What's going on with diversity and inclusion at MIT?

Student Activities Office

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STUDENT ACTIVITIES OFFICE

Community, Diversity, Leadership

Mission:

The Student Activities Office provides an environment for students to test new ideas, develop leadership skills and create community at MIT, while advocating for and affirming their identities. Through co-curricular opportunities and experiences such as student organizations, events, cross-cultural education, civic engagement and leadership development, students gain invaluable skills and experiential knowledge that they will continue to develop during their time on campus and beyond as future leaders.

DIVISION OF STUDENT LIFE

Collaboration, Community, Excellence, Inclusion, Integrity, Leadership

Mission:

The Division of Student Life is a leader in providing exceptional living and learning environments for MIT students through a rich variety of opportunities that inspire academic achievement, innovative thought, leadership, and global citizenship.

As an integral part of MIT’s educational mission, the Division of Student Life fosters a safe, healthy, and supportive environment centered on well-being, a commitment to learning, and the development of critical skills for personal growth. We place serving students as the highest priority for our staff, programs, services, and facilities. We partner with others to create a dynamic campus community grounded in personal and group responsibility, fairness and respect, where individual differences are expected and appreciated.
Why are Diversity & Inclusion Important?

- “We must achieve a higher level of diversity and inclusion at MIT. We need everyone to contribute at the apex of their ability, and if something in the culture is getting in the way, we have to change it.”
  - Susan Hockfield, MLK Breakfast 2009

- MIT recognizes the need to address increasing diversity...on the student level also creating an inclusive environment where difference...is valued as an important part of learning, community building and creative approaches to problem solving.
  - GSC & UA Joint Task Force on the Presidential Search 2012

- Communication about diversity needs to be increased, messaging needs to go beyond race and gender; Students want visible leadership on these matters from MIT senior leaders; students may be afraid to ask for help in these
  - Student feedback from the Institute Diversity Summit 2012
LBGTQ and Allies, Multicultural, Women
- LBGT@MIT, Rainbow Lounge
- OMP, Black Students Union and Latino Cultural Center
- Women@MIT, Margaret Cheney Room

How does SAO view Diversity?
Diversity is important for EVERYONE. We all have a race, class, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability, etc. We all have a role to play at MIT.

Inclusion + Social Justice = Excellence
By offering a common understanding and core value for inclusion, social justice, and equity we get closer to all students feeling welcome, a sense of belonging, wellness, and excellence.
How do we get there?
How do we ensure that ALL students feel a sense of belonging, welcome, and inclusion at MIT?

SAO Philosophy
It’s as easy as A, B, C

AFFIRMING IDENTITY
BUILDING COMMUNITY
CULTIVATING LEADERSHIP
Affirming Identity

• Workshops, dialogue series, and retreats for discussion and reflection around personal aspects of identity and raising awareness of self and others

• Social Justice and Ally Development Trainings to staff, faculty, students, and student leaders

• Addressing multiple layers and cross-sections of Identity (ability, class, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity)

• Addressing all forms of oppression on campus - how can we fully live up to our Nondiscrimination policy?
Affirming Identity
Office of Multicultural Programs

- Orientation Leader Training
- Diversity Orientation
- Black Women’s Alliance Retreat
- “Gaytober”- Heterosexual Privilege and Allyship
- Being a Black Women at MIT
- Be Empowered & Affirmed @ MIT: The 21st Century New Black Woman.
- Conversations You Can’t Have on Campus: Women’s Retreat
Affirming Identity
LBGT@MIT

• Rainbow Lounge – safe and supportive
  “RL is an unbiased, nonjudgmental support for students who are questioning, learning about, or want a safe space to discuss their identities”

• YAWH Campaign—19,000 people
  “YAWH very comforting, and a big part of why I came to MIT.”

• Educational workshops/trainings about white privilege, LBGTQ Identity/FSLIGs, Religious Life, Athletics, Sexism, Ally development, unconscious bias, micro-agressions, etc.
Affirming Identity
Women@MIT

- Cheney Room IAP series
  - Today’s Feminist, Healthy Relationships, Being a Black Woman at MIT
- “Conversations You Can’t Have On-campus: Being a Woman at MIT” Retreat
- Graduate Mother’s Group
- Graduate Women’s Group and Undergraduate Women’s Lunch Series
Building Community

• Creating safe spaces for marginalized communities

• Creating welcoming spaces for members of the community to intermingle, to be themselves, and to interact with others

• Providing opportunities for direct involvement by students in office spaces and programming

• Ensuring educational opportunities for majority communities

• Building connections and relationships between students, staff, faculty, and alums

• Encouraging collaboration across student communities and student organizations
Building Community
LBGT@MIT

LBGTQ and Ally Community Leadership Retreat - 10th Annual!
• “PTown was empowering and educational. Great way to start the year, feeling more connected.”

