Graduate Student Council of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology

General Council Meeting
December 2, 2015 at 5:30 – 7:30 pm in 4-270

Minutes

1. Quorum Check and Approval of November Minutes (5:30 pm)
   a. Approved!

2. Approval of Minutes (5:31 pm)

3. New faces (5:32 pm)

4. Speaker Paul Laglacé, MIT2016 Gala (5:35 pm)
   a. 100 years of MIT in Cambridge. We don’t have balls anymore.
   b. Events
      i. Open House (2nd in the last century!)
      ii. Moving day: May 7—procession, dinner? Department events? Then big ball with 4 separate locations. Maybe institute dessert.
   c. Send emails with ideas to pal@mit.edu. Think about:
      i. What is a party?
      ii. Themes?
      iii. What will attract grad students?
      iv. Other items to think about—how to make attractive?
   d. Q: Does it need to be on campus? A: Probably…
   e. Comment: it’s close to finals for students…
   f. Q: Send out paper invitations?
   g. Q: How to get a headcount? A: ~8000 people is estimate (incl. students, staff, faculty, alumni)
   h. Q: Is there a way to incorporate the departments? A: Maybe structure dinners around departments,
      i. Q: Dancing? A: Probably all will be expected to be dance
      j. Q: Bruce Springsteen. But maybe a big-name star would help
      k. Suggestion: Different time period theme for each location, live music at each?
      l. Suggestion: Different schools?
      m. Q: Family-friendly events? A: Open House

5. Report from Presidential Task Force on External Affairs (6:01 pm)
   a. Many options, details in the full report.
   b. Mission and purpose of task force—Assess how we currently interface with external groups; recommend changes; include all options
   c. Organization: introduction; Chapter 1: independent actions that don’t require re-organization; Chapter 2: Organizational changes
   d. Independent Actions
      i. Advocacy Platform: describes agreed-upon positions of GSC; write to include current Legislative Platform, or make it a partner document. LASC currently is defined in LP.
      ii. Identity Documents: to give to external bodies to understand GSC
      iii. Communication Guidelines: Who gets to speak for GSC, on what issues, what venues, standards?
      iv. Formalize Partnerships
e. Organizational Changes: Four main classes
   i. New Constitutional Officer for External Affairs (Foreign Minister?)
      1. Would require constitutional change; needs ¾ vote in council, and majority in student body referendum
   ii. External Affairs Board (EAB)
      1. Many options re: who is in charge, membership
      2. President; special assistant in charge?
      3. Run similar to Muddy Charles Board—chair and membership could be external to GSC
   iii. External Affairs Committee (EAC)
      1. New Standing Committee with 2 co-chairs
   iv. External Affairs Subcommittee (EASC)
      1. Directly under Excomm, or just redefine LASC and stay under HCA
      2. Can be created/disbanded by committee chairs
   v. Of course, also no change

f. What next?
   i. Consider options and try to implement in spring semester. Working sessions, open houses over IAP
   ii. Legislative Platform Open House in January: review LP
   iii. Draft resolutions!

g. Questions
   i. Detailing of history behind creation of Task Force
   ii. Board vs. Committee? A: Board has ability to define membership. Can make HCA ex-officio members of board, reduce problem of overlap of responsibilities
   iii. How will resolutions work? A: Some think it should come from outside of Task Force/current LASC

h. Straw Poll: Do you find the following options acceptable?? 7 options + no change; out of 50 people voting
   i. Option 1: Create EA Officer—35% y, 61% n, 4% a
   ii. Option 2a: EA Board with president as chair—40% y, 54% n, 6% a
   iii. Option 2b: EA Board with new chair (analog to Muddy) — 73% y, 23% n, 4% a
   iv. Option 2c: EA Board managed by appointed special assistant (non-excomm) — 43% y, 51% n, 6% a
   v. Option 3ab: EA Standing Committee — 62% y, 36% n, 2% a
   vi. Option 4a: EASC of Excomm — 42% y, 54% n, 4% a
   vii. Option 4b: EASC replacing LASC, in HCA — 38% y, 52% n, 10% a
   viii. Option 5: No change — 36% y, 58% n, 6% a

6. New Business (6:46 pm)
   a. Task Force on Recruitment and Engagement:
      i. Motivation: Difficulty in filling excomm and general council chairs; Council Chair funding underutilized; Situations of different viewpoints on campus often not heard by GSC
ii. Will be less formal than EA task force: more brainstorming
iii. Timescale: short window for reporting (March GCM); try to pass resolution to accelerate voting to today
iv. Motion to suspend rules and accelerate voting: via clickers. 82% y, 14% n, 4% a – passes
v. Motion to pass resolution – seconded –

1. Questions:
   a. Q: Why can’t this just be taken care of by excomm? A: This is an opportunity for council members, community to contribute ideas.
   b. Concern: This is a cultural shift that has been taking place for years; we can’t just find one magic solution. A: All the more reason to form this group! Will try to implement
   c. A few people voice support for the resolution.
   d. Q: Shouldn’t the real task be to find why people aren’t engaged? A: We want people on the task force who aren’t currently represented. The task force should ideally address this very concern.
   e. Q: Worry that we are taking volunteers away from other groups? A: Hope that
   f. Q: Concern of bureaucracy?

2. Vote:
   a. Test quorum – still there
   b. Vote (now, absolute numbers): 37 y, 4 n, 3 a; Passes.

7. Committee Updates (7:13 pm)
   a. Activities:
      i. Coming up: Ski Trip—still selling tickets through 12/6; Last coffee hour next Monday
      ii. Battle of the Bands: Will be late Feb/early March; bands looking for
   b. HCA:
      i. Costco shuttle is actually running again!
      ii. Renter’s insurance campaign will launch in dorms
      iii. LASC: public comments on OPT rules; 67 people used LASC template, published in Tech; voter registration events before primaries
   c. Muddy: Social after GCM; finance committee; Muddy Mondays
   d. ARC:
      i. Faculty talk series: not many attendees this semester. ARC may take this over. Lack of advertising, inconvenient times. Suggest broader range of interests also.
      ii. Interdisciplinary journal club: starting in Spring 2016
      iii. Another dissertation bootcamp
   e. OC: Not much until spring
   f. ASA: General Body Meeting next Tuesday. MUST attend if you are an ASA-recognized group; otherwise there’s a fine
8. Officers (7:24 pm):
   a. President:
      i. Holiday party! Firebrand Saints this Friday starting at 6 pm
      ii. Ivy+ Summit. Learned that most other schools have a dedicated graduate student center space. In the future we may
      iii. Thanks to those who filled out the mid-year survey
   b. Vice-President:
      i. Inactive reps
      ii. Fall nominations board all filled (except ROTC)
      iii. Special project: mental health services referring students out
   c. Secretary: Anno is being marked as spam.
   d. Treasurer:
      i. Funding deadlines approaching: FB, GSC/PKG Public Service Center fund; Athletics and Performance Activities Grant; Collaboration Award; Student Group Initial Funding
      ii. New Diversity Fund: non-recurring events (not eligible for ARCADE)
      iii. OneMIT Board now active:
         1. Need HASS rep
         2. Student Group “speed-dating” event happening; first event funded by OneMIT
         3. No formal application process for applying; just email
      iv. Do we have a rescope? Will be determined in February

9. Open Floor
   a. Looking for Sloan OneMIT Board rep as well
   b. Remember Holiday party on Friday

10. Adjournment (7:35 pm)