

Dean for Graduate Education

The [Office of the Dean for Graduate Education](#) (ODGE) is an Institute-wide support and referral office for graduate students and graduate administrators. ODGE complements graduate administration in individual schools and departments, and advocates broadly for graduate education. ODGE comprises the Office of the Dean for Graduate Education, the [International Students Office](#) (ISO), and the [Graduate Student Council](#) (GSC); together, they foster academic excellence and quality of life for MIT's community of graduate students.

The mission of ODGE is to promote graduate education and student life at MIT. ODGE's vision is to make the graduate student experience at MIT a transformative one, thereby developing the next generation of scholars and leaders who will create new knowledge, innovate in ways that serve society, and educate succeeding generations. The strategic plan of ODGE is organized around four key themes: expanding the diversity of the graduate student population, improving funding for graduate education, enhancing the graduate community, and improving the day-to-day business processes within the offices of ODGE.

Office of the Dean for Graduate Education Headquarters

Leveraging the efforts of a small office with a headcount of 11, ODGE accomplishes its goals by working collaboratively with other units. This entails key partnerships with the offices of the Dean for Undergraduate Education, the Dean for Student Life, Resource Development, the Alumni Association, the Office of the Provost, and MIT's academic departments.

The role of the dean for graduate education is to provide a senior voice on behalf of graduate student issues and concerns and to work with the GSC to articulate relevant matters to senior administration. In addition, the office provides centralized services to the student body with regard to personal support and advising, policy administration, student status changes, financial support, recruitment efforts, and programs to support the graduate community.

International Students Office

The mission of the ISO is to help the international student population at MIT fulfill academic goals by providing services and support programs that facilitate adjustment to a new academic and cultural environment. The office assists students in maintaining their legal status in the US, provides support for their dependents, and promotes students' interaction with and integration into the MIT community at large. In addition, the staff of eight interfaces with all MIT offices, advocating for awareness in the community of issues relevant to MIT's international student population.

Graduate Student Council

The GSC works to enhance the graduate experience by promoting the general welfare and concerns of the graduate student body, creating new programs and initiatives to

provide opportunities for growth and interaction, and communicating with the MIT administration and faculty on behalf of graduate students. These goals are accomplished through a structure of elected student representatives, standing committees, and officers. The student council is supported by two support staff employees.

Diversity

ODGE serves as a catalyst for attracting a more diverse graduate student body to all of MIT's graduate academic programs, and provides students with various forms of support so that they succeed academically. ODGE's functional definition of diversity, in terms of its programs and initiatives, focuses on underrepresented minority students, who primarily include African American, Native American, Hispanic, and Hispanic American students. ODGE has also sought to work with women, first-generation college students, and students from small colleges in its recruiting and retention efforts.

ODGE is guided in its vision by a 2004 faculty resolution that called for MIT to increase the percentage of underrepresented minority graduate students by a factor of three within a decade. Since 2004, a number of strides have been made toward reaching the resolution's goals. The number of graduate school applications from underrepresented minority students has approximately doubled, to more than 1,100 applications. This increase in applications has led to a corresponding rise in the total number of underrepresented minority graduate students enrolled in MIT's graduate programs— from 301 students in 2004, to 453 students in 2010. Despite these gains, there is still much work to be done.

ODGE's ongoing strategy consists of two parts: partnering with academic departments to improve the quality of recruiting and mentoring, and developing programs operated by its office to support diversity. Continuing on this course allows ODGE to build on its work and evaluate its success.

The primary mechanisms for recruiting applicants from underserved and underrepresented groups and for engaging departments and programs are the MIT Summer Research Program (MSRP) and CONVERGE, a graduate pre-admissions preview weekend. ODGE has worked with departments to develop new initiatives, such as the new Biology Bridge Program (B³) for minority students (B³ is discussed in the Department of Biology report to president). ODGE has been actively involved in the Harvard-MIT Division of Health Sciences and Technology's diversity working group, which is developing initiatives to improve the diversity of the division's graduate population. ODGE also has consulted with the Department of Physics on its engagement with schools in the South and Southwest. ODGE plays a critical role in organizing MIT's presence at national recruiting conferences such as the Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students, the National Society of Black Engineers, the National Organization for the Professional Advancement of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers, the Society for the Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science, the American Indian Science and Engineering Society, and the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers.

CONVERGE

CONVERGE, a graduate preview weekend, seeks not only to encourage the highest caliber students to apply to MIT but also to shift the perception held by some potential students that MIT is a cold and unwelcoming place in which they cannot flourish. CONVERGE's mission is to increase the presence of underrepresented and underserved students in MIT's graduate programs. Since 2004, CONVERGE has brought nearly 200 students to campus, including 28 students in fall 2010. In the 2010 admissions cycle, 24 former CONVERGE participants applied for graduate admission. Seven of these students were admitted, six of whom will begin studies in fall 2011. Find additional background and information on the [CONVERGE website](#).

MIT Summer Research Program

The summer research program is MIT's premier recruitment tool for underrepresented minority graduate students. MSRP seeks to promote the value of graduate education, to improve the research enterprise through increased diversity, and to prepare and recruit the best and the brightest for graduate education at MIT. Since its inception, MSRP has seen more than 90% of program participants go on to pursue advanced degrees at institutions of higher learning. This year MIT departments admitted 12 former MSRP interns, 11 of whom accepted and will begin their programs in fall 2011.

