

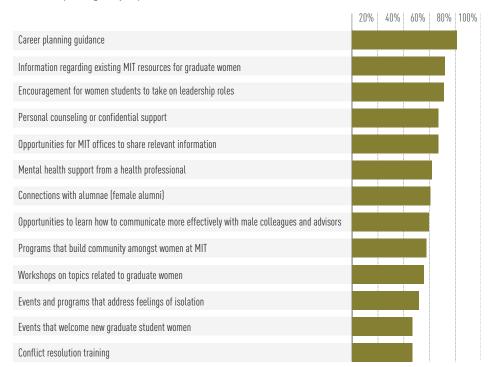






Personal support, access to resources, work-life balance, and community are increasingly important to the academic, professional, and personal success of our graduate students. Furthermore, in addition to creating new, original knowledge at the frontiers of the field, today's graduates also need the ability to recognize what this new knowledge means in a broader context, and they must possess a more extensive skill set to be able to act on this new knowledge for the benefit of humanity. Hence, professional and personal development activities are needed that serve to prepare students for a range of career paths. Ongoing services of the ODGE include advising and counseling; providing a venue to resolve individual problems facing graduate students; substantive funding in support of community, including the Graduate Student Life Grants and the Graduate Community Fellows program; support for student activities via the Graduate Student Council; and professional and personal development programming such as the Path of Professorship workshop. In 2010, MIT completed a Survey of Graduate Women (Figure 6), which surfaced valuable data regarding how well MIT currently meets the needs of graduate women and how MIT can further improve the quality of life of all graduate students. The following goals are informed by this data and will amplify efforts toward a holistic graduate student experience.

Figure 6: Importance of Graduate Women Support Functions, 2010 Survey of Graduate Women Percent responding "Very important" or "Essential"





Personal Support

In order to provide our graduate students with the personal support they require to become engaged, successful citizens of the MIT community and the world, six specific areas are targeted. We will:

- » Conduct a Needs Assessment. In collaboration with the Office of Residential Life and Spouses&Partners@MIT, the ODGE will survey the landscape to understand the unique needs and interests of graduate students, with particular attention to families in the MIT community (for example, affordable and available daycare and employment for spouses).
- » Build Collaborations. The ODGE will partner with the Division of Student Life to build collaborations between the offices. We will send referrals to and publicize Community Wellness programs and activities in order to raise visibility and use in the graduate community. In addition, we will engage their staff in ODGE programs such as MSRP, ISO, Orientation, student groups, among others.
- » Connect Students to Resources. Mechanisms will be developed to direct graduate students—international, underrepresented minority and female students—to resources such as the ODGE website, other online resources, videos, and the student life and learning webpage.



- » Provide Resource Training. In conjunction with collaborative partners, resource training will be provided for ODGE staff, graduate administrators, and graduate officers that enhances the ability to prevent issues and respond to the critical needs of graduate students. Such training will address a number of areas, including cultural sensitivity; identifying early warning signs for graduate student issues; wellness and its relationship with performance; the manifestation of trauma; coping with loss; mediation and conflict resolution; dealing with academic integrity issues; and handling complaints.
- » Focus on Harassment. In order to provide a safer environment for our students, an assessment will be carried out on the prevalence of harassment, stalking, and bullying; work will be conducted to understand the legal framework of these issues; and to support, promote, and advocate prevention of and quick response to these issues.
- » Create a Student Case Database. A student information software platform and database will be implemented and utilized for tracking student cases related to support, advising, and leaves of absence.

Community

In order to foster an increased sense of community among MIT graduate students, greater focus will shift to pre-orientation programs, family support, and the inclusion of off-campus students.

In focusing on pre-orientation, the India pre-orientation program for incoming graduate students may be expanded to other countries. In this model, incoming graduate students from a particular country engage with one another before departing for MIT. In the same spirit, cohort and community-building programs may be developed.



Today's graduates need the ability to recognize what new knowledge means in a broader context, and to build a more extensive skill set in order to act on their knowledge.

To encourage and increase family support, programs that effectively serve the identified needs of graduate student families will be publicized, developed, and bolstered in conjunction with collaborative partners.

To strengthen the sense of inclusion among off-campus students, communications and engagement mechanisms will be developed to reach out to off-campus graduate students around ODGE activities.

Professional and Personal Development

Finally, the ODGE will institute a number of professional and personal development initiatives to enable our graduate students to grow and succeed. They include:

The Professional Development Portal (PRO-DEPOT)

We will create a comprehensive and engaging online knowledge repository of audio and video content related to personal and professional development. The ODGE will take the following actions:

- » Mine TechTV, MIT World, and similar online library websites for relevant audio-visual content.
- » Develop in-house audio-visual and editing capabilities.
- » Digitally capture and post on the ODGE website relevant professional and personal development activities sponsored by the ODGE, MIT offices, and student groups.
- » After mining and posting current content, assess the breadth, depth, quality, and degree of duplication; analyze in terms of core competency areas; identify where gaps exist to guide the development of future programming.



Foundational Skills Program

A coherent, personalized professional development program will be explored that potentially uses blended (e.g. combination of online/in-person) learning with collaborative partners such as DUE and DSL. The goals of program will be to:

- » develop mechanisms for integration with graduate curricula and research
- » assess the need for central versus discipline-based training
- » survey alumni as to key skills needed for different career paths.

International Engagement

In collaboration with MIT International Science and Technology Initiatives (MISTI), more graduate students will be encouraged to engage in international exchange programs.

External Awards

A targeted list of honorific awards will be created and publicized, for which graduate students will be nominated annually.

Work-Life Balance

Web and print materials will be used along with ODGE programs to focus on enhancing work-life balance and time-management for graduate students.

Figure 7: 2011 Enrolled Graduate Student Survey—Professional Development

Please indicate the extent to which your graduate education at MIT is enhancing these skills. Percentage of respondents selecting "To a great extent"

