Committee on Student Life (CSL)
Friday, October 1, 2010
Room 12-196 12pm – 2pm
Minutes taken by Lisa Stagnone
FINAL

Minutes

Present: Chris Colombo, Alex Slocum, David Singer, Robin Deits, Vivek Sakhrani, Barbara Baker, James Hong

Guests: Tim Moore, Director, MIT Recreational Sports, Lauren Hanley, Assistant Director of Fitness, Holston Taylor, MIT Track Coach, Maryanne Kirkbride MS/MBA, RN MIT Medical

Final Minutes will be votes on

Recap / view of pending issues
Minutes to be posted to web from 9/10 and 9/16 meetings
Review of 9/16 meeting (Intimate Partner Violence. Aka Domestic Violence)
Updated the name because individuals aren’t always living together
10/20 CLS Meeting will be at East Campus. Dinner provided by Dean Colombo and Prof. Alex Slocum. 30 students to rsvp to lstag@mit.edu plus committee
Topic of discussion will be “What do you want in your next Dean of Engineering”

Today’s Topic: Health and Fitness

Chair of the Corporation, John Reed, spoke of making all healthy within the MIT community. There’s an increase in type II diabetes that will affect many people and have a significant effect on caring for them through health care cost. It’s an expensive issue. How do we prevent it? We need to get more students involved with basic a health and fitness awareness. Can we get Daper and Healthcare to work together for a lower cost system if fitness is involved?

Coach Taylor provided a proposed plan in 1980 to MIT. It involved lessening insurance cost, increasing productivity and basic health wellness. Involved exercise, healthy life style, and what it takes to be a healthy community. Its cost was too expensive. MIT doesn’t have an approach to wellness. Student’s attempts of bringing exercise into their routine have changed more than staffer attempts. MIT has not been intentional on inputting a system for success. Instead they sometimes seem intent working the ground. (Action item: Lisa to request proposed plan from Stephanie George.)

Alex Slocum suggests that, by working with the Provost Office, maybe we can ask people to state their health routine on their resume. Example: When filling out an application you’ll see a question like “What do you do to keep yourself healthy”? A fit person with healthier habits may, in time, get the job before an unfit person, in the future, if stated on their resume.
Maryanne Kirkbride stated that we can keep everyone healthy. There’s a committee that worked on reducing costs and health care. We need to encourage people to be healthier. They came up with the Get Fit Program [http://getfit.mit.edu/]. (It’s a 12-week, team-oriented fitness challenge open to the entire MIT community. The goal of getfit@mit is to help make MIT a healthier community by encouraging participants to exercise regularly.) Other programs are offered through the Z Center, Blue Cross.

Great resource for information can be found at Balancing Life and Family [http://hrweb.mit.edu/worklife/balancing-work-personal-life]
Work Place 2.0 [http://web.mit.edu/fnl/volume/211/flynn_barry.html]

Robin Deits stated that sometimes students, once away from campus, find time to sleep, have lunch and relax and work on a healthy routine. Then, once back on campus, in the groove, it diminishes. We need to teach the community how to manage exercise, sleep and nutrition.

It’s been stated that the MIT Culture starts during the first year on campus. Everyone stays up late. There’s no balance of school and wellness. We need to look at this holistically. We need to teach how to be effective. It needs to be incorporated into the advising process. Historically, it’s been said that you need to get as much knowledge as possible with many activities. This is having an effect on the students. They need to be taught to prioritize and balance and it should be implemented and practiced throughout MIT.

Lauren Hanley and Tim Moore have stated that there are lots of classes at the Z Center. They go from individual, team and groups, ranging from swimming, to golf, to squash. They will get credit for these activities towards their PE credits which are required to graduate. What students need is a disciplined life style or you have inefficiency.

Grad students love using DAPER. All kinds of activities are utilized. It’s a great way to socialize. Maybe if we make an example from upper classmen, using activities in their daily routines, it will get the word out and freshman will follow. It’s hard to build it into your schedule if you have to choose between sleeping and exercising. Perhaps we should including Faculty in on this practice and spread it around campus?

Action Item: Maryanne, Tim: How do we gather and release to the community a proposal to generate funding to get people in shape, taking into consideration the Culture at MIT? It must come from the Department Heads and stated that staff needs to take time to exercise. If we propose it from the Provost’s Office to the Corporation, they may consider it an experiment. This would be how to make better fit employees, increase productivity and present a study stating absentee-ism vs. presentee-ism. With MIT being leaders, wouldn’t it make sense that the health model for the world be found at MIT? If MIT can lead the nation with health and fitness, it would lead us to fixing the health care situation.

