

**“Don’t panic.”**

Douglas Adams,  
*The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy*



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# MIT Application Guide

Some Intentionally Bad Haiku to Ease the Pain of College Applications



**Grrrrr.** Applications.  
What a pain! Boring questions,  
parents on your case...

There has to be a  
better way than filling out  
all these stupid forms.



Maybe there is, but  
(ooops, we sound like parents here)  
we’ve found that this works.

We want to get to  
know you as well as we can.  
Believe it or not.



What emerges from  
the many details is a  
portrait: the real you.

What should we know that  
test scores, transcripts, and teachers  
can’t fully reveal?



Only you can turn  
these otherwise stupid forms  
into your story.

We’re looking forward  
to learning all about you.  
Get started. **Have fun!**

# Checklist

## ASAP!

- ☐ Register for a MyMIT account at my.mit.edu. (See page 12)
- ☐ Submit Part 1. (See page 13)
- ☐ Contact your interviewer to schedule your interview. (See page 18)
- ☐ Give Teacher Evaluations to your teachers. (See page 20)
- ☐ Give Secondary School Report to your guidance counselor or principal. (See page 21)

## Before October 20 (Early Action) or December 10 (Regular Action)

- ☐ Schedule your MIT interview. (See page 18)

## Before November 1 (Early Action) or January 1 (Regular Action)

- ☐ Submit Part 2 and all other required application materials. (See page 15)
- ☐ Optional: submit music and/or art portfolios; contact MIT coach(es) and/or ROTC. (See pages 22-23)



## November (Early Action) or January (Regular Action) test dates

- ☐ Last standardized tests that will be considered in selection committee – please plan accordingly! (See pages 24-25)

## After first semester, first trimester, or second quarter

- ☐ Have your guidance counselor or principal complete the Mid-year Grade Report. (See page 21)

## Before February 15

- ☐ Submit all financial aid materials to Financial Aid Office. (See pages 27-30)



# Introductions

## We're so happy that you are considering applying to MIT.

We're aware that applying to college can be both daunting and exhilarating, especially when you add it to your already-packed schedule of tough coursework, activities, social, and family life responsibilities. You may wonder why the process needs to be so involved and demanding of your time.

Admission at a place like MIT is always based upon the match between you and the Institute's culture, community, and mission. We've introduced MIT to you through our web site, blogs, publications, and mailings. It's now your turn to introduce yourself to us, through our application process.

There should be a sense of resonance between us. In order to determine that resonance, we really need to understand each other, what our values are, what makes us come alive. A handful of numbers can't do that. So we have to ask you for a whole lot more.

We hope to guide you through a few hours of self-discovery, and we've tried to make it entertaining along the way. Ideally, you'll look back on our application and find that you've actually enjoyed working on it.

**So have fun with this! Most importantly, just be yourself. We look forward to reading all about the real you.**

When we admit a class of students to MIT, it's as if we're choosing a 1,000-person team to climb a very interesting, fairly rugged mountain — together. We obviously want people who have the training, stamina, and passion for the climb. At the same time, we want each to add something useful or intriguing to the team, from a wonderful temperament or sense of humor, to compelling personal experiences, to a wide range of individual gifts, talents, interests, and achievements. We are emphatically not looking for a batch of identical perfect climbers; we are looking for a richly varied team of capable people who will support, surprise and inspire each other.

## A Bit About Us

MIT is a unique place with specific core values:

- **We are a meritocracy.** We judge each other by our ideas, our creativity, and our accomplishments, not by social status, age, gender, or background.
- **We are relevant.** We're proud to generate useful knowledge that makes a difference in the world, changing it for the better.
- **We are entrepreneurial.** The key to success at MIT is to have a good idea and be prepared to run with it.
- **We are inventive.** While we respect tradition, we are not afraid to abandon the past or to strike out in new or unusual directions in search of a better way to do things.
- **We are unconventional.** In an institution where the currency in trade is intelligence, it is okay to be different. Our acceptance of each other frees us up to be our real selves.

Does this sound like you?  
Keep reading.

# The Match Between You and MIT

Understandably, we're often asked what makes an applicant the right "match" to MIT. Here are some key components:

**Alignment with MIT's mission** publishing and sharing of results is at the center of academic research. Making the world a better place. Fostering a collaborative environment. Remember that there are many ways to make the world better — we're not looking for applicants to have cured all infectious disease in the world by the time they're fifteen. Tutoring a single kid in math changes the world. Lobbying a senator to change a bad policy changes the world. There are thousands of examples.

**Collaborative & cooperative spirit.** The core of the MIT spirit is collaboration and cooperation. You can see it all over the Institute: many of the problem sets (our affectionate term for homework) at MIT are designed to be worked on in groups; cross-department labs are very common; MIT is known for its interdisciplinary research; the Open Source movement is powerful here; admit people who are not only planning to succeed, but who are not afraid to fail. When people take risks in life, they learn resilience as a result — risk leads to failure as often as it leads to success. The most creative and successful people — and MIT is loaded with them — know that failure is part of life and that if you stay focused and don't give up, goals are ultimately realized.

**Risk-taking.** MIT wants to

## Hands-on creativity.

MIT is an active, hands-on place.

Innovation is risky and messy!

Getting your hands dirty and trying something new is often the best way to achieve success.

We apply theoretical knowledge to real-world problems here;

our Latin motto means

"Mind and Hand."

In other words,

you shouldn't

just enjoy thinking,

you should also

enjoy doing.

## The character of the MIT community.

Our community is comprised

of good people. People who

take care of each other and

lift each other up.

People who inspire each other

to work and dream beyond

their potential. We're looking

to admit people who by nature

will sustain the qualities of

this community.

## Intensity, curiosity, and excitement.

In a nutshell:

you should be invested

in the things that

really mean something to you

(we're not particularly picky as to what).

Choose quality over quantity — we

don't expect you to do a million things.

Tell us about those few things

you've put your heart into

and you truly care about

and that will be enough.

Of course this is not an exhaustive list, and

remember that

no one profile —

no matter how

impressive —

represents "the

perfect match."

It takes all of

us working together

to create that —

which is a huge

part of what makes

MIT the powerful

community that it is.





