

Some thoughts for new (and experienced) faculty.

Your interactions with an advisee will be more useful if you get to know the student beyond his/her course schedule. In turn, students say they often find faculty intimidating, and would like to know their advisors better.

Getting to know your advisee... (some questions you might ask)

- What is your four-year plan at MIT?
- What are you thinking about doing after graduation?
- How is your time management going?
- Are you feeling stressed?
- Where are you from?
- Where do you live at MIT? Is this working out well?
- What extracurricular activities are you involved in? Do you get enough exercise?
- Discuss how you chose your research or career path.
- Attend an event involving your student.
- Invite a student to have a meal with your family.

What to do when a student needs help

A student may have academic or other difficulties due to health, personal or financial issues. Do not be reluctant to ask what is wrong—your advisee will likely welcome the opportunity to speak with you.

You should try to put the student in touch with help, and can offer to accompany him/her to an appropriate appointment, or can take him/her to MIT Medical if it is an emergency. In the Department, contact Janice Chang. Housemasters often know students well, and may be able to offer useful insight. Student Support Services has Counseling Deans available, and MIT Medical is always open.

- **Student Support Services**, to contact a Counseling Dean 9am to 5pm, M–F Room 5-104, x3-4861
web.mit.edu/uuap/s3
- **MIT Medical** E23-3rd floor (Mental Health)
MIT Mental Health (24 hours) x3-2916
Urgent Care (24 hours) x3-4418
medweb.mit.edu
- **Campus Police** x3-1212, dial 100 (on campus only)
For all emergencies, to request medical transport, or to contact a Dean on call after hours and on weekends.
web.mit.edu/cp/www
- **Student Financial Services**
Student Services Office 11-120, x8-8600
web.mit.edu/sfs

Undergrad Biology Contacts

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Useful Websites

Biology Department website
web.mit.edu/biology

WebSIS
student.mit.edu

Communications Requirement
web.mit.edu/commreq

UROP Office
web.mit.edu/urop

Academic Guide for Undergraduates and Their Advisors
web.mit.edu/acadinfo/undergrad/academic-guide

Academic services, programs, and policies
web.mit.edu/acadinfo

HASS concentration requirements
shass.mit.edu/undergraduate

Term regulations for subjects
web.mit.edu/faculty/teaching/termregs.html

Committee on Curricula
web.mit.edu/registrar/subjects/cmtes/coc

Academic Calendar
web.mit.edu/registrar/calendar

MIT DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY

Advising Undergraduates

A Short Guide for Biology Faculty

2011–2012

As an academic advisor, you play a crucial role in the success of MIT students, who place very high value on contact with faculty. This brochure addresses your advising responsibilities and may help to optimize meetings with your students.

Roles of the advisor

- Help a student choose appropriate courses
- Offer career advice
- Mentor a student in broader life issues
- Encourage a student to play an active role in planning his/her education and in seeking out additional mentors

The Biology Department requires the following meetings between advisor and advisee:

- **A Registration Day meeting each semester.** This meeting may be necessarily short (~20 min.) to accommodate all advisees. For many advisees, particularly new students, a pre-Reg Day meeting is helpful. If you must be away on Reg Day, please arrange for another faculty member to cover for you. Notify Janice Chang and your advisees. You should meet with each of your advisees before you leave or after you return.
- **A mid-term meeting each semester**, within the two-week period prior to Drop Date. Since these meetings are spread out, you should be able to meet for 30 min. (or more) with each advisee.
- **Other meetings**, as requested by your advisee (within reason). These will be of variable length, but will be more efficient if the purpose of the meeting is made clear, and your advisee brings all necessary materials.

Other Information

• Planning

A student should write out a plan of his/her entire course sequence, to make sure that all requirements will be met in the senior year.

• Setting up a “mentoring network”

Your advisees should be encouraged to seek out additional mentors, including faculty, athletics coaches and grad student/postdoc UROP supervisors. This “mentoring network” should include faculty who will write letters of recommendation. A reasonable goal is one new contact every semester.

Course Information

• Degree Requirements

Conversations with your advisees will be streamlined if you know Departmental and General MIT Course requirements. These can be found in the Biology Program Requirements brochure, in the insert to this brochure, or on the Department web site.

• Accessing academic records

Use the WebSIS link and your Kerberos ID to obtain information on a student’s grade report, registration status, picture, undergraduate degree audit, address and class schedule. student.mit.edu

• Course load

A student typically registers for 48 units of coursework per semester. If an advisee wishes to register for 60 or more units, you should make sure there is a valid reason, and should monitor him/her for possible stress and poor performance. A student on academic warning can register for no more than 48 units in the next semester.

• UROP/research

Lab research (UROP) for credit is most often taken for 12 units, and counts as one course. Research can substitute for the 30-unit project lab, as 7.18, only if the research mentor is an MIT faculty member and the research is conducted at MIT. web.mit.edu/urop

• Add Date and Drop Date

Add Date is the fifth week after classes start and is the last date that a class can be added. Drop Date is the end of the tenth week and is the last date that a subject can be

cancelled. Using Drop Date is an emergency measure—a problem course should be dropped within the first few weeks of the semester.

• Sophomore Exploratory Option

A Sophomore can designate, by Add Date, one subject per term as exploratory, and can change to listener status up to Reg Day of the following term (such that no grade record appears on the transcript). web.mit.edu/registrar/reg/grades/exploratory.html

• Junior/Senior P/D/F Option

Juniors and Seniors may take a total of two subjects to be graded P, D or F. Such subjects may not be used to fulfill GIR, departmental, or minor requirements. web.mit.edu/registrar/reg/grades/jrsr.pdf.html

• Double Majors

Petitions for double majors are submitted to the Committee on Curricula (CoC). Specific requirements are described at: web.mit.edu/registrar/subjects/cmtes/coc/petitions_doublemajor.html

• Light load or part-time study

If a student wants to register for less than 32 units, a tuition adjustment/light load form, obtained from the Student Services Office, must be submitted by Add Date. web.mit.edu/registrar/reg/costs/undergraduate/lightload.html

• International students

An international student must register for at least 36 units to maintain full-time student and visa status. The International Students Office (ISO) can help. web.mit.edu/iso

• Recommendation letters

As early as possible, a student should identify faculty whom he/she will ask for letters of recommendation. Contact with such faculty should be extensive, so that meaningful letters can be written.

• Confidentiality

All information about students is confidential, and must not be released to anyone outside MIT (including parents) without written permission of the student. Student information may be used within MIT only for legitimate educational reasons and only for the reasons stated when the information was collected. Please contact Janice Chang for more information. web.mit.edu/registrar/general/csip

• Committee on Academic Performance (CAP)

A student with poor performance will be flagged by the CAP when the term GPA is 3.0 or less or course load is 35 units or less (unless “light load” has been designated). web.mit.edu/acadinfo/cap

• Student Conduct

All academic and non-academic complaints about student conduct are filed with the Office of Student Conduct. A complaint may be heard by an administrative review or the Committee on Discipline (COD). Contact Janice Chang with questions. web.mit.edu/committees/cod

MIT course numbers

MIT courses are designated by numbers that students use in preference to names. The following list may help you communicate better with your advisees!

1	Civil and Environmental Engineering
2	Mechanical Engineering
3	Materials Science and Engineering
4	Architecture
5	Chemistry
6	Electrical Engineering and Computer Science
7	Biology
8	Physics
9	Brain and Cognitive Sciences
10	Chemical Engineering
11	Urban Studies and Planning
12	Earth, Atmospheric and Planetary Sciences
14	Economics
15	Management
16	Aeronautics and Astronautics
17	Political Science
18	Mathematics
20	Biological Engineering
21	Humanities
21A	Anthropology
21F	Foreign Languages and Literatures
21H	History
21L	Literature
21M	Music and Theater Arts
21W	Writing and Humanistic Studies
22	Nuclear Science and Engineering
24	Linguistics and Philosophy
CDO	Computation for Design and Optimization
CMS	Comparative Media Studies
CSB	Computational and Systems Biology
ESD	Engineering Systems Division
HST	Health Sciences and Technology
MAS	Media Arts and Sciences
ROTC	ROTC Programs
STS	Science, Technology and Society

Biology Graduation Checklist

Suggested Timeline for Course 7 Majors

- Sophomore year: 7.02J, 7.03, 7.05 and possibly 7.06. 7.03 and 7.012/7.013/7.014 can be taken concurrently. 5.12 is a prerequisite for 7.05.
- Junior year: 7.06, 1 or more restricted electives, project lab, UROP.
- Senior year: Complete restricted electives, project lab, UROP.

7.10J/20.110J or 5.60 can be taken at any time. Courses can also be started beginning in the junior year. This is useful for students changing majors or completing double degrees/majors. Note that restricted electives must be in the list approved for undergraduates.

Biology Degree Requirements

Required Lecture Subjects:

- 7.012 or 7.013 or 7.014
- 7.03
- 7.05 or 5.07J
- 7.06
- 5.111 or 5.112 or 3.091
- 5.12
- 7.10J/20.110J or 5.60 (2.005, 3.012, 8.044 or 10.213)
- Three biology restricted electives from approved list under course offerings.

Required Laboratory Courses

- 7.02J (10.702J or 20.109 will substitute)
- Project lab (7.13, 7.16, or 7.18)
No project lab required for Course 7A

Communication Requirements

- Two CI-M subjects in the Major
 - For Course 7: 7.02J/10.702J or 20.109 and one of: 7.13, 7.16, or 7.18
 - For Course 7A: 7.02J/10.702J or 20.109 and one of: 3.014, 5.36, 5.38, 7.19, 8.13, 9.02, 9.12, 9.18, 9.63, 10.26, 10.28, 10.29, 20.380 or 2.791J/6.021J/20.370J.

General Institute Requirements

- Science requirements in Biology, Chemistry, Math, Physics
- Laboratory (LAB) Requirement
- Restricted Electives in Science and Technology (REST)
- Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences Requirement, includes 2 Communication Requirement subjects (CI-H)
- Communication Requirement
 - 2 CI-H
 - 2 CI-M
- Physical Education Requirement
 - Pass swim test
 - 4 PE subjects or equivalent