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Graduate Student Council

of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology

This meeting addressed two main topics: ongoing work on transitional funding for doctoral students changing labs, and remote international appointments.

The GSC sought to clarify to the Chancellor the GSC/RISE position with regard to grad students switching research groups due to a misfit in research interests. In seeking a guarantee that grad students can obtain transitional funding to switch groups based on research interest, we are not trying to make it so grad students can dance around between groups for five years or change groups on a whim; rather, we wish to avoid having grad students stuck in a choice of poor research group due to issues with departmental group selection options, and allow support when a grad student has a serious change in research interests. The Chancellor added that her concern is that MIT can't guarantee support for grad students who want to do research in areas/topics in which no MIT professor is currently working. This issue will be worked out in Phase 2 of the transitional support plan as it cannot be adequately addressed in January.

With regard to remote international appointments, many of the main issues and questions had been addressed in a separate meeting between OVC, OGC and the International Support Network leaders. In this meeting, the GSC got clarity that DAS is not making final decisions on student employees applying to retain international remote appointments for medical reasons, and MIT Medical will be consulted on the cases of people under their care. Grad students whose PIs are pressuring them to return to the US for inappropriate reasons, i.e. just to meet once a week in person, are encouraged to utilize the [MIT hotline](#). Finally, in extreme cases where the grad student has overwhelming medical reasons to remain abroad but their current appointment will be illegal if continued, the decision may come down to the availability of funding for non-service fellowships.