

Chair of the Faculty

Faculty Policy Committee

The Faculty Policy Committee (FPC), chaired by Professor Lorna J. Gibson (the chair of the Faculty), spent most of the 2005–2006 academic year reviewing changes to the Faculty governance structure—in particular, changes to the *Rules and Regulations of the Faculty* and some of the Faculty’s standing committees. During the academic year, the committee met twice with the president.

One of the first actions taken by the committee was to ask the Faculty to approve a change of status for the secretary of the Faculty from guest to member of the FPC. The Faculty voted to approve this change in the fall of 2005.

Professor Gibson chaired a committee to review MIT’s student disciplinary system. The committee, composed of faculty, students, and legal counsel, decided that several changes needed to be made to the system and to the charge and membership of the Committee on Discipline. Changes included creating a single pathway for discipline cases and allowing appeal to the chancellor in cases of suspension or expulsion. In the past those appeals were made to the president. The Faculty approved these changes in fall 2005.

Professor Gibson commissioned an ad hoc committee to review the nominations process for the standing committees of the Faculty. In spring 2005, names other than those chosen by the Committee on Nominations for the annual nominations slate were circulated for committee membership. The ad hoc committee, chaired by Professor Alar Toomre, recommended that in the event of alternate nominations—as allowed by section 1.51 of the *Rules and Regulations of the Faculty*—more time be given for faculty members to review the names of the alternate nominations and that more background information on the alternate nominations be presented. It was widely agreed that the Committee on Nominations applies extensive research and thought to its recommendations of faculty committee membership; the alternate nominations should enjoy the same consideration.

The FPC reviewed the Committee on Graduate Student Programs (CGSP) and recommended several changes to the committee’s charge and membership following numerous meetings with graduate student officers, graduate students administrators, the dean for graduate students, the vice president for research, and graduate student members. The FPC recommended to the Faculty that the CGSP be renamed the Committee on Graduate Programs, that the committee focus more on graduate student policies, and that the membership of the committee decrease significantly. A group of graduate student administrators will continue to meet to discuss procedural issues such as grades and new courses. The Faculty voted to approve these changes in April 2006.

The FPC reviewed the Biological Engineering Division’s request to become course number 20. The committee approved this request with support from the Committee on Curricula, the dean of engineering, and the head of the division. The Faculty approved this request in February.

The FPC heard reports from the Task Force on the Undergraduate Educational Commons, the Task Force on Medical Care for the MIT Community, the cochairs of the Council on Faculty Diversity, the Graduate Student Council Task Force on Diversity, and the Committee to Review the Engineering Systems Division. The FPC also met with the chairs of the Committee on Student Life and the Committee on the Undergraduate Program, as well as with Chancellor Phillip Clay and dean for graduate students Isaac Colbert to discuss the advising and mentoring of both undergraduate and graduate students. The FPC discussed research ethics with ombudsperson Mary Rowe, reviewed policies for family care for faculty (presented by Professor Lotte Bailyn), and MIT's response to the request from the National Institutes of Health for depositions of publications (presented by Professor Brian Evans, chair of the Committee on the Library System and Ann Wolpert, director of the MIT Libraries).

Committee on Academic Performance

The Committee on Academic Performance (CAP) reviewed 339 petitions this year. Last year's number was 327, and the average for the past five years is 396. Of this year's petitions 283 (83 percent) were approved, 39 (12 percent) denied and 17 (5 percent) have not yet been resolved.

The CAP placed 318 students on warning. Last year's number was 256 and the average for the past five years is 309. Students required to withdraw totaled 51. Last year's number was 48 and the average for the past five years is 42. Details of this year's actions are given below.

CAP End-of-Term Action Summary 2005–2006

Year	Fall 2005		Spring 2006	
	Warnings	Required withdrawals	Warnings	Required withdrawals
Freshmen	56	0	37	4
Sophomores	53	4	39	10
Juniors	40	5	29	11
Seniors	44	9	20	8
Total	193	18	125	33

This year the CAP began to benefit from a number of policy issues addressed in the previous year: the Communication Requirement, retroactive credit for students returning after a financial hold, late add of an Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP) subject, medical leaves and the CAP end-of-term meetings, suspension of services to students required to withdraw, and "ghost students." Last year's changes allowed the committee to focus on the factors influencing students' poor performance, and to be more uniform in its decisions, both from term to term and across departments.

