT PE faculty come from all MIT schools except the Sloan School of Management.

Current Goals, Objectives, and Priorities

The principles that guide MIT PE activities include the following:

- MIT PE should meet current learning needs of technology professionals globally with MIT faculty expertise.
- Faculty should extend knowledge from MIT research and discoveries, particularly those related to Institute initiatives and priority areas of interest (such as innovation, health, and artificial intelligence) to industry professionals.
- The MIT PE office will maintain a relatively small, entrepreneurial organization that generates high net revenue while maintaining high customer satisfaction.
- The program will deliver sizable surplus revenues to the Institute (via the Office of the Provost) and the School of Engineering for discretionary purposes.

The goals of MIT PE are to continue expanding course offerings, student enrollment, and faculty engagement for all its programs, with particular emphasis on global outreach and diversity. Among the priority topics currently being addressed are innovation, the internet of things, artificial intelligence and deep learning, cybersecurity, and climate change. These priorities were set in response to Institute priorities, industry trends, and market demand. Multicourse certificate programs were added to the MIT PE portfolio in the past two years to answer market demand for nondegree credentials in new technology areas. To serve the learning needs of industry professionals outside the US who cannot easily come to MIT, MIT PE has expanded deliveries of some courses in countries in Asia and the Middle East, with plans to expand to Latin America and Africa. Along with in-classroom courses, MIT PE is actively pursuing the delivery of an expanding portfolio of online and blended (online and residential) learning courses to cater to a wider universe of professionals around the world.

Accomplishments

During the summer of 2019, MIT PE offered nearly 50 short courses (two to five days long) that were aimed at technology professionals and spanned a wide range of topics. These included artificial intelligence, machine learning, the invention process, persuasive communications, and how to lead engineering teams. Among new courses added this year

were Applied Blockchain: Implementation Technology Strategies, with John Williams and Abel Sanchez; Deep Learning for AI (Artificial Intelligence) Computer Vision, with Antonio Torralba and Philip Isola; Ethics of AI: Safeguarding Humanity, with Bernhardt L. Trout and Stefanie Jegelka; and Inclusive Innovation: Designing for a Better World, with Maria Yang and Amy Smith of MIT's D-Lab. This course was aimed at nonprofit organizations.

The certificate programs (each with four courses) offered under the Summer Short Programs portfolio were expanded from two to four to meet market demand. One new certificate was in Biotechnology and Life Sciences and one was in Design and Manufacturing. These certificates round out the existing Innovation and Technology and Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence certificates.

As part of MIT PE's effort to expand its international outreach, programs on innovation and design, innovation and leadership, and intercultural communication in teams were offered in Saudi Arabia, Dubai, India, and Singapore.

MIT PE also expanded its two-year-old line of blended, collaborative learning programs to include courses addressing digital transformation, machine learning, and smart manufacturing. Each time these courses were offered, there were 400–500 registrants. A popular blended course, Intersection of Leadership and Innovation, was translated and offered in Spanish for Spanish-language markets (a first for MIT). There were several hundred registrants from Latin America, with the highest number coming from Peru.

Funding

MIT PE continues to be a wholly self-sustaining entity, contributing significant surplus revenues to the Office of the Provost and the School of Engineering for discretionary spending.

Challenges and Prospective Solutions

While the market climate is very positive for expanding MIT PE programs, there is a lack of available classroom space on campus, especially during the academic year. To house additional staff and support overall growth in program activity, MIT PE will move to expanded office space in fiscal year 2020. To support lifelong learning on a long-term basis, however, MIT PE would ideally have its own combined office and executive education classroom space. This would allow custom corporate programs to be conducted in the MIT PE space throughout the year. Open-enrollment programs could continue to be conducted in available classrooms on campus.

Personnel

Karen Morrissey from Harvard Executive Education joined MIT PE as assistant director for short programs. Lu Men joined the team as manager for international programs and Brittany Law joined as program coordinator for short programs. Kandis Schuler was promoted to finance officer.

Bhaskar Pant
Executive Director