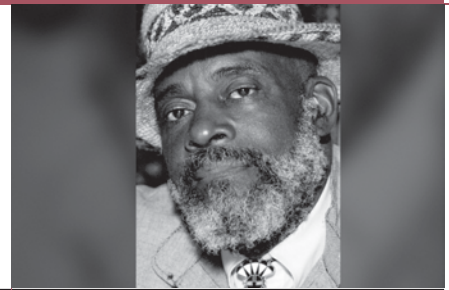


MIT Faculty Newsletter

<https://fnl.mit.edu>

in this issue we offer further commentary on the question of students' relationship to faculty class lectures (below and [pages 6 and 7](#)); an outline of the new Commencement format ([page 9](#)); responses to two previous Newsletter articles ([pages 10 and 12](#)); and a listing of the candidates for the upcoming FNL Editorial Board election ([page 14](#)).



Mel