2015-2016 Report by the GSC President
Michael McClellan, GSC President

In the last year, I have had the great pleasure and privilege of serving as the President of the Graduate Student Council (GSC). As outlined in our Constitution, the GSC exists for the following purposes:

- To represent the graduate students on all matters pertaining to their general welfare as graduate students.
- To provide for and promote graduate student extra-curricular activities.
- To provide for the welcoming and orientation of new graduate students.
- To provide a formal means of communication among graduate students.

Every division of the GSC (General Council, Committees, Boards, Subcommittees, Working Groups, Task Forces…) ultimately derives its power from these four simple purpose statements. The past year has provided the GSC General Council with many opportunities to weigh in on the future operations of the GSC; some of these changes may eventually give fresh texture to these trusty (but very old) purpose statements.

In the next year, as Council members begin to turn over and as the new Officer Team and Executive Committee discuss their ideas for the future of the GSC, I encourage every member of the GSC to think about what these four statements in our Constitution mean to them. The 62nd Council of the GSC, which adjorns with the delivery of this report to the General Council, showed that our guiding principles are truly alive and change in rhythms similar to the ebb and flow of our ever-shifting Council membership.

This Year-End Presidential Report cannot capture every event and initiative developed by the superb volunteer team that makes up the membership of the GSC; however, a brief list of accomplishments of each Committee is included at the end of this report. To each and every member of our organization: you make our entire MIT graduate student body proud by conducting yourself with grace, diligence, thoughtfulness, and an eye to the future. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to represent you in the past year. Thank you for all that you do.

Only by working together can we make MIT better,

Michael McClellan, GSC President (2015-2016)
# 2015-2016 Report by the GSC President

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Developing Our Future, Together: Presidential Task Forces

When making any major decision, the GSC will always be in a stronger position when many alternatives have been considered. Only by weighing all possible factors and all potential solutions will the best course of action become visible. One vehicle for extensive investigation and deliberation in the GSC is an **ad hoc** Task Force convened by the President. In 2015-2016, I convened two such task forces, charged (a) to examine the future of external affairs of the GSC, and (b) to develop new initiatives and organizational changes that will increase engagement of current GSC members and will enhance the recruitment of non-GSC MIT graduate students.

While I found great value in the work produced by these two Task Forces, this problem-solving format will not be ideal for all issues facing the GSC. In cases where time is not abundant or few enthusiastic members are available, the intensive and collaborative process inherent in these Task Forces may not be appropriate. In the future, I highly suggest that the Task Force format be continued to address issues that are well suited for this type of investigation. Task Forces do not always end with a “final” recommendation or a sense of closure; however, the potential successes that may be achieved using the Task Force structure employed twice in 2015-2016 should encourage future Councils to use this tactic more often.

External Affairs Task Force: Creation of the External Affairs Board

As authorized in the GSC Council Resolution 62.gsc.2.1, the first Presidential Task Force of the year was charged with determining the future of the GSC’s engagement with entities and initiatives external to the MIT campus. After the earlier Resolution 61.gsc.11.1, which would have established an External Affairs Committee, failed to pass Council, there remained many questions regarding the structure of the GSC and how it could best support initiatives that take GSC money and volunteers off campus: Legislative Action Days in Washington DC, meetings with larger national and regional associations of graduate student governments (such as NAGPS, National Association of Graduate-Professional Students and the Ivy+ Group), regional/local activism on issues facing Cambridge and surrounding cities, and many other permanent and ad hoc activities.

The purpose of the External Affairs Task Force was described within its charge:

> This Presidential Task Force on External Affairs shall assess the manners in which the GSC currently interfaces with governments and external programs, and shall recommend changes to the way the GSC handles its external affairs to the GSC President and to the General Council.

As part of this process, the Task Force examined nearly a dozen possible options that would change how the GSC handles its external affairs. From that pool of options, the following were recommended: four “independent recommendations” that could be implemented immediately, and seven possible methods of restructuring the GSC Organizational Chart. For an exhaustive account of the research and recommendations of the Task Force, the reader is directed to the full Task Force Report (given to Council at the December 2015 General Council Meeting).

