

## Office of Faculty Support

In AY2014, the [Office of Faculty Support](#) (OFS) focused on its mission of helping faculty develop and coordinate the undergraduate curriculum and educational programming, supporting faculty governance, and providing information and infrastructure related to undergraduate education. OFS staff continued the essential work of supporting the [Committee on the Undergraduate Program](#) (CUP) and its standing Subcommittees on the Communication Requirement (SOCR) and the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (HASS) Requirement (SHR); supporting the Undergraduate Officers Group; administering the MacVicar Faculty Fellows Program; overseeing the central budget for the Communication Requirement (CR); managing the selection process for curriculum development funds; administering the online subject evaluation system; and supporting faculty innovation in education.

### MacVicar Faculty Fellows Program

Diana Henderson, dean for curriculum and faculty support, and her OFS team continue to administer and strengthen the [MacVicar Faculty Fellows Program](#), which honors MIT's best undergraduate teachers. Five new MacVicar Faculty Fellows were announced on MacVicar Day, March 14, 2014: associate professors Kristala L.J. Prather (Department of Chemical Engineering) and Jacopo Buongiorno (Department of Nuclear Science and Engineering) and professors Tomás Lozano-Pérez (Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science), Heather Anne Paxson (Anthropology), and John Ochsendorf (Department of Architecture).



*MacVicar Faculty Fellows gather on MacVicar Day 2014. Standing, left to right: professors Wit Busza, Monty Krieger, Robert Jaffe, Charles Leiserson, Alan Oppenheim, George Verghese, Steven Hall, Dennis Freeman, Diana Henderson, Jean Jackson, William Broadhead, Anne E.C. McCants, Ruth Perry, David Kaiser, Haynes Miller, and Bishwapriya Sanyal. Seated, left to right: professors John Ochsendorf, Kristala L.J. Prather, Heather Anne Paxson, Tomás Lozano-Pérez, and Jacopo Buongiorno. Photo: Dominick Reuter*

The new fellows were introduced publicly by dean Dennis Freeman before a symposium, *Creating a Network of Mentors: A Roundtable*. Symposium speakers included professor David Darmofal (Department of Aeronautics and Astronautics), professor Nergis Mavalvala (Department of Physics), professor Leslie Norford (Department of Architecture), and Justin Bullock '14 (Department of Chemical Engineering).



*Speakers Justin Bullock, Leslie Norford, Nergis Mavalvala, and David Darmofal with moderator Dennis Freeman at the MacVicar Day symposium. Photo: Dominick Reuter*

MacVicar Day concluded with a dinner hosted by MIT president Rafael Reif and his wife at Gray House, where the new fellows received awards from provost Martin A. Schmidt. The special guest throughout the day was Victoria MacVicar, sister of the late Margaret MacVicar, professor of physical science and dean for undergraduate education, for whom the program is named.



*2014 MacVicar Faculty Fellows John Ochsendorf, Kristala L.J. Prather, Tomás Lozano-Pérez, Heather Anne Paxson, and Jacopo Buongiorno (seated, left to right) join provost Martin A. Schmidt, president Rafael Reif, and dean for undergraduate education Dennis Freeman (standing, left to right) at Gray House. Photo: Dominick Reuter*

OFS organized four other events and three luncheons for the fellows, including a reception with newly tenured faculty, a reception with new faculty, and a lunch with professor Karen Wilcox at which the work of the Institute-wide Task Force on the Future of MIT Education was discussed.

The MacVicar Program team includes associate dean Mary Enterline, administrative assistant Deborah Boldin, and administrative assistant Brian Nelson.

## **Enrollment Management**

In its second year, the enrollment management project team concentrated on designing, testing, and implementing an important set of [enrollment tools](#) to be piloted in limited-enrollment subjects designated as communication intensive in the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (CI-H/HW), which are part of the Communication Requirement.

The first phase of the pilot rolled out during May's preregistration period. The tools included a subject selector that 926 students accessed to list their preferences for CI-H/HW subjects. Students could also ask to be placed on waitlists for their primary selections if they were not scheduled into them. Continuing students had until June 16 to list their preferences; this deadline was intended to encourage students to make informed choices and to allow departments to run reports providing information about student demand and potentially adjust staffing to meet students' interests.

