Policies and Procedures

Academic Integrity

Cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and other forms of academic dishonesty are considered serious offenses for which disciplinary penalties can be imposed.

Early in the term, the instructor should communicate specific expectations regarding academic conduct and collaboration in the subject. See the information on Term Regulations.

The Institute encourages faculty to take responses to academic dishonesty seriously, while also evaluating each case individually for the most appropriate response. In all cases, documenting the outcome with the Office of Student Citizenship ensures that records of student misconduct are maintained centrally at the Institute, preventing an individual student from committing several instances of academic dishonesty without accountability. The Handbook for Academic Integrity can be found online (http://integrity.mit.edu).

Several degrees of response are available, all of which help uphold the integrity of the Institute and all students’ learning experiences. The Office of Student Citizenship is responsible for facilitating these responses for faculty, as well as maintaining documentation within the Institute on the incident and response. Information for faculty regarding the options for handling academic integrity violations is online (http://studentlife.mit.edu/citizenship/faculty).

Voter Registration

Voter registration forms and instructions (http://web.mit.edu/registrar/reg/voter_registration.html) are available in the Student Services Center, Room 11-120.

Institute Policy on Harassment

Harassment of any kind is not acceptable behavior at MIT; it is inconsistent with the commitment to community that characterizes MIT’s activities. MIT is committed to creating an environment in which every individual can work, study, and live without being harassed. Harassment may therefore lead to sanctions up to and including termination of employment or student status.

Harassment is any conduct, verbal or physical, on or off campus, that has the intent or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s or group’s educational or work performance at MIT or that creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational, work or living environment. Some kinds of harassment are prohibited by civil laws or by MIT policies on conflict of interest and nondiscrimination (see relevant sections of Policies and Procedures (http://web.mit.edu/policies)).

Harassment on the basis of race, color, sex, disability, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, veteran’s status, or age includes harassment of an individual in terms of a stereotyped group characteristic, or because of that person’s identification with a particular group.

Sexual harassment may take many forms. Sexual assault and requests for sexual favors that affect educational or employment decisions constitute sexual harassment. However, sexual harassment may also consist of unwanted physical contact, requests for sexual favors, visual displays of degrading sexual images, sexually suggestive conduct, or offensive remarks of a sexual nature.

The Institute is committed under this policy to stopping harassment and associated retaliatory behavior. All MIT supervisors have a responsibility to act to stop harassment in the areas under their supervision.

Any member of the MIT community who feels harassed is encouraged to seek assistance and resolution of the complaint. MIT provides a variety of avenues by which an individual who feels harassed may proceed, so that each person may choose an avenue appropriate to his or her particular situation. Institute procedures are intended to protect the rights of both complainant and respondent, to protect privacy, and to prevent supervisory reprisal.

General complaint procedures are described in MIT Policies and Procedures, Section 9.6 (http://web.mit.edu/policies/9/9.6.html) as well as the Guidelines for Raising Complaints about Harassment at MIT (http://web.mit.edu/communications/hg).

Institute Policy on Hazing

MIT prohibits hazing by individuals or groups and defines it as follows: Any action or activity that is reasonably likely to, or is intended to, endanger the physical or mental health of a person for the purpose of initiation, admission into, affiliation with, or as a condition for continued membership in a group, organization, or living community. This definition shall apply regardless of location or consent of participants. Hazing includes, without limitation, behaviors that violate Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 269, Sections 17-19 (reproduced in their entirety below).

Endangering mental health is defined as sleep deprivation, extended isolation, public degradation, intimidation, creation of artificial and excessive stress, public nudity, and other comparable behaviors that are reasonably likely to, or are intended to, cause a significant degree of distress, disgrace, anguish, or interference with academic, professional, or personal pursuits.

Apathy or acquiescence in the presence of hazing are not neutral acts and constitute hazing as prohibited by this policy. Students and other members of the Institute community must report incidents of hazing that they witness or for which they were present. Incidents of hazing shall be reported to an appropriate law enforcement official.
and the Office of Student Citizenship. Failure to report incidents of hazing is a violation of this policy and may be a violation of Massachusetts law (M.G.L. c. 269 Section 18).

Any retaliation against any person who reports, is a witness to, is involved with, or cooperates with the adjudication of hazing is strictly prohibited.

Prohibited forms of hazing include but are not limited to:

- **Subtle Hazing**: Behaviors that emphasize a power imbalance between new members and other members of the group or community. This is termed “subtle hazing” because these types of hazing are often taken for granted or accepted as “harmless” or meaningless. Subtle hazing typically involves activities or attitudes that breach reasonable standards of mutual respect and place new members on the receiving end of ridicule, embarrassment, and/or humiliation tactics. New members often feel the need to endure subtle hazing to feel like part of the group or community.
  
  Examples of subtle hazing include but are not limited to:
  - Deception
  - Silence periods
  - Deprivation of privileges
  - Social isolation
  - Name calling
  - Assignment of duties not assigned to other members.

- **Harassment Hazing**: Behaviors that cause emotional anguish or physical discomfort in order to feel like part of the group. Harassment hazing often confuses, frustrates, and causes undue stress for new members.
  
  Examples of harassment hazing include but are not limited to:
  - Verbal abuse
  - Threats or implied threats
  - Sexual simulations
  - Requiring situational inappropriate attire
  - Sleep deprivation.

- **Violent Hazing**: Behaviors that do or could cause physical or psychological harm.
  