During the year the CAP dealt with the policy issues in these areas:

- Identifying ghost students
- Participation of resource people in end-of-term meetings
- Expectations for students on warning

Several issues that should be addressed in the next academic year are presented in the committee's full annual report.

Committee on Curricula

The Committee on Curricula (COC) acts with power on proposals to create, revise, or cancel undergraduate subjects and on student petitions for second SB degrees and substitutions for the General Institute Requirements.

During the 2005–2006 academic year, the COC analyzed and approved the assignment of a course number (20) to the Biological Engineering program. The committee approved major curriculum changes for Course 1 (Civil and Environmental Engineering), Course 2 (Mechanical Engineering), and Course 16 (Aeronautics and Astronautics). The committee also approved a new minor in Course 21-F (Japanese).

The committee approved 62 new subjects that included six Restricted Electives in Science and Technology subjects, and 10 communication-intensive Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences subjects. The committee also reviewed and approved 725 substantial changes to existing subjects, including four communication-intensive major subjects approved by the Subcommittee on the Communication Requirement.

Committee on Discipline

The Committee on Discipline (COD), chaired by Professor Margery Resnick, held 17 hearings involving a total of 21 students this year. The COD heard charges related to academic dishonesty, misuse of alcohol, assault, breaking and entering, computer misuse, sexual harassment, theft, and vandalism. The demographic breakdown of respondents includes 14 men and 7 women, with 20 undergraduate students and 1 graduate student.

Sanctions imposed ranged from formal probation to suspension and expulsion to withholding the degree for one year. In addition, faculty and staff members sent warning letters to the Office of Student Conduct advising that they had taken disciplinary action against 21 students.

The committee functioned smoothly, and successfully integrated the new rules passed by the Faculty for COD hearings. These new rules formalized the single pathway to review disciplinary complaints and changed the way in which sanctions are imposed and appealed. The committee now has the authority to impose sanctions of suspension or expulsion, and the chancellor reviews and acts on appeals. The committee membership for 2005–2006 included two new faculty members and two new undergraduate student members. The COD worked closely with the Office of the Dean for Undergraduate Education, Office of the Dean for Student Life, MIT Medical, and MIT's legal counsel throughout the year.

Committee on Faculty–Administration

The Committee on Faculty–Administration (CFA), chaired by Professor Mary Fuller, was charged by the chair of the Faculty with conducting a review of its mission to determine

whether CFA served a continuing purpose. A meeting of roughly half the members early in the fall term quickly concluded that the committee should be disbanded, a conclusion reiterated in individual meetings with the remaining members (and echoing the committee's report to the president in 2004–2005). Two reasons came to the fore: first, that the committee has historically lacked both a regular stream of business and a mandate to act on any recommendations; and second, that while actual and potential issues exist at the overlap of MIT's faculty and administration, it was felt that a standing committee that meets irregularly is not an effective instrument for addressing those issues. The chair of the committee will go to the Faculty Policy Committee in the fall with a recommendation to disband; that step precedes a vote by the Faculty.

Committee on the Library System

As anticipated at the beginning of the year, four issues occupied much of the attention of the Committee on the Library System (CLS) this year: the scholarly communications situation, budget and facilities for the library system, DSpace and its implementation, and the institution of a visual data bank.

Of these issues, the visual data bank and DSpace are the least problematic. Thanks to the groundwork of the prior chair of this committee, Professor Carolyn Jones, and the hard work of Steven Gass and other individuals on the Library Systems staff, the visual data bank initiative will begin a pilot program with faculty members in the Architecture and Humanities departments intended to produce a digital teaching collection of visual images. Additional work will undoubtedly be needed to provide methods for incorporating visual research collections in the future.

DSpace has grown from its initial stages into a robust Institute resource. It has proven to be a nationwide prototype for digital repositories of academic and research data. Still, use of this resource by the faculty has been slower than anticipated. In part, the lack of response owes to underdeveloped awareness, but some work could also be expended to make it easier to submit materials. The DSpace initiative, which faces the end of its seed grants, is convolved with the academic publishing issues that are discussed below.