Once the Task Force concluded its work by delivering a report to Council, a small working group of interested Council members and students-at-large drafted Council Resolution 62.gsc.7.2 (passed at the March 2016 GCM), which created an External Affairs Board composed of various elected, appointed, and **ex officio** members defined in the amended Article II of the GSC Bylaws.
Recruitment and Engagement Task Force

The second Presidential Task Force convened this year was charged as follows (in 62.gsc.6.1):

This Presidential Task Force on Engagement and Recruitment shall suggest improvements to ways in which the GSC can better represent the wealth of viewpoints and opinions within the entire MIT graduate student body in all of its deliberations and actions. In addition, the Task Force shall suggest structural or cultural changes to the GSC that will better ensure that highly motivated graduate students are able to take on GSC leadership positions without significant interruptions or setbacks in their research, academic progress, or wellbeing.
This year showed a continued decline in the interest of MIT graduate students to take on positions within the GSC (despite an overall increase in attendance at many GSC-sponsored events and select GSC Subcommittee meetings). In addition, many student organizations have expressed that the GSC does not always provide support that they need in crucial points throughout the year (in terms of funding, advocacy, and topics discussed at GSC meetings).

As discussed in the GCM deliberations on 62.gsc.6.1, there will be no “magic bullet” that solves all of the recruitment and engagement challenges the GSC faces. The Task Force, however, has suggested many changes including: targeted discussions during the pre-GCM dinner, a one-month legislative schedule for Council resolutions that includes a collaborative “markup” period ahead of debate, more reciprocity/information sharing with the Sloan Senate, and explicit outlets to discuss issues facing international students. It will be up to the 63rd Council (and beyond) to bring these recommendations to bear; however, the hard work put in by the dedicated Task Force members will make that process easier for all.

Fiscal Year 2016 Budget and Trends in Funding

In order for the GSC to fund its internal operations, ASA-recognized student organizations, and its own events and initiatives, three major sources of revenue are utilized: funding from the Office of the Dean for Graduate Education (in restricted and unrestricted forms), royalty shares from sales of the Grad Rat ring, and proceeds from the student-run Fall Career Fair.

These revenue streams change from year to year, requiring a process by which future budgets can be projected based on past inflows and outflows. According to Article VI of the GSC Bylaws, general revenue must be calculated based on an average of the revenue from the previous three years. The volatile nature of revenue from the Career Fair is moderated by this projection: in the case of a shortfall, the Stabilization Fund can absorb most losses, while in the case of a surplus, extra revenue can be reallocated to budget line items through a mid-year “rescope” process.

Career Fair Proceeds

As with any other year, the proceeds from the 2015 Fall MIT Career Fair constituted a majority of the revenue for the Fiscal Year 2016 (FY16) Budget of the GSC. For the first time since FY13, the GSC’s share of the Career Fair profits was (a) under $400,000 and (b) within 3% of the projected revenue. Although the GSC could develop more programs and initiatives with a larger revenue stream, the shift from short-term special funds for unexpected windfalls (as were developed in the rescoped budgets of FY14* and FY15*) to predictable revenue numbers has allowed for greatly expanded budgets of core GSC programs in FY16.

Continued Expansion of Funding Board Allocations

The general budgetary operating principle of the 2015-2016 Officer Team was to provide student groups with as much funding as possible through Funding Board general allocations and targeted line items on the Funding Board sheet. In FY16, allocations made to ASA-recognized student groups through general Funding Board totaled $200,000. While this represents a record high in terms of money actually disbursed to student groups, it also represents a low point in recent years in terms of the percentage of money requested by student groups that is actually
allocated. In future years, Funding Board allocations should remain a priority; however, in addition to the current set of Funding Guidelines which determine the types of events that the GSC is allowed to fund, Funding Board should develop a statement of Funding Priorities that allow the Board to systematically prioritize requests that can have the largest impact on the MIT graduate student body, can provide new experiences to graduate students, and can lead to robust community building across the various groups that compose the unique constellation of our graduate student body.

GSC OneMIT Board Restructure and First Events

The GSC OneMIT Board was first conceived in FY15, and was modified in FY16 by Council Resolution 62.gsc.3.1 in order to enhance the sustainability of the Board. With representation on the Board from each of the five schools (plus the GSC Treasurer as an ex officio member and the GSC President as a non-voting observer), the Board is charged as follows:

The GSC OneMIT Board is charged with fostering interaction, communication, collaboration, understanding, and respect between all graduate students at MIT by providing targeted support and resources to students and student groups. Funding from the GSC OneMIT Board will enhance the wellbeing of MIT graduate students, which supports the Mission of the GSC. [...] The Board will use its funding guidelines to support initiatives that promote academic, social, cultural, and professional connections across the five MIT Schools.