In AY2011, 40 interns conducted research in 16 different departments. Ten of the participating faculty members had never hosted MSRP interns in the past but have now joined more than 200 faculty members who have been key to the program's success since its inception. These professors participate in intern selection, in matching interns with projects, and in academic interactions.

MSRP continues to build relationships with other institutions and programs. In 2010, MSRP worked with professor Juana Mendenhall, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Visiting Assistant Professor, from Morehouse College, to sponsor two of her students to conduct research at MIT. Both students presented their research at the Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students in November 2010. This year, two more students from Morehouse College have come to work with Professor Mendenhall and MIT faculty on joint projects. Additionally, partnerships with the Synthetic Biology Engineering Research Center and Hampton University's Research Experiences for Undergraduates program have solidified partnerships with key historically black colleges and universities. Find more information on the program at the [MSRP website](#).

Graduate School Clinic

The purpose of this initiative is to establish and grow strong relationships with top students at minority-serving institutions early in their academic careers. The process aims to identify and cultivate students who might not be the highest performers in their freshman year, but who have the potential to be MIT candidates by their junior and senior years. These students participate in an interactive presentation on preparing for graduate school that includes common themes from interviews, tools for applying to graduate school, tips on obtaining funding, advice on selecting a school and advisor,

and a host of other useful information. In AY2011, several graduate school clinics were conducted nationwide and 14 graduate students were trained to conduct the clinics.

Alumni Engagement

The purpose of the alumni engagement initiative is to identify and build relationships with underrepresented minority graduate alumni in key cities. This year, the Graduate Community Fellows Program created a model that allows alumni in key cities to be identified and sorted by MIT department and current employment, among other categories. Most notable is an asynchronous timeline that allows ODGE to quickly see which alumni were students at the same time and might have connections to one another. This model and these relationships have been used to further the conversation around various ways to engage minority alumni. In the coming year, key initiatives discussed in these conversations will be launched.

Future Faculty Workshop

In June 2011, ODGE cosponsored the Future Faculty Workshop: Diverse Leaders of Tomorrow. This two-day workshop sought to provide mentorship to aspiring underrepresented minority students with ambitions to become independent academic researchers in the areas of chemistry and chemical engineering.

Graduate Community

Today's graduate students actively seek opportunities to interact and share knowledge and experiences with fellow scholars, both within and outside their departments. Given the maturity of many MIT graduate students and the small size of the ODGE staff, ODGE's strategy in building a vibrant graduate community is to tap into student talent and creativity whenever possible. In addition to the critical work of personally supporting and advising students one-on-one, ODGE efforts have included Graduate Student Life Grants, which enable students to build their own community. The program boasts a growing cohort of graduate community fellows.

MIT has had a substantial international student population for many years. In AY2011, 3,168 international students from 114 countries were on campus. More than 675 spouses and children accompanied international students to the Institute, nearly all entering the US under MIT's legal sponsorship. Asian countries continue to dominate MIT's international population, with students from the People's Republic of China at the top of the list. In AY2011, nearly 28% of the overall MIT student population was international. At the undergraduate level, 9.28% of students were international; at the graduate degree-granting level, nearly 39% of students were international.

The Institute retains its enormous appeal to the best and the brightest around the world in nearly all science and engineering fields. This past academic year, all of the approximately 1,000 incoming international students who accepted offers of admission and could identify funding resources arrived by their program start dates.

The ISO is legally mandated to provide immigration information to all new students and to verify that they are in appropriate legal status. Required orientation programming

for all incoming foreign national students ensures that this important statutory responsibility is fulfilled on behalf of the Institute. In collaboration with the Office of the Registrar and MIT Card Services, incoming students are permitted to register and receive an MIT ID only after they have attended an ISO orientation. To accommodate graduate internationals who arrive at the Institute throughout the summer, the office continued to hold daily immigration sessions in August 2010 so that students could more quickly participate in MIT community life upon their arrival.

All international students, regardless of age, degree program, or familiarity with life in the US, undergo a period of cultural adjustment. They and their dependents require information about their new surroundings, culture, and community. These needs are addressed by orientation activities such as a campus police workshop and an MIT Medical presentation, as well as updated information on being a spouse and partner at MIT, on elementary schools in the Boston area, and on English language classes. Newly admitted students have been able to find answers to many of their practical questions and concerns prior to arrival in the US by accessing the [ISO website](#).

GSC's student life activities included orientation, social events throughout the year, and advocacy on topics critical to graduate student needs. Social activities were reprioritized and consolidated, and strategic new events are now in-flight. Advocacy topics significantly expanded in AY2011, including work on capital projects such as the potential repurposing of Walker Memorial.

Orientation

GSC organized the largest graduate orientation in MIT's history, which featured three overarching goals or themes: know the Institute, know the people, and know the city. In addition, AY2011 orientation added an international development theme to numerous events, including the annual welcome address with MIT president Susan Hockfield.

The ISO is solely responsible for international freshman orientation. While only 9.28% of AY2011 undergraduates were international, they required advice and services at a disproportionate rate compared to their graduate counterparts, especially with respect to immigration compliance issues. Freshman orientation has been designed specifically to help introduce international students to the extensive immigration responsibilities they have while pursuing their academic programs.