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## MIT: A Brief Overview

### Whom you'll find here

#### Undergraduates

- **4,172** undergraduates (**45%** women, **55%** men)
- **20%** are underrepresented minorities (African American, Hispanic, Native American)
- **9%** are international, representing over **90** countries
- All **50** US states represented (most represented: California, New York, Massachusetts, Texas, Florida)
- **28%** major in science, **2%** in architecture and planning, **58%** in engineering, **4%** in the humanities, arts, and social sciences, and **7%** in management

#### Faculty

- **1,008** faculty members (all teach classes and do research)
- **7** Nobel Laureates
- **19** MacArthur Fellows
- **4** Pulitzer Prize winners

### Your major

When you apply to MIT, you don't apply to a specific school or department; you apply to MIT as a whole. At the end of their freshman year, students choose their major from among any of the 47 degree programs in 31 academic departments offered at MIT. Students are free to select any major; there is no separate application process for entry into a major, department, or school.

Approximately 15% of our students choose to double major; you may also choose up to two minors.



## MIT: A Brief Overview

Stuff on whom you'll meet,  
what you'll study, where you'll live,  
and ways to have fun.

### Your studies

At MIT, undergraduates receive bachelor of science degrees. To earn a degree, all undergraduates must complete a core requirement that is equally divided between science and mathematics, and the humanities, arts, and social sciences.

The science/mathematics requirement includes chemistry, biology, physics, and calculus, as well as laboratory and science electives.

The humanities, arts, and social sciences requirement must be fulfilled in three out of five categories: literary and textual studies; language, thought, and value; the arts; cultures and societies; and historical studies.

Students must also complete a four-subject communication requirement.

### Your research

The Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program, or UROP, supports undergraduate and faculty collaboration on research projects. Founded in 1969, UROP has revolutionized undergraduate participation in research and serves as a model for undergraduate research programs in academic institutions across the country. UROPs are a chance to gain significant research experience and can be done in numerous areas such as cancer research, cognition and language processing, alternative energy, educational innovation, the humanities, nanotechnology, finance, genetics, bioengineering, service learning, and more. The possibilities are endless. Students usually join a faculty member's project, but they may also design their own and recruit faculty to advise them. Students can earn academic credit or pay, or work as volunteers. The program is open to all students, including freshmen, and supports research in any department. UROPs are so popular that approximately 85% of students will participate in at least one UROP while at MIT.

### Where you live

Housing is guaranteed for all four years, and more than 90% of MIT students choose to live in MIT housing. The 11 dormitories each have their own culture and personality, and students may select the dorm whose culture suits them best. Some of the dorms are awesomely geeky, others are known for some of the best parties in Boston, but all provide a very supportive and friendly environment. Most students who live in the dorms choose to live in the same dorm for all four years; there are no "freshman-only" dorms. All dorms also have a live-in faculty housemaster who oversees the life of the dorm.

After the first year, students may choose to live in one of MIT's residential fraternities, sororities, and other independent and cooperative living groups, called FSILGs. The FSILGs are both on campus and in Boston, Cambridge, and Brookline. They provide an option for students to live in a small, close-knit environment. Each FSILG has a live-in adult Resident Advisor to guide and mentor the students.



### What you do for fun

At MIT, the informal motto is, “Work hard, play hard.” As such, students complement their academic and research work with a wide array of extracurricular opportunities.

The more than 400 activity groups on MIT’s campus include:

- |                               |                              |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 30 religious groups           | 19 intramural sports         |
| 32 fraternities & sororities  | (with more than 1,000        |
| 19 dance groups               | teams competing)             |
| (from ballet to hip hop)      | 30 club sports (including    |
| 31 music groups (including    | ultimate frisbee, rugby,     |
| 7 a cappella groups)          | kickboxing, archery,         |
| 10 theater groups             | synchronized swimming,       |
| (including a Shakespeare      | and more)                    |
| ensemble, a sketch comedy     | 41 varsity sports (including |
| group, and the Musical        | a Division I program         |
| Theater Guild)                | in crew, and Division III    |
| 65 ethnic and cultural groups | programs in our other        |
| (from African Students        | NCAA sports, including       |
| Association to Vietnamese     | football, field hockey,      |
| Students Association)         | and men’s and women’s        |
|                               | basketball)                  |

### There's lots more to discover!

To learn more about what makes MIT unique and exciting, please visit [mitadmissions.org](http://mitadmissions.org) for thousands of blog entries written by current students, admissions and financial aid officers, and other members of the MIT community.

## The Application and MyMIT

We get lots of questions about the best strategy for completing our application. We promise you that there’s no magic formula for admission, so our advice is pretty simple: just be yourself.

Our application isn’t a test—it’s really just a vehicle built to help us learn as much about you as possible. There are no right or wrong answers to our questions.

Think about how best to present the real you — your abilities, your goals, and your imagination — as fully as possible. Carefully consider what you’d like us to know that test scores and transcripts won’t reveal. Don’t hold back.

We’re not trying to invade your privacy; we simply want to get to know you better and to understand the context in which you’ve achieved your success. The more complete your application, the better the snapshot we’ll have of your life.

We’ve written this booklet to help you understand the various parts of our application and why we ask the questions we ask. We hope you find it helpful!



## The Application & MyMIT

To put it simply...  
Just be yourself. There is no  
magic formula.



We encourage you to register for a MyMIT account as soon as possible at **my.mit.edu**. It only takes a few minutes to sign up, and you'll need this account to apply, track the various components of your application, arrange to stay overnight at MIT with a current student, and keep tabs on your financial aid forms. You'll also need a MyMIT account to set up your MIT interview.

Applying to MIT is easy and convenient using MyMIT. You can work on your application in multiple sessions, editing it as many times as you wish, with the ability to upload essays and send them electronically. To learn more about applying online to MIT, register for a MyMIT account at **my.mit.edu** and follow the link to our online application.



It's your responsibility to ensure that we receive all of the required pieces of your application, and MyMIT makes this task easy. Your account will be updated frequently — usually within a few days of receiving new materials — so you'll know as soon as we receive materials from your teachers and counselor. (Please keep in mind, however, that processing of paper forms may take up to two weeks during peak periods.)

Whereas mitadmissions.org is the “informational side” of our presence on the web, **my.mit.edu** is the “functional side.” It will help you to navigate your personal MIT application process from start to finish.

One last tip — please make note of the MyMIT username and password you create, just in case you forget them!

