

Security Survey Results

1. Survey Methodology

Following student discussion of the security changes made starting summer 2013, this survey was written and administered by Matthew Davis and Phoebe Whitwell, the Dormitory Council Housing Chairs for 2014-2015. The survey opened on December 1, 2014, and was closed on December 15, 2014. During that time, it received over 1,000 responses. Mid-way through the time during which the survey was open, a small Techcash reward (to be awarded to four randomly selected survey participants) was offered to incentivise survey participation. On December 1, the survey was sent individually to each large dormitory social list, as well as to undergrads@mit.edu (by the UA president) and to the Panhellenic Association (by the Panhel president). There was a second email sent to each dorm social list on December 10 when the incentive was announced. The survey responses were validated by confirmation that each response included a valid kerberos account attached to it. These kerberos accounts were used only to verify the validity of the survey response and was not associated with the content of the response in any analysis.

At the time of the survey opening, it had not been reviewed by Institutional Research as it was determined that the issue was time-sensitive enough to warrant quick survey release. Before constructing this report, Matthew and Phoebe met with Jagruti Patel from IR to discuss the questions that might have been misleading, thereby providing inaccurate survey results, as well as the best ways to analyze the data. She pointed out that in many questions, the “Neutral” response is very large, which is probably due to people using “Neutral” as a “N/A” answer (no “N/A” option was provided.) She also pointed out where some wording was unclear, such as the definition of an “event” for questions 13-15 and the definition of “MIT culture” in question 21. Additionally, Ms. Patel suggested that in future surveys, statements in agree/disagree ranges should be mixed positive and negative, rather than all positive as seen here. In the future, we would certainly incorporate Ms. Patel’s suggestions, and we would like to thank her sincerely here for working with us.

2. Total Results

1. **Kerberos of participants** (*not included here; requested only to ensure that participants were valid MIT students or staff and were not answering more than once*)

2. Class Year	
Freshmen	29%
Sophomore	24%
Junior	23%
Senior	20%
Undergraduate, >senior	2%
Graduate	2%
Housemaster	0.354%
Total	1,131

3. Residence			
<i>Dormitory</i>	<i>Percent Survey Responses</i>	<i>Percent Residents of that Dorm*</i>	<i># Dorm Residents</i>
Baker	7%	24%	318
Burton-Conner	10%	33%	344
East Campus	15%	47%	354
Maseeh	6%	15%	326
MacGregor	10%	33%	462
McCormick	6%	27%	237
New House	8%	33%	291
Next House	9%	29%	347
Random	4%	52%	93
Senior House	5%	40%	146
Simmons	8%	27%	344
FSILG	9%		
Off-Campus/Other	3%		
Total		31%	

**based on resident numbers found on Housing website*

4. International Students	
International	7%
5. Gender	
Male	40%
Female	57%
Other/Prefer not to disclose	3%
6. Student Desk Workers	
Desk workers	11%

7. Experience with professional security workers

A professional security worker makes me feel safe.

Very True	7%
True	17%
Somewhat True	21%
Neutral	20%
Somewhat False	11%
False	14%
Very False	11%

A professional security worker makes me feel comfortable.

Very True	5%
True	13%
Somewhat True	14%
Neutral	20%
Somewhat False	15%
False	15%
Very False	17%

A professional security worker promotes a positive atmosphere.

Very True	4%
True	9%
Somewhat True	11%
Neutral	19%
Somewhat False	19%
False	20%
Very False	18%

A professional security worker is helpful in understanding security policies.

Very True	5%
True	8%
Somewhat True	13%
Neutral	21%
Somewhat False	14%
False	18%
Very False	21%

Total Answering **939**

8-9. Experience with Security Workers (*text response*)

Write three words that best describe your experience with professional security workers.