This fall, after incoming freshmen, transfer students, and students returning from leaves enter their choices, a new algorithm will attempt to optimize student choice and place all students into their CI-H/HW subject preferences while maintaining enrollment caps, giving priority to students who are furthest behind in their Communication Requirement and moving students to the waitlist as needed. Before classes begin, students and their advisors will know which students are enrolled in which CI-H/HW subjects.

The project team developed the specifications for additional tools that will become available in August, including waitlists that are sorted by priority groups set by SOCR. Students will be able to see which subjects have openings, check their priority groups, and put themselves on waitlists. Instructors can view the lists and, if places are available, make enrollment offers to waitlisted students.

This project is jointly sponsored by Dean Henderson, registrar Mary Callahan, and Eamon Kearns of Information Services and Technology (IS&T), with business leadership provided by Dean Henderson and staff from OFS (associate deans Mary Enterline and Anna Frazer and communications/data specialist Rosanne Santucci). The supporting communications group, led by Dean Enterline, includes associate dean Kathleen MacArthur and Santucci.

## **Subject Evaluation**

During AY2014, MIT transitioned to a shorter Institute-wide evaluation form. Based on faculty and student feedback about the questions piloted in spring 2013, the Subject Evaluation Advisory Committee (SEAC) revised two questions and continued the pilot in the fall. After all but one of the departments adopted the form in the fall, SEAC recommended adoption of the form beginning in spring 2014.

During the end-of-term evaluation period for spring 2014, 1,036 subjects in 38 departments and programs were evaluated online. A total of 17,431 evaluations were completed by 6,229 students, including ratings and comments for 2,086 instructors. The average response rate for subjects evaluated online was 61%, excluding registered listeners. The average overall rating of subjects was 5.8, and the average overall rating of instructors was 6.0 (1 = very poor, 7 = excellent).

SEAC, which comprises faculty from all five schools and two student representatives and is chaired by Dean Henderson, also recommended that MIT standardize its half-term periods so that one evaluation period can be held and half-term evaluation reports can be released rather than held until the end of the term. At the request of the Committee on Curricula (CoC), SEAC members revised a set of questions that CoC will be adding to evaluations for subjects that are experimenting with online pedagogies.

The OFS subject evaluation team includes Dean Enterline, Rosanne Santucci, Deborah Boldin (coordinator for subject evaluations), and Brian Nelson.

### **Support of Faculty Governance**

OFS staffs and supports CUP and its subcommittees, providing a valuable link between the work of DUE and the faculty committees responsible for MIT's undergraduate program. OFS staff helped frame discussions, provide background material and data, and draft policy statements, reports, presentations, and other communications from the committees and their faculty chairs. The work of these committees is discussed in more detail in the section submitted by the chair of the faculty. OFS staff who helped to manage the committees' activities include Dean Frazer (CUP), assistant dean Genevieve Filiault (CUP and SHR), administrative assistant Eileen Milligan (CUP and SOCR), Dean MacArthur (SOCR), and staff associate Jason Donath (SHR).

Staff from CUP, SOCR, and SHR joined staff from a number of other standing faculty committees at regular meetings to coordinate work and agendas for committee and Institute faculty meetings.

### **Administration of the Communication Requirement**

In addition to supporting the work of SOCR, OFS coordinates the administration of the [Communication Requirement](#) in collaboration with the School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences; other DUE offices; and those involved in instructional delivery.

Patricia Fernandes, advisor for the Communication and HASS Requirements, continued efforts to send targeted messages reminding students to register for communication-intensive subjects, providing early alerts to students projected to be out of compliance with the CR at the end of the term, and encouraging students to contact the CR office for individual advice about pace and progress toward completion of the requirement. These messages streamline the work of SOCR, provide better information to the academic units, and give students the information they need to plan their registration. In part due to these efforts, the number of students out of compliance with the pace of the CR has decreased over the last two years (from 4.17% in AY2012 to 3.32% in AY2014) despite the increase in overall class size.

