COVID-19 FAQ: March 12, 2020
Policies about Student Access to UROPs and Campus Facilities and Update on Summer 2020 Opportunities

What are the guiding principles being used to make these decisions?

- Deliver on commitment, per MIT Emergency Management, to de-densify the campus, minimize social interaction, and slow disease spread.
- Preserve educational experience for MIT students (as much as possible).
- Ensure equity by minimizing financial hardship and maximizing equity of opportunity (especially as most students will be off-campus).
- Remain firm in applying principles, but be open to reconsidering and adapting decisions, depending upon how circumstances evolve in the coming weeks and months.

What is the status of current and future UROPs?

- **All in-lab/in-person UROPs must end by Sunday, March 15, 2020.** This applies equally to students working in on-campus labs, Whitehead, Broad, Lincoln Lab, hospitals, IMES/HST/Harvard facilities or other research or collaborative spaces. This includes undergraduates who have received a special exception to remain in on-campus housing.
- **Remote UROPs will be allowed with faculty permission.** With faculty supervisor approval, those students who can UROP remotely or virtually will be allowed to continue for pay or credit for the remainder of the term. Students and faculty may decide to continue design/build UROPs only if they find practical means for students' designs to be fabricated (MIT central machine shop, other professional shops, or by MIT graduate students/staff) and then shipped to UROP students off campus if necessary and feasible.
- **Students must complete a mandatory UROP Status Update Form by March 31, 2020.** All current UROPs must complete a brief online form, indicating whether their UROP will be discontinued effective March 15 or continued remotely with permission of the faculty supervisor. This form must be completed no later than Tuesday, March 31, 2020.
- **Paying UROP students.** Only UROP students who have faculty supervisor approval to continue spring work remotely (see above criteria) will be eligible to be paid for hours worked beyond the Sunday, March 15 deadline. Students in this category can continue to submit online timesheets through Atlas.
UROPs that are not authorized by faculty supervisors for remote/virtual work for the remainder of the spring term **will end March 15**. Hours worked through March 15th will be paid; students should be sure that those hours are entered on Atlas time sheets and submitted as soon as possible for timely payment. Any student facing financial hardship due to termination of a UROP position or other reasons should contact Student Financial Services (sfs@mit.edu or 617-258-8600).

- **UROP for credit.** When assigning grades for UROPs for academic credit, supervisors should keep in mind that the credit units may need to be adjusted to reflect the amount of work a student was able to complete if the UROP was discontinued.
- These changes apply to all MIT, exchange, and Wellesley College students, regardless of their living situations or locations.

What are the access/use policies on makerspaces, labs and machine shops (applies to Departmental project shops, Departmental machine shops, Project Manus, Edgerton, Hobby Shop, etc.)?

- At the present time, undergraduates will not be allowed to access or use MIT makerspaces (defined as all machine shops, labs, assembly areas, student-run makerspaces and other design/build facilities) for any reason. This policy *is inclusive of* undergraduates who have received a special exception to remain in on-campus housing.
- Undergraduates should retrieve their belongings and project materials from makerspaces prior to leaving campus. Should undergraduates find it impractical to do this for *essential materials*, they may request help here: https://project-manus.mit.edu/2020-spring-retrieval. Project Manus will review requests and work to facilitate retrieval and shipping of *essential materials*.
- Graduate students, postdocs, faculty and staff may use shops and makerspaces for research enterprises, including thesis projects and other MIT-related research activities.
- Updated information on facilities that will be accessible to graduate students, and their new open hours, will be available by March 17th at:
  - https://project-manus.mit.edu/2020-spring-makerspaces
  - On the Mobius app
- Graduate students, postdocs, faculty and staff must have special permission to use these facilities for purposes other than MIT-related research. This permission will be granted on a case-by-case basis by the manager of the facility, using a process that they determine. For student-run makerspaces, this permission must be granted by the faculty member or technical staff that is tasked with oversight.
- The Mobius app may be used to verify which graduate students, postdocs, faculty and staff have been granted access via special permission.
- Facility managers should implement precautions, including: social distancing, new limits on maximum capacities, and posting hand washing reminders, etc.
- Graduate students, postdocs, faculty and staff are encouraged to bring their own personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Facility managers should identify PPE that could spread disease and implement reasonable precautions. For example PPE such as safety glasses, dust masks, respiration equipment, and other equipment that comes into close proximity with the face. Facility managers should consider (i) classifying these as "single-use" or (ii) implementing suitable sterilization processes.
- Graduate students, postdocs, faculty and staff may want to consider using the MIT central machine shop to meet some of their needs.

Can I use campus facilities to complete my senior thesis project or capstone project?

- Unfortunately, no. We are restricting undergraduate access to all labs, shops, and makerspaces in order to advance public health goals and due to concerns for equity and fairness. Should the situation change and the campus is able to resume such activities, we will revisit this decision. In the meantime, consult with your faculty advisor to make a plan specific to the circumstances of your project.

What is the status of Summer 2020 opportunities and programming?

- We are aware that, in addition to all of the changes in the spring semester, students are concerned and have questions about their options for summer opportunities. Because things are changing so rapidly, we strongly urge students to be flexible and start thinking about a possible Plan B in case their existing or intended plans are cancelled or changed.
- Staff at MIT are already working with employers and graduate/professional programs to creatively and proactively adapt to changing conditions. For instance, MIT's Career Advising and Professional Development (CAPD) office has been in contact with employers to explore plans for remote summer internships and to develop new geographic-specific opportunities that will help students make the most of their time away from campus this summer.
- To support students through the current uncertainty, a new team has been created that will focus on coordinating and planning for non-academic or co-curricular summer opportunities including internships, UROP, MISTI, PKG, etc. The charge/mission of this team (provisionally) will be:
  - To support MIT students with clear and helpful advice, communication, and programming;
  - To coordinate Institute initiatives, communications, and decision-making; and
  - To make careful assessments and timely decisions about the status of MIT summer opportunities in light of the latest developments and evolving Institute and governmental responses.