Chancellor's Response to the Institute-wide Planning Task Force Preliminary Report

3 Academic Education Working Group Recommendations

Recommendation	UA Position Summary	Chancellor's Response
3.1 Recommendation 2: **Improve Understanding of Faculty Workloads**	**3.1.1 Summary of the Recommendation** This involves research into how professors and other teaching utilize their time. Since no particular recommendation was made, we interpreted the recommendation in that it could ultimately involve redistribution of teaching resources–such as by having more classes be taught by lecturers instead of research professors, or vice versa. It could also impact the number of office hours held or time required for professors to spend with UROPs and advisees. However, we understand that this first step is just to call for a study to see if a more efficient use of resources is possible, and that no action will be taken until the study is complete.	This is a matter for each department to work out with faculty.
3.2 Recommendation 4: **Increase Productive Faculty/Student Educational Interactions**	**3.2.1 Summary of the Recommendation** This recommendation has two major components. First, there are a significant number of classes here at MIT with low student to faculty ratios or with fewer than nine students per class. This proposal calls for larger class sizes and the possible reduction of classes that have low enrollment. Second, there is concern that an excessive amount of TA resources are being used to generate new problem sets each year. In the recent year, some classes have already moved away from graded problem sets and are reusing previous years' problems freely. This proposal calls for further study on the impact of removing graded problem sets from the curriculum. This might lead to the elimination of TA positions.	This is a matter for departmental consideration. There is no Institute policy on this and we will not propose one. Departments will consider how to deploy resources. Class size may be one dimension to review; deployment of TA resources may be another. How assignments are framed or graded is a faculty prerogative.

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3 Academic Education Working Group Recommendations (Continued)

Recommendation	UA Position Summary	Chancellor's Response
3.3 Recommendation 5: Develop Summer Classes for GIRs and Other Courses	**3.3.1 Summary of the Recommendation** Implementing summer classes may be accomplished in a variety of ways. MIT students, including newly- matriculated freshmen, could take GIRs and other introductory level classes in order to free room for advanced subjects in the normal fall and spring terms. As this is not a normal term, the same financial aid procedures might not apply. In addition, summer classes might be accompanied by an increase in enrollment given that the GIR class size is a limiting factor on the freshman class size. It would be important that these classes have the same rigor as those offered during the academic year.	DUE will lead a review of summer classes, taking into account all the potential markets. We agree that all classes should have appropriate rigor. There will be no action on this until the matter is reviewed and appropriate consultation with CUP and other faculty committees is pursued.
	Another scenario involves non-MIT affiliated students and high schoolers taking GIR classes, which could count for college level credit at other peer institutions. Allowing the general public to take MIT classes would also be an option. Non-MIT students are likely to be charged full price.	This will be part of the review noted above.
	Over the summer, the dormitories are underutilized. In addition to generating registration fees from summer classes, revenue could be collected from summer housing.	DSL will collaborate with DUE to determine student housing needs. The Housing Strategy Group is the vehicle for students and other stakeholders to advise the DSL on housing issues.

Chancellor's Response to the Institute-wide Planning Task Force Preliminary Report

3 Academic Education Working Group Recommendations (Continued)

Recommendation	UA Position Summary	Chancellor's Response
3.4 Recommendation 6: **Increase Undergraduate Enrollment**	**3.4.1 Summary of the Recommendation** This recommendation calls for increasing the undergraduate student body by about 400 members, or roughly 10 percent. Increasing the undergraduate class size could be accomplished by increasing the freshman class size, accepting more transfer students, or enrolling more students in "3+2" programs. An assessment of how a potential enrollment increase would affect undergraduates in areas such as academics, student support, and student life must be considered carefully. Likewise, further investigation into the potential financial gains, and associated risks, is necessary.	Undergraduate enrollment will not be increased until additional housing is available (specifically W1) and we have assessed and addressed other issues related to the likely impacts of an increase in the size of the undergraduate student body.
3.5 Recommendation 10: **Change Drop/Add Dates**	**3.5.1 Summary of the Recommendation** Compared to peer institutions, MIT has a late add date and a late drop date. As a result, the fluctuation of class sizes result in underutilization of resources since the hiring of TAs, the booking of rooms, and other resource allotment occurs at the beginning of the term. Given the high stress environment of MIT, many students appreciate the late drop date deadline as a safety net. From a pedagogical point, however, having a student take a class for eleven weeks only to drop reduces valuable teacher-student interactions with those that intend to finish. Possibilities range from small fees incurred for registering and unregistering classes, moving the add date up since most professors will not sign an add form after the second or third week, and moving drop date earlier.	The academic calendar is a faculty governance issue. Discussion of this will go through the Committee on Academic Performance and the Committee on Graduate Programs. These committees will consider whether to make a recommendation that in turn would be considered by the Faculty Policy Committee and then considered for a vote of the entire Faculty.