This year, the GSC OneMIT Board funded three events, and has received significant interest by students wishing to host events in Summer 2016. In order for the Board to receive funding beyond the initial seed amount ($5000 each from ODGE and the Deans of Engineering and Sloan), the Board must demonstrate its effectiveness in bridging social and cultural gaps among the five MIT Schools.

Other Funding for Non-ASA Groups

In addition to general Funding Board allocations for ASA-recognized student groups, the FY16 budget also featured an expansion of funding that is available to student groups without ASA recognition (due to provisional status, delays in ASA processing, the ad hoc nature of groups, or ineligibility with respect to ASA guidelines). Funding Board line items for Diversity Events, Family Programming, and multi-group collaboration were increased in FY16 and have proven to be effective in providing funding to groups who show promise to enhance the MIT graduate student community but who—for whatever reason—cannot apply through the typical Funding Board general allocation process.

Graduate Student Academic and Professional Experience

The GSC is responsible—through direct programming, orientation, operation of the Muddy Charles Pub, funding to student groups, and more—for many of the social aspects of the MIT graduate student experience. In addition to these social events, the GSC also works to enhance the academic experience of graduate students through advocacy and programming by our Academics, Research, and Careers (ARC) Committee and the actions of the Officer Team. By engaging in partnerships with offices and individuals from across the Institute—including ODGE, the Chair of the Faculty, the MIT Corporation (a structure similar to a Board of Trustees at other institutions), the President of MIT, Global Education and Career Development (GECD), and many
more—the GSC demonstrates its commitment to the academic and professional development of each graduate student.

Every day, graduate students at MIT are learning skills and making connections that will enable them to be the very best at whatever they choose to do. If a graduate student makes a connection, gets an internship, lands a job, or develops a research collaboration due to programming and advocacy by the GSC (including the Fall Career Fair), this will clearly improve their experience while still at MIT and this will have an indelible effect on their future.

Evaluating Advising: An Initiative from CJAC

The MIT Corporation Joint Advisory Committee on Institute-Wide Affairs (CJAC) is convened in order to provide information directly to the MIT Corporation without first going through the MIT administration. The membership of CJAC consists of three representatives from each of the following groups: graduate students (GSC President and two students-at-large), undergraduate students (UA President and two students-at-large), faculty (Chair of the Faculty and two members-at-large) and the main membership of The Corporation. Each year, CJAC decides on an issue facing graduate students that would benefit from deep investigation and an end-of-year report including recommendations to be delivered to The Corporation. Typically, the main findings of the report are held as confidential proceedings of the committee; however, this year, the investigation on the graduate student topic has led to a pilot program that cannot remain confidential by nature of its implementation.

For most students conducting research as part of their degree objectives, registration in a research “placeholder” subject such as 12.ThG or 6.960 is required in order to signify progress on the research project or thesis. At the end of the semester, students are assigned a grade (letter grade, P/D/F, or J/U marking satisfactory or unsatisfactory progress) by their research/thesis advisor; at this point, the advisor has the chance to consider how the student has performed in the past semester, but there is no official opportunity for students to similarly consider how the past semester has unfolded.

As part of the work done by CJAC this year, a set of questions was developed to evaluate some of the hallmarks of exceptional research/thesis advisors as informed by nominations for the MIT Perkins Award for Excellence in Advising from the past few decades. Using the Subject Evaluation platform currently utilized to collect student feedback on academic subjects, these questions will be introduced in a pilot in which students enrolled in 6.ThG, 6.960, and 2.ThG will respond to the questions in Figure 2, below. In order to protect student privacy, especially in small research groups, the responses to the evaluations are never linked to advisor names; the responses are aggregated to the department level, where the response statistics and free-text comments are visible to the departmental administrator of Subject Evaluations.
Figure 2. Screenshot of Subject Evaluation questions on research and thesis advisors as seen by students who will complete the evaluations.