Of 397 distinct responses, 18% were clearly positive towards professional security workers. The most common positive descriptors were “friendly” and “polite”. 2% of total responses described security workers as increasing safety or “necessary”. 20% of responses were neutral, with common descriptors being “formal” (4% of total responses), “fine” or “neutral” (7% of total responses), and “distant”. 60% of total responses were clearly negative to varying degrees. 11% of total responses described security workers as “unnecessary”, while 8% described security workers as “obstructive” or otherwise

complained about the time spent checking in with the security worker and 7% described security workers as “rude” or otherwise “unprofessional”. A further 7% said they were frustrated or annoyed by security workers, while 6% of total responses went to each of the following descriptive categories: “incompetent” or “unprepared”; “awkward” or “uncomfortable”; and “uncaring”, “unfriendly”, or “unhelpful”.

Please write any comments you have about professional security workers.

There were 405 distinct responses to this question. As many responses covered more than one topic, and some responses were irrelevant (ie. when the student had no interactions with security workers), it is difficult to present accurate percentages and therefore none are included in this version of the analysis. Both positive and negative feedback of interactions with individual security worker were common, though there was more positive feedback for individual workers overall. Many people also expressed that whether the security experience was positive or negative varied greatly by the individual worker. Some students reported inappropriate conduct from individual security workers, such as harassment or undue meanness, or felt that certain of them did not perform competently.

The most common feedback not regarding individual workers was that the presence of the security workers seems unnecessary and doesn't add anything to the way that the security was run before. Many students also noted that the security workers should be better informed about the security policies as well as the idiosyncrasies of MIT dorm culture, and that many security workers are overly strict, enforcing the rules no matter the circumstances (i.e. not letting student EMTs responding to a call into the building, or, in a less extreme example, not letting a student who had forgotten their ID back in after they had just observed the student exiting the building as a resident.) However, many responses noted that the over-adherence to policy was less due to individual workers being over-zealous and more due to the strictness of the policy itself and the desire of the workers not to lose their jobs.

Many responses proposed that it would be better to trust security to MIT employees or students rather than outside contractors and that the presence of the security workers interrupts the home-like environment of the dorms. Some responses noted that it is reassuring to have professionals in the dorms to enforce security policies, while others observed that the security policies can be confusing to students, that often security workers and student desk workers do not cooperate well with each other, that there is a lot of inconsistency in the enforcement of the rules from building to building and security worker to security worker, and that having a consistent security worker for each building who is a good fit for that building is important.

- “I appreciate how the security workers are all female in McCormick. There is one nighttime security worker who is super friendly!”
- “They are generally kind and helpful people, but it's not clear to me that their presence makes any impact on dorm security. The process of checking in a non MIT guest every single time they enter

the building is annoying enough that I simply have my guest continue walking past the front desk, and 50% of the time, they are not asked to check in.”

- “When working desk, some of the security workers will comment about what I’m doing. It’s really uncomfortable to know they’re looking over my shoulder and paying attention to what I’m doing when I work desk.”
- “Despite having set exceptions allowing for [religious Jews on the Sabbath] to get into the dorm without their ID, the professional security worker will ignore the policy, which is incredibly difficult to deal with.”
- “The fact that they are not permitted to even leave the desk shows their inefficacy to possibly avert a threat in the dormitory...not once have I seen a security worker have to deny someone entrance, or deal with an unauthorized person.”

10. Experience with Security Cameras

A security camera makes me feel safe.

Very True	3%
True	12%
Somewhat True	19%
Neutral	19%
Somewhat False	13%
False	16%
Very False	18%

A security camera makes me feel comfortable.

Very True	2%
True	6%
Somewhat True	10%
Neutral	18%
Somewhat False	15%
False	19%
Very False	30%

I am comfortable with outside security cameras at entrances.

Very True	12%
True	28%
Somewhat True	19%
Neutral	14%
Somewhat False	8%
False	8%
Very False	11%

I am comfortable with outside security cameras in general.

Very True	10%
True	21%
Somewhat True	17%
Neutral	15%
Somewhat False	13%
False	11%
Very False	13%

I am comfortable with indoor security cameras at entrances.

Very True	7%
True	17%
Somewhat True	14%
Neutral	14%
Somewhat False	14%
False	13%
Very False	21%

I am comfortable with indoor security cameras in general.

Very True	3%
True	6%
Somewhat True	8%
Neutral	12%
Somewhat False	17%
False	18%
Very False	36%

I am comfortable with security camera footage being stored indefinitely.