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3 Academic Education Working Group Recommendations (Continued)

Recommendation	UA Position Summary	Chancellor's Response
3.6 Recommendation 13: **Increase Number of Special Students**	**3.6.1 Summary of the Recommendation** There is a proposal to increase the number of special students at MIT. Special students are non-MIT students who are allowed to take classes at MIT. This may include high school students from the area or other people who may want to take classes. Increasing the number of special students can be manifested in many different forms. First, it may include public listing of MIT classes and opening up registration to the general public. This could entail Boston area adults attending lectures and recitations, taking exams, and receiving a grade. Second, it could involve allowing visiting students (typically graduate students here for research) to pay to audit or take classes. Not explicitly mentioned in this plan, but a similar plan would be to expand on a "3+2" program, where a student would attend 3 years at a liberal arts college and spend 2 years at MIT, resulting in two bachelor's degrees. Additionally, MIT could increase the number of transfer students, whom we admit at a far lower rate than either regular admission or peer institutions. Both would be paired with an increase in enrollment, but this allows the Institute to bypass two significant roadblocks to a simple increase in enrollment, namely GIR capacity and on-campus housing for freshmen.	MIT has two categories of non-degree students: special students and visiting students. Special students take a small number of subjects and pay full tuition (usually on a per course basis) unless they take more than three subjects. Each instructor must agree to have these students in his/her class, and they typically take seats that would otherwise be unused. These students require few services and contribute revenue to MIT. We don't see changing our policies with respect to these students. Visiting students don't pay tuition and typically are invited into faculty labs and research groups. Faculty pay a fee of $1,000 to host them ($500 if they stay less than five weeks). The number of these students has grown substantially, and we believe their costs to MIT in lab space, library utilization, ISO services and faculty time exceed the modest revenue we get from them. We plan to review the fee structure associated with this category of students. As part of their spring agenda, the Admissions Office and the Committee on Undergraduate Admissions and Financial Aid (CUAFA) are looking at transfer students and other enrollment related proposals from the task force. We will await the results of their review before deciding on any next steps.

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Updated: 2/24/2010

3 Academic Education Working Group Recommendations (Continued)		
Recommendation	UA Position Summary	Chancellor's Response
3.7 Recommendation 14: Eliminate Athena Clusters	**3.7.1 Summary of the Recommendation** This idea involves an evaluation of the current placement and usage of Athena clusters, closing underutilized clusters, and potentially moving clusters to new places on campus. Given that most students have laptops and the usage pattern of clusters has changed drastically since their inception, the current number and locations of clusters might not be optimal. If a cluster is closed, there is a question as to how the space will be reallocated (whether it will remain collaborative work space or be open to reassignment as offices or classrooms).	The MIT Council on Educational Technology (MITCET), which advises DUE on priorities, policies, and opportunities in educational technology, has formed a working group to review this recommendation. The group includes students, faculty, and staff. No action will be taken pending the outcome of the review.
3.8 Recommendation 15: Limit Printing in Athena Clusters	**3.8.1 Summary of the Recommendation** Athena cluster printers consume a vast quantity of paper and toner. This idea is to explore options for incentivizing students to not print as many pages. The Institute-wide Planning Task Force Report specifically calls out the idea of charging a per-page printing fee, but other options are also being considered.	See 3.7.

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3 Academic Education Working Group Recommendations (Continued)		
Recommendation	UA Position Summary	Chancellor's Response
3.9 Recommendation 17: Reduce Costs for Freshmen Alternative Programs	**3.9.1 Summary of the Recommendation** MIT currently offers several unique freshman programs (including Terrascope, Concourse, and ESG) that focus on a diverse variety of objectives. This asks for a reevaluation of the core objectives of these programs and cutting costs that are not directly related to these objectives. The plan could also involve removing program-specific staff members, making teaching for these classes a rotating assignment among professors, or combining programs together to reduce costs. members, making teaching for these classes a rotating assignment among professors, or combining programs together to reduce costs.	Like other academic programs and departments, these programs will face budget reductions in the coming year. However, there are no plans to eliminate any of these programs.