## The Application, Part 1: Tips

**The first step in the application process is to submit Part 1 (biographical information). Submitting this form and your application fee initiates your MIT application process.**

### Fee Waivers

If the application fee presents a hardship for you and your family, you may qualify for a fee waiver. To request a fee waiver, ask your high school guidance counselor, principal, or other school official to fill out the SAT Request for Waiver of College Application Fee form or submit an official letter on your behalf. The completed form or letter should then be mailed to our office.

### Applying for Financial Aid

There is a question in Part 1 about whether you intend to apply for financial aid. The answer to this question is not seen by admissions officers, and because MIT is need-blind in admissions, your financial status does not impact your chances for admission. By checking this box, though, the Financial Aid Office will know early on of your intention to apply for aid, and will make the necessary preparations for your application. For more information on MIT's generous financial aid, see pages 27-30.

### Mother and Father Fields

These fields should be used to provide information here about the people whom you consider to be your mother and father, whether they are biological, adoptive, or step-parents. If you feel that you need to clarify your responses, please use the field provided.

### MIT Connections

While many schools give an admissions preference for “legacies,” or children of alumni, MIT offers no such advantage to legacy candidates. Everyone at MIT, including students who have a family member who went to MIT, or who gave money to MIT, was admitted because of their own talent, not because of their family relations.



### The Early Action Option



You will also indicate in Part 1 if you intend to apply for Early Action or Regular Action.

(The Early Action option is available to US citizens and permanent residents only.)

If you'll be able to complete all testing requirements by the November testing date, schedule your interview by October 20,

and submit your application

(Part 1 and Part 2)

and supporting documents

by November 1,

MIT will consider your application

in early December.

At that time we will either

offer you admission,

deny you admission,

or defer the decision until March.

If we offer you admission,

you'll have until May 1

to let us know if you will attend.

We are committed to admitting no more than one third of our class in Early Action.

We'll reconsider deferred applicants without prejudice in March and will notify them with all other candidates in late March.

If you wish to be considered for Early Action, check the appropriate box on Part 1.

Please know that applying for Early Action does not put your application at an advantage or disadvantage.

Our Early Action program is both nonbinding and nonrestrictive.

## The Application, Part 2: Tips

Part 2 asks for your responses to various essay and short-answer questions, a list of your activities and honors, and your test scores. It also asks you to tell us about your secondary school coursework by recording a list of your self-reported courses and grades.

Part 2 is where we start to learn all about you, in your words. It's where we begin to understand you as a person, not just as a student.

Read the next few pages carefully so you'll know how best to translate yourself to the application. We look forward to getting to know you.

## The Application Part 2: Tips

This part takes more time.  
Here you'll share the stories of  
how you became you.



## The Main Essay

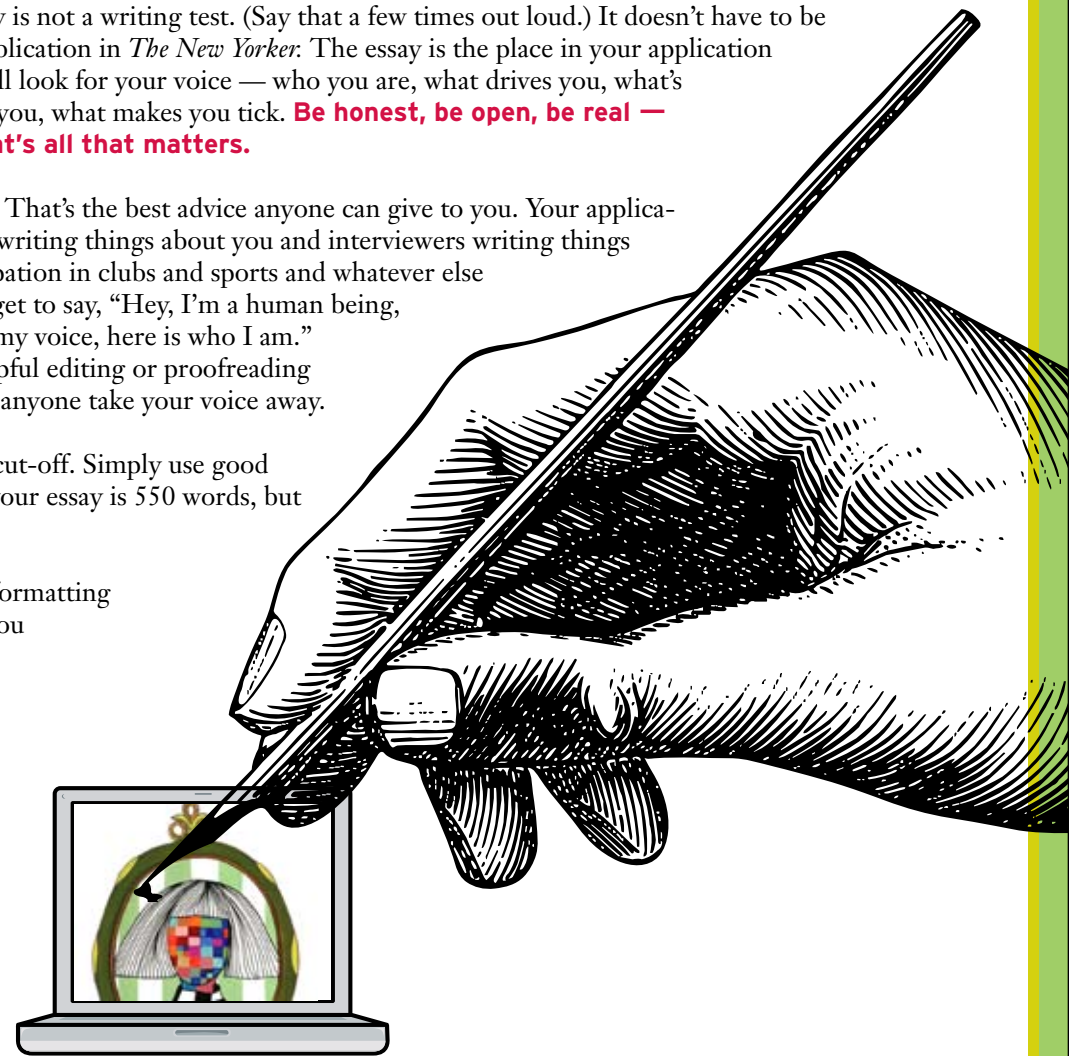
The essay is not a writing test. (Say that a few times out loud.) It doesn't have to be fit for publication in *The New Yorker*. The essay is the place in your application where we'll look for your voice — who you are, what drives you, what's important to you, what makes you tick. **Be honest, be open, be real — connect with us. That's all that matters.**

**The rules are simple: write your own essay.** That's the best advice anyone can give to you. Your application is full of grades and test scores and teachers writing things about you and interviewers writing things about you and things inferred from your participation in clubs and sports and whatever else you do ... the essay is the one place where you get to say, "Hey, I'm a human being, let me connect with you on that level, here is my voice, here is who I am." That's all we're really looking for. A little helpful editing or proofreading from a parent or teacher is fine, but don't let anyone take your voice away.

