COMMON PRINCIPLES of the graduate student experience

1. Faculty members and graduate students are strongly encouraged to build relationships 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.

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. Faculty members should receive attribution for scholarly assistance to faculty, and vice versa, including contributions to publications and patents.

5. Faculty members 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 group. These include their departmental or program graduate administrator, program head or departmental graduate officer, a dean in the OGE, 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 research grade, advisors should provide additional periodic feedback of academic progress, performance, and professional potential, preferably in written form.

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 of informal solutions were unsuccessful, the student can appeal by means of private Institute complaint resolution procedures.

INSTITUTE POLICY

guiding the graduate student experience

MIT does not discriminate against individuals on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, religion, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, or national or ethnic origin in admissions, financial aid, athletics, academic programs, advice and counseling services, employment policies, scholarship and loan programs, and other Institute administered programs and activities, and other Institute administered programs and activities; the Institute may, however, favor US citizens or residents in admissions and financial aid. Full policy

Institute policies prohibit harassment, discrimination, racial conduct, retaliation, and violence against community members. Graduate students may utilize the complaint resolution process for complaints against faculty and staff. Full policy

Faculty, academic instructional staff, principal investigators, and staff supervisors are prohibited from having a sexual or romantic relationship with an MIT graduate student if they have or might reasonably be expected to have any type of authority over that student. Full policy

Any graduate student who believes they have been subject to inappropriate conduct is encouraged to resolve the concern through the Institute’s complaint resolution procedures. Full policy

Pending approval by the Office of Graduate Education, eligible graduate students may have access to child care or academic leave. Full policy

As with all members of the MIT community, graduate students are to be treated with evenhanded respect for their dignity, individual qualities, and property. Full policy

Graduate students have a right to and responsibility to maintain a safe and clean working environment. Full policy

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. Full policy

Graduate students are protected from personal exploitation. In the case of full-time research assistants, services required of the graduate student must contribute to the student’s research or professional training. Full policy

Graduate students in a paid assistantship have a right to paid vacation in accordance with Institute policy. Full policy

Graduate students must be notified of the work requirements for each subject, including grading criteria and procedures, at the beginning of each term. Full policy

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

Full policy

If a department is considering denying a graduate student further enrollment or financial aid, the department must provide notice of the basis for denying further enrollment or financial aid. Full policy

Massachusetts Institute of Technology