3 Academic Education Working Group Recommendations (Continued)		
Recommendation	UA Position Summary	Chancellor's Response
3.10 Recommendation 24: Eliminate the Physical Education Requirement (Alternate Models)	**3.10.1 Summary of the Recommendation** Currently, MIT provides a large and diverse array of Physical Education (PE) classes. The main issue with the PE requirement is that, aside from playing a varsity sport or participating in the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC), there are no alternative ways to gain PE credit. The Undergraduate Association Athletics Committee has been informed that alternative ways to gain PE credit might not be feasible given the current level of Institute staffing. A portion of students would prefer not to have a PE requirement at all. However, the Institute points out that students who are not athletes by nature or do not work out regularly can be inspired by the PE requirement to expose themselves to new disciplines, take on a healthier lifestyle, and get involved in athletics. Within the requirement, the student body as a whole seems to enjoy the PE options they are given. This is apparent based on the speed at which some classes now fill up. If this variety were to decrease, however, Physical Education at MIT might be viewed in an entirely different light.	The Physical Education requirement is part of the undergraduate program. Any change must originate with a faculty committee and be voted on by the faculty.

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4 Academic Space Working Group Recommendations

Recommendation	UA Position Summary	Chancellor's Response
4.1 Recommendation 2: **Invest in Preventative Maintenance**	**4.1.1 Summary of the Position** This recommendation would assess deferred maintenance needs on campus. While large scale classroom and other facility maintenance is common on MIT's campus, the biggest impact of deferred maintenance on undergraduates would likely be in the dormitories. This recommendation would have the Institute make a plan to improve the level of physical condition in dorms such that they can be sustained by routine maintenance. A number of dorms such as Bexley, Burton Conner, Random Hall and East Campus have needed extensive repairs for years. However, the repairs needed would probably require relocation of students in those dorms for an extended period of time. Many students are concerned about the freedom of expression that might be lost in the repaired living spaces, such as the ability to customize rooms or paint on the walls. With these concerns and constraints in mind, the sooner the maintenance is performed, the more money MIT will save in the long run.	DSL will move this forward with this recommendation and work in collaboration with the Department of Facilities. The Housing Strategy Group will advise. The implementation of this will take place over many years.

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5 Administrative Processes Working Group Recommendations		
Recommendation	UA Position Summary	Chancellor's Response
5.1 Recommendation 17: Shuttle Services	**5.1.1 Summary of the Recommendation** This recommendation calls for the evaluation of MIT's shuttle service. Redundant routes covered by both the MIT Shuttle Service and MBTA buses might be eliminated. In addition, some shuttle routes might have reduced frequencies of operation. There is also the possibility that some non-core routes might require fees.	DSL is working with the Department of Facilities, UA, and the GSC to carry out this recommendation.

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Updated: 2/24/2010

6 Student Life Working Group Recommendations

Recommendation	UA Position Summary	Chancellor's Response
6.1 Recommendation 2: Improvement of Housing Utilization During the Summer	**6.1.1 Summary of the Recommendation** Students living on campus over the summer would be consolidated into a reduced number of dorms. The other dorms would be used to generate revenue by renting or subletting to other parties.	DSL will move this forward. Housing will develop a plan to be implemented starting this coming summer. The DSL will consult with the Housing Strategy Group.
6.2 Recommendation 3: Relaxation of Four-year On-campus Housing Commitment	**6.2.1 Summary of the Recommendation** Students would no longer be guaranteed four years of on-campus housing. The desired result would be the ability to increase undergraduate enrollment without finishing the renovation of the W1 dorm. The process to reduce the population of overcrowded dorms might be unpopular and getting back into on-campus housing might become even harder.	In its final report, the task force stated that there would be no need to change the housing commitment if we make no increase in enrollment before the completion of W-1. We agree that no change in the existing housing is warranted at this time.
6.3 Recommendation 4: Metering of Dormitories	**6.3.1 Summary of the Recommendation** Google PowerMeter, which details energy usage or a residence, has suggested that just informing people of how much energy they are using will help them reduce their consumption by about 15 percent. A recent evaluation of the heating system at a particular dorm revealed that significant savings could be obtained by replacing a steam trap. This idea involves tracking dorm usage metrics and charging residents individually for their portion of utilities, such as water, electricity, and heat. The desired result would be to reduce waste and save money. Issues might arise if dorm rates are adjusted based on energy consumption.	DSL and the Department of Facilities will develop a plan and consult with the Housing Strategy Group.