Personal Support and Advising

Over the past year, requests to ODGE for outreach, advice, referral, or other assistance related to graduate students' personal and academic matters have continued to increase dramatically. Such requests have come from students themselves, as well as from faculty (most often thesis advisors, housemasters, and department graduate officers), department graduate administrators, and others in the community whose core work includes supporting the life and learning of graduate students. Communication of these requests has ranged from email to phone calls to individual appointments, and the nature and complexity of the student support requested or needed has been unpredictable. No day is without a request for advice or support, and the issues may be related to matters as personal as the illness or death of a family member; emotional

or mental health; or parental, spousal or partner relationship dysfunctions. Concerns related to academics and research also vary, and are typically multifaceted.

The one staff person who handles almost all student “cases” in ODGE, the senior associate dean, is likely to see four or more students a day who need guidance and support and who, often enough, need referral to a mental health and counseling clinician. Each student generally requires continued support over some period of time and may need help in communicating with faculty, administrators, family, and other relevant MIT offices and individuals. Thus, in addition to the in-person meetings, extensive outreach and follow-up are essential to caring for the “whole” student. The level of engagement on the part of the senior associate dean is intrinsically intense in a variety of ways.

Over the past year, ODGE approved and processed 52 graduate student medical leaves, compared to 30 in the previous year. In the spring 2011 alone, 16 students went on leave, 15 continued on leave, and 5 students returned to their graduate programs from prior terms on leave. Of all medical leaves for AY2011, 81% were recommended by MIT Medical’s mental health and counseling service.

The ODGE office notes significant increases in concerns and crises that engage both ODGE and the MIT Medical’s Mental Health and Counseling Service. This trend is, in part, attributable to ODGE’s significant and successful communications efforts to increase awareness of its many resources and its capacity to connect graduate students with the right service at the right time. Greater awareness by faculty, administrators, and students of resources has certainly contributed to ODGE’s ability to more readily identify needs and challenges and to provide the appropriate support.

In an effort to enhance the ability of ODGE to serve the needs of the graduate student community and the departments in the area of personal support and advising, the dean successfully advocated for additional staff; a new position, assistant dean for support and advising, will be added for AY2012.

Student advising remains at the core of the ISO’s responsibility to MIT’s international students. The vast majority of the office’s staff time is spent in individual appointments with students who seek confidential advice and counsel. Typically, office advisors have as many as eight student appointments per day. Whether through the ISO website, or by appointment, the office’s staff is kept busy providing legal and personal advice to prospective, admitted, current, and graduated students. Dependents of registered students also fall under the ISO purview and frequently seek personal counsel. While often seeking the office’s expertise because regulations require it, students (and their dependents) also come to the office with underlying concerns about cultural adjustment and worries about political tensions and family crises back home.

Highlighting Graduate Student Accomplishments

MIT is sometimes known as a “praise-free zone”; however, its graduate students have significant achievements on a daily basis. In order to celebrate the big “wins” and bring the community together around positive news, ODGE has created new venues

to highlight graduate student accomplishments. A [news feature](#) has been added to the ODGE website; recent graduate student publications, students who have won fellowships and awards, and other notable items are reported there. In addition, the dean sends a periodic broadcast email to all graduate students, which now incorporates a “dean’s list” with pointers to online news items.

Graduate Student Life Grants

The Graduate Student Life Grants program is a request-for-proposal process that invites graduate students and others in the MIT community to submit creative ideas for funding. The key criterion is that each proposal offer concrete ideas for enhancing the community life of graduate students. The grants are one of the few sources on campus that will fund the proposal of an individual, rather than requiring affiliation with a student group or department. While most projects run one to two years, 11 proposals have earned some level of ongoing funding, and four others have become an ongoing part of the Institute through other funding sources.

Of the 23 proposals submitted in AY2011, 10 new initiatives were funded. Projects were targeted to create more intermingling within and between departments, to allow families time and space to gather together, and to inspire women in business. Topics centered on clean energy, transportation, and challenges and opportunities in India. Since the program’s inception in 2002, 155 unique projects have been supported with \$1.2M. The [Graduate Student Life Grants website](#) offers more detail on the funding process, as well as on project descriptions.

Graduate Community Fellows

Graduate community fellows work on projects and assignments that enhance the graduate community in unique ways. Each fellow reports to a staff member in ODGE or in a partner organization, and focuses on a specific project. The typical appointment period is the nine-month academic year, and fellows work an average of 10 hours each week in return for a monthly stipend. This year, the program added two positions to assist with highlighting graduate student accomplishments, bringing the total to 15 fellows.

Fellows conducted vital work for ODGE in the areas of programs for women, including the Path of Professorship workshop and assembling a guide for healthful eating; diversity initiatives such as the Graduate School Clinic, building stronger connections with MSRP and CONVERGE alumni, and developing networks of minority alumni; the Graduate Student Life Grants program; programs for international students; highlighting graduate student accomplishments; and graduate student orientation.

Christopher Love, the graduate community fellow for international students, actively and tirelessly supported and participated in most of the ISO’s programming activities in AY2011. Love, a Course 2 PhD candidate, informally surveyed graduate internationals about their needs and interests, hoping to use the data to develop additional programming when he continues as a fellow in fall 2011.

