

GRADUATE STUDY AT MIT

The broad scope and high quality of MIT's graduate education have made it a global leader. The most important factor in the effectiveness of graduate programs at MIT is the quality of the faculty. MIT is proud of its nationally and internationally recognized faculty of scholars and academic leaders, who are also effective teachers and research collaborators.

More than a third of MIT graduate students have international citizenship. The Institute has made significant efforts, with some success, to increase the numbers of underrepresented and women students attending its graduate programs. This representation of students from diverse backgrounds contributes greatly to the richness of the MIT community and to the excellence of its graduate academic programs.

Graduate education at MIT places special emphasis on the relevance of science and technology to the complex problems of society. Such problems frequently require an interdisciplinary approach involving expertise in several different departments.

Extensive resources for graduate study have developed naturally at MIT from a long tradition of emphasis on contributions to new knowledge. The wealth and diversity of teaching and research resources are described in the school and departmental sections.

Although most graduate students find their interests served by programs available within a single department, others choose to work in interdisciplinary fields (described in the sections on Interdisciplinary Graduate Programs (<https://catalog.mit.edu/interdisciplinary/graduate-programs>) and Research and Study (<https://catalog.mit.edu/mit/research>)), which may reach into two or more departments and involve work in any of MIT's laboratories and centers.

An additional resource for graduate study is cross-registration in programs with Harvard University and Wellesley College, and joint degree programs with the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. Limited study opportunities are also available at Boston University, Brandeis University, Tufts University, and at local institutions through the Consortium for Graduate Studies in Gender, Culture, Women, and Sexuality.

Graduate students are encouraged to use MIT's extensive athletic facilities. Teams comprised of both undergraduate and graduate students participate in intercollegiate competitions and the intramural athletic program.

Graduate students also participate in a wide array of social activities at MIT, and take advantage of the numerous cultural and intellectual opportunities in the Boston area, including free admission to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and the Museum of Science. A more detailed description of campus activities (<https://catalog.mit.edu/mit/campus-life>) can be found in the section on Campus Life.

Independent Activities Period

Independent Activities Period (IAP) (<https://elo.mit.edu/iap>) is a four-week period in January during which faculty and students are freed from the rigors of regularly scheduled classes for flexible teaching and learning and for independent study and research. IAP is part of the academic program of the Institute—the "1" month in MIT's "4-1-4" academic calendar. Students are encouraged to explore the educational resources of the Institute by taking specially designed subjects, arranging individual projects with faculty members, or organizing and participating in IAP activities. They may also pursue interests independently either on or off campus.

Departmental programs may require students to complete a subject (of no more than 12 units) during one IAP.

Activities

More than 600 activities are offered each year on a wide range of topics, both academic and nonacademic. In addition, most departments offer "special subjects," for which students can arrange credit for individual work.

Many IAP activities, both credit and noncredit, are organized each fall. Noncredit activities are advertised, beginning in early November, on the MIT Events Calendar (<https://calendar.mit.edu>). Information on credit activities is available, beginning in early December, on the Subject Listing & Schedule (<http://student.mit.edu/catalog>) website.

Organizing Activities

Nonacademic activities may be organized or attended by members of the MIT community: faculty, students, and employees. Tips on organizing an IAP activity (<https://elo.mit.edu/iap>) are available on the IAP website. Organizers may approach MIT departments and organizations to help defray expenses.

Students find organizing IAP activities a rewarding challenge. For many, it is their first opportunity to develop and teach a program from their own ideas. In doing so, they acquire organizational and leadership skills that prove invaluable to their careers.

Tuition, Housing, and Meals

Regular students paying full tuition in either the fall or spring term do not have to pay additional tuition or housing fees to the Institute during IAP. Students who have not been charged full tuition in either the fall or spring term are subject to additional tuition charges and should consult the Registrar's Office, Room 5-117, 617-258-6409. MIT Dining provides food service options through retail, house dining, and catering services throughout the entire academic year, including IAP. Please visit the Dining website in early December to learn more about dining options during IAP (<http://dining.mit.edu>).

Academic Credit and Grades

Students should follow directions to register for subjects (<https://registrar.mit.edu/registration-academics/registration-information/iap-registration>) on the Registrar's Office website. In addition to regular subjects, students may make arrangements to earn credit for independent work under faculty supervision. No student may earn more than 12 units of credit during IAP. Credits received by first-year undergraduate students during IAP are not counted toward their credit limits for fall or spring term.

All credit-bearing subjects are graded according to the grading rules approved for that subject number. A subject can be graded P/D/F only if it has been approved with P/D/F grading. Similarly, the number of units awarded must be as specified for that subject. However, faculty sometimes teach new classes under special subject numbers for which credit units are arranged.

For students to receive credit for work done in IAP, instructors must submit grades to the Registrar's Office by the deadline given in the academic calendar. If a grade is received after the Add Date of the succeeding term and the student did not register in the subject during IAP, the student must petition to receive credit. IAP credit will not be given if the grade is received after the end of the succeeding spring term.

Students may view their IAP grades on WebSIS (<http://student.mit.edu>) shortly after the start of the spring term. Students who do not receive grades when expected should check promptly with their instructors or the Registrar's Office to ensure the grades are submitted and recorded.

Special Students

Applications for special student status solely for IAP will not be accepted. Special students admitted to the fall or spring term must consult the Admissions Office concerning their status during IAP; they do not automatically have IAP privileges. If the special student has paid full tuition during the fall term or is admitted to do so in the spring, there will not be an additional tuition charge for IAP. If the student has not been paying full tuition, a charge for the IAP units will be added to either the fall or spring term up to a maximum of full tuition for the term.

Office of Graduate Education

The Institute has a single faculty that is responsible for both undergraduate and graduate instruction. The administration of graduate education rests with the president, provost, chancellor, vice chancellor, senior associate dean for graduate education, and the Committee on Graduate Programs (a standing committee of the Faculty).

The mission of the Office of Graduate Education (<https://oge.mit.edu>) (OGE) is to provide Institute-wide support and service to students, faculty, and staff to make graduate education at MIT empowering, exciting, holistic, and transformative. The senior associate dean for graduate education directs the office.

Each department exercises a large measure of autonomy for its graduate programs, under general guidelines established for the Institute as a whole. Each department has a departmental committee on graduate students, including one or more graduate registration officers, to administer department and Institute graduate procedures.

More detailed information about the organization, rules, regulations, and procedures of graduate education is given in Graduate Policies and Procedures (<https://oge.mit.edu/graduate-policies-and-procedures>).

Career Advising and Professional Development

Career Advising and Professional Development helps students make informed decisions about career goals and find opportunities related to their professional objectives. CAPD provides programming and one-on-one advising specifically for graduate students and supports those interested in the faculty path as well as careers beyond academia. As a complement to academic coursework and research, CAPD offers workshops and programming on MIT's professional development competencies (<https://capd.mit.edu/channels/graduate-student-professional-development>): career advancement, communication, interpersonal skills, personal development, leadership and mentoring, social responsibility, and teaching. Graduate students are encouraged to visit the office during their first year to learn what career resources are available. Many services can be accessed via Handshake (<https://app.joinhandshake.com/edu>), and the office can be reached by email (capd@mit.edu) or by phone at 617-715-5329.

See also the Career Advising and Professional Development (<https://catalog.mit.edu/mit/undergraduate-education/career/global-education-career-development>) description under Undergraduate Education.