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6 Student Life Working Group Recommendations (Continued)

Recommendation	UA Position Summary	Chancellor's Response
6.4 Recommendation 5: **Adjusting Financial Aid to True Food Costs**	**6.4.1 Summary of the Recommendation** Financial aid provides $4,510 per year for food. However, MIT students report that they spend only $1,700 to $2,240 on food per year. The Task Force suggests reducing the food component of financial aid to $3,000 per year for students without a meal plan; students with a meal plan would continue to receive $4,510. The Task Force estimates that such a change could save $2.4 million per year. It is not clear whether "meal plan" refers to the existing House Dining program or to a revised plan (see Section 6.5 on page 36).	A survey sponsored jointly by DUE and CUAFA was conducted in the fall. Based on the results, as well as consultation with Student Financial Services, a slight adjustment will be made to the student expense budget that determines financial aid eligibility in several categories, including the dining allowance. Further information will be available in the near future.
6.5 Recommendation 6: **Implementation of Meal Plan Changes in House Dining**	**6.5.1 Summary of the Recommendation** The Task Force suggests replacing the existing $300/semester House Dining membership with a $600/semester dining plan. The Blue Ribbon Committee estimated that this would help reduce a $500,000 annual subsidy of the dining system. It is not clear whether additional Blue Ribbon Committee recommendations would be implemented.	DSL will move this forward with the four residence halls that have dining halls, working with each housemaster and student executive committee to develop a sustainable dining plan that eliminates the subsidy.

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7.1 Administrative Processes Working Group Recommendations

Recommendation	UA Position Summary	Chancellor's Response
7.1.1 Recommendation 8: Next Generation Student Systems	**7.1.1 Recommendation 8: Next Generation Student Systems** A series of projects called NGS3 will work to further automate business processes related to students. This could include things such as registration forms becoming fully electronic and replacements for part or all of MITSIS/WebSIS.	Planning for the future evolution of the MIT Student Information System is ongoing. Whether (and when) a new system is undertaken remains to be determined. This would be a lengthy and expensive project that we currently do not have the resources to undertake.

7.2 Administrative HR/Benefits Working Group Recommendations

Recommendation	UA Position Summary	Chancellor's Response
7.2.1 Recommendation 2: Add Co-pay for Services Received at MIT Medical Facility	**7.2.1 Recommendation 2: Add Co-pay for Services Received at MIT Medical Facility** MIT Medical will begin charging co-pays for specialty care visits. This change is necessary for compliance with the Mental Health Parity Act, which took effect on 1/1/2009. The co-pays do not apply to primary care, and may not apply to students at all.	The current policy will continue. Students are not required to make any co-pays for services rendered at the campus medical facility except for certain immunizations.

7.3 Administrative Procurement Recommendations

Recommendation	UA Position Summary	Chancellor's Response
7.3.1 Recommendation 8: Standardize Personal Computing Purchases on Dell PCs	This idea is to restrict purchases of computers on campus to a single vendor and model of computer. In the last fiscal year, Apple and Dell were split 50/50 on laptop purchases and 30/70 on desktop purchases. This could affect the student discount program.	Members of the community will have a choice of several configurations that will be supported. The community will also be allowed to choose unsupported configurations but must bear the costs of supporting these options themselves.

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7.3 Administrative Procurement Recommendations (Continued)

ISSUES RAISED BY THE GSC	GSC Position Summary	Chancellor's Response
TA Cost Abatement	Concerns were raised about the possibility that graduate students would be required to do the work of regular teaching assistants without any compensation for doing so.	We agree that demanding that students do the work of a full-time TA solely for credit and without any other financial support was inappropriate. However, for the student with full time financial support, we agree that some teaching experience, including a program on how to teach as well as practical experience, would be educationally useful.
Right-size graduate population	Concerns were raised about an artificial cap on graduate students that was independent of the quality of the applicant pool and the availability of funding. There are also concerns that we do not yet know the costs and revenue associated with students and the value of their contributions to research and teaching.	We agree that there is not enough data about the costs and benefits of having either fewer or more graduate students. This recommendation requires substantially more analysis. This work will be coordinated by the DGE.
Study Impacts of Time to Completion	The GSC has no issues with studying this issue. However, they want to make sure that any policies adopted to reduce time to completion be formulated with recognizing the need to reflect the different expectations across disciplines and provide flexibility for students who change advisors or research topics.	The DGE will work with the departments and with students on this area.
3+2 Master's Program	The GSC is concerned about the possibility of lowered admissions standards for students in this program and the consequent effects of on the value of an MIT degree. They are also concerned that the admissions to this program should not compete with regular admissions or aid to students in other programs.	The DGE and DUE will jointly explore ideas for a "3+2" program. They will consult appropriate faculty committees before making a recommendation. There is agreement that the admissions standards for such programs should not be different from those in existing MEng or SM programs. It is also expected that the students in these programs will be primarily self-supported.

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