The results and initial feedback provided by this Subject Evaluation pilot program will lead to a refined set of questions being deployed in future iterations of the same evaluation. Eventually, the same type of questions may be adapted for other purposes (UROP evaluation, for example) and may be expanded to many more academic departments. This evaluation has the potential to provide each department with targeted comments and longitudinal data (after a large number of evaluations have occurred) in order to start and track progress of initiatives aimed at improving advising relationships within the department.

Experiential Learning and Internships

As tenure-track faculty positions become scarcer, graduate students are increasingly seeking out experiences in non-academic fields such as government, industry, and entrepreneurship. The GSC Committee on Academics, Research, and Careers (ARC) has initiated many programs in which non-academic career options are discussed, and these programs will become increasingly important as the job market for graduate students continues to shift. As gleaned from conversations with many Institute partners (such as GECD, Faculty leadership, and the International Students Office), there are many challenges that students may face when trying to set up internships or off-campus experiences that may contribute to their professional development. Some issues students face include difficulty discussing career goals with academic/research advisors, employment authorization for international students, and the use of credit-bearing academic subjects to signify the educational outcomes of such experiences. In the next year, the role of co-curricular experiential learning and
internship experiences must be explicitly considered by students, administrators, and faculty members. All three groups have different motivations and priorities, but in order for MIT graduate students to bring the Institute motto “Mens et Manus” truly to bear in the modern world and future job market, all three must agree on some common ground regarding the potentially powerful role of experiential learning in the graduate school curriculum.

New and Renewed Partnerships
The GSC is far from the only group who is actively working to improve the graduate student experience at MIT. In the past year, the GSC has worked with too many partners to count; however, there are a few notable partnerships that have emerged in 2015-2016 that should be maintained in the future in order to achieve sustained progress in advancing the mission of the GSC.

Mental Health and MindHandHeart
To signify the increasing importance of programming and initiatives to improve mental health of MIT community members, the Chancellor’s Office initiated a new suite of programs and funds under the banner of “MindHandHeart,” an expansion of the MIT motto “Mens et Manus.” The GSC was involved in the beginning of this initiative, and most participation was coordinated by student volunteer members of the MindHandHeart (MHH) Steering Committee, including HCA Co-Chair George Chao and student-at-large Lawrence Wong. As part of MHH, a number of student initiatives were funded (up to $10,000) using the Innovation Fund.

In addition to MindHandHeart, many other student groups and cross-campus initiatives have supported mental health in other ways. In a collaboration between the Undergraduate Association and Prof. Daniel Jackson, a series of interviews and portraits were published in The Tech under the title “Portraits of Resilience,” showing through words and photos the mental health experiences and journeys of MIT community members. The series had few men and few graduate students participating, so I worked with the organizers to be one of the final participants in the Spring 2016 semester (http://tech.mit.edu/V136/N12/mcclellan.html). The GSC weekly announcement email (“Anno”) now features a Mental Health section. The GSC is working with the new Director of MIT Medical (Dr. Cecilia Stuopis ’90) to ensure graduate student participation in the selection of the next Director of MIT Mental Health Services. In a vacuum, none of these individual initiatives have the power to completely transform our campus culture, but when combined, we all hope to help create and foster a caring community here at MIT.

Major Events with SOLVE and MIT2016
The GSC Officer Team planned and executed two large events in the past year, both of which deepened the relationships between the GSC and key Institute offices. Both events ended up taking the form of modified “hackathon” in which students were instructed to come up with solutions to a set of challenges in a short amount of time.

To support the SOLVE series of events produced in collaboration between the Office of the MIT President and MIT Technology Review, the GSC organized the “Solve-a-thon” in which groups of students designed concepts for wearable medical devices. To support the MIT2016
Together in Service Day, the GSC organized the (very similarly named) “Serve-a-thon” in which teams worked to develop solutions to four challenges currently facing the City of Cambridge: the future of parking, narrow-footprint bus shelter design, “blue sky” street redesign, and tree-friendly sidewalks.

Attendance at both events could have been better, but the willingness of the GSC to support such large pillars of the Institute Calendar has allowed the current Officer Team to make connections with staff members and administrators from all corners of the Institute.