Action Item: Lauren: MIT Medical, Terry Stone. Ask them to head the initiative. Send her an invite or day pass to exercise. Pass them out in their offices to staff. Alex suggested we send some to Susan Hockfield too. The message would be ‘challenge the community to get in shape and rethink the way they live’.
Action Item: Robin: Exercise improves overall health and your sex life. Explore the aspects of health that improve.

There are simple things you can do to implement a healthier you. How about, instead of running out to lunch 5 days a week, you make your own lunches. This is how you don’t waste time (deciding on where to go, walking to the location, ordering, eating, walking back). You can save this time for exercising.

Action Item: GIR (General Information Required) check out Upgrade your Health and Happiness Class 21W 732: Teaches structure. How to package health & happiness could be a new writing class – Les Perlman could answer this.
FAQs about the Healthy Student Goals

• Why do we need these?
  o To help us establish a baseline for student health status
  o To guide program development and collaboration
  o To serve as a reference for students, staff and faculty interested in health issues

• If we were wildly successful, how would these goals make a difference?
  o Future Tech stories:
    ▪ “Student Health Survey Results Show Improved Resiliency”
      • The Student Health Advisory Committee presented the results of the 2013 survey showing an XX% gain in students reporting feeling challenged but not overwhelmed. A YY% gain was seen in students ability to regain equilibrium after an academic or social setback. …..
      • The results were achieved with a targeted effort bringing together many resources on campus to bear on one of the Healthy Student goals.
    ▪ “[Insert your dorm here!] wins Healthiest Grad Dorm Award for 2011”
      • Competing in the Wellness Week Healthy Dorm challenge, [Your Dorm] nudged out [Your neighbor’s dorm] by a slim margin. Winners were judged on percent of students returning the health interest survey, number of health and community events and participation in the healthy dorm working group.
    ▪ “UA CSL and Faculty CSL agree on health priorities for 2012-2014 academic years.”
      • Based on the survey results from last year the UA CSL will be working with MedLinks, SHAC and MIT-EMS to target health programs addressing three high priority health goals from MIT’s comprehensive list of goals defining the student health. The goals are:
        o XXX
        o YYY
        o ZZZ
      • The joint CSL working group will develop and promote an action plan with interested community members.
      • The impact of the effort will be assessed in the 2014 student health survey.

• These goals are completely unranked, are some more important than others?
  o These are designed to be an encyclopedia of goals and we will tap them and work on them as priorities arise.

• If students do this – will we all look the same?
  o These are not meant to be prescriptive and personal growth as well as personal choices play a major role.
Healthy MIT!
Goals for a Healthy Student Community

At MIT, we need to be as smart about the health our community as we are about the rest of our endeavors. Not surprisingly, our best approach includes identifying metrics, analyzing data and solving new problems! While a healthy student is proactive about their wellbeing, everyone has a role in a healthy community.

There are many factors that influence the health of MIT undergraduate and graduate students and student communities. These draft goals are a result of community input from students and staff. They take advantage of extensive work done in Canada on important determinants of health. After a community comment period, they will be finalized and publicized to allow us to work together more intentionally and to measure our collective progress over time.

A Healthy MIT Community:
- Understands that everyone contributes to the health of our community.
- Understands and values the critical benefits a diverse community brings to our overall health.
- Adopts a wellness philosophy helping its members learn about and make choices for a healthier overall lifestyle.
- Understands the powerful connection between health, wellness and performance and achievement.
- Understands the diminishing returns of inherent in chronic overwork.
- Seeks to use data to understand, communicate and improve key health status indicators.
- Seeks to incorporate best practices from key faculty to craft MIT-specific opportunities for optimizing health and wellness.

Contributing Factor: Our Community Environment

Civic vitality refers to the strength of social networks within a community. It is reflected in the institutions, organizations and informal giving practices that people create to share resources and build attachments with others. In addition, social stability, recognition of diversity, safety, good working relationships and cohesive communities provide supportive society that reduces or avoids many potential risks to good health. Social and community responses can add resources to an individual’s repertoire of strategies to cope with changes and foster health.¹

- A healthy student taps MIT’s vital community to build relationships.
- A healthy student recognizes that diversity, safety and good relationships reduce many potential risks to good health.
- A healthy student feels the importance of being of service to the community.

