February General Council Meeting Agenda  
February 8, 2017, 5:30pm-7:00pm, 32-141

1. Introduction, Dinner, and New Faces (5 min; 5:30pm-5:35pm)
   a. New faces
   b. Quorum check (51 people present)
   c. Approval of December GCM Minutes (Approved unanimously)

2. Guest speaker: Steve Baker (’84, MArch ’88) from the Alumni Association (10 min; 5:35pm-5:45pm)
   a. Not here to tell us all about AA, but a specific initiative.
   b. How many of you have an UG degree from MIT?
   c. We care about GSE (Graduate School Exclusive)
   d. We want to engage GSEs. More than 50% of MIT is now GSE.
   e. We know that GSEs rank their experience better, but engage less with MIT. We need to figure out ways to have Alumni engage more with MIT. It is a strategic mission for MIT and it matters.
   f. Graduate alumni feel better, but engage less.
   g. We need to engage you better not solely as alumni but as students; here.
   h. Hypotheses why people do not connect to MIT
      i. People connected more to UG
      ii. Fewer opportunities for building community.
      iii. Residential experience not uniform
      iv. Some here only for 2 years
      v. Many internationals
   i. Main question:
      i. What can we do to connect better with the Grad Population?
         1. Assume that if we connect with you now, you’ll stay connected.
      ii. E.g. mentoring programs? Are existing alumni mentoring current students?
   j. Ans1: Maybe focus on learning aspect instead of work? If we could come back and register via the Alumni Association. Things we wanted to learn but never had a chance.
   k. Ans2: There should be more visibility from the AA. E.g. AA help with spouses, try to impact the grad experience.
      i. We’re meeting with married and children later.
   l. Ans3: Inherent in the problem: We’re subdivided in fields, not enough opportunities to engage/cross-pollinate. Not enough interaction between departments. Maybe try to engage at the department level?
   m. Ans4: I am involved at my UG because I serve as mentor, but for graduate school there is not enough of a base of people to mentor.
   n. Ans5: Try to have contact with Alums from the 1st day.

3. Committee Updates (15 min; 5:45pm-6:00pm)
   a. ARC
i. Destress your dissertation 1 week long, about 20 people/day
ii. Professors on tap. If you have any good ideas about Professors to invite, let us know.
iii. GECD has an open house. Feb 10, 1:00-4:00pm
iv. Get involved with ARC.

b. AC
   i. Grad Gala, Apr 15. Ticket sales start Feb. 27\textsuperscript{th}
   ii. Ski trip went well, 370+ attendees, cost neutral to GSC
   iii. “Taste of” series to resume.
   iv. Battle of the Bands coming up in March.

c. ASA
   i. New group moratorium lifted. New group applications due March 3\textsuperscript{rd}

d. EAB
   i. Statements thanking Congress for passing H.R.5578
   ii. Statement in support of science-informed decision making by federal agency leaders
   iii. Statement opposing the E.O. on visas and refugees.
   iv. 2 Call Congress prone banks (Jan 30\textsuperscript{th}, Feb 6\textsuperscript{th})
   v. Met representatives from Trinity College (Ireland)
   vi. Will meet representatives from Natl. Uni. Singapore
   vii. Will visit Statehouse, Represent MIT at NAGPS
   viii. Will go to D.C. for NAGPS, Intl. Womens’ Day
   ix. We have open positions, join!

e. HCA
   i. Every year the institute describes the stipend increase
   ii. Costco Shuttle fixed
   iii. Come to the meeting, they have nice food.

f. Muddy
   i. Have a number of cultural events this semester
   ii. Join us to help us run a pub.

g. OC
   i. Last major thing of the year.
   ii. Activities and Resource Fair, 60 groups in attendance. Done holding events
   iii. Need people to apply for next year!
   iv. Will engage with admin, can change things about orientation.

4. Officer Updates (10 min; 6:00pm-6:10pm)
a. President
   i. Vice Chancellor for Education
      1. Academic Priorities (long term) for the Office of the Chancellor.
      2. We’re holding a forum on Wed. 15\textsuperscript{th}, a great opportunity to talk to Chancellor.
      3. ODGE transition on hold until the VC Position is dealt with.
4. Talk to Erik, Lisa, Arolyn
   ii. GSC 2017-2018
       1. We’ll open nominations for Officer Positions in March
       2. Prez, VP, Secr. Treas
       3. April: Elections
   iii. We’re also recruiting people to run Career Fair
       1. It’s important, we get 2/3 of our money!

b. VP
   i. New Committee Members check in with her

c. Treasurer
   i. We have $17,700 more than we thought. With some caveats (Career Fair, GradRat, Rollover)
   ii. CF, GradRat, Rollover discussed.
   iii. We were concerned about the CF being less profitable, but now that we have money, we’ll spend it
       1. Stay tuned for a rescope.
   iv. SLF
       1. Won’t be raised
       2. Will figure out a process for changing the SLF in the future.
       3. In general we’ll revisit/review the whole issue of funding.