• Specific Groups for First Years, Gender Fluidity, Bi students, QPOC brunches, queer women, ‘family’ dinners

• Ally trainings: GRTs, RAs, FLP, REFs, IFC/Panhel, med links, diversity summit, departments, WSGP, Housemasters, Registrar, Admissions, HR

• LBGTQ Programs – approx. 80/year serving approx. 1200 students
Building Community
Office of Multicultural Programs

• When Support Gets Personal: Intercultural Dialogue
• Multicultural Mixer
• MC^2 Standing out and Fitting In: Navigating the Cultural Landscape of MIT
• Charm School- Effective Communication
• Minority Graduating Student Luncheon
• CPW Minority Women’s Brunch
• Committee on Race and Diversity
• Diversity Summit Facilitator
• Student Enrichment Theme Team
• Sustainable Dialogue Taskforce
• Focus Groups
Building Community
Women@MIT

• Margaret Cheney Room (over 700 students with access)
  • Renovations and climate survey
  • Programming within space
  • Funding for students to host events
  • Ongoing group meetings (book clubs, discussion groups, etc.)
  • Student staff
• Women’s Orientation and CPW
• “Conversations You Can’t Have On-campus: Being a Woman at MIT” faculty dinner
• Exam lunches
Building Community:
High Levels of Collaboration

- DSL
- Residential Life Programs
- FSILGs
- Housing Office
- UA, ASA
- Religious Life
- Athletics
- Dean’s Office
- CABS and LCC
- Community Development and Substance Abuse
- Office of Student Citizenship
- Student Development and Support
- Housemasters

- DUE
- Undergrad Advising and Academic Programs
- Student Support Services
- Office of Minority Education
- Admissions Office
- Student Financial Services
- Global Education and Career Development
- Registrar’s Office
- Disability Services

- Academic Departments
- Women and Gender Studies
- Political Science Department
- Chemistry, Biology, EECS
- Sloan School
- Chair of the Faculty

- ODGE
- International Student’s Office
- Graduate Student Council

- Ombuds Office
- Office of General Counsel
- President’s Committee on Race and Diversity
- President’s Committee, Women’s Advisory Group
- Human Resources
- Alumni Association
- MIT Police
- MIT Medical
- MIT Mental Health
- Community Wellness
- Lincoln Labs
Cultivating Leadership

• Educating the student body - what does it mean to be an *Inclusive* Leader

• Encouraging and providing opportunities for students from marginalized groups to seek out and maintain leadership roles

• Directly advising affinity based student organizations, supporting their leadership and organizational development

• Providing opportunities for mentorship between undergraduates and graduates, chance for upcoming students to learn from those who have gone before them

• Involvement with Institute-wide Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives
Cultivating Leadership
Women@MIT

• Council of Women’s Groups
  – SWE, UWIP, USWIM, BWA, Mujeres Latinas, NUSW, Panhel, SWS

• Undergraduate Association WAG representative and committee

• Undergraduate to Graduate Women’s Mentoring Program

• Involvement with Woman’s Advisory Group
Cultivating Leadership
LBGT@MIT

• Focus on ‘Inclusive’ leadership and facilitation skills
• Successful and proactive transition of leadership in student groups
• LBGTQ Mentorship, connecting with Sloan, DUSP, and other grad student communities
• P-Town Leadership Retreat
• LBGT Issues Group – MIT wide policy changes
• Advising on LBGT National Best Practices
Cultivating Leadership
Office of Multicultural Programs

- MIT Lead- “Using Your Group Dynamics to Create a Dynamic Group”
- MIT Lead- “Being an Inclusive Leader”
- Multicultural Programming Board
- MC^2 Planning Committee
- OMP Advisory Board
- Council for the Advancement of Black Students & Latino Leaders Association Leadership Retreat
BEYOND THE CELEBRATION:

Supporting Students
Departments
Institute-Wide
Global/National Best Practice
Next Steps:

What is the future of Diversity and Inclusion at MIT?
What are the next steps for SAO? DSL? MIT?

Join the conversation:

– Online:  
  [http://diversity.mit.edu/](http://diversity.mit.edu/)
– Institute Diversity Summit:  
  January 2013
– Council on Staff Diversity and Inclusion Efforts (Peter)
– DSL Theme Teams