Progress has been slow in planning for new facilities for the Libraries' physical collections. It is important that this planning momentum be maintained and, if possible, increased so that an orderly improvement of the bricks and mortar portion of the library system can be accomplished.

The issue of maintaining a healthy, accessible system of scholarly communications has been a slow, but complex, problem affecting many sectors of the higher education community. It involves private for-profit publishers, not-for-profit academic institutions, government funding agencies, and university publishing houses and is, therefore, not a simple problem to solve. The CLS members grappled with the problem of finding the best way to make progress. During an Institute Faculty Meeting this spring, Ann Wolpert, the director of the Libraries, and Professor Alice Gast, vice president for research, presented a discussion of the difficulties facing the academic publishing enterprise faculty committee. Professor Brian Evans, outgoing CLS chair, wrote a brief piece for the *Faculty Newsletter* in an attempt to publicize the issue a little further. At

the last two CLS meetings the members discussed some details of a proposed Faculty resolution that the committee would like to moot for general discussion within the Institute.

Committee on Nominations

The 2005–2006 Committee on Nominations comprised two new members and four returning veterans, including the committee chair, Professor Robert E. Cohen. Staff associate Peggy Peterson served the committee for a second consecutive year.

The blend of experience and new insights led to a smooth and productive year for the Committee on Nominations. Several vacancies on the rosters of the standing committees were filled during the fall term, and an early start was made on the new slate of nominees needed for the April 2006 Faculty Meeting. The committee met its goal of securing the full slate of nominees by the end of the calendar year 2005, leaving ample time during the Independent Activities Period and spring term for careful deliberation and outreach into the community in regard to nominating the next faculty chair.

As in past years, the committee made use of the self-generated faculty preference database provided by the administration, as well as suggestions that derived from personal contacts and the past experience of committee members. A prioritized list was developed for each committee, taking into account the Committee on Nominations's concern for balanced membership for all of the committees in terms of gender and minority representation and in representation from the five Schools of the Institute.

The slate of nominees (29 faculty members for 12 Standing Committees of the Faculty and the nominee for the chair of the faculty) was introduced at the April Faculty Meeting and approved unanimously in May. At the time of this writing the Nominations Committee is completing its final task for the year, filling the six faculty vacancies on the new Committee on Graduate Programs.

Committee on Outside Professional Activities

The Committee on Outside Professional Activities, chaired by Professor Bruce Tidor, is charged with keeping informed of potential conflicts of interest, counseling the interested parties, reporting periodically to the Faculty, and recommending appropriate modifications of policies and procedures to the Faculty. Due to its relative inactivity over the past few years, the committee has initiated a review of its role in the structure of the standing committees of the Faculty.

Committee on Student Life

In an effort begun previously, most student groups presented their plans and issues before the Committee on Student Life (CSL). Several groups returned to CSL later in the year for additional discussion. These groups included the Undergraduate Association, Graduate Student Association, Panhellenic Association, Association for Women Students, DormCon, Association of Student Activities, and fraternities, sororities, and independent living groups.

In addition, the CSL heard reports on specific topics from the Student Health Advisory Council, MIT Medical, the Graduate Student Council Housing and Community Affairs Committee, and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Program.

Together with the chair of the Committee on the Undergraduate Program, CSL chair Professor Hazel Sive, with input from the committee, continued to work under Chancellor Clay to implement and discuss improvements to upperclass undergraduate advising at MIT. Progress was reported at the May Faculty Meeting, one year after the report was submitted. Implementation pertained to the freshman/sophomore transition, student advisor programs, increased numbers of advisor/advisee meetings, information dissemination, and the notion that students must participate actively in the advising process.

Interact at MIT, a new website designed to promote faculty/student interaction, was designed by CSL last year. It includes a searchable faculty database and other useful information. Launch of the site was delayed through this year due to necessary improvements and other issues. The site is to be launched in fall 2006, and will be a welcome addition to the MIT databases.

The issue of harassment at MIT has not been addressed at an Institute-wide level for 15 years. Numerous resources exist to advise students and others, and to monitor and provide support for victims of harassment at MIT. However, the CSL felt that broader questions of reasonable behavior have not been recently addressed. With encouragement from the president, provost and chancellor, the committee began to discuss such issues. CSL consulted with ombudsperson Mary Rowe, president emeritus Paul Gray, MIT Human Resources director Laura Avakian and colleagues, COD chair Professor Margery Resnick, dean for undergraduate education Daniel Hastings, MIT information technology representative Timothy McGovern, and LGBT program coordinator Abigail Francis and colleagues.