In AY2011, fellows were assigned to projects that included the Institute's Committee on Race and Diversity, the Resources for Easing Friction and Stress Programs, programs to end violence against women, and a mentorship program for high school students as a graduate school pipeline. Find more details at the [Graduate Community Fellows program website](#).

Support for Graduate Women

Path of Professorship

This annual one-and-a-half day workshop for graduate and postdoctoral women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields who aspire to academic careers as faculty was held on October 22–23, 2010, at the MIT Faculty Club. In attendance were 41 graduate students, 19 postdocs, and one visiting scholar. Due to overwhelming demand and limited capacity, all participants were required to apply. Participants were selected on the criteria of time until beginning a job search and responses to several short essay questions.

Twenty-nine women faculty presenters, representing 15 colleges and universities, offered advice, tools, strategies, and general information to inspire and better prepare future women faculty. MIT women faculty were enormously gracious and responsive to requests for their support; 11 were presenters, while others enthusiastically encouraged their students and postdocs to attend. Workshop topics covered three broad themes: finding your place in the academy, getting the position you want, and surviving your first year as a professor.

For the first time, the Office of the Associate Provost and Vice President for Research funded the participation of the postdoctoral women. This investment resulted in a more than \$6K savings for ODGE. The funding was most noteworthy in light of reduced budgets, which may ultimately have had a negative effect on ODGE's ability to accommodate the interests of non-graduate students.

Also a first in 2010 was the video recording of several workshop sessions as part of ODGE's initiative to offer professional development content more broadly to graduate women students. While not all sessions may be recorded due to the personal and candid stories of experiences shared by presenters, ODGE continues to seek opportunities to deepen the impact of this workshop.

With respect to the significance of the Path to Professorship workshop to date, career paths of former participants reveal that 33% of those who have completed their degree programs and postdoctoral fellowships are currently in the professoriate. Participants from the 2010 workshop heightened the value of the program with the following responses to the feedback survey:

The sessions were truly invaluable, and I feel much more confident in pursuing my career as a professor after receiving the wisdom and advice of the panelists. This program has been so helpful in illuminating the various aspects of the faculty application process. It meant so much that the speakers came from such diverse

academic backgrounds and that they shared their personal and professional journeys with us.

I can't say enough good things about this program. The content is incredibly helpful and makes the whole academic career process a lot less frightening/nebulous. The execution is flawless—so organized, so tasteful, so classy. Thank you so much for letting me be a part of this.

One faculty presenter, a chair of a department of physics, said, "Workshops like this one are so important in preparing graduate students and postdocs for faculty positions. I hope you will be able to continue these events for many years to come."

Graduate Women's Group

The Graduate Women's Group convened for lunch once per month, bringing together approximately 50–75 students from diverse departments and programs for an opportunity to share information and experiences and build networks of support. Beginning with an invitation from senior associate dean Blanche Staton in 2009, business partners Miri Skolnik, a psychologist in Student Support Services, and Susanna (Zan) Barry, a health educator and expert in stress management in Community Wellness at MIT Medical, have been actively engaged as co-conveners, along with assistant director of student activities Alicia Erwin. With four "helping" professionals at their disposal for more than an hour, the students have a unique opportunity for personal, focused attention in a comfortable and "safe" environment where they feel valued.

Several years ago, the students made it clear that the chance to simply be with one another was what mattered most to them. This past year, a survey was administered to attendees to determine whether the needs and interests for the lunch had changed, and the responses will be used to inform planning for next year's lunch gatherings. Forty-eight percent of the students expressed an interest in receiving information and having speakers, 38% indicated a preference for changing the format each month, 8% requested informational handouts and no speakers, and only 12% simply wanted to have lunch and interact informally with other students. The survey also captured topics of interest—most mentioned were health and wellness, MIT resources, academic preparation (what is needed to be successful in graduate studies at MIT), and building relationships.

The Graduate Women's Group decided to take immediate steps to let the students know that their voices were heard. Speakers, health professionals, and advanced graduate women students were invited to discuss healthful sleeping and eating habits and tips for managing time effectively, as well as strategies for navigating MIT and making the best use of resources.

Graduate Women's Reading Group

Each month, 17 graduate students gathered for fellowship and intellectual discussions of books, both fiction and nonfiction, provided by ODGE. Each year, students have been asked to comment on the value of the reading group. The following are some perspectives:

The MIT graduate women's reading group provides a much needed outlet during the tenure of our studies. The group draws together women from disparate fields that would have no other intersection here at MIT aside from their passion for reading non-scientific literature. I look forward to meeting these women monthly, and they provide a direct support network and a means to share life experiences and advice, which are commonly shared tangential to the book topics and content. I'm from China. I loved reading, mostly in Chinese. This group gave me a great chance to read one good English book every month.... I hope this group can continue, since it has been a great complement to my academic life.

After reading one of the books, I realized that my true interests post-graduation were really in a slightly different field, and this has made such a difference in my prospects for what I want to do after I graduate.

Demand for involvement in the reading group has grown over the past three years, and several students have requested that ODGE provide resources to enable broader participation. However, the rising cost of purchasing even softcover books precludes such expansion at this time. ODGE will consider alternatives that may facilitate greater inclusion in the future.

