

The MIT2016 Grand Gala –
Overview leading to Questions & Issues
Paul Lagace and Blanche Staton, co-chairs

for consideration by GSC – 12/2/15

As President Reif indicated in his email to the Institute community on November 3, 2015, MIT will be celebrating our first century on the Cambridge side of the river in 2016. A key day of celebration is Saturday, May 7, the “Moving Day at MIT”. In the afternoon, there will be a procession to commemorate the ceremonial crossing from Boston to Cambridge that took place in 1916. In the later evening (about 8:00 to 9:00), a reinterpretation of “The Pageant” of 1916 will take place in the Killian Court. This will be followed immediately by the Grand Gala that will consist of dance parties at multiple locations across campus.

The MIT2016 Grand Gala is to be the biggest social event in the history of the Institute! It is intended to be a worldwide event looking to have alum gatherings at locations around the world participating via network connections. We, representing the Institute, look to have all members of our Institute and their significant others feel welcome, and to have several thousand community members enjoy that shared time that night. In order to achieve this, it is important to structure these pieces of the overall Grand Gala so that everyone feels welcome and comfortable.

It is possible to structure the dance parties held at the several venues in different ways. Representing the team of community members who are working these details, we are looking for suggestions concerning this structure. There are a number of questions that we can pose, although this does not limit possible questions that need to be answered. Once these broad-level questions are identified and answered, the details to fulfill such can then be defined.

Here are key broad-level questions about which we are looking for thoughts:

- By what means is a theme for a specific venue and its party defined? (e.g. type of music, type of food, suggested dress, tying items to a time period, tying items to parts of the world)
- What types of themes, and specific definitions thereof, would most attract graduate students (as well as your thoughts for other people of our community)?
- Are there other particular items that should be included to make these attractive?

We look for replies to these, to other questions that need to be answered, and suggestions for further ways to get input including you enabling continuing discussion amongst your graduate student groups. Please feel free to send input to Paul Lagace’s email address: pal@mit.edu. Thank you.

- PRELIMINARY -