Dean, School of Science

The mission of the School of Science is to teach and do research in the sciences (life, physical, and mathematical) that supports the creation and transfer of knowledge, educates the world's future scientists, and leads to innovation and discoveries that enhance human knowledge and experience. The School of Science accomplishes this mission by providing comprehensive education in the sciences and mathematics to MIT undergraduate and graduate students, conducting forefront research of the highest quality that pushes the boundaries of knowledge and the frontiers of science, enhancing the educational and scholarly connections between and among scientific disciplines and between science and engineering; mentoring postdoctoral scientists and junior faculty so that they can excel, promoting public service and educational and scholarly outreach, and creating and maintaining a diverse and broadly inclusive environment that strives to be free of intellectual barriers.

Building and Strengthening a Diverse Community

One of the highest priorities of the School administration is to support our existing outstanding faculty and to recruit exceptionally talented young researchers and educators, especially underrepresented minorities and women, to our faculty. A new faculty search policy has been established with standards to guarantee that every search is used as a vehicle to increase the diversity of our faculty. The School has made intensive efforts to identify minority candidates; however, the pool of available candidates is very small in all fields of science. Further, competition for the available candidates is intense. A gender equity committee established in the school this year was assigned to review the current practices for hiring women and minorities and examine methods for improvement.

School of Science Faculty Awards

Our faculty received numerous honors in recognition of their research and service, many offered by professional societies and professional communities. The individual reports from the School's departments, labs, and centers will make note of many of these awards. Several notable awards deserve additional mention here. Professor Richard Schrock was awarded the Nobel Prize in chemistry for his role in developing the method of metathesis in organic synthesis. In November 2005, the Medal of Science was awarded to Professors Phillip A. Sharp and Stephen J. Lippard. Professors Edward Adelson and Terry Orr-Weaver were elected to the National Academy of Sciences in recognition of their distinguished and continuing achievements in original research. Professors Timothy Swager, Tania Baker, Keith Nelson, and Earl Miller were elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and Professor Mriganka Sur was elected a fellow to the Royal Society. The School of Science Teaching Prizes were awarded to Professor Stephen Bell of Biology, Professor Denis Auroux of Mathematics, and Professor Scott Hughes of Physics for their outstanding teaching in undergraduate education. Dr. Dionisios Margetis of Mathematics was awarded the Teaching Prize for his outstanding efforts in graduate education.

School of Science Rewards and Recognition

The School of Science Rewards and Recognition Program continues to recognize the many dedicated and hard-working people within our departments, labs, and centers. During the 2006 academic year, the annual Infinite Mile ceremonies were held in April. A total of 33 awards were given in the categories of Infinite Mile Awards, the Dean's Education and Student Advising Awards, and the Dean's Recognition Award. In addition, the School offers the Spot Awards program, which recognizes employees "on the spot" for doing something beyond their normal duties. A total of 110 Spot Awards were awarded to a variety of support staff, service staff, technical staff, research staff, and administrators during fall 2005 and spring 2006.

Academic Program Statistics

There were 899 undergraduate majors in the School of Science during the past academic year, a 1% increase over the previous year. The number of minority student majors at the undergraduate level changed as follows:

African Americans	28 to 36 (28.5% increase)
Hispanics	69 to 70 (1.5% increase)
Native Americans	14 to 7 (50% decrease)
Asian Americans	369 to 242 (34.4% decrease)

Seventy-four minors were awarded in the School in AY2006. The female undergraduate population decreased from 479 to 448. Twenty-nine percent of the Institute's upperclass undergraduates were enrolled in the School of Science. Graduate enrollments in science decreased from 1,119 to 1,089, representing 18% of the graduate population at MIT. The number of minority students at the graduate level changed as follows:

African Americans	14 to 15 (7% increase)
Hispanics	28 to 31 (11% increase)
Native Americans	2 to 3 (50% increase)
Asian Americans	88 to 87 (1% decrease)

The number of female graduate students decreased by one, from 375 to 374. The overall percentage of female graduate students is 34%.

There were 276 faculty members in the School this year, up from 268 the previous year. The undergraduate student-to-faculty ratio remained at 3 to 1, and the graduate student-to-faculty ratio remained at 4 to 1.

Fundraising

New gifts and pledges to the School of Science totaled $71M in FY2006.

Research Volume

The FY2006 research volume for units within the School of Science totaled $138.5M, a $5.7M (4.0%) decrease from FY2005. The primary sponsors, in order of size, are the Department of Health and Human Services (National Institutes of Health primarily), the Department of Energy, the National Science Foundation, and NASA. The impact of School of Science faculty extends beyond the units of the School. The research volume for Science faculty at the Institute totaled $238.9M, a $600K (2.5%) decrease from FY2005.

The many new research initiatives and fundamental discoveries that occurred in the various departments and laboratories of the School of Science are discussed in the reports of those units.

Robert J. Silbey
Dean, School of Science
Class of 1942 Professor of Chemistry

More information about the School of Science can be found at http://web.mit.edu/science/.