Over a series of fascinating and productive conversations, we formulated a first phase plan to promote discussion of reasonable behavior at MIT. This has included writing scenarios presenting behavior that may be reasonable or unreasonable, depending on the reader's perspective. These will be included in a brochure and on "tent cards" at MIT dining facilities, which will stimulate discussion. Additionally, six contact offices and personnel available to discuss possible unreasonable behavior have been identified, and these will be advertised to the community. Extension of these initiatives will continue next year.

Committee on Undergraduate Admissions and Financial Aid

This year the Committee on Undergraduate Admissions and Financial Aid (CUAFA), chaired by Professor Nigel Wilson, focused on two issues: how to make MIT's financial aid offers more competitive in light of changes being made in financial aid by some of our main competitors, and how to increase the number of underrepresented minority undergraduates. Committee members spent considerable time addressing the role that the required self-help level might play both in affecting applicants' perception of the cost of an MIT education, and their performance and behavior while at the Institute. CUAFA

recommended lowering the level of self-help across the board from its current level of \$5,500. When it became clear that this was not feasible financially for the Institute, CUAFA supported the new policy developed by Student Financial Services to match Pell Grants as a way of targeting reductions in self-help to those in greatest financial need. The Institute adopted this policy, and a careful assessment of the results will be undertaken this summer to evaluate its effectiveness.

The Admissions Office undertook a major effort to increase MIT's outreach to the underrepresented minority communities this year by hiring additional staff and developing new programs. These initiatives resulted in an increase of almost 15 percent in the number of underrepresented minority students admitted for the Class of 2010. Although the figures on students accepting admission are not yet final, at this point we expect to have the largest number of African American students since 1999 along with the highest yield for African Americans since 1994. Both these issues will be a continuing focus for CUAFA attention in the coming year.

Committee on the Undergraduate Program

In 2005–2006, the Committee on the Undergraduate Program (CUP) continued its focus on advising and mentoring, with particular attention to freshman advising. The committee heard reports from the Academic Resource Center (ARC) on the status of the Residence-based Advising (RBA) program as well as on Freshman Advising Seminars and traditional advising. CUP members agreed that RBA has been very successful on a number of levels and urged the ARC to maintain a flexible approach and explore efforts to expand this advising option, where appropriate. The committee underscored the need for more faculty participation in freshman advising and made a number of suggestions, immediate and long-term, in support of that goal. One important element of this push is improving incentives for participation. CUP members commended the steps taken to date to improve the transition from freshman to major advising but also urged that the policies and procedures for purging freshman advising folders be reexamined.

The ARC also updated the CUP on the status of UROP. Of particular concern to CUP members are the funding challenges and the level of participation among underrepresented minorities.

The CUP continued to work with the Committee on Student Life and the chancellor to implement the recommendations laid out in the May 2002 CUP/CSL Report to the Faculty on Advising and Mentoring of Undergraduates. Among the activities associated with this, the CUP chair met with the registrar to begin discussions about a possible summer working group to focus on the technical infrastructure needed to improve support for advising.

Committee members met with the faculty members receiving d'Arbeloff grant funds to develop and offer project-based subjects for freshmen in 2006–2007. The CUP will be working over the summer with the principal investigators of these pilots to articulate further the details of the subjects and identify appropriate incentives for student participation. Also in support of next year's d'Arbeloff initiatives, the CUP approved a

three-unit extension to the 54-unit credit limit for freshmen enrolled for fall 2006 in 3.093 Finding and Evaluating Information.

The CUP has a variety of ongoing monitoring responsibilities. During 2005–2006, it continued to monitor the experimental Sophomore Exploratory Subject Option, which was in the third year of its five-year experimental period. Through its Subcommittee on the Communication Requirement (see below), the CUP maintained its oversight of this General Institute Requirement.