The 500-word limit is a guideline, not a strict cut-off. Simply use good judgment — your application readers won't mind if your essay is 550 words, but 1,000 words may be a different story.

If you upload a file, please be aware that small formatting losses can occur. Don't worry about this — you certainly won't be penalized!

<b>Essay Option A</b>	<b>Essay Option B</b>
Tell us about an experience which, at the time, really felt like "the end of the world" — but had it not happened, you would not be who you are today. Describe the process through which you discovered value in the negative.	Describe the world you come from, for example your family, clubs, school, community, city, or town. How has that world shaped your dreams and aspirations?



## Short Answer Questions

### Short Essay A:

*Tell us about something you do simply for the pleasure of it.*

This is not a trick question. Some folks seem to think it might be — they assume that MIT is looking for every second of every day to be "meaningful" — and so over the years we've received some truly outlandish claims of what passes for fun in the lives of our applicants.

The truth is that we're looking for balance. MIT is an intense educational experience — one that requires regular down-time to digest and process. The ability to prioritize and balance becomes very important. We'd like to hear about the ways you've embraced this in high school, because it's a great (and necessary) skill for thriving here.

### Short Essay B:

*Which department or program at MIT appeals to you and why?*

Truly, we're asking only because we're curious about what interests you right now — not because we have any quotas. You won't declare your major until the end of your freshman year — there's a lot of time between now and then to explore, discover new things, and change your mind.

For this reason, approximately half of our students ultimately major in something entirely different from what they wrote here when they applied, so we couldn't use this data to predict anything even if we wanted to. Moral of the story: writing "underwater basket weaving" will not give you an edge in the admissions process, so just be honest!

### The "Completely Optional" Essay

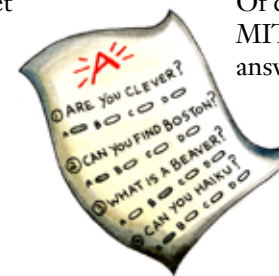
*On a separate sheet, show us and/or tell us about something that you have created. This can be, for example, a design, a device, an object, an idea, or concept.*

First off: this essay really, truly is *completely* optional.

If you have something interesting to share, we'd love to hear about it. You can send in a written response online, or, if you need to send along photographs, diagrams, or other things that can't be submitted online, you can mail them directly to the Admissions Office.

But if you don't have anything you want to share, don't worry — the majority of applicants, and the majority of admitted students, do not submit an essay for this question.

Of course, by the time they graduate from MIT, every student will have an interesting answer for this question!



## Interview

The interview is an important (and often fun!) part of the MIT admissions process. The interview is a very effective way for us to learn more about you and for you to introduce yourself as a real live individual. While the interview is not required at MIT, it is highly recommended, and often helps us to better understand you. If available, having an interview is to your advantage. Last year, of eligible applicants, we admitted 15% of those who had an interview (or who had their interview waived) but only 5% of those who chose not to interview.

Interviews are conducted by Educational Counselors, or ECs — MIT alumni volunteers who meet with applicants in their home communities.

In late summer, you'll find your interviewer's name and contact information in your MyMIT account. Please note that there may be times when there is no EC in your area and we will waive your interview.

It is your responsibility to check your MyMIT account to find out the name of your EC, and to schedule the interview before the interview deadline.



You should schedule your meeting with your EC at the earliest possible date. Please do not call your EC late at night, early in the morning, or on holidays. Early Action applicants must contact their EC by October 20 to schedule the interview. Regular Action applicants must contact their EC by December 10; ECs may not be able to accommodate interview requests after this date. (If you are applying Early Decision/Action elsewhere, you may need to schedule your interview before you submit your application to MIT. This is fine.)

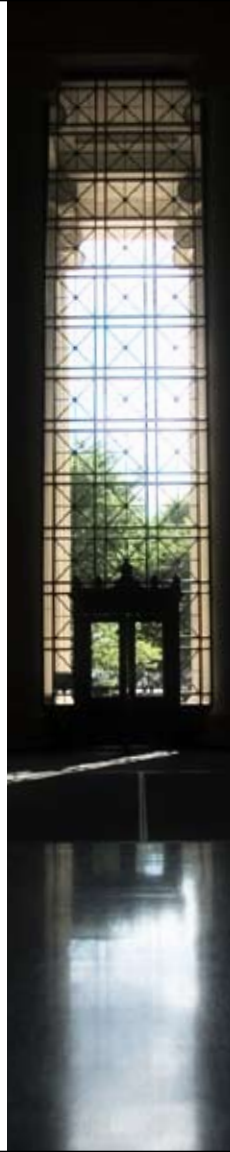
Keep in mind that the interview is intended to be a two-way exchange. Just as your EC is getting to know you, he or she is providing you with information about MIT. Before your meeting, review your interests and activities and prepare questions for your EC. Then relax and enjoy the conversation.

## Self-reported Coursework

How you fill out the Self-reported Coursework form will not make or break your application. Use your best judgment — we're just trying to get a clear picture of your academic preparation by subject area. We see thousands of different transcripts, so it really helps us to view your coursework and grades in a consistent format.

**Here are some tips and instructions to help you complete this form:**

- This form should be completed only by students in U.S. school systems.
- The information you provide does not replace your official high school transcript, which must be sent to us from your school.
- It might help to have a copy of your high school transcript in front of you while completing this form. Consult your guidance counselor if you have questions.
- Enter the names of your school courses by subject area. Please avoid uncommon abbreviations if possible (abbreviations like "AP US History" or "IB Biology HL" are fine). Please include all classes you have taken *and are currently taking*.
- If there aren't enough spaces for all the courses you have taken, start with your most recent (current) classes and work backwards. You can also use the "Additional courses" section as an overflow section for any of the subject areas.
- If your courses were taken outside of your high school (at a local junior college or university, for example), tell us where they were taken in the "Course Title" field.
- In the "Term and/or Final Grade(s)" field, list the term and/or final grades for each class, as found on your school transcript (semester, trimester, quarter, final, etc.).
- Use one line only per class — for example, it's not necessary to use a separate line for each semester of the same class. Place all grades for a class in the same field, separating grades with commas.