Engagement with GSC Alumni

Throughout the year, any given member of the GSC leadership will amass a large amount of knowledge and will form relationships with numerous internal and external partners; even with extensive and detailed transitions of power, it will never be possible to transfer ever pertinent fact to the next generations of leaders. Therefore, in order to provide depth to cyclical issues (such as graduate student housing), to build on past successes, to provide professional/career ideas, and to learn from past mistakes, the Officer Team and past Executive Committee members have become committed to creating opportunities for current graduate students (and GSC leaders) to meet with graduate student alumni of MIT who were previously involved in the GSC.

Figure 3: Four GSC Presidents at 2016 Grad Gala; photo by Joseph Lee
(Caleb Waugh 2013-14, Kendall Nowocin 14-15, Arolyn Conwill 16-17, Michael McClellan 15-16)

This year, I had the chance to talk with numerous past GSC Presidents about their experience at MIT; each conversation was incredibly helpful in determining the long-term arc of GSC Advocacy on behalf of MIT graduate students. The annual GSC Alumni BBQ, which provides alumni with a chance to meet the current GSC Executive Committee over Commencement Weekend, has become institutionalized. Alumni have expressed great interest in returning to MIT through professional development programming (perhaps through events sponsored by Academics, Research, and Careers).

The next step for alumni engagement will be official resurrection of the GSC Board of Advisors, which is mandated by GSC Bylaws Article VII. For the past few years, the Board has been relatively inactive, but the 2016 GSC Alumni BBQ will serve as a catalyst for re-forming the Board.
NAGPS and Ivy+

The GSC has the opportunity to share best practices and join multi-school advocacy initiatives at the meetings of its largest national and regional associations, the National Association of Graduate-Professional Students (NAGPS) and the Ivy+ Group (the eight Ivies plus MIT). The GSC sent large delegations to the NAGPS Leadership Summit, the NAGPS National Conference, the Ivy+ Summit, and both NAGPS Legislative Action Days. In each of these meetings, the GSC has the opportunity to showcase its best-in-class features: budgetary practices, use of a career fair as a major revenue stream, collaborative (rather than deeply adversarial) relationships with members of the administration, and more. On some issues, however, the GSC stands virtually alone: the GSC does not pay any of its Officers or Committee Chairs, the GSC does not require students to join a committee or subcommittee to be eligible for Travel Grant money, and the GSC does not have a clear divide between its executive and legislative functions.

In the future, the relationships between the GSC and these larger organizations will largely be managed by the Subcommittee of the University Liaison, which will be housed under the newly formed External Affairs Board. The application procedure for students to join the NAGPS and Ivy+ delegations will remain open to all graduate students, and these trips will continue to represent the best opportunities for current and future Executive Committee members to learn from the institutional knowledge held by other graduate student governments across the country.

Introduction to Future Challenges

This section will serve as a brief introduction to a few issues that arose in 2015-2016 but for which there was little closure. For many of these challenges, there are potential solutions already in the works; however, it will be up to the 63rd Council and the 2016-2017 Executive Committee to continue addressing these pressing issues.

International Student Concerns

In the final few months of the 62nd Council, many issues pertaining to international graduate students and the International Students Office (ISO) came to the fore:

• Support for the new International Council created by ISO
• Clear and consistent communication from academic departments and ISO regarding authorization for internships and non-Institute-controlled entrepreneurship programs
• Smaller proportion of international GSC Council Reps than international graduate students in general at MIT
• Financial and logistical support for student-run international pre-orientation programs in home countries (such as the India program developed by Sangam)

Filling GSC Positions

As has happened in the past few years, there were many challenges in getting full participation in all parts of the GSC.

• Once again, most Officer and Committee Chair elections were uncontested
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• In addition, once again, the Executive Committee was not completely filled with Committee Chairs by the time of the Executive Committee Transition Retreat
• Some departments were unrepresented in the General Council for the entirety of the 62nd Council, including Biology and Brain and Cognitive Science
• The Council Representative Fund for Council Reps to plan activities within their constituencies was once again vastly underspent
• Many GSC Committees had exceedingly few at-large members, while other Committees and Subcommittees filled the GSC Office at each monthly meeting

Institutional Support for Student Groups

Many student groups have candidly discussed with me the ways in which the GSC could better support them in the future. Building on the recommendations from the Engagement and Recruitment Task Force, improvements need to be made in the following areas:

• Options for less restrictive funding of student group events and initiatives (such as speaker fees in exceptional cases)
• Advocacy to key administrators on targeted issues; for example, the GSC should work with the Black Graduate Student Association (BGSA) to coordinate response of the Chancellor’s Working Group to its detailed report and list of recommendations
• Opportunities to present pressing issues and key updates at General Council Meetings, perhaps during the dinner portion of the meeting and in the first few minutes of the meeting itself

Collaborations with Sloan

Out of the ~6800 graduate students currently enrolled at MIT, nearly 1500 are enrolled at the Sloan School of Management. While the GSC represents all graduate students at MIT, previous years have seen a tug-of-war between the GSC and the Sloan Senate with respect to who “actually” represents their interests. This year, the GSC has tried to clear the pettiness of some past encounters, and there has been an increase in participation by Sloan students in GSC Committees, Task Forces, and Subcommittees. By forming explicit partnerships with the Sloan Senate, Sloan Clubs, and individual Sloan students, the GSC and the Sloan student body will both be able to enjoy the resources and advantages unique to the other group.

• Introduction of Sloan students to GSC initiatives that are not currently available at Sloan, such as legislative action, local/state political issues, and nomination to key Institute Committees (through Nominations Board)
• Continued unity in Orientation programming, especially around the Presidential Welcome and “OneMIT” events

Changes in Administration

As Dean for Graduate Education Christine Ortiz and Dean for Student Life Chris Colombo step away from their roles, the GSC will need to play an active role in transitioning the new administrators to their roles at MIT. The new Vice President for Student Life Suzy Nelson will start in July, and the GSC must be available to provide her with information, guidance, and suggestions
for improving the graduate student community through Division of Student Life programming. The future of the Office of the Dean for Graduate Education (ODGE) will require input from many graduate student communities, and the GSC will need to be a strong voice in any reorganization or personnel searches that are conducted.

Concluding Thoughts: Where are We Going?

As I close my year as GSC President, I find myself naturally reflecting on where all of this started: my public statement of purpose from the April 2015 GSC Officer Election:

The previous GSC Officers have done much hard work to cultivate and sustain trusting relationships with members of the MIT administration. As GSC President, I would honor this previous work and continue to advise the Institute on high-level decisions that will affect the graduate student community.

Part of the power inherent in a close working relationship is the ability to disagree on the exact path to reach the same positive outcome. Therefore, with the trust of the graduate student community behind me as an elected GSC officer, I would not hesitate to suggest drastic changes in current or proposed initiatives or rules when they may be detrimental to any aspect of the graduate student experience.

I do not expect for the 63rd Council to agree with every path I have taken to represent the GSC in the past year. However, as I step to the sideline to become an observer to the ever-pressing forward progress of the GSC, I hope that individual Council members and GSC leaders will reach out to me whenever my experience could help inform future decisions of the Council.

I love this place. I love the GSC. The past year has been amazing, and I was overjoyed to have been able to share this experience with each and every one of the students I met.

Figure 4: It's not all hard work! The GSC Officer Team of 2015-2016 thanks all of the GSC volunteers, members, and leaders of the past year for everything they did on behalf of students. (Picture by Joseph Lee)
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Brief Accomplishments of Each GSC Committee/Board
As submitted by each Committee Chair; email addresses for each committee provided

