Minutes

Present: Muriel Medard, Barbara Baker, Chris Colombo, Enectali Figueroa-Feliciano

Minutes: Minutes from 4/9/10 to be distributed before the next meeting.

Agenda I: Committee Membership
Muriel has been concerned with the overall irregular student participation on the committee this year. She has spoken with the UA President, Mike Bennie, about the issue with the undergraduates and he is looking into it. She has also spoken with the newly elected GSC President about the graduate student attendance. This is a problem which has an effect upon both ends because if the student representatives don’t attend meetings they aren’t able to take information discussed at CSL back to the UA and GSC, and likewise they can't bring information from their respective student bodies to CSL.

Why haven’t students been attending the Committee meetings (this is also a problem on several other committees, not just CSL)?

- The UA does have a process to choose representatives, but do they have a process to oversee if the representatives are actually attending committee meetings?
- There has been more student engagement with the Deans and the Chancellor, so maybe students don’t feel they need to be as involved with committees. They say they want to be involved but attendance shows otherwise.
- There also might only be a few hot topics right now that students choose to commit themselves to and they are less interested in long term topics.
  - The GSC has told Muriel that they will put together the main topics they are interested in discussing and bring them to the committee.
- Perhaps a UA officer should have CSL membership be included in their position responsibilities?

Agenda 2: Update on the new DSL Associate Dean for Leadership Position from Barbara Baker and Chris Colombo
The search committee was working from the early part of the academic year through January and they identified four finalists, two of which were identified as lead candidates. They have been back for second interviews to have more in-depth conversations (designed to discuss the questions the candidates have about MIT, the position requirements, and also to give more MIT staff the opportunity to meet with the candidates).

- The second of the candidates is at MIT today (4/21) and so it will soon be determined if either of the candidates will work and if DSL can move forward with the position, or if things need to be reconsidered and we need to ask the search firm to look for someone else.

The new position is not increasing the DSL headcount because there used to be a Senior Associate Dean and a Director of Leadership and the new position combines the two positions and includes responsibilities over the SAO, CAC, and the PSC. This would coordinate all the
DSL leadership components and new responsibilities under one larger umbrella. There are several prominent leadership programs run by DSL: the Community Catalyst Program (for three years) and Leadershape (for 16 years). The individual chosen for the position should have national exposure, a lot of experience in leadership programs, and should also bring a collaborative effort to MIT. Many of the candidates come from liberal arts schools and so they must be able to work with the scientists and engineers that are the majority at MIT (DSL is still trying to figure out a way to connect with the Gordon Leadership Program).

Discussion:
Muriel states that on CSL several years ago there was a strong concern that leadership doesn’t belong in student life but in organizational behavior, and also that MIT shouldn’t emphasize certain traits or particular programs other than the ones in which we excel (science and engineering).

- DSL is taking this position on leadership due to alumni who feel that MIT doesn’t give them the skills to develop their leadership capacity. Surveys show that students leave the Institute without a proper education in leadership and communication skills. Therefore, our role is to help students develop the opportunities to improve their skills by leading groups, understanding their own visions, putting those visions into play, and being able to listen to the constituencies they serve. All of these abilities will add to, not take away, from the educational experience. The Sloan school is very happy with the DSL program. If there are concerns from the faculty, past or present, DSL would be happy to speak with them or share with them the alumni concerns.

Perhaps the new position could be announced in the faculty newsletter because then people won’t misunderstand the position even if they are unhappy with it.

- Nobody has yet raised an issue with the position and many faculty members (especially in Gordon and Sloan) have been spoken to, and so there is no reason why DSL should need to announce the position in the faculty newsletter. What could be done is that an entire Institute presentation upon leadership could be given to the Committee of the Faculty, a portion of which can show what DSL is offering students in terms of leadership.

What percentage of the faculty is unhappy with DSL leadership? Different levels of discontent would necessitate different manners of response.

- Muriel doesn’t know the number of people that are unhappy, just that there have been several people concerned if leadership de-emphasizes academics and if it fits in well with MIT?
- DSL wants to serve the students in ways which complement their core academics and programs are being trimmed and consolidated to offer what is essential. Students continue to say that they need leadership.

Does the new position really fall under the purview of CSL?

- No, it does not.

*To be noted: Karen Nilsson has announced that she is retiring and we have contacted a search form to look nationally for someone to fill the position. That position will not be changing.

End of Meeting