

# Resources for helping to navigate difficult situations at MIT

Department of Biology

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**Is a person or situation disrupting your work environment?** There are many options for addressing such situations at MIT, both within the Biology Department and elsewhere on campus. Below is a compilation of some resources and guidelines on how to navigate them.

## **EMERGENCY**

In any emergency, if you feel unsafe, or if you are concerned for someone else's safety, call the MIT POLICE (617-253-1212 or x100 from a campus phone) and speak to them directly or ask to speak to the MIT Dean on Call (<https://studentlife.mit.edu/dean-call-system>).

## **NOT Emergency**

If it is not an emergency, consider whom you will be comfortable talking with. There are many options, and finding someone with whom you are comfortable is important. If the person you contact first does not have the appropriate expertise, s/he can help direct you to other individuals or offices.

In all cases, think about what information you are willing to share and with whom. In general, concrete information is needed to drive action. The more information you are able to share, the more you can be informed about outcomes and be involved in problem resolution. As you explain your situation, be clear about what degree of confidentiality you would like to maintain.

Allegations of sexual misconduct carry mandatory reporting obligations, and the extent to which names are shared depends on the specific case and the wishes of the complainant. Concerns about the safety of an individual may compel action, even if the information that raised concerns was provided anonymously or in confidence.

A good strategy is to first consider the most local, immediate people, e.g., your advisor or supervisor, and then others in the department, members of the department leadership team (listed below), and others in support positions outside of the department. Keep talking to people until you find the right source of advice and support, as needed.

**Considerations for choosing one person or office over another.** If you want to discuss your concerns and brainstorm about how to handle the situation, then a meeting with a faculty member might be most appropriate. Also, meeting with someone in your building-specific Human Resources office can be helpful. If you want MIT to take action, then a visit to the Title IX office or the Office of Student Citizenship (see below) is likely more appropriate. If you are not sure, then it is usually best to start locally. A fairly comprehensive list of resources (wellness and others) at MIT can be found at <http://resources.mit.edu/>.

## **Departmental options**

**Your supervisor** (faculty or administrative). Talking with your supervisor is often the simplest and most direct approach. However, there might be circumstances in which this is not possible or you feel your supervisor is part of the problem.

**Other faculty members.** This is a good alternative approach if there is a faculty member or senior departmental administrator with whom you are comfortable. There is a robust leadership team in the department (listed below).

**bioREFS.** The bioREFS (Resource for Easing Friction and Stress) provide support within the Biology community. bioREFS are graduate students trained to provide an accessible and confidential resource to fellow graduate students, undergraduates, postdocs, and possibly others. The bioREFS can support, coach, listen, and informally mediate in times of stress.

Although not empowered to take administrative action, they can help you explore your options or vent frustrations. They are experienced advisors regarding personal conflicts with co-workers, advisors, or between friends. bioREFS are also highly knowledgeable about the many resources on campus and can help you find other sources of support. [biorefs@mit.edu](mailto:biorefs@mit.edu); <http://biorefs.mit.edu/>

### **Biology Department Senior Administration**

Janice Chang; Education; [jdchang@mit.edu](mailto:jdchang@mit.edu); 617-253-7344

Dan Delgado; Human Resources; [delgado@mit.edu](mailto:delgado@mit.edu); 617-253-4703

Rebecca Chamberlain; Administrative Officer; [chambe@mit.edu](mailto:chambe@mit.edu); 617-253-4729

### **Biology Department Faculty Leadership**

#### Undergraduate Officer:

Dennis Kim; [dhkim@mit.edu](mailto:dhkim@mit.edu); 617-324-0050

other faculty with significant experience advising on undergraduate student matters:

Hazel Sive; [sive@wi.mit.edu](mailto:sive@wi.mit.edu); 617-258-8242

Graham Walker; [gwalker@mit.edu](mailto:gwalker@mit.edu); 617-253-6716

#### Graduate Officers:

Amy Keating; [keating@mit.edu](mailto:keating@mit.edu); 617-452-3398

Steve Bell; [spbell@mit.edu](mailto:spbell@mit.edu); 617-253-2054

others with significant experience advising on graduate student matters:

Frank Solomon; [solomon@mit.edu](mailto:solomon@mit.edu); 617-253-3026

Tania Baker; [tabaker@mit.edu](mailto:tabaker@mit.edu); 617-253-3594

Bob Sauer; [bobsauer@mit.edu](mailto:bobsauer@mit.edu); 617-253-3163

#### Associate Department Heads:

Michael Laub; [laub@mit.edu](mailto:laub@mit.edu); 617-324-0418

Jackie Lees; [jalees@mit.edu](mailto:jalees@mit.edu); 617-252-1972

Peter Reddien; [reddien@wi.mit.edu](mailto:reddien@wi.mit.edu); 617-324-4083

#### Building Directors:

Koch Institute: Tyler Jacks; [tjacks@mit.edu](mailto:tjacks@mit.edu); 617-253-0262

Whitehead Institute: David Page; [dcpage@wi.mit.edu](mailto:dcpage@wi.mit.edu); 617-258-5203

Building 68: Michael Laub; [laub@mit.edu](mailto:laub@mit.edu); 617-324-0418

#### Department Head:

Alan D. Grossman; [adg@mit.edu](mailto:adg@mit.edu); 617-253-1515

### **Options Outside the Department**

There are many support services and offices at MIT. Below is a partial list with a brief description of the mission of the office or group and what they can provide. Some offices serve specific MIT populations.

**iREFS.** The iREFS (Institute-wide Resource for Easing Friction and Stress) serve as resources to graduate students across the Institute, regardless of departmental affiliation. They come from a variety of backgrounds and are chosen for their commitment to graduate student wellness and abilities to support their fellows during times of uncertainty, stress or conflict. Like bioREFS, iREFS are confidential, trained in conflict management skills, and can make informed referrals to other resources and offices at MIT. [conflictmanagement@mit.edu](mailto:conflictmanagement@mit.edu);  
<http://refs.mit.edu/irefs/>

**Ombuds Office.** The MIT Ombuds Office helps people express concerns, resolve disputes, manage conflicts, and learn more productive ways of communicating. The Ombuds Office serves as an independent, confidential, neutral, and informal resource to the diverse MIT community—it is a resource for faculty, staff, students, and post-docs. Note that the ombudsperson does not have authority to act on complaints, but he/she can provide advice and direct members of the community to appropriate resources. <http://web.mit.edu/ombud/>

**Student Support Services (S3).** Deans and staff in the S3 office provide broad support to *undergraduate students* and can provide advice. Staff in S3 can involve other personnel (Title IX office, MIT Police, Office of Student Citizenship) as needed, and can also act as a liaison between different parties. <https://studentlife.mit.edu/s3>

**Office for the Dean of Graduate Education (ODGE).** Deans in the ODGE can meet with *graduate students* to provide advice. These meetings can be confidential in most circumstances. Staff in the ODGE can involve other personnel (Title IX office, MIT Police, Office of Student Citizenship) as needed, and can also act as a liaison between different parties. <http://odge.mit.edu/development/gps/>

**Office of Student Citizenship.** If you are having problems with an MIT student (undergraduate or graduate), this office provides a variety of conflict resolution services and oversees formal student discipline procedures. You can seek a meeting to get advice, and/or you can file a formal complaint with the committee on discipline (<https://cod.mit.edu/complaint>). All formal complaints will be investigated. As a complainant you will have the right to receive information (which may be limited by confidentiality) about the follow-up. FAQ for students wishing to file a complaint can be found here: <http://studentlife.mit.edu/osc/complaint-resolution-process/basic-information-complainants>.

**Title IX Office.** The Title IX Office handles issues of gender-based discrimination, including [sexual misconduct](#). Mandatory reports of sexual misconduct complaints go to this office, and complainants will be advised by office staff of their rights and options. The office also serves as a source of information and advice for issues related to gender-based discrimination. <http://titleix.mit.edu/>

**Information about legal obligations.** MIT employees (including faculty and staff) have an obligation to share information about possible Title IX incidents (e.g. gender discrimination including sexual assault/harassment, relationship violence, or stalking) with the Title IX Office. If a student discloses experiencing any of these issues to an MIT employee, that employee will need to notify the Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX office will follow-up with the student to offer reporting options, resources, and will use the information to track broader trends across the Institute. (bioREFS and iREFS do not have this obligation.)

**MIT Guidelines for Raising Complaints about Harassment are found at:**  
<http://web.mit.edu/communications/hg/>

**The MIT Police have a form to report sexual assault with no names attached:**  
<http://web.mit.edu/surveys/police/reporting.html>

You may make a fully anonymous report of a problematic situation at MIT at EthicsPoint, which is handled by an outside contractor. All reports will be investigated, but because your report will be anonymous, you will not be told anything about the follow up and no one will be able to contact you to get additional information.  
<https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/28258/index.html>