Graduate Women Student Support Survey

Last year, the Graduate Women Student Support Survey results, with 52% of all graduate women responding, were initially made available on the website of Institutional Research (Office of the Provost). Since then, the survey sponsors—ODGE, the Division of Student Life, and GSC—have convened a small group to further review the wealth of data generated by the survey and to extract and summarize highlights which may be most useful and informative to stakeholders. The outcome was the creation of two additional reports—Survey Highlights; and Open Comments, Themes, and Highlights—which have been added to the Office of the Provost's Institutional Research [Graduate Student Surveys website](#).

Encouraging for ODGE is that the most positive aspects of support are current resources and programs, including those sponsored by ODGE, and support from women graduate peers, community, and departmental women's groups (some of which spun off from the Graduate Women's Group). Survey highlights also illuminate a concern recently expressed throughout the graduate community—the need for more effective communication of resources for students. Awareness of resources was lowest among international graduate women.

The next steps for the review team will be personalized outreach to stakeholders to ensure awareness of the findings and to facilitate discussions of the findings that will, presumably, inspire strategic thinking and action to identify best practices and reasonably address challenges.

ODGE Celebrates MIT's 150th Anniversary

ODGE enthusiastically took part in the community celebration of MIT's 150th year. Dean Staton was recognized as "Mentor to Thousands" for her leadership and tireless commitment to students. She also signed MIT's renewed charter as the staff

representative at the MIT Convocation. ODGE brought to campus two award-winning authors to discuss their latest books: Isabel Wilkerson, a 1995 Pulitzer Prize winner and professor of journalism and director of narrative nonfiction at Boston University, talked about her telling narrative *The Warmth of Other Suns*. Jennine Capó Crucet talked about her debut collection of short stories, *How to Leave Hialeah*, which won the 2009 Iowa Short Fiction Award, the 2010 John Gardner Prize, and the 2010 Devil's Kitchen Reading Award in Prose.

Dean for graduate education Christine Ortiz gave invited presentations at the Human Diversity and Social Order Forum on Minorities in the US, which examined Hispanic citizenship in America, and the Leaders in Science and Engineering: The Women of MIT symposium. As part of the Institute-wide open house, ODGE offered a lively and informative panel discussion about the value of graduate education when pursuing careers in academia, industry, or public service; the open house brought together current graduate students and representatives from various partner offices to interact with the visitors. A "flash mob" organized by graduate community fellows provided an engaging dance break during the afternoon, with several deans and the president participating.

Professional Development

Graduate Student Council Programs

For the fourth consecutive year, GSC teamed up with the Writing and Communication Center and Community Wellness at MIT Medical to offer the Dissertation Boot Camp, which provides students formal support and training while writing their dissertation. Due to continued high demand, the program was significantly expanded this year by increasing numbers of participants and by increasing the length of each boot camp to two weeks. Also, in collaboration with the Postdoctoral Advisory Council and the Career Development Center, GSC held the annual academic careers series as well as the national award-winning professional development series on academic careers, with the latest sessions attracting more than 100 attendees.

A new GSC subcommittee, Graduate Women at MIT, was active this year and created two flagship events: a fall women's leadership conference, and a spring empowerment conference. Further, the GSC Leadership Development subcommittee held various Institute-wide speaker series and mentored numerous students through its leadership self-assessment workshops.

The 2010 MIT Career Fair, organized jointly with the Class of 2010 and the Society of Women Engineers, was a great success. With more than 300 companies and over 5,000 students attending, the fair was the largest student-run event on campus and one of the largest career fairs in the nation. The employer-to-student ratio of the fair is approximately five times higher than that at career fairs of MIT's peer institutions such as Harvard University and Yale University, a testament to the student-run model.

Global Fellows Summer Program

In June, and for the first time, ODGE and the Dean for Undergraduate Education cosponsored the Global Fellows Summer Program, an intensive four-and-a-half-

day program incorporating presentations, interactive work, and hands-on activities. The program accepted 20 PhD students from Imperial College London and 20 from MIT. Participants developed the professional skills required to launch and manage a successful research career, with an emphasis on creating and sustaining successful international research collaborations. The program may serve as a scalable model, and two of its sessions on international collaboration are available on [TechTV](#).

International Programs

International Freshman Mentor Program

This program, currently in its 13th year, has become a mainstay of freshman orientation. The program matches incoming international freshmen with upperclassmen, long before their arrival in the US. Strong bonds develop between student and mentor, beginning with email correspondence while the student is still at home, to airport pickup, to many year-long mentor-organized activities. The mentor program is now staffed and organized entirely by upperclass international students, who bring tremendous enthusiasm and creativity to the program.

Host to International Students Program

The Host to International Students Program has remained vital in providing incoming freshman students with supportive emotional and social ties to MIT community members and their families. More than 250 students and community members participated in 2010. Despite budget constraints, the program continues to offer many formative experiences and positive, lifelong relationships for participating international undergraduates.

Jeanty International Teas

Roger Jeanty '72 continued to provide financial support to the ISO to ensure the continuity of the popular Jeanty International Teas, established in 2007. More than 150 international students attended each of the four AY2011 teas that featured colorful cultural/holiday themes ranging from the annual Halloween fête in October to a St. Patrick's Day tea in March.

Work-Life Balance

Core GSC activities encouraging work-life balance included the annual GSC ski trip—in which some 550 students enjoy an Independent Activities Period weekend in the snow at Sunday River in Maine—and the annual 600-student Grad Gala, which sold out for the fourth consecutive year, as well as various other sports and off-campus leisure activities. In addition, the activities committee created a new outreach subcommittee to work with Massachusetts middle schools, as well as a new arts subcommittee that showcased MIT student art and held numerous museum and art gallery events in Boston.

The Muddy Charles Pub is a focal point and meeting place for many graduate students, and the pub continued its cultural Muddy Mondays series, offering food and drink from around the world in partnership with student groups from a featured country. Pub renovations continue to give this beloved pub a new and improved look.

Housing and Community Affairs

GSC's Grad Rat (graduate ring) subcommittee continued its campaign to reach out to a wide range of student groups and alumni. A highlight of AY2011 was the presentation of a Grad Rat to then-Chancellor Phillip Clay, who is also an MIT graduate alumnus, made in conjunction with a joint GSC–Undergraduate Association award for service to the community.

The Housing and Community Affairs committee ran a new safety survey among graduate residents in MIT's northwest corridor. The results gave important insights into the perceived and actual safety of graduate students, and over the coming year it is expected that these insights will drive improvements in northwest corridor safety. The committee also worked with the housing office to develop a new “room flagging” system to give students greater flexibility in their on-campus room choices, and to improve the long-term consistency of on-campus housing.

Walker Memorial Assessment Team

In fall 2010, the Office of the Provost announced the potential repurposing of Walker Memorial for use by the Department of Music and Theatre Arts. Such a repurposing could have vast implications for the graduate student community over the coming decade. In response, GSC formed the Walker Memorial Task Force to better understand the potential effects of such repurposing, and to work collaboratively with the administration to help unlock win-win scenarios for both the Department of Music and Theatre Arts and for the graduate community overall.

As a result of this work, a unique process was set up in which the Provost's office, the music and theatre arts department, and students would collaborate on this capital project: The Walker Memorial Assessment Team was created to craft a long-term plan for Walker, to assess potential impacts on the community, and to help architects design a revamped Walker Memorial that is both beneficial for the Department of Music and Theatre Arts as well as for the student body. The team is composed of graduate and undergraduate students, music and theatre arts faculty, the deans for graduate education and student life, and members of the Provost's office.

Graduate Financial Support

ODGE has a broad responsibility for administering external, endowed, diversity, and MIT presidential fellowships. Fellowships are attractive because they allow students to concentrate on their research without the distractions of a research assistant or teaching assistant position. With the uncertainty of the economic downturn, more and more graduate students are applying for fellowships. In addition, ODGE handles funds for support of programming and participates in setting graduate stipend guidelines.

Fellowships

In AY2011, the number of students on competitive external fellowships increased from 431 to 495, with total funding of more than \$17M. The dean's office administered 14 sponsored fellowships, including seven federal and seven non-federal fellowships. MIT remains one of the universities most commonly selected by National Science Foundation

and National Defense Science and Engineering Graduate fellows. Out of approximately 2,000 National Science Foundation fellows nationwide, MIT currently enrolls 364 (compared to 300 last year). Seventy-three National Defense Science and Engineering Graduate fellows are currently enrolled (compared to 82 last year).

The MIT Presidential Fellowships program maintained a strong standing, with awards of \$6.6M, as well as a support structure for fellows. More information on the program can be found in the Office of the Provost report to the president.

ODGE awarded \$4.72M in endowed internal fellowships to outstanding students. It expanded its portfolio of competitive fellowships to a total of 16 with the creation of the Endowed Fellowships of the Arab Republic of Egypt, per an agreement signed between MIT and the Egyptian Ministry of Finance in June 2009. The fund was created “for the purpose of providing an opportunity for qualified and exceptional individuals to expand their education at the prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the hopes of increasing their capacity in serving their country with the highest skills and knowledge.” During the AY2011 cycle, two graduate students were supported by these fellowships, and a total of five will be supported in AY2012; the goal is a long-term steady state of 10 supported fellows. An additional fellowship will be offered for AY2012 due to an agreement signed in April 2011 between President Hockfield and Chinese State Councilor Yandong Liu. The China Scholarship Council Graduate Fellowship Program will be offered to MIT graduate students who are also citizens of the People’s Republic of China. Find more information on various fellowship aid resources at the [Fellowships website](#).

Support for Programming

The Kailath International Student Fund (established in 2002 with a generous grant from professor George Verghese and Dr. Ann Kailath) continues to provide support for programming through the ISO that would otherwise not be possible. Activities supported by Kailath monies include immigration attorney presentations during the Independent Activities Period; subscriptions to international journals and newspapers available to students in the ISO; support for several international students with severe dental issues, the traditional three-week “ISO Haven” in December, which provides food and a place for international students to take a break from end-of-term exams and projects; and the office’s graduation open house in June for graduating internationals and their visiting family members.

The GSC funding board awarded \$128,548 to more than 100 student groups in the past academic year. Hundreds of events were made possible because of this funding, with an emphasis on on-campus events and clubs that promote interdisciplinary interaction. Furthermore, GSC travel grants continue to act as a financial safety net by enabling dozens of students to present their work at academic conferences when departments cannot meet these needs.

Stipend Support

The GSC’s annual stipend recommendation to the MIT administration has been a consistently strong example of the council and the administration working

collaboratively. Each year's recommendation is made from a cost-of-living analysis produced from surveys and government inflation statistics. Analysis this year showed that the average graduate student faced at least 1.5% inflation during 2009–2010, and that many still rely on savings, credit cards, and gifts from relatives to meet expenses. These findings were presented to the dean's group, resulting in a central stipend increase of 2%.

Business Processes

This year, ODGE began reviewing its strategic plan. The office celebrated completed objectives since the implementation of the 2009 plan, and started to refine ongoing strategic themes and next steps in its work. Staff members maintained a high standard in meeting their ongoing responsibilities, as well as in developing new tools and processes.

The ISO plays a pivotal role in the legal admission of international students, issuing the immigration documents required for appropriate student visas and port of entry inspection. The number of foreign nationals admitted to MIT increased again in AY2011. International undergraduate admissions rose by a record 13% (source: MIT Office of Admissions). With the opening of Maseeh Hall, the Institute will be enrolling a larger Class of 2015. International undergraduates are expected to make up 10% of the freshman class, up from nearly 9% in AY2010. At the graduate level, while the percentage of students admitted (approximately 12%) remained the same as in AY2010, the actual number of newly enrolled international graduate students rose to 950, up by 127 from AY2010.

Foreign universities and foreign governments continue to seek to establish formal exchange programs with the Institute. The Institute has sponsored and supported participation in international exchange, bringing more foreign nationals to campus for non-degree academic programs as short as three weeks and as long as 24 months. Exchanges with institutions and organizations such as the Masdar Institute and China Scholarship Council established formal, contractual relationships with MIT. These will result in more international students enrolling at the Institute in limited and specialized programs in AY2012, funded entirely by international sources.

The number of visiting students invited to the Institute by MIT faculty continued to grow at a robust pace in AY2011. On any given day, approximately 500 visiting students are present on campus. Over the course of a year, however, more than 750 visiting students come to MIT to conduct student research in its departments, labs, and centers. As with all international students, visiting students must comply with the federal government's SEVIS (Student Exchange Visitor Information System) regulatory mandates. However, because visiting students arrive throughout the year, often at short notice and bypassing the normal admissions process, they are particularly vulnerable to SEVIS compliance issues and present unique challenges to the ISO. Because of the ongoing growth, responsibility, and complexity of the visiting students program, Mayoka Takemori was promoted to administrative staff in October 2010 as advisor to visiting students.

During AY2011, ISO director and associate dean Danielle Guichard-Ashbrook was part of a visiting students subcommittee that submitted a proposal to the provost for an increased visiting student fee structure to help offset visitors' use of Institute infrastructure. The new visiting student fee proposal is expected to be approved by the provost in fall 2011.

The academic, professional, and career arms of GSC included academic policy work, professional development opportunities for graduate students, and Institute-wide career events. As in AY2010, the academic and professional development work of GSC continues to experience rapid growth.

In the area of communications, GSC's web presence was consolidated and focused over the past year. In particular, the GSC blog, the graduate student news website, and the original GSC website were redesigned and combined to provide a unified web portal and online presence going forward. In addition, information technology infrastructure and tools were redesigned and modernized, opening the door for future opportunities in GSC's communications capabilities and online presence.

Staffing Changes

During AY2011, ODGE welcomed Jessica Landry as the new assistant to the dean, Keiko Tanaka as the administrative officer, and Idalia Cuevas as the financial assistant. Recruitment for an assistant dean for advising, a new and approved position for FY2012, is currently under way.

Developing New Tools

SUNAPSIS

AY2011 was a transitional year for the ISO. With the deployment of SUNAPSIS scheduled for October 2011, the office has taken early leadership in supporting Digital MIT. SUNAPSIS, a comprehensive software application, facilitates the data integration of the MIT student information system and the federal government's international student tracking database, SEVIS. As a result, the incoming admitted international students, commencing June 2011, submitted all visa documentation electronically and are the first MIT students to be entirely paperless. All federally required documentation, all data pursuant to academic activity, and all personal advising notes will now reside in the student's e-file. Over the course of AY2012, the office plans to convert all currently registered international students from paper to e-files. When digital conversion of business processes is complete, the office will be poised to incorporate SEVIS II in 2013, when the Department of Homeland Security plans to digitize foreign student immigration processing.

PRO-DEPOT

Professional and personal development has been identified as an area of great interest to graduate students. To offer students more tools in this regard, ODGE began a new initiative to offer a comprehensive video library of professional and personal development content, called Professional Development Portal (PRO-DEPOT). PRO-

DEPOT will be available through the ODGE website in fall 2011. To support the initiative, in 2010 ODGE began filming development events throughout campus for hosting on TechTV. Example topics include graduate admissions, leadership, the value of graduate education, consulting and public policy, and discussions targeted to specific industries.

Hourly Student Appointment Automation Project

In March 2011, the Hourly Student Appointment Automation Project kicked off. The objective was to develop and implement a new hourly student appointment system to replace the electronic Student Personnel Action Form. The goal was to streamline the appointment and validation process. The project team comprises Information Services and Technology staff, Student Financial Services, ODGE, and current electronic Student Personnel Action Form users from departments. ODGE participates in the project as policy setter of student work hours and overseer of compliance with visa regulations for international student workers.

Improving Graduate Admissions

In January 2011, the dean for graduate education assembled a task force to address MIT's highly heterogeneous mix of electronic, paper-based, and hybrid departmental graduate admissions systems. To serve the urgent need and broad support for an improved infrastructure, the task force comprehensively analyzed the capabilities and limitations of current systems and recommended the creation of an opt-in, centralized, all-electronic admissions system through the adoption of existing software developed by the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science. An implementation plan, including long-term maintenance and support of the system, is being developed with the goal of transitioning, within the next three admissions cycles, all academic units wishing to participate.

Academic Policy

ODGE Faculty Advisory Board

ODGE now benefits from the counsel of the Faculty Advisory Board, which will serve as a critical resource on topics relevant to graduate education and the graduate student experience on campus. The first discussion, in June 2011, focused on the assessment of graduate programs. The ODGE faculty advisory board will review, discuss, and provide input on ODGE programs, activities, strategic plans, and business processes, and will also provide suggestions for how to strengthen interactions with graduate programs, schools, labs, and centers.

Graduate Student Council Advising Initiative

In the area of academic policy, GCS's advising initiative continued to consolidate and build upon last year's success. Advising policy recommendations were made to approximately one dozen departments, which led to various policy changes such as the inception of a new graduate advising award in the Department of Aeronautics and Astronautics, and the revamping of formal reporting structures in the Department of Materials Science and the Department of Mechanical Engineering. The advising

initiative was awarded the Program of the Year Award at the national level through the National Association of Graduate-Professional Students.

External Collaborations

In December 2010, MIT planned and hosted the day-long winter meeting of associate and assistant graduate deans of MIT's peers, an "Ivy Plus" contingency of 11 institutions. This meeting was held in Washington, DC, in tandem with the annual meeting of the Council of Graduate Schools and was attended by 26 colleagues. The agenda, which was determined by consensus, comprised several key topics. Those identified for "deep" discussion related to the sharing of institutional data, and the current state and future impact of global/international educational collaborations. Other discussion topics of interest and concern were graduate student funding, student affairs, admissions, and diversity.

After more than 15 years of the same meeting format, MIT was successful in getting buy-in from colleagues to try something different. In recent years, there has been some tension between the comfort of the way things have always been done and the challenge of sustaining engagement among colleagues of very different generations. To increase the chances for success, MIT's hosting staff, the assistant and senior associate deans, cultivated advocates and allies one school at a time, built small agreements that made a big difference, and engaged colleagues from the member institutions in developing the new structure. MIT leveraged the talent, expertise, and good thinking of a broader segment of the group, and shared the responsibility for leading the meeting with others. In the end, the group agreed to continue the new format for its next gathering (hosted by Harvard University in May 2011), during which the new model was adopted by all member institutions as the norm for future meetings.

The ISO, together with the International Scholars Office, also hosted the "Ivy Plus" Group Meeting for International Offices on March 23–24, 2011. With 11 peer institutions from across the US, international office directors and assistant directors covered an ambitious agenda, with such diverse topics as the changing of international demographics due to exploding global educational initiatives, Department of Homeland Security recertification and site inspection of campuses, and the rising number of mental health concerns among international student populations.

The GSC continued its national advocacy policy to align MIT student views and national needs through cooperative lobbying with the National Association of Graduate-Professional Students. GSC's legislative action subcommittee—a team formed only one year ago—used this policy and cemented its activity within the council through strong lobbying tradition in Washington, DC, on issues such as tax exemption of graduate student stipends, open access to federally funded published research, and higher caps on H-1B visas for advanced-degree holders. A push also continued for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to recognize a graduate student appreciation week. Lastly, GSC hosted the national association's annual conference at MIT, during which more than 50 student governments converged to share best practices and set a national agenda for the upcoming year. The conference's plenary speaker was US Representative Michael Capuano, who addressed conference attendees as well as others in the MIT

community. Through the legislative action subcommittee, GSC demonstrated its leadership in these efforts and stood out as one of the nation's most active graduate-professional governments.

Government Compliance

The ISO was subjected to federal government inspection in AY2011. In March, with one week's notice, the US Department of State conducted a two-day site inspection of MIT's J-1 exchange visitor program for international students. Staff interviews, random student file inspection, assessment of business practices, and evaluation of international student programming were areas of interest for the two visiting exchange program officers from the State Department.

In April, the ISO submitted extensive documentation to the Department of Homeland Security for recertification of MIT's F-1 international student program. This six-month review continues into early AY2012, after which the office expects that MIT's ability to sponsor and bring foreign national students into the US will be renewed for five years.

Amgen Scholars Program

Begun in 2006, Amgen Scholars is a \$25M, eight-year program through which selected undergraduates attend one of 10 prestigious universities for an intensive summer research experience in a scientific field. Participants are immersed in research directed by some of the nation's top academic scientists. As one of the 10 host institutions, MIT hosts 25–30 summer research interns in its Amgen-UROP (Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program) Scholars Program each year. A full report of MIT's work as a host site may be found in the report of the Office of Undergraduate Advising and Academic Programming, within the Dean for Undergraduate Education report to the president.

MIT also serves as US program office for all sites of the Amgen Scholars Program through ODGE. As US program office, ODGE oversees operations of all 10 institutions, providing direction and technical assistance, and works to promote the program at the national level. It has served this function since the program's inception and initial call for applications. In 2010, ODGE was awarded a renewal of the initial four-year grant to continue as the Amgen Scholars US program office. The phase II grant represents an additional \$3M commitment.

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