Support to SOCR, provided by Dean MacArthur and Eileen Milligan, included managing the subcommittee's review of proposals for 18 new CI subjects and relicensing proposals for 29 CIH subjects, supporting SOCR's project to refine the criteria for and description of CI-M subjects, and providing input to the group developing enrollment tools to be piloted in CIH/HW subjects in the AY2015 fall term. For the second time since SOCR agreed that the CI-HW instructors' initial fall workshop should be administered through the Office of the Communication Requirement, Dean MacArthur organized and facilitated this meeting. The workshop was well attended by faculty and lecturers, and its agenda provided ample opportunity for robust discussion and exchange of good pedagogical practices.

### **Administration of the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences Requirement**

The first cohort of students to complete the revised distribution system within the [HASS Requirement](#) graduated this year. Despite initial questions about capacity in arts subjects, the transition was successful—all students graduating under the revised requirement completed at least one art, one humanities, and one social science subject as part of the eight-subject requirement. This success can be attributed, in part, to the advising efforts of Patricia Fernandes, who worked with students as they progressed through the requirement, providing general advising and reminders and evaluating student petitions and readmissions cases in conjunction with Student Support Services and SHR.

Students submitted 1,215 HASS concentration proposals and 1,077 completion forms. Members of the Class of 2014 completed the highest numbers of concentrations in economics (263), music (97), Spanish (55), psychology (54), and Chinese (51). They completed a total of 210 concentrations in foreign languages (including Spanish and Chinese). Comparative media studies, literature, philosophy, political science, and theater arts remain popular, each with around 35 students.

Support to SHR, provided by Dean Filiault and Jason Donath, included managing the subcommittee's subject approval process, providing context for discussions, and supporting the subcommittee's efforts to report its assessment findings and recommendations for the experimental HASS Exploration (HEX) Program. Also, Dean Henderson and Donath held the yearly IAP meeting of HEX instructors and administered funds supporting their joint activities.

The HASS concentration form project team (Patricia Fernandes, Rosanne Santucci, Deans Enterline and Filiault, and members of IS&T) continued their efforts to move the concentration forms online in fall 2014 for all students graduating after June 2015. They finalized the functional specifications for the project, tested the system, participated in usability testing, discussed policies and processes with SHR, developed a communication plan, and began outreach to departments and faculty.

### **Curriculum Development Funds**

Faculty groups developing new curricula received approximately \$550,000 from the [d'Arbeloff Fund for Excellence in Education](#) (seven awards) and from the [Alumni Class Funds](#) (12 awards), supported by the Classes of 1951, 1955, 1972, and 1999. Both funds aim to enhance undergraduate education and are administered by OFS.

The d'Arbeloff Fund was established through a gift from Brit (SM '61) and Alex ('49) d'Arbeloff. The call for proposals focused on initiatives for establishing and enhancing [HASS Exploration](#) subjects, creating online modules to be used within or across subjects, providing opportunities aligned with the [faculty resolution](#) that envisions every MIT freshman having a faculty mentor, and enhancing freshman participation in appropriately focused group UROP projects, project teams, or other forms of supervised research with faculty.

Dean Enterline, Brian Nelson, and Deborah Boldin administered the funds, with Rosanne Santucci supporting a database of projects.

### **Faculty Outreach**

Throughout the year, Dean Henderson facilitated monthly meetings of the Undergraduate Officers Group. Agenda topics included the curricular review process, enrollment tools, the Committee on Discipline, the HEX Program, Institute and faculty initiatives, revised CI-M criteria, curriculum mapping, online add/drop, and HASS concentration forms. The officers also met with the IS&T vice president and chancellor Cynthia Barnhart.

Dean Filiault and Martha Janus (administrative assistant in the Office of the Registrar) provided staffing for the group.

### **Staff Changes**

In November 2013, associate dean Anna Frazer left OFS for a position at the University of Washington. Dean Frazer played an important role in supporting CUP and faculty governance more broadly, and she was an invaluable member of our senior staff and MIT's wider community.

In May 2014, assistant dean Kathleen MacArthur and staff associate Genevieve Filiault were deservedly promoted to associate dean and assistant dean, respectively. Dean MacArthur also received a DUE Infinite Mile Award for Community this June.

Even amid major office changes (including a June relocation from Building 12 to Building 35), OFS staff remained profoundly capable, knowledgeable, dedicated, and helpful to students, faculty, and staff alike. We are deeply indebted to them all.

**Diana Henderson**

**Dean for Curriculum and Faculty Support**