Housing and Community Affairs (HCA; gsc-hca@mit.edu)
1. Annual Stipend Increase - We recommended a 3.59% stipend increase, and the Dean’s Group accepted a 3.5% stipend increase, which is the largest increment above cost-of-living increase they have accepted.
2. Housing - We served on the Site 4 new graduate dorm design committee and ensured that graduate student priorities were met. We represented and liaised with DSL during monthly Housing Strategy Group meetings. Got DSL to agree to installing water fountain for Westgate.
3. Transportation - Improvement of Costco Shuttle regularity, creation of website, and better management of Costco Cards
4. Health Insurance - Blocked increase in co-payments. Lobbied for a small 8-9% increase in Premium Rates, which helps the majority of students. Only Sloan, undergraduate and families have to pay premiums out of pocket and will be directly affected by the increase.
5. Mental Health - We have been working hard to improve the quality of, increase the access to, and the overall affordability of mental health care at or outside MIT Medical. This year we advocated to stop increases in our co-payment rates for office visits in order to keep access to care affordable.
5a. MindHandHeart - Staffed MHH Steering Committee with two graduate chairs - also part of the Health Subcommittee. Organized Dogs, Dorms, and Friends event to relieve finals stress and encourage help-seeking
6. Gender-Neutral Paid Parental Leave - We presented a proposal to the Dean’s group to have gender-neutral paid parental leave for all MIT graduate students.
7. Sustainability - Our sustainability subcommittee has been working year-round to improve access to recycling/compost facilities and make all MIT facilities, dorms and meetings more sustainable. Organized Earth Day, visibility and booth at MIT 2016.
8. Off-Campus Events - Our off-campus subcommittee works on providing free events to graduate students, such as films, kayaking, Broadway shows and so much more. Off-campus Housing Fair with OCH.
9. Need-based Childcare Grant – A proposal to establish a need-based childcare grant was presented to Dean’s Group.

Activities (gsc-ac@mit.edu)
1. Organized 30+ events for graduate students over the course of a year, including large annual ones and smaller regular ones
2. Collaborated with student cultural groups to hold Taste of events for Brazil, Spain, India, Canada, and more
3. Ski Trip attended by 400+, Grad Gala by 500+, Acoustic BBQ by 900+
4. Added value to the community by putting on these events within the confines of our budget
Academics, Research, and Careers (ARC; gsc-arc@mit.edu)
1. This year the Academic Panels have been much more inclusive. In the past, ARC focused mainly on inviting biotech, or industry professors to talk. The Committee also invited a social science prof who is working in Microsoft to speak on panels. That also led to some students from linguistics and philosophy contacting ARC. These panels attracted at least 200 students--rooms were overflowing!
2. Expanded the Dissertation Bootcamp series to include one-day formats, while keeping the extended Vacation Bootcamps. The one-day bootcamp was full!
3. Expanded the range of workshops to include skillsets such as negotiation/conflict management/improv. Attendance was also maxed out for some workshops e.g. improv/conflict management.
4. Supported the GECD in other events such as other panels they organized (publicity, food, etc)
5. Increased partnerships with other MIT offices, such as Conflict Management, while maintaining traditional partnerships with GECD.
6. Travel Grants successfully disbursed to students who needed additional support for professional travel.
7. Chose recipients of various Institute Awards for teaching and advising.

Orientation (gsc-oc@mit.edu)
1. Restructured first day events (Presidential Welcome, Grad School 101)
2. increasing collaboration/coordination with Sloan Orientation
3. Restructured the Orientation Fellow position that supports Orientation programming

Publicity and Publications Board (P&P; gsc-secretary@mit.edu)
1. Finalized Website transition. This was a difficult process but eventually found a very good webmaster and CMM.
2. Emphasis on wellness in the GSC Anno: new section, and increased visibility of events.
3. Worked with officers to develop and advertise new events such as the Solve-a-thon, Serve-a-thon, and publicized MIT2016.

Nominations Board (gsc-vp@mit.edu)
1. New website system implemented to allow institute committee chairs to submit requests for nominations (this should help gather correct information)
2. New website system implemented to apply for institute committee openings
3. Process changed to rolling applications instead of twice per year

External Affairs Board (gsc-eab@mit.edu)
1. Elected its first Chair, and is now working with former members of LASC and other students-at-large to draft subcommittee charges for its first year in operation
2015-2016 Report by the GSC President

Funding Board (gsc-treasurer@mit.edu)
1. Got the Family Programming Fund, the Diversity Fund and Initiatives Fund off the ground with new applications.
2. Provided $199k for small events, medium events and capital expenses for graduate student groups.
3. Provided funding for a public service fellowship for a graduate student, Libbie Cohn (Urban Studies and Planning), to develop a permanent community center and resource for Bay Area residents.
4. Provided $16,000 to support the participation of individuals and teams of graduate students in sporting events.
5. Encouraged sustainable practices in the graduate community through the Sustainability Grant.

Muddy Charles Board of Governors (gsc-muddy-chair@mit.edu)
1. Analyzed bylaws and generated new set of Rules and Governing Documents
2. Generated long-term financial plan of the Pub’s reserve account
3. Revisited Board Advisor roles for better engagement