Contributing Factor: Our Physical Environment
In the built environment, factors related to housing, indoor air quality, and the design of communities and transportation systems can significantly influence our physical and psychological well-being.  

- A healthy student will live, study, work and play in safe, hygienic environments.
- A healthy student will understand the connection between safe, clean living conditions and overall health and well-being.
- A healthy student takes appropriate responsibility for his or her environment

**Contributing Factor: Personal Health Practices and Coping Skills**

Personal health practices and coping skills refer to those actions by which individuals can prevent diseases and promote self-care, cope with challenges and develop self-reliance, solve problems and make choices that enhance health. There is a growing recognition that personal “choices” are greatly influenced by the socioeconomic environments in which people live, learn, work and play.  

- A healthy student understands that wellness is the process of learning about and then making choices to create a healthier lifestyle.
- A healthy student understands the connection between food, sleep, hygiene, help-seeking and academic performance and health.
- A healthy student demonstrates personal health practices that help prevent disease, promote self-care, cope with challenges, develop self-reliance, solve problems and make choices that enhance health.
- A healthy student will feel challenged, but not routinely overwhelmed.
- A healthy student can regain his or her equilibrium after setbacks.
- A healthy student will obtain, process, and understand basic health, mental health and support information and services.
- A healthy student understands the personal and community impact of drugs, alcohol and other risky behaviors.

**Contributing Factor: Individual Awareness and Social Support**

Support from families, friends and communities is associated with better health. Such social support networks could be very important in helping people solve problems and deal with adversity, as well as in maintaining a sense of mastery and control over life circumstances. The caring and respect that occurs in social relationships, and the resulting sense of satisfaction and well-being, seem to act as a buffer against health problems.  

Some persons or groups may face additional health risks due to a socio-economic environment, which is largely determined by dominant cultural values that contribute to …marginalization, stigmatization, loss or devaluation of language and culture.
- A healthy student has close friends and/or family he or she can count on.
- A healthy student feels a part of one or more social networks.
- A healthy student understands how his or her own demographic characteristics and cultural identities influence health, wellness and health care.
- A healthy student feels he or she has some modicum of control over life circumstances and stressful situations at MIT.
- A healthy student has financial resources to meet basic expenses and has the knowledge, skills and motivation to use his or her financial resources to promote healthy living.

1 The National Health Forum: What Makes Canadians Healthy or Unhealthy? Underlying Premises and Evidence Table (6/16/03).
Physical Education Credit

- For a flexible way to earn PE Points, try:
  - Step
  - Yoga
  - Our alternative
  - Points Program
  - Kickboxing
  - Group Exercise
  - Pilates
  - Personal Training
  - PiYo
  - Private Swim
  - Cycling

Exercise is one of the best ways to:

- Increase your energy
- Lower your stress level
- Improve your sleep
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Strengthen your muscles and bones
- Improve your immune system
- Boost your mood
- Increase learning skills
- Improve your memory

Dr. John Ratey

- Dr. John Ratey on exercise and your brain (interview)
The Monitor, March 2006

- John J. Ratey, MD, is an Associate Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, Research Associate, and Author, as well as a Clinical Psychologist maintaining a private practice in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He has lectured and published over 60 peer-reviewed articles on the topics of Attention, Autism, ADHD, and other issues in neuropsychiatry.

- Dr. Ratey has penned, Spark: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain, published by Little Brown. In 2008, Dr. Ratey joined the reader in an understanding of neurobiology and inspires the reader to reach to their potential, and embrace exercise that is crucial for the brain and body to operate at peak performance.
Exercise and its effect on the brain

- Increases blood flow to the brain
- Increases heart rate and stroke volume
- Lowers blood pressure
- Reduces risk of cardiovascular disease
- Improves memory and cognitive function
- Reduces stress and anxiety
- Increases production of growth factors in the brain
- Improves mood and emotional well-being
- Increases energy levels

Regular exercise, especially aerobic exercise, has been shown to have a positive effect on the brain and overall health. It is recommended to engage in at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise per week, such as brisk walking, swimming, or cycling. Additionally, incorporating strength training and stretching into your exercise routine can further benefit your brain health.