## Extra-curricular Activities

Please use our form, not your resume, to list your activities outside of class. There is only enough space to list five things — please choose the five *that mean the most to you* and tell us a bit about them. This will tell us more about you than any “laundry list” of everything you’ve ever done in high school. You are welcome to submit a resume, but submitting a resume in lieu of filling out our standard activity list won’t be appreciated by the committee (so please don’t!).

“Activities” is intentionally broad and designed to be left open to your interpretation. The sky is the limit — everything from “serving as captain of the school basketball team” to “hanging out with my little brother” is appropriate — but only you will know which five things have meant the most to you over the last several years.



## Teacher Evaluations

Two teacher evaluations are required — please give them to your teachers early! You can download them in PDF format via your MyMIT account or at [web.mit.edu/admissions/forms](http://web.mit.edu/admissions/forms).

One recommendation should be from a math or science teacher and the other should be from a humanities, social science or language teacher. We find that the best recommendations are written by teachers who know an applicant well as both a student and a person — please choose accordingly.

We prefer that teachers use our forms, but it’s okay if your high school has its own form. It’s okay too for a teacher to submit a letter; we just ask that he/she attach it to our form — with your name and date of birth clearly indicated — and that the letter addresses the questions on our form.

Supplemental evaluations are also welcome — we simply ask that they provide different or additional context beyond the two we’ve already requested. Great examples of supplemental recommendations include coaches, employers, research advisors, and music teachers.

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## Secondary School Report + Mid-year Grade Report

You can download these forms in PDF format via your MyMIT account or at [web.mit.edu/admissions/forms](http://web.mit.edu/admissions/forms).

The forms should be completed by your school guidance counselor, if available. If your school does not have a guidance counselor, a principal, headmaster, or other similar educational official should complete the forms.

### Secondary School Report Form

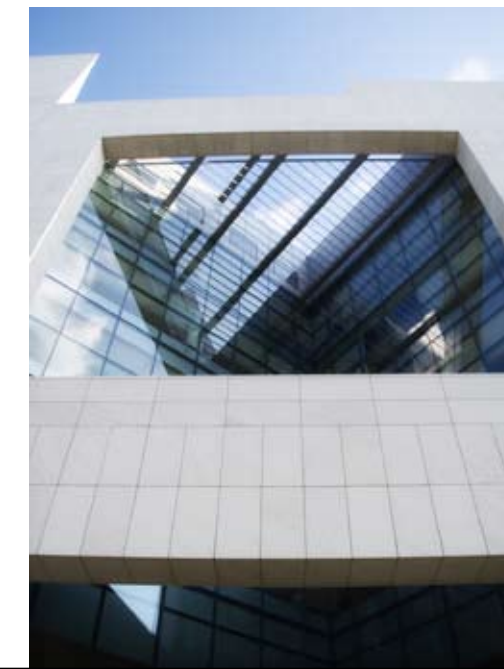
Your guidance counselor should complete this form and return it to us along with your transcript and a letter of summary/recommendation. We prefer that schools use our form, but it’s okay if your school has a policy to use its own form. Give your guidance counselor this form early so that he/she has time to fully consider the best way to present your accomplishments.

### Mid-year Grade Report Form

This form is required for all applicants who currently attend a U.S. high school or who currently attend a school located abroad that follows the U.S. high school curriculum. The Mid-year Grade Report form should be returned to us as soon as possible after completion of the fall semester (or after completion of the second quarter, if your school uses a quarter-based system). If your school uses a trimester schedule, please return this form to us following completion of the first trimester. We realize that most Early Action applicants will not have first term grades by November 1; if you apply Early Action, simply return this form to us as soon as these grades are available.

Early Action applicants on quarter-based systems often ask if it is okay to send in their first-quarter grades. This is not required, but it’s certainly okay. Please note, however, that you must still send in the mid-year report after the second quarter grades have been released.

For Regular Action applicants, the Mid-year Grade Report form should be returned as soon as your first semester grades are available. We realize that for some of you, your mid-year grades will not be released until after January 1 — this is not a problem. Please just be sure to send the form in as soon as they are available.





## Art, Athletics, Music, ROTC

### Art

There are many opportunities at MIT in the arts and architecture.

From watercolors to holograms, sculpture to interactive video, MIT offers a wide array of visual arts opportunities. And since establishing the nation's first architecture program in 1865, MIT has become an internationally recognized center of excellence in architecture.

Students who are interested in architecture or art are welcome to submit a portfolio containing any art, photography, or architectural work for evaluation by the architecture faculty. If you are thinking about submitting an art portfolio, please submit it by November 1 if you are an Early Action applicant or by January 1 if you are a Regular Action applicant.



Format: Simple, 8" x 10" hard copies are preferred. Submissions in CD format are permitted but not preferred. Please note that slides are not encouraged.

Please include:

- Your full name
- Your date of birth
- "Undergraduate Application Materials" on the envelope

Please send submissions to:

Jan Wampler, *Director of Design*  
Undergraduate Program  
MIT Department of Architecture  
Building 9-213  
77 Massachusetts Avenue  
Cambridge, MA 02139-4307

### Athletics

If you are an accomplished athlete and you are considering participating at the varsity level in college, we encourage you to contact the MIT coach for your sport(s) directly. MIT fields 41 varsity teams (21 for men, 17 for women, three coeducational) and competes mainly against Division III New England colleges and Ivy League schools, but also routinely participates in regional and national tournaments and championships. Learn more about MIT's athletics programs at [www.mitathletics.com](http://www.mitathletics.com). On that page, click on "Recruiting" to be in touch with your sport's coaching staff.



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### Music

MIT is home to a vibrant and diverse musical community. Students may choose from a broad range of courses — including history, theory/composition, computer music, and performance — through the Music department, or can join one of more than 30 instrumental and choral ensembles on campus.

While a music portfolio is not a prerequisite for being involved in MIT's music community, advanced musicians who are interested in continuing their music activity at MIT are encouraged to submit a music supplement. If you are thinking about submitting a music portfolio, please submit it by November 1 if you are an Early Action applicant or by January 1 if you are a Regular Action applicant.