Very True	2%
True	7%
Somewhat True	9%
Neutral	11%
Somewhat False	15%
False	15%
Very False	41%

I am comfortable with security camera footage being stored for two weeks.

Very True	6%
True	18%
Somewhat True	22%
Neutral	19%
Somewhat False	12%
False	11%
Very False	12%

I am comfortable with security camera footage being accessed by MIT for administrative purposes.

Very True	4%
True	9%
Somewhat True	11%
Neutral	15%
Somewhat False	14%
False	15%
Very False	33%

I am comfortable with security camera footage being accessed by MIT for police purposes.

Very True	17%
True	24%
Somewhat True	23%
Neutral	14%
Somewhat False	8%
False	5%
Very False	9%

Total Answering **930**

11. Experience with Security Cameras

There was a total of 332 text responses to this question. In general, comments regarding security cameras ranged from neutral to very negative, with many students expressing concerns about the idea of security cameras in general. In total, there were 14 overtly positive comments about security cameras.

Most student comments concerned one of the following:

- Desire to know where the security cameras are in a dorm;
- Concern about invasion of privacy;
- Concern with having cameras inside the dormitory;
- Concern with having cameras in public places, such as lounges;
- Concern with cameras viewing more than the door they are pointing at;
- Concern with cameras not being able to catch crime, or, when a crime is committed, not being accessible;
- Concern with the storage of film, specifically, there is no guarantee that film is destroyed after two weeks;
- Concern with who has access to footage, and whether this can be abused by others;
- Concern with overall transparency with the use of security cameras, requests for footage, and storage of film;
- Requests for cameras to look at bike racks.

12. Do you host events in your dormitory?

Yes	46%
No	39%
N/A	15%
Total Answering	938

13. Effect on Event Planning

Security policies are clear for events.

Very True/True/Somewhat True	31%
Neutral	22%
Somewhat False/False/Very False	47%

I know who to contact with questions regarding security and events.

Very True/True/Somewhat True	33%
Neutral	18%
Somewhat False/False/Very False	49%

Professional security workers are responsive to my event needs.

Very True/True/Somewhat True	18%
Neutral	51%
Somewhat False/False/Very False	31%

Professional security workers treat guests respectfully.

Very True/True/Somewhat True	33%
Neutral	40%
Somewhat False/False/Very False	27%

15. Effect on Event Planning (text responses)

16. Visiting Dormitories

How often do you visit dormitories other than your own?

Very Often	19%
Often	22%
Sometimes	51%
Never	8%

How often do you attend formal events at other dormitories?

Very Often	2%
Often	7%
Sometimes	45%
Never	46%

17. Reasons for Visiting Dormitories (text response)

18. For each dormitory for which you are on a guest list or frequently visit, please indicate your experience entering as a guest.

<i>Dormitory</i>	<i>Frequent Visitors</i>	<i>Average Response*</i>
Baker	303	2.891
Burton-Conner	293	2.744
East Campus	240	1.667
MacGregor	191	2.859
Maseeh	382	2.856
McCormick	292	2.582
New	166	2.849

Next	253	2.407
Random	117	2.897
Senior House	156	2.635
Simmons	247	2.814

**On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being the most positive and 5 being the most negative.*

19. Please indicate your level of familiarity with each of the following.

Guest Policy		
Very Familiar		26%
Somewhat Familiar		41%
Know of it, not where to find it		26%
Unfamiliar		8%
Event Policy		
Very Familiar		7%
Somewhat Familiar		27%
Know of it, not where to find it		38%
Unfamiliar		27%
Security Policy		
Very Familiar		8%
Somewhat Familiar		27%
Know of it, not where to find it		36%
Unfamiliar		29%
Security Camera Policy		
Very Familiar		7%
Somewhat Familiar		12%
Know of it, not where to find it		36%
Unfamiliar		49%

