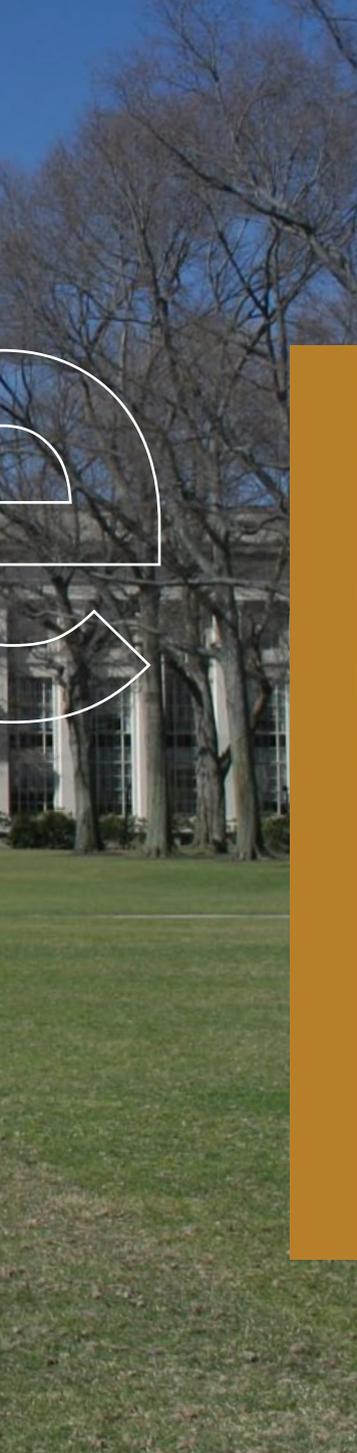


Administration and Policy





The ODGE strives to provide the highest quality of services to individual graduate students, graduate programs, and schools in the areas of finance, petition handling, visa assistance, communications, policy issues and personal support. We are committed to building a culture of collaboration, appreciation, respect, teamwork, and excellence.

In collaboration with the Institute-wide initiative “Digital MIT,” we will increase our efficiency through enhanced student systems and further digitization.

The ODGE strives to provide the highest quality of services to individual graduate students, graduate programs, and schools in the areas of finance, petition handling, visa assistance, communications, and personal support. The office works with the Committee on Graduate Programs to develop, review, and administer graduate student policies and procedures. We are committed to building a culture of collaboration, appreciation, respect, teamwork, and excellence. Due to needs precipitated by federal immigration mandates, the International Students Office has already made significant progress towards its transition to digital by licensing out the software framework SUNAPSIS™ (a comprehensive immigration case management software system). In collaboration with the Institute-wide initiative “Digital MIT,” we will increase our efficiency through enhanced student systems and further digitization.

Digital ODGE

In collaboration with MIT Information Systems and Technology (IS&T), ODGE business processes will be converted from paper-based to electronic systems. We will work with IS&T to refine and improve enterprise systems where the ODGE serves as business owner (such as WebGradAid and Grad Dental) and those that are critical to the work of the ODGE (MITSIS, Student Financial Services, Registrar, e.g.). In addition, standardized datasets will be created to use for internal and external fellowship data, funding documentation for groups, and events and programs, for example, to allow for more consistent messaging.

Team-Building and Collaboration

In collaboration with MIT Human Resources, consistent and frequent staff team-building activities will be carried out that facilitate communication, develop leadership skills, build trust, and enhance collaboration. Communication and collaboration will further be strengthened with individual departments and other offices on campus that serve graduate students. To successfully fulfill this initiative, we will:



- » Carry out team-building self-assessment surveys, report results to ODGE staff, and create strategies for building on strengths and exploring areas of opportunity.
- » Create an ODGE-generated list of successful team practices of high-performing teams and disseminate to staff.
- » Create opportunities for staff across ODGE units to work together, interact, and give presentations.
- » Offer opportunities for information dissemination on the activities of different units within the ODGE.
- » Invite graduate officers, administrators, and staff involved in graduate education to give presentations on their work at ODGE staff meetings.



Staff Professional Development

Working with MIT Human Resources, we will strive to present ODGE staff with opportunities for skill development and advancement. To increase professional improvement, staff career tracks will be mapped and individualized development activities such as seminars, conferences, workshops, and mentoring opportunities will be strategically planned. In addition, advanced training seminars will be offered on topics such as conflict mediation, unconscious bias, crisis management, and negotiations.

Other keys to these efforts include creating and circulating an internal list of staff responsibilities; establishing a staff rewards and recognition program; and developing a training and orientation manual for all ODGE staff that will include administrative, financial, and programmatic modules on a core set of skills.

Financial management

A number of strategies have been designated in the coming years to ensure successful financial management. Quarterly budget reports that show expenses and projections for each key area will be created. Policies and procedures for managing financial transactions with clear guidelines for spending limits and authorizations will be developed. In addition, cost-sharing opportunities with other MIT offices that serve graduate students will be investigated, along with efficiencies gained by streamlining business practices through automation.



Graduate Admissions

The ODGE will steward the implementation of the recommendations made by the Task Force on Improving Graduate Admissions Processes. This will include the Institute-wide adoption of the graduate admissions system developed by the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science over a timeframe of three admissions cycles, in a manner allowing graduate programs to opt in and commercial vendors to be phased out.

Specific strategies for this initiative include:

- » Creating a project team consisting of EECS, IS&T, the ODGE, and Central Admissions (DUE) and establishing roles and responsibilities of project team members.
- » Developing a detailed implementation and communications plan that includes necessary Institute financial/staffing support.
- » Assembling an *ad hoc* Committee on Graduate Admissions (CGA) to serve as the primary Institute body for review and oversight of the centralized graduate admissions transition.

Policy

The organization, categories, and content of the online Graduate Policies and Procedures (GPP) will be updated and improved. In collaboration with other offices, the GPP will be cross-referenced and linked with other online MIT policy documentation, including Institute and departmental guidelines (such as graduate manuals).