To submit a music portfolio, send an email to [auditions@mit.edu](mailto:auditions@mit.edu). In the body of the email, please be sure to include:

- Your name
- Your date of birth
- Mac-compatible email attachments



#### For Performers

In the body of your email, please note your instrument as well as the composer and title of the recorded music.

Please submit:

- MP3 recording attachments of two pieces of contrasting styles, of about 10 minutes total duration. They may be solo or with accompaniment but not in an ensemble.
- A one-page Music Resume attached in PDF or Microsoft Word format
- One letter of recommendation from a music teacher attached in PDF or Microsoft Word format

If you play two instruments equally well, please submit a separate supplement for each instrument.

#### For Composers

Please submit:

- One recent composition score attached in PDF format
- A one-page Music Resume attached in PDF or Microsoft Word format
- One letter of recommendation from a music teacher attached in PDF or Microsoft Word format

### ROTC

MIT is home to Boston's largest Reserve Officers Training Corps, or ROTC, program. All three ROTC programs — Army, Navy/Marine Corps, and Air Force — are active on campus and provide leadership training.

If you are interested in participating in one of MIT's three ROTC programs and wish to find out more information, please visit [web.mit.edu/due/rotc](http://web.mit.edu/due/rotc).



## Standardized Testing

Specific standardized tests are required for any freshman application to MIT. While your scores are only one component of your application, they are important, and you should make sure you're prepared for the testing process.



### Testing Deadlines and Reporting Scores

In order to apply for freshman admission, you must take the required tests on or before the November test date for Early Action or the January test date for Regular Action.

Your scores must be reported to us officially from the testing agency; scores you list on your application and scores appearing on your school transcript will not be considered official. Our SAT and TOEFL code is 3514 and our ACT code is 1858.

We recommend that you list MIT as a school to receive your scores when you take the test (you must do this if taking January tests; otherwise we will not receive them in time). If you do not, please allow plenty of time for your scores to arrive at MIT.

It is important that you register for tests with the same name as you have indicated on your application or MyMIT account. Your record and test scores will not be linked in our system if the names do not match.

You can get more information and register for the SAT tests online at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com), for the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) at [www.ets.org/toefl](http://www.ets.org/toefl), and for the ACT at [www.act.org](http://www.act.org).

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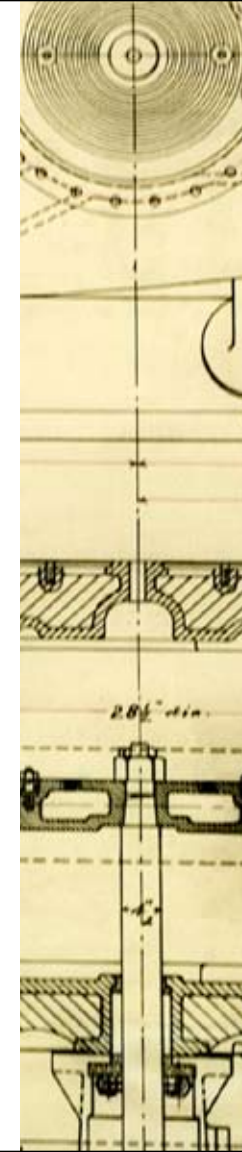
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### Testing Requirements

**For native English speakers:** We require the SAT Reasoning Test or the ACT Plus Writing test. We do not prefer one over the other. In addition, we require two SAT Subject Tests: one in math (level 1 or 2), and one in science (physics, chemistry, or biology e/m). We do not have a preference as to which science you take or which level math you take.

If you have taken the SAT Reasoning Test or ACT Plus Writing more than once, we will use the highest score achieved in each section for our evaluation. Since reporting multiple scores will not hurt you, we recommend that when you register to take tests, you ask for all of your scores to be reported to MIT.

**For non-native English speakers:** You have two options: 1) take the tests required for native English speakers (see above), or 2) you may take the TOEFL and two SAT Subject Tests, one in math (level 1 or 2) and one in science (physics, chemistry, or biology e/m). If you have been using English for less than five years or do not speak English at home, we strongly suggest that you take the TOEFL.



### When to take which tests

Obviously, it's vital that students take all tests on or before their testing deadline (November test date for Early Action and January test date for Regular Action). Beyond that, however, choose your test dates wisely! For example, if you will be completing high school physics, chemistry or biology before your senior year, it's best to take the appropriate SAT Subject Tests(s) right afterwards, in June, while the material is fresh in your mind.

Many applicants do take at least one science subject test during senior year, after completing only a portion of the given course; our Admissions Committee recognizes this and judges the scores accordingly. As a general rule, however, it's best to take a subject exam just after you've completed a whole course.

The content of your math courses should determine whether you take the Level 1 or the Level 2 Math test and when. (The two tests are weighed equally in the admissions decision.) Before you choose the dates for any of your tests, particularly the math test, be sure to get advice from your guidance counselor and your teachers.

## Selection Process

After you click the submit button, it's easy to feel as though your application has entered a black hole — what really happens between when you apply and when you receive your decision? We understand that not knowing the details can add a lot of stress to the waiting period, so we're happy to shed some light into that black hole.

Once your application is complete, it will first be read by a senior admissions officer who will consider your application in a holistic manner, within its proper context. Strong applications will then be evaluated by another admissions officer who will summarize it at length for the committee. Next, members of the admissions committee, which may include a faculty member, will do additional evaluations and summaries of the application.



These summaries, along with your application, will then go to the selection committee, where multiple groups of different admissions staff and faculty members will weigh in. At least a dozen people will significantly discuss and debate an application before it is placed in the admit pile.

This is all very intentional; committee decisions ensure that every decision is correct in the context of the overall applicant pool, and that no one individual's bias or preferences or familiarity with a given case has any chance of swaying a decision unfairly.

Our process is a student-centered process, not a school- or region-centered process. This means that we do not read your application along with other students from your school or region to compare you against each other; each applicant stands on their own. We have no quotas by school, state, or region. You are not at any disadvantage if other excellent students from your school or area are also applying.

This process of carefully reading applications and discussing them extensively in committee takes months. It's not something we ever rush — these decisions are far too important.

In other words, your application is in good hands — so please try not to worry. We'll also give you regular updates on our progress through the blogs at [mitadmissions.org](http://mitadmissions.org).