5. Old Business (30 min; 6:10pm-6:40pm)
   a. Brief review of parliamentary procedures
   b. Bylaws Amendments (5 min each; 25 min total)
      i. 63.gsc.9 Amendment to the Bylaws concerning removal of Committee Chairpersons
         • Allow Council to remove committee chairs, not just committees
         • Can committee still remove own chair?
           o Yes
         • Does this affect subcommittee chairs?
           o No, subcommittee chairs are selected as described in the committee operating procedures
         • When was last time we removed a chair?
           o Unknown
         • Not sure that 3 members should be able to do this
           o Any 3 members can impeach an officer, according to the constitution
         • Proposed Amendment – 20% of council members
           o All council members
         • Vote to consider amendment?
           o Yes - 15
           o No – 37
           o Abstain – 0
           o Amendment failed
• Vote on legislation
  o Yes - 44
  o No - 5
  o Abstain - 2
  o Passes

ii. 63.gsc.10 Amendment to the Bylaws concerning affairs pertaining to Council Officers
• Introduces a procedure to break a tie in officer elections
  o Do a revote among leading candidates
  o If 3 votes and still undecided, flip a coin
• Officer impeachment procedures
• Order of succession for Officers
• Two-thirds versus one-half majority for Officers vs. committee chairs?
  o 2/3 in Constitution
• Can there be discussion between revotes?
  o The text says that re-voting will happen according to the above procedure.
• Fair random method is mandated after 3 deadlocked votes. Could reopen nominations instead? Why 3 votes?
  o Meetings cannot go on forever
• Voting on legislation
  o Yes - 41
  o No - 7
  o Abstain - 4
  o Passes

iii. 63.gsc.11 Amendment to the Bylaws concerning Council Meeting Procedures
• Clarification of what it means to reconsider legislation
  o Reintroduce to normal legislative cycle, voted on next month
• Voting threshold – remove yes + no > quorum requirement
  o Abstaining is stronger than a no
• Update two-month cycle to be consistent with new meeting timing requirement from last Bylaws update
• Friendly amendment – considering it
• Concern about voting without quorum, concern about being able to table at all
  o Still must have quorum in order to take a vote
  o Clarification – we are trying to get rid of strategic abstention
• This was added in response to issue with many abstentions 2 years ago
  o What is a legitimate vote?
- This is tabling, not voting down
- Thinks endless cycle of tabling is unlikely

- Has someone done this?
  - Yes. This happened when there was an attempt to make a fund for Ivy+ conference at end of Council
- Worry about people not voting at all
- Five more minutes of discussion
- Abstention should be able to sit out on a vote
  - This amendment reinforces this
- What are consequences of having Council members walking out?
  - We already have this
- What is the point of quorum? Do we need 50% of people to vote?
  - An abstention is a vote!
- Example – what if everyone was present and more than half wanted to abstain?
  - No way to vote
- How do we count quorum?
  - Clickers that respond
- In Roberts rules of order, abstention is act of not voting
- Concern about extreme minority passing something controversial
  - An abstention should not be a no, it should have no effect
  - Extreme minority cannot pass something, can still vote no
- Extending time by 2 minutes
- Proposed amendment
  - Yes + no must meet half of quorum
  - Vote to consider amendment
    - Yes - 24
    - No - 23
    - Abstain - 2
    - We will consider amendment
  - Choices to be abstain, not vote, yes, no
  - Amendment doesn’t fix the problem where an abstention can be more powerful than rest of yes and no votes
    - Half of quorum would need to decide to do this
  - Extend time by 1 minute
  - Motion to amend amendment to make it 75% of quorum instead of 50%
  - Vote on amendment to amendment
    - Yes - 23
    - No - 23
Abstain – 5
Fails
  • Vote on Kyle’s 50% amendment
    • “and if the amount of the total votes cast minus abstentions meets half of quorum”
    • Yes – 27
    • No – 20
    • Abstain – 1
    • Amendment passes
  • Motion to extend for 2 min
  • Better to keep abstentions to allow people to stay in the room
  • Abstention can currently be used to manipulate the vote
  • This legislation tries to strip power from Council to abstain
  • Vote on amended legislation
    • Yes - 34
    • No - 7
    • Abstain - 3
    • Passes
  • Quorum is still 39

6. Motion to adjourn
  • Yes - 21
  • No - 15
  • Abstain - 1