STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Undergraduate Student Government

The Undergraduate Association (UA) (http://ua.mit.edu), the major governmental body to which all undergraduates belong, works to improve the quality of undergraduate life. It is assisted by a variety of committees. The Finance Board coordinates budgets and allocates funds to student organizations. The Committee on Educational Policy proposes educational reforms and provides student feedback to the departments and the Institute on important educational issues. The Nominations Committee recommends student representatives for more than 50 administrative and faculty committees.

Each class at MIT annually elects a president and executive committee for its class council, which plans and coordinates programs and social events throughout the year.

The Association of Student Activities (http://web.mit.edu/asa), a joint committee of the UA and the Graduate Student Council (see below), is responsible for recognizing student groups and activities, allocating student office space, and organizing Activities Midways, which takes place during orientation in August and also Campus Preview Weekend, which takes place in April.

All living groups determine governing structures responsible for the internal functioning of their houses, including sponsoring social events and handling judicial matters within the respective houses. To deal with issues of common concern, the fraternities have formed the Interfraternity Council (IFC), the sororities are organized under the Panhellenic Council, the independent living groups established the Living Group Council (LGC), and the Institute residence halls coordination is accomplished through the Dormitory Council. The IFC, Panhellenic Council, and LGC also work on good relations between their houses and their host communities in Boston’s Back Bay, Brookline, and Cambridge. The Dormitory Council coordinates common house activities such as freshman orientation and major social events, and handles interhouse judicial problems.

Graduate Student Government

The Graduate Student Council (GSC) exists to enhance the overall graduate experience at MIT by promoting the general welfare and concerns of the graduate student body, creating new programs and initiatives, and communicating with the MIT faculty and administration on behalf of graduate students. The GSC seeks to emphasize, in all its activities, the core values of representation, communication, collaboration, transparency, and accountability.

The council accomplishes its goals through a structure of elected representatives, standing committees, and officers. GSC representatives facilitate communication between the council and their constituency (a department, academic program, living group, or demographic group). The standing committees span all facets of the graduate experience, including orientation for all incoming graduate students, the career fair and a variety of academic seminars throughout the year, large social and cultural activities, and even the Muddy Charles Pub.

On issues such as housing, stipends, health care, and advising, as well as nearly any other academic or student-life related issue, the GSC serves as the primary voice and advocate for the graduate student body. In addition, the GSC nominates individuals to serve on a number of Institute committees, to ensure that there is a student voice in decisions made throughout the Institute.

The GSC also interfaces with graduate student groups through the Association of Student Activities (http://web.mit.edu/asa) (a joint committee of the GSC and the Undergraduate Association) and the GSC funding board, which allocates event funding to these groups. Additionally, the GSC maintains relations with other graduate student organizations both locally and nationally so as to share ideas about how to best address graduate students’ needs.

The GSC office is located in Room 50-220, Walker Memorial, above the Muddy Charles Pub. To keep students apprised of the council’s activities, it maintains a comprehensive website (http://gsc.mit.edu) which serves as a repository for a large amount of information relevant to graduate students; it also periodically publishes The Graduate.