



Undergraduate Association News

March Presidential Address

Dear Undergraduates,

Over the past months, the Undergraduate Association has been working diligently to improve problems we see with the level of student involvement in Institute affairs. Although collaboration with the administration is often successful, we are distressed by several recent cases that represent a breakdown in the process of interfacing with the student body. We are concerned that these events are creating a negative perception that the administration disregards or fails to solicit student input.

Most recent problems have arisen when students were not given an opportunity to share their perspective or when administrators failed to explain their decisions. These issues can be seen in controversies surrounding the planning of the W1 and Green Hall dormitories, dining program overhauls, and community support of students (press statements, hacking arrests, RIAA).

There are clear benefits to student involvement. First, cooperation demonstrates mutual respect, minimizes controversy, and promotes transparency. Second, students can serve as an informational tool, bringing unique perspective to decision-making. Third, such collaboration aligns with MIT's educational mission of empowering students and developing leaders.

To bring us closer to this goal, we propose that President Hockfield form a Committee on Student Involvement consisting of students, faculty members, administrators, and corporation members. This committee should be charged with developing a coherent and comprehensive philosophy guiding student involvement, proposing recommendations for greater student involvement, and establishing methods to ensure the success of these recommendations.

If you have suggestions or want to be involved, we would love to hear from you.

Sincerely,

Martin F. Holmes, UA President (goholmes@mit.edu)

Ali S. Wyne, UA Vice President (awyne@mit.edu)



Student Faculty Dinners!

**Want to get to know your
MIT faculty better?
With free food?**

Sign up for the student-faculty dinner program! Groups of 3-5 students can invite a faculty member to dinner, picking their own date, time, and location, and will be reimbursed \$20 per person!

www.mit.edu/2008/ua/faculty.html

Spotlight: Student Committee on Educational Policy

- ✓ Term Regulations are located at www.mit.edu/faculty/teaching/termregs.html
- ✓ Report violations to ua.mit.edu/violations, for anonymous advocacy.
- ✓ We are conducting a survey and drafting a report on the quality of advising at MIT. Be on the lookout for the survey soon!
- ✓ SCEP is currently working on implementation of the Task Force Recommendations. Look for more flexibility and student friendliness in the GIRs.
- ✓ The Earll M. Murman Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Advising will be presented for the first time this year at convocation.

UA Open Positions!

Housing Chair:

Want to have a major impact on housing, REX, early returns, deferred maintenance, and more?

Webmaster:

Want to put your coding skills to use? Interested in redesigning the UA website, aiding with UA transparency, and collaborating with IS&T on a number of projects?

Send a statement of your qualifications and goals to ua-admin@mit.edu by March 21.

Senate and Legislation Updates

- ✓ Gave \$2000 for the Simmons/McCormick Formal
 - ✓ Requested that President Hockfield sign the Presidents Climate Commitment
 - ✓ Passed resolution that shuttle signs with map and times be placed at all stops
 - ✓ Approved legislation in support of a TechShuttle stop in front of the Media Lab
 - ✓ Called for Shuttletrack service to be expanded
 - ✓ Allocated funds for posting boards in each dorm to help Senators communicate with residents
 - ✓ Provided \$1000 for a new ASA server so student groups can get reimbursements and book space
 - ✓ Enacted bill to give \$2000 in funding for the MIT chapter of the National Society of Black Engineers
- Comments? Email Irina Shklyar at <ishklyar>*

UA Project Update

- **Financial Aid** policies will now provide free tuition to students with family incomes of less than \$75,000. Financial Aid was repeatedly mentioned to the Provost in his town hall meeting.
- **Blue Ribbon Committee on Dining** is conducting a holistic reevaluation of MIT dining. It will recommend short term changes to meal plans as well as long term changes to dining facilities.
- **Undergraduate Enrollment** will increase by 10% starting in 2010. We are working to ensure that academic, student life, and support resources are ready to handle the increase.
- **Career Fair Holiday** has faced various setbacks from administrators and student organizers. We continue to work together to determine if we might be able to reach a viable solution.
- **Textbook Information Initiative** is a system developed by the UA, IS&T, Libraries, and DUE to provide students with information about their required textbooks prior to the start of term.
- **Statement of Principles** is being tackled by the UA and several deans as a means of strengthening community standards and ensuring a high level of academic integrity.
- **Go Cross Campus** has been sponsored by the Committee on Student Life as a means of encouraging a broader campus community and friendly competition.
- **FSILG Recycling** programs are being studied by our Sustainability Committee in order to provide Boston residents with environmentally friendly disposal options.
- **Third Eye Blind** is coming to MIT on April 18 thanks to the UA Events Committee.
- **TechCash Expansions** are being negotiated with Bertucci's, Pour House, and Star Market.
- **Advising Report** is being drafted to investigate ways of improving academic advising.
- **RIAA Concerns** are being discussed with the Dean for Student Life, IS&T, and MIT Legal.



Attend a UA Meeting!

Come see what your government is doing for you!
Attend a UA Exec or a UA Senate meeting to give input on current student policy! There will be FREE FOOD!

March 17, 8pm: W20-400 IS&T Discussion with VP Jerry Grochow

March 19, 10pm: Burton Conner Conference Room

April 2, 10pm: Next House (tentative)

April 9, 10pm: New House (tentative)

\$ UA Fresh Fund \$

New Ideas?

Events?

Student Groups?

... need money?
the UA fresh fund has \$20,000 waiting for you!

email ua@mit.edu to propose your new idea!

Questions or comments? Email ua@mit.edu or visit the UA website at <http://ua.mit.edu/> !