20. Please indicate your level of satisfaction with each of the following.

Guest Policy		
Very Satisfied/Satisfied/Somewhat Satisfied		39%
Neutral		11%
Somewhat Unsatisfied/Unsatisfied/Very Unsatisfied		50%
Event Policy		
Very Satisfied/Satisfied/Somewhat Satisfied		23%
Neutral		38%
Somewhat Unsatisfied/Unsatisfied/Very Unsatisfied		40%
Security Policy		
Very Satisfied/Satisfied/Somewhat Satisfied		18%
Neutral		25%
Somewhat Unsatisfied/Unsatisfied/Very Unsatisfied		57%

Security Camera Policy	
Very Satisfied/Satisfied/Somewhat Satisfied	14%
Neutral	24%
Somewhat Unsatisfied/Unsatisfied/Very Unsatisfied	61%

21. Response to Potential Changes to Security

Allied Barton workers answering security questions.	
Very Positive/Positive/Somewhat Positive	44%
Neutral	39%
Somewhat Negative/Negative/Very Negative	17%
Allied Barton workers receiving additional training on MIT culture.	
Very Positive/Positive/Somewhat Positive	76%
Neutral	16%
Somewhat Negative/Negative/Very Negative	7%
Reworking guest policy with dorm governments and relevant administrators	
Very Positive/Positive/Somewhat Positive	83%
Neutral	14%
Somewhat Negative/Negative/Very Negative	3%
Reworking security policy with dorm governments and relevant administrators	
Very Positive/Positive/Somewhat Positive	82%
Neutral	15%
Somewhat Negative/Negative/Very Negative	4%
Reworking security camera policy with dorm governments and relevant administrators	
Very Positive/Positive/Somewhat Positive	78%
Neutral	19%
Somewhat Negative/Negative/Very Negative	4%
Reworking event policy with dorm governments and relevant administrators	
Very Positive/Positive/Somewhat Positive	71%
Neutral	26%
Somewhat Negative/Negative/Very Negative	3%
Removal of Allied Barton security workers and replacing them with a student deskworker	
Very Positive/Positive/Somewhat Positive	62%
Neutral	16%
Somewhat Negative/Negative/Very Negative	23%
Removal of Allied Barton security and replacing them with MIT staff (ie Nightwatch)	
Very Positive/Positive/Somewhat Positive	52%
Neutral	24%
Somewhat Negative/Negative/Very Negative	24%
Installing additional security cameras	
Very Positive/Positive/Somewhat Positive	13%
Neutral	22%
Somewhat Negative/Negative/Very Negative	65%

Reducing existing number of security cameras	
Very Positive/Positive/Somewhat Positive	55%
Neutral	32%
Somewhat Negative/Negative/Very Negative	12%
Implementing an institute committee on security policies and changes	
Very Positive/Positive/Somewhat Positive	61%
Neutral	29%
Somewhat Negative/Negative/Very Negative	10%
Allowing access to additional doors	
Very Positive/Positive/Somewhat Positive	82%
Neutral	13%
Somewhat Negative/Negative/Very Negative	5%

22. Additional Ideas for Improving Security *(text response)*

There were 159 distinct responses to this question. Common suggestions are listed below in order of much people suggested them:

- Allow access via additional doors
- Remove Allied-Barton workers and replace with MIT staff or student deskworkers
- More student participation in decision processes and policy drafting
- Varied guest list suggestions, many specific to individual dorms
- Remove all security changes made in the last two years
- Tailor security to individual dorms
- Remove cameras (all cameras or just inside cameras, depending)
- Automate guest list system
- Grant any MIT undergraduate access to any dorm
- Stricter guest policy for parents
- Give security workers the freedom to use their judgment/discretion and relax strict guidelines
- Standardize guest policy across dorms
- Clarify guest policies for events
- Remove time restrictions on guests
- Make policies easier to find
- Implement formal complaint system

23. Additional Comments *(text response)*

There were 110 distinct responses to this question. Most comments focused on the following four areas, listed in order of decreasing magnitude:

- Dissatisfaction with current guest list policies, ranging from not being able to enter after 12AM, to the lack of consistency between dormitories;
- Concern with the placement of security cameras inside dormitories, and recommendations to place cameras outside the dormitory;
- Concern with inconsistent application of security policies by Allied Barton security workers.