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## Financial Aid



Our mission at MIT is to advance knowledge and educate students in science, technology and other areas of scholarship that will best serve the nation and the world in the 21st century. To achieve this mission we recruit and enroll the most talented and promising students, make all our admissions decisions without regard to family financial circumstances, award all our aid based on financial need, and meet the full need of each student for all four years.

As a result of our strong commitment to making MIT affordable, we have one of the most diverse campus communities among our peer institutions. We urge you not to let the cost of MIT deter you from applying to one of the world's most outstanding universities.

### Just consider the following facts:

- Approximately three out of four MIT undergraduates receive some form of financial assistance.
- Tuition, fees, room, board, supplies, and personal expenses total \$50,100 for the 2008–2009 academic year, but our average financial aid award, including scholarships, loans and work, was more than \$33,040 in 2007–2008.
- Families earning less than \$75,000 a year will have all tuition covered, and MIT will eliminate the student loan expectation.

### Common questions and answers about the financial aid process

#### Q What does it cost per year to attend MIT?

**A** Our estimated cost of attendance for the year 2008–2009 is \$50,100, plus travel. Included in the total cost is tuition and fees, totaling \$36,390. We estimate that you will spend \$10,860 on room and meals, and \$2,850 on books and personal expenses.

#### Q How do I apply for financial aid?

**A** U.S. citizens and permanent residents begin by filing the 2009–2010 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) with the federal government and the PROFILE Application with the College Scholarship Service (CSS) as soon after January 1, 2009 as possible, but no later than February 15, 2009. In order to ensure the timely notification of the financial aid decision, you should not wait until your parents file their 2008 federal income tax return before you file these applications. Use best estimates of your 2008 financial information instead. Please refer to “Financial Aid application



materials” at the end of this section for other forms you may need to submit. If you are not a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, you must complete the International Student Financial Aid Application instead of the FAFSA and CSS PROFILE. This application will be available on our web site after November 1, 2008.

**Q What is the financial aid application deadline and what if I miss it?**

**A** Although it takes some time and effort, it is critical that you complete your financial aid application by the February 15 deadline. Doing so will ensure that you are best prepared to make the decision to attend MIT in a timely manner. If you miss the deadline, you will still be eligible for financial aid consideration but your financial aid award may not be complete by the May 1 admissions reply deadline.



**Q Do I need to submit copies of my tax returns to you?**

**A** If you are a U.S. citizen or permanent resident we will require a copy of your parents’ most recent tax return before we can determine your eligibility for financial aid. Upon completing the CSS PROFILE application, you will be sent an Institutional Documentation Service (IDOC) Cover Sheet by the College Board. You will use the IDOC Cover Sheet to submit your parents’ 2008 federal income tax returns, miscellaneous schedules, and W-2 forms. If your parents have not yet filed their 2008 federal tax return by the time you receive the IDOC Cover Sheet, you should send a copy of your parents’ 2007 federal tax return directly to MIT along with copies of their 2007 W-2 forms. Once the 2008 federal income tax returns are filed, you should send these to the College Board along with your IDOC Cover Sheet. The College Board will scan the forms and perform some data entry for us. MIT will be able to view every piece of paper you submit. If you are an international applicant, please provide a complete copy of your national income tax return along with your application for financial aid to MIT. If your country does not have an annual income tax form, please send a letter from each parent’s employer(s) indicating salary earned in local currency. Please completely translate ALL materials into English, but report figures in your local currency.

**Q What does a typical financial aid award from MIT look like?**

**A** We meet 100% of a family’s calculated need. The award contains a preset “self-help” component that consists of a low-interest student loan and/or MIT student job. The rest of your family’s calculated need is met with an MIT scholarship.

**Q Is there an income “cut off ” for financial aid?**

**A** No. We encourage all applicants for admission who think they need assistance to apply for financial aid, regardless of income level. We apply a formula that uses all of the information on the FAFSA and the CSS PROFILE. There are a number of factors other than income that we take into consideration when assessing a family’s ability to contribute. We may also take into account any special financial circumstances.

**Q Will I get the same financial aid for all four years?**

**A** Students must reapply for financial aid every year. We review your eligibility for assistance each year with the updated information you and your parents give to us. However, you should expect to receive the same financial aid provided there are no significant changes in your family’s finances and you meet the financial aid renewal deadlines.

**Q How are scholarships from outside sources treated by MIT?**

**A** We reward the receipt of outside awards by (1) reducing the self-help component (student loans and/or work) and (2) reducing the student contribution dollar for dollar. Should the total amount of all outside awards received exceed the amount of self-help and student contribution, we reduce the MIT scholarship portion of the award. Outside awards are scholarships, grants, or benefits from federal, state, or private sources that are not administered by MIT.

**Q What type of work is available to meet the self-help component of the package?**

**A** A variety of work opportunities are available on campus that can fit into the busy schedule of a typical MIT student. The current campus minimum wage is \$9.00 an hour. Many part-time paid jobs are also part of community service programs, enabling students to get involved with the Cambridge/Boston community while earning money to help defray the cost of their education. Most community service jobs require students to have Federal Work Study in their financial aid package. Work Study is quite common at MIT, with 61% of students participating. Students can also participate in the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP), which allows them to participate in research-based collaboration with faculty members. Any student who wants to work on campus must complete an Employment

Eligibility Verification Form (I-9) before commencing employment. International students can work on campus during the academic year and during the summer. See [web.mit.edu/sfs/jobs](http://web.mit.edu/sfs/jobs) for more information about student employment at MIT.

**Q When will I be notified about the financial aid decision?**

**A** Both Early Action and Regular Action admitted students who apply by the February 15 deadline will be notified by April 1 about their financial aid decision. Applicants who do not meet the February 15 deadline will be notified of their eligibility to receive aid shortly after their application becomes complete. However, we reserve the right to stop reviewing late applications after May 1.

For more information, see the Student Financial Services website at [web.mit.edu/sfs](http://web.mit.edu/sfs)



## Financial Aid application materials

**The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)**

If you are a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, you and your parents must complete the 2009–2010 FAFSA online at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov> (alternatively, the paper version is available from your high school guidance office). File the FAFSA as soon as possible after January 1 and designate MIT as a recipient by using our name, address, and federal school code of 002178.

**The CSS PROFILE**

If you are a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, you and your parents must also complete the 2009–2010 CSS PROFILE application. You may complete the application online at <https://profileonline.collegeboard.com>. Be sure to designate MIT as one of the recipients, using our code number of 3514.

**CSS Business/Farm Supplement**

If you are completing the CSS PROFILE application and either parent is self-employed or owns any part of a business or farm, s/he will need to submit the CSS Business/Farm Supplement (sent to you with your IDOC packet) for each business or farm in which any interest is held.



## Financial Aid application materials (continued)

### Complete copies of your parents' 2008 federal income tax returns

(including all Schedules and W-2 forms)  
If you are a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, we will require a copy of your parents' most recent tax return before we can determine your eligibility for financial aid. Upon completing the CSS PROFILE application, you will be sent an IDOC (Institutional Documentation Service) Cover Sheet by the College Board. You will use the IDOC Cover Sheet to submit your 2008 federal income tax returns, miscellaneous schedules, and W-2 forms. If you or your parents own corporations, partnerships or trusts, please include copies of those tax returns (Forms 1041, 1065, 1120, 1120S, K-1).

Please note: If the 2008 federal income tax return is not yet available, send the 2007 form and 2008 W-2 forms by the February 15 deadline directly to MIT, and send the 2008 federal income tax return to the College Board using the IDOC Cover Sheet as soon as it is completed.

### Separated or divorced parents

If your parents are separated or divorced, we also require your noncustodial parent to submit a web-based Noncustodial Parent's Profile (at the end of the application process for the PROFILE, you will receive further information on how to fulfill the noncustodial parent requirement). Additionally, we will need copies of 2008 federal income tax returns and W-2 forms from the noncustodial parent. This information will be requested as part of the IDOC process highlighted above in the section on federal tax returns.

### Additional information

If your family has special circumstances or unusual expenses, please submit a detailed letter directly to the College Board as part of your IDOC packet to help us better understand your financial situation. MIT will be able to retrieve images of every piece of paper you send, so your financial aid officer will be able to read your comments about any special circumstances you may share with us.

### International students

Like our domestic applicants, financial need has no bearing on admissions decisions for international applicants. Additionally, we meet the full financial need of our international applicants. Students from countries other than the United States must complete the International Student Financial Aid Application. This application will be available at <http://web.mit.edu/sfs> after November 1, 2008. If your parents are separated or divorced, each parent must complete an International Student Financial Aid Application. Please provide a complete copy of your national income tax along with your application for financial aid to MIT. If your country does not have an annual income tax form, please send a letter from each parent's employer(s) indicating salary earned in local currency. Please completely translate ALL materials into English.

### For more on financial aid, please contact: Student Financial Services

Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
77 Massachusetts Avenue, Room 11-320  
Cambridge, MA 02139-4307  
Phone: 617-253-4971  
Email: [finaid@mit.edu](mailto:finaid@mit.edu)  
Website: [web.mit.edu/sfs](http://web.mit.edu/sfs)

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## Advice from MIT Students

**“Just be yourself — if you’re accepted, you’ll know that MIT is perfect for you, not the person you tried to be on your application.”**

– Karen Sittig

**“Despite the equations and reactions I was inundated with when I arrived at MIT, the MIT application was one place where this approach was not necessary. Instead, the application was all about me and my voice: who I was, what I wanted to do, and how I was going to use my four (now nine) years to leave the Institute better than I found it.”**

– Bryan Owens

**“In my application, I decided to emphasize my passions and where I came from. I wasn’t afraid to write that some of my favorite interests did not involve math or science or that to this day I still spend afternoons playing with Legos. Showing who you are is of the utmost importance because the perfect school for you is where your personality will feel right at home.”**

– Omar Abudayyeh

**“Write about YOUR life — your loves, your fears, and your dreams. Not your parents’ — nor your counselor’s. Find the original fire in your heart that shaped you to who you are today, and let that passion take full rein of your essay.”**

– Chris Su

**“If at the end of the application process you feel relieved instead of enriched, then you missed an excellent opportunity to learn about yourself.”**

– Michael Snively

**Advice from  
MIT Students**

**A few years ago,  
these folks stood where you stand now.  
Heed their good advice.**

# A Message from the Dean

Dear prospective MIT students,

The thing to remember, throughout your entire college search, is that you should really only be looking for the school that is the best match to *you*.


Try not to pay too much attention to all of the national rankings and other measures that cast the widest possible net, leading everyone to believe that there are only a handful of schools that can be considered “the best.” The best education will come from the school that fits *you* best, and nothing else matters.

Think about these questions: In what types of environments do you find yourself the most motivated? When do you find yourself truly engaged and excited? What sorts of people inspire you to push the boundaries of your education?

Answer these questions honestly, and then put each school on your list to the test. Then create your own set of rankings — one that is designed only for you.

This is also the way to complete our application: honestly, sincerely, and from your own point of view. Stay true to yourself, regardless of others’ expectations. At the end of the journey, having honored your true self throughout the application process is the only way to guarantee that you’ll land where you most belong.

Good luck, and have fun! We look forward to reading all about you.

Sincerely,  
  
Stuart Schmill '86  
Dean of Admissions

# MIT Nondiscrimination Policy

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology is committed to the principle of equal opportunity in education and employment. The Institute does not discriminate against individuals on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, veteran status, ancestry, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, employment policies, scholarship and loan programs, and other Institute administered programs and activities, but may favor U.S. citizens or residents in admissions and financial aid.\*

The Vice President for Human Resources is designated as the Institute’s Equal Opportunity Officer and Title IX Coordinator. Inquiries concerning the Institute’s policies, compliance with applicable laws, statutes, and regulations (such as Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504), and complaints may be directed to the Vice President for Human Resources, Room E19-215, 617-253-6512, or to the Coordinator of Staff Diversity Initiatives/Affirmative Action, Room E19-215, 617-253-1594. In the absence of the Vice President for Human Resources or the Coordinator of Staff Diversity Initiatives/Affirmative Action, inquiries or complaints may

be directed to the Executive Vice President, Room 3-211, 617-253-3928, or to the Director of Labor and Employee Relations, Room E19-235N, 617-253-4264, respectively. Inquiries about the laws and about compliance may also be directed to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education.

\*The ROTC programs at MIT are operated under Department of Defense (DoD) policies and regulations, and do not comply fully with MIT’s policy of nondiscrimination with regard to sexual orientation. MIT continues to advocate for a change in DoD policies and regulations concerning sexual orientation, and will replace scholarships of students who lose ROTC financial aid because of these DoD policies and regulations.

MIT Admissions Office 617-253-3400 admissions@mit.edu mitadmissions.org