Subcommittee on the Communication Requirement

During 2005–2006, the CUP's Subcommittee on the Communication Requirement (SOCR) was chaired by Professor Suzanne Flynn, with Professor Tania Baker chairing the Communication Intensive Subject in the Major (CI-M) working group. The subcommittee's membership was altered beginning this year so that regular faculty members serve three-year terms, rather than the previous one-year terms, and the associate dean of the School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences will be an *ex officio* member. This latter change was an effort to strengthen the working relationship with the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (HASS) Overview Committee, chaired by the associate dean, which handles matters pertaining to the communication intensive subjects in HASS (CI-H).

SOCR continued its oversight of the Communication Requirement and focused its attention on launching a program evaluation of the requirement. In October, the subcommittee issued a request for proposals in search of outside experts to help develop this assessment. Much of January was spent interviewing candidates, but ultimately SOCR members determined that at least the initial phases of the evaluation could be conducted using in-house expertise. In February, Phase 1 of an 18-month, three-phase program evaluation was launched with the assistance of in-house program evaluator Rudolph Mitchell of the Teaching and Learning Lab.

The CI-M working group began a three-year cycle of visiting departments to discuss with them how their communication intensive subjects in the major are working in the context of the undergraduate degree programs. The working group also considered proposals for new and revised CI-M subjects.

SOCR members considered petitions from students seeking exemption to or adjustment of some aspect of the Communication Requirement. Petitions that demonstrated extenuating circumstances or compelling educational cause were approved.

Harold E. Edgerton Faculty Achievement Award Selection Committee

As in the past few years, the Harold E. Edgerton Faculty Achievement Award Selection Committee received more than a dozen very strong nominations from the various schools at MIT. We were especially impressed that many of the nominees combine pioneering research with stellar teaching evaluations. After a careful review, the committee selected an exceptional young colleague, Professor David Kaiser, for the award. At MIT, Professor Kaiser is associate professor of the history of science in the

Program in Science, Technology, and Society, as well as a lecturer in the Department of Physics.

Professor Kaiser, who was unanimously chosen to receive the award, completed a double major for the PhD (physics and history of science) in 2000, the year he was hired at MIT. He publishes extensively, as evidenced by the fact that he already has one monograph, more than 40 articles in leading journals and edited books, and one book of his own, which subsequently was awarded the coveted Pfizer Award. His nomination letter mentions that during his short time at MIT, having been hired by two departments, Professor Kaiser has “established an excellent reputation as a boundary-crosser.” He teaches undergraduates, graduates, and postdoctoral students with “fresh perspectives and collaborations that can result from such learning experiences.” “His highly successful collaboration in teaching with the School of Science provides a model for future teaching initiatives and shows that more and better interdisciplinary education is achievable.”

The following committee members made the selection: Karen R. Polenske, Urban Studies and Planning; Dimitris J. Bertsimas, Sloan School of Management; Seth Lloyd, Mechanical Engineering; Peter C. Perdue, History; and Robert T. Sauer, Biology.

The committee is pleased to recognize the outstanding qualities and exceptional accomplishments of Professor Kaiser. MIT established this award in 1982 as a permanent tribute to Institute Professor emeritus Harold E. “Doc” Edgerton, to recognize exceptional distinction in teaching, in research, and in scholarship.

James R. Killian Jr. Faculty Award Selection Committee

The James R. Killian Jr. Faculty Award Selection Committee, consisting of Professors Isabelle de Courtivron, Erich Ippen (chair), Leona Samson, Ezra Zucherman Sivan, and Anne Spirn, announced the selection of H. Robert Horvitz, David H. Koch professor of biology, as recipient of this year’s highest faculty achievement award. Professor Horvitz is a pioneer in using the simple roundworm *Caenorhabditis elegans* as an experimental organism for studying the genetic basis of the development of multicellular organisms. He and his research group have made seminal discoveries in areas of cell differentiation, programmed cell death, and nerve cell function that have led to fundamental understanding of development for all multicellular organisms.

Professor Horvitz’s accomplishments have been recognized internationally by numerous national and international awards, including the Nobel Prize for physiology or medicine in 2002. He is a member of the National Academy of Sciences and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. His recognition as the Killian Award recipient is a fitting honor for someone who has devoted his career not only to research, but also to 27 years of teaching and service to the Institute.

Lorna J. Gibson, Chair of the Faculty

Lily U. Burns, Staff Associate

More information about faculty governance may be found at <http://web.mit.edu/faculty/governance.html>.