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<http://gsc.mit.edu>



Graduate Student Council

of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology

* Indicates council vote will be held.

1. Introduction (5:30-5:40)
 - a. New faces
 - b. Quorum check*
 - c. Approval of May minutes
2. Update on how GSC Executive Committee is working with MIT administration on student concerns; transparency measures (5:40-5:50)
 - a. GSC is working with admins and we want to be transparent about which people/offices we're talking with
 - b. We restructured the website to make it easier to navigate and see what committees are there.
 - c. COVID-19 Student Solutions Group will be an important voice on issues, e.g. grading policy
 - i. Survey was sent today
 - d. We're working on getting PIs to be more transparent with their students about where funding is coming from.
 - e. Question: Issue with transparency: passive transparency (all info accessible) vs. active transparency (i.e. there are channels for exposure for tools)
 - i. Maybe you should be more active about announcing things you/departments are doing? Also try to identify who are the actors in departments (e.g. departmental GSC)
 - f. Question: I feel a more centralized way to express student voices would be good. Students would want to know what way to get their voice heard.
 - g. Question: Transparency as related to GSC desire to have a historian – could be useful.
3. *Brainstorm*: Mobilizing & student groups in the COVID era (5:50-6:10)
 - a. Funding
 - i. Check-in with your group(s) – where does the budget usually come from?
 - ii. How will these sources be affected in the upcoming year?
 - I. Survey from UA/ASA coming soon!
 - iii. What other options are there?
 - I. <http://asa.mit.edu/group-resources/group-funding>

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2. ASA
3. SOLE/DAPER
- b. Advocacy
 - i. Who to go to with concerns?
 1. UA/GSC
 2. ASA
 3. DAPER/SOLE
 4. Department/dorm exec (if relevant)
 5. Groups with similar missions
 - c. Continuity when leaders graduate
 - i. Transition meeting
 - ii. SOLE and ASA have resources on contents of transition workshops
 1. <https://asa.mit.edu/group-resources/transition-resources>
 - iii. Think critically about publicity and recruitment this year
 1. SOLE can support your marketing strategy.
4. Discussion: Grading models for the fall semester, pros and cons (6:10-6:30)
 - a. What we know
 - i. Fall semester will mostly be taught remotely
 1. Lab performance classes preferentially given space on campus
 - ii. 25-60% of undergraduates will be invited on campus
 - iii. How to get involved
 1. Survey sent out in Presidential Memo today
 2. Join the student solutions group!
 - a. <https://gsc.mit.edu/join-the-student-solutions-group/>
 3. Email academic policy SSG (gsc-ssg-academic-policy@mit.edu) or chair of APART (danheiser@mit.edu) directly.
 - b. Grading options
 - i. Standard letter grades
 1. Alternate version of D/F = no record
 - ii. Alternative grades: pass/no record (PE/NE/IE)
 - iii. Instructor decides for each class before reg. day
 - iv. Student opt-in per class
 1. Letter grades as default

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2. Alternative grades as default
 - v. Dual opt-in: default is letter grades, either instructor or students can opt-in to alternative grades.
- c. Comments
 - i. There could be a drop in productivity
 - I. Audience member: I noticed no change in productivity in my class
 - ii. Student opt-in: nice for flexibility but I am worried about equity between students whose circumstances *allow* them to choose letter grades and those who can't - socioeconomic status factors in!
 - I. Parental status is a factor as well. I'm concerned about students who would opt for the graded option being unable to do so because of some aspect of their personal situation.
 - iii. Orals/exams might be hard in the Math department
 - iv. There should be provisos to faculty to not search after and enforce a surveillance method; hard-nosed professors might be overly concerned with invasive ways to prevent cheating.
 - v. I'm afraid that we as graduate students are trying to impose a grading system for the undergrads when we aren't in that situation. It kind of feels like we're saying we know what's best for them better than they do
 - I. A LOT of decision-making at MIT happens to favor undergrads...We shouldn't undercut our own voices and needs, it's gotta be a balance.
5. Graduate student issues during the Research Ramp-up
 - a. Info: how to report PI coercion and other issues (6:30-6:40)
 - i. 10% of grad students felt coerced
 - ii. In small labs, it's not super anonymous.
 - b. Discussion: what's going well, and what isn't? (6:40-7:00)
 - i. Update: one of the main machine shops on campus is going to release guidance soon.
 - ii. Reporting is good but sometimes too late and it's a high barrier. Also if your department head tells you to prioritize health, you might be more likely to do so.
 - iii. Ramp up phase 2 will have additional testing requirements.



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- iv. What is ramp-up phase 2? Why do labs have ramp-up when SHASS doesn't?
 - v. We need libraries
 - vi. Admin seems to have no concern for non-lab work
6. Officer updates (7:00-7:10)
- a. ExComm Statements Subcommittee membership
 - i. Works up GSC Statements for ExComm to vote on
 - ii. Serves the other committees that don't have Statement voting membership
 - iii. Membership as of now:
 1. Steven Burcat (officer member)
 2. Naveen Arunachalam (secretary)
 3. Jonathan Behrens (HCA Co-chair)
 4. Bianca Lepe (DEI Chair)
 5. Jordan Harrod (EAB Chair)
 6. [An EAB member]
7. Committee updates (7:10-7:25)
- a. ARC
 - i. COVID-related topics
 - ii. Alumni Relations
 - b. AC
 - i. In talks with Harvard to have a virtual poetry even this summer
 - ii. Planning a few other virtual events for the summer
 - iii. Next meeting on July 6th – 6:30 pm
 - c. ASA
 - i. Done with re-recognition!!!
 - ii. Virtual Midway: adapt CP* website or something new?
 - iii. Still waiting on guidance on student spaces on campus
 - d. DEI
 - i. BGSA petition
 - ii. Black Lives Matter Departmental Demands
 - iii. GSC DEI Allyship guide
 - e. EAB
 - i. Next meeting TBD
 - ii. Passed two more statements
 1. Join OPT letter with 72 other student councils

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2. MA state elections voting options in response to COVID-19
- iii. Working on:
 1. Affordable Housing Overlay
 2. Cambridge Student Association
 3. Executive Order on Visas – Limited Advocacy Options
- f. Muddy
 - i. Next meeting 7/13/2020 at 7pm Eastern
 - ii. Board is looking for new grad student members!
- g. OC
 - i. Completed orientation webinars (OC 2020)
 - ii. Orientation Facebook page: 1300/2000 students signed up
 - iii. Informal place for students to meet each other
 - iv. New place for interaction
 - v. Social Event
 1. 1 hour long Ice Breaker event for new students to virtually meet each other
 2. 2 PM EST July 3rd, 12 AM EST July 4th
 3. Volunteers wanted!
 - a. Email gsc-oc-chair@mit.edu if you are interested
 - vi. Future Webinars and Plans
 1. General webinars mid-July
 2. Finance late-July
 3. Advising late-July, early-August
 4. Meeting with graduate admins to coordinate orientation with departmental orientations
 5. Orientation Leaders
- h. HCA
 - i. No update
 - ii. Joint the Advocacy subcommittee!!!
8. Open Floor
 - a. Housing complaints
 - i. For students who have left, the temporary ending lease will end July 31; there's not explanation of what will happen Aug 1, e.g. when to start paying rent.
 - ii. Check-in process is counterintuitive: check in one day, get tested next day, then get key



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I. This is in the process of being fixed.

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