



# Graduate Student Council

of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology

## Officers

gsc-officers@mit.edu

### **President**

Arolyn Conwill

### **Executive Committee**

gsc-president@mit.edu

### **Vice-President**

Angela Crews

### **Nominations Board**

gsc-vp@mit.edu

### **Secretary**

Orpheus Chatzivasileiou

### **Publications & Publicity Board**

gsc-secretary@mit.edu

### **Treasurer**

Lisa Guay

### **Funding Board**

gsc-treasurer@mit.edu

## Committees

gsc-excomm@mit.edu

### **Academics, Research, &**

#### **Careers (ARC)**

Andrew Fiore

Erik Tillman

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#### **Activities (AC)**

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#### **Assoc. of Student**

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#### **Muddy Charles Pub**

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#### **Orientation (OC)**

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James Kaczmarek

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## GSC Office

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Phone: 617-253-2195

<http://gsc.mit.edu>

## 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?
    - iii. With whom should we be engaging?
  - 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 1<sup>st</sup> day.
3. Committee Updates (15 min; 5:45pm-6:00pm)
  - a. ARC



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- 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<sup>th</sup>
- 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<sup>rd</sup>

#### 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<sup>th</sup>, Feb 6<sup>th</sup>)
- 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<sup>th</sup>, a great opportunity to talk to Chancellor.
3. ODGE transition on hold until the VC Position is dealt with.



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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?
        - Yes
      - Does this affect subcommittee chairs?
        - No, subcommittee chairs are selected as described in the committee operating procedures
      - When was last time we removed a chair?
        - Unknown
      - Not sure that 3 members should be able to do this
        - Any 3 members can impeach an officer, according to the constitution
      - Proposed Amendment – 20% of council members
        - All council members
      - Vote to consider amendment?
        - Yes - 15
        - No – 37
        - Abstain – 0
        - Amendment failed



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- Vote on legislation
    - Yes - 44
    - No - 5
    - Abstain - 2
    - 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
    - Do a revote among leading candidates
    - 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?
    - 2/3 in Constitution
  - Can there be discussion between revotes?
    - 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?
    - Meetings cannot go on forever
  - Voting on legislation
    - Yes - 41
    - No - 7
    - Abstain - 4
    - Passes
- iii. 63.gsc.11 Amendment to the Bylaws concerning Council Meeting Procedures
- Clarification of what it means to reconsider legislation
    - Reintroduce to normal legislative cycle, voted on next month
  - Voting threshold – remove yes + no > quorum requirement
    - 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
    - Still must have quorum in order to take a vote
    - Clarification – we are trying to get rid of strategic abstention
  - This was added in response to issue with many abstentions 2 years ago
    - What is a legitimate vote?



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- 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



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- 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