



Training graduate students is one of the most important duties of the Institute. We seek to define expectations on graduate student advising for each advisor and advisee at MIT, and for setting a high standard of conduct at other universities.

# BEST PRACTICES

## in Graduate Student Advising

### COMMON VALUES

On the Graduate Student Experience

### INSTITUTE POLICY

Guiding the Graduate Student Experience

Faculty members and their students are encouraged to resolve conflicts and seek assistance through a variety of MIT resources and offices, compiled in resources.mit.edu. These include:

#### DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM GRADUATE OFFICERS

odg.mit.edu/gpp/overstgnt/officers

#### DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM HEADS

#### OMBUDS OFFICE

Room 10-213  
Phone 617-253-5921  
ombud.mit.edu

#### GRADUATE PERSONAL SUPPORT (GPS)

#### OFFICE OF THE DEAN FOR GRADUATE EDUCATION (ODGE)

Room 3-138  
Phone 617-253-4860  
Email odg@mit.edu  
odg.mit.edu

#### CONFLICT MANAGEMENT @ MIT

#### DIVISION OF STUDENT LIFE (DSL)

Room W20-507

Phone 617-253-3276

Email conflictmanagement@mit.edu

#### INSTITUTE COMMUNITY & EQUITY OFFICE

Room 4-250

Phone 617-324-7319

Email iceo@mit.edu

diversity.mit.edu

#### COMMUNITY WELLNESS @ MIT MEDICAL

Room E23-205

Phone 617-253-1316

Email wellness@med.mit.edu

medical.mit.edu/services/community-wellness

#### MIT MEDICAL

Building E23

Phone 617-253-4481

medical.mit.edu

#### MENTAL HEALTH & COUNSELING @ MIT MEDICAL

Building E23, 3rd floor

Phone 617-253-2916 weekdays

617-253-4481 nights/weekends

medical.mit.edu/services/mental-health-counseling

#### ACTIVE MINDS @ MIT

Email activeminds-exec@mit.edu

activeminds.mit.edu

# BEST PRACTICES in Graduate Student Advising

## COMMON VALUES

### on the Graduate Student Experience

- 1 Faculty members and their graduate students are strongly encouraged to build their relationship by establishing common expectations on the major elements of their professional interactions, such as:
  - A. Requirements for achieving and maintaining an acceptable academic standing as well as graduation requirements for each academic unit;
  - B. A regular time for meeting;
  - C. Lead times for feedback on work such as thesis and manuscript drafts;
  - D. A shared understanding of what constitutes sufficient notice and reasonable scheduling of events the student is expected to attend following a request from their advisor;
  - E. A shared understanding of academic integrity and responsible conduct of research.
- 2 Faculty and students are strongly encouraged to attempt to resolve conflicts through direct discussion and other informal procedures.
- 3 Graduate students are strongly encouraged to keep their advisor apprised of academic progress and seek their advisor's input on the same subject on a regular basis.
- 4 Graduate students should receive attribution for scholarly assistance to faculty, and vice versa, including contributions to publications and patents.
- 5 Faculty are expected to be supportive of their students' participation in extra-academic activities and to recognize the value of such activities for their intellectual and professional development. Depending on the discipline, these activities might include training in job interviews, information on academic and non-academic career options, and internships.
- 6 A number of resources are available for graduate students who wish to terminate their relationship with their advisor and search for a new research laboratory. These include their departmental or program graduate administrator, program head or departmental graduate officer, a dean in the ODGE, or an Institute ombudsperson.
- 7 Graduate students share with the faculty the responsibility for securing, maintaining, and protecting the integrity of grades, scholarship, and research.
- 8 Faculty members have the responsibility to inform graduate students of the source and amount of their financial support and of all expectations associated with any funded position. Faculty members should inform graduate students promptly of matters that affect their funding status.
- 9 Graduate students and faculty have a responsibility to inform each other as soon as they have knowledge of a possible change of their status. Graduate students should provide reasonable notice to their advisor if they intend to leave or change advisors; have a medical or personal issue that interferes with study and research; or are experiencing other academic or life issues that an advisor might reasonably need to know about. When circumstances require leaving a research project, graduate students should provide a summary of their work so that any delay associated with continuation of the project is minimized.
- 10 Beyond the responsibility to provide an evaluation once per term via a thesis grade, advisors should consider providing additional periodic feedback of academic progress, performance and professional potential, preferably in the form of a written evaluation.
- 11 Graduate students are protected by a variety of policies and procedures, as summarized in the document Institute Policy Guiding the Graduate Student Experience. If a student feels that they have been unfairly treated, or treated in a way that is in violation of MIT policies, and attempts at informal solutions were unsuccessful, the student can appeal by means of confidential Institute Complaint Resolution procedures. The student can be accompanied by a member of the MIT community to a meeting about the complaint. These individuals may not be family members, subordinates, or attorneys. The role of the MIT community member is to provide support and guidance, not to be a substitute for the party, who is the primary participant.

Graduate students form a large part of the MIT community, and their involvement can have a significant influence on the Institute. Therefore each graduate student bears a responsibility for respect and maturity in their behavior towards all members of the Institute community.

## INSTITUTE POLICY

### Guiding the Graduate Student Experience

- MIT does not discriminate against individuals on the basis of race, color, gender, sexual orientation, religion, handicap, age or national or ethnic origin in administration of its education policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs and other Institute administered programs and activities.
- Graduate students are protected from harassment, including sexual misconduct and retaliation.
- Any graduate student who believes that they have been unfairly treated is encouraged to resolve the concern through the Institute's complaint resolution procedures.
- Pending approval by the Dean for Graduate Education, female graduate students anticipating giving birth may take paid childbirth accommodation.
- As with all members of the MIT community, graduate students are to be treated with evenhanded respect for their dignity, individual qualities, and property.
- Graduate students have a right to and responsibility to maintain a safe and clean working environment.
- Graduate students have the right to conduct research in an environment free from conflicts of interest and the responsibility to maintain their research free of conflicts of interest.
- Graduate students have the right to conduct research in an environment free from academic misconduct and dishonesty and a responsibility to maintain standards of academic integrity and responsible conduct of research.
- Graduate students are protected from personal exploitation. In the case of full-time research assistants, supervised activities should be confined to thesis research and professional development.
- Graduate students in a paid assistantship have a right to paid vacation in accordance with Institute policy.
- Graduate students must be notified of the work requirements for each subject, including grading criteria and procedures, at the beginning of each term.
- Each academic unit should ensure that students have ready access to the following information.
  - A. Degree requirements
  - B. Academic deadlines
  - C. Time limits for seeking advanced degrees
  - D. Departmental procedures for general and/or qualifying exams
  - E. Guidelines for resolving concerns or conflicts within the department
  - F. Individuals available for consultation regarding student issues and problems
  - G. Criteria for termination or withdrawal of a graduate student
  - H. Rules governing teaching assistant and research assistant appointments and fellowships
- If a department or program is considering terminating a graduate student, that student should be made aware at an early stage of the reasons for such consideration, and should be notified in writing when formal consideration of termination is initiated.

For more information about  
Graduate Policies & Procedures please visit:  
**[edge.mit.edu/gpp/roles](https://edge.mit.edu/gpp/roles)**