  Examples of violent hazing include but are not limited to:
  - Placing students in the shower against their will
  - Forced or coerced alcohol or other drug consumption
  - Forced or coerced sexual acts
  - Beating
  - Paddling, or other forms of assault
  - Forced or coerced ingestion of vile substances
  - Bondage
  - Kidnapping
  - Expected participation in illegal activity.

The sanction of disciplinary suspension or disciplinary expulsion will be strongly considered for individuals or groups found responsible for hazing.

In addition to the foregoing, students are advised that the following is the Massachusetts law on hazing:

> Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

> The term “hazing” as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.” M.G.L. c. 269 Section 17.

> Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such a person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.” M.G.L. c. 269 Section 18.

> Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution’s compliance with this section’s requirements that an institution issue copies of this section
and sections seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgement stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full time student in such institution a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the board of higher education and in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution's policies to its students. The board of higher education and, in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such report. M.G.L. c. 269 Section 19.

For further information about hazing and hazing prevention efforts at MIT, visit MIT’s hazing resources website (http://hazefree.mit.edu) contact the Office of Student Outreach and Support in W20-507 or 617-253-3276.

Please note there is an anonymous form to report hazing (https://hazefree.mit.edu/hazing-reporting-form) available for public use.

Other Personal Conduct

All members of the MIT community are expected to conduct themselves with proper respect for one another and for each other's property. The Institute fosters the attitude that every person brings unique qualities, talents, and dignity to the community and that every individual deserves to be treated, judged, and accorded both common decencies and all the benefits of society in an evenhanded and respectful manner.

The Institute reserves the right to take any action that it deems necessary or appropriate to protect the intellectual integrity, safety, and well-being of the campus community including interim measures such as temporary suspension. To that end, MIT students are expected to abide by the rules, regulations, and policies of the Institute, as well as city, state, and federal laws. Students are expected to be familiar with the Institute's expectations of them, which are found in the MIT Bulletin, in the Mind and Hand Book (http://studentlife.mit.edu/mindandhandbook), and in the Institute Policies and Procedures (http://web.mit.edu/policies).

MIT expects that members of the MIT community will not engage in behavior that endangers their own sustained effectiveness or that has serious ramifications for their own physical and mental health, safety, welfare, academic well-being, professional obligations, or for that of others. In situations where an individual student's physical illness or emotional difficulties affect not only the student, but also others in the community, it is the Institute's responsibility to consider the well-being of the community as well as the individuals in care decisions.

Off-campus misconduct may be a basis for MIT disciplinary action if the Institute considers that such alleged misconduct may have violated institute policy and expectations of civility, integrity, and respect. Student status in no sense renders an individual student immune from the jurisdiction of civil or criminal courts and other governmental authorities. MIT actions will take into account applicable law as well as the policies and procedures of the Institute and the standards of behavior expected of members of the educational community.

MIT handles internally some incidents that might give rise to civil or criminal liability. This is done with the understanding by the outside community that MIT deals seriously with such offenses. As is the case for many universities, local authorities often rely on MIT to resolve such issues as long as the internal policies and procedures are effective and adequate. MIT action by itself, however, does not preclude the possibility of other judicial remedy.

If an infraction causes a student to be involved both in Institute disciplinary proceedings and in criminal proceedings, the Institute generally will not delay or stop the internal process until after the criminal proceedings have been concluded.
For more information, contact the Office of Student Citizenship (OSC) (citizenship@mit.edu), Room W20-507, 617-253-3276.

Complaint and Disciplinary Procedures

Students who believe that they have been treated improperly for any reason are encouraged to raise their concerns. Difficulties with other students can be pursued through the living group, department head, other appropriate venues or groups, and the Office of Student Citizenship (OSC) (http://studentlife.mit.edu/citizenship), Room W20-507, 617-253-3276. Students may also bring concerns to the attention of an Ombudsperson (http://web.mit.edu/ombud).

It is the Institute's policy that individuals will not be retaliated against for initiating an inquiry or complaint in good faith.

Anyone—including individual students, faculty members, and employees of the Institute—may bring a formal complaint against a student to the Committee on Discipline (COD). The COD reviews cases of academic offenses, violations of Institute regulations and standards, and other infractions alleged to have been committed by students.

A formal complaint against a student must be submitted in writing to OSC. The charge and its documentation are transmitted to the chair of the COD. After a review of the documentation, the chair will decide whether or not a hearing by the COD is warranted, and, if so, what the appropriate forum will be. The COD has the authority to impose any sanction it deems appropriate. Possible sanctions include placing a letter in a student's disciplinary file, probation, suspension, and expulsion. Sanctions may also include educational and/or restorative components meant to address the wrongdoing and serve the larger community. Detailed procedures for resolving complaints alleging that a student has violated MIT policies are available from the OSC (http://studentlife.mit.edu/citizenship) and from the COD (http://cod.mit.edu).

This procedure serves also as the grievance procedure for students as required by Title IX of the Higher Education Act of 1972 with regard to grievances arising out of alleged discrimination on the basis of sex, and for disabled students alleging failure to comply with Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

A complaint against anyone employed by MIT may go to the immediate or higher supervisor of the apparent offender, or to the Human Resources Office on campus or at Lincoln Laboratory.

A description of the complaint procedures for persons employed at MIT is included in Institute Policy 9.6 (http://web.mit.edu/policies/9/9.6.html). Refer to the COD website (http://cod.mit.edu) for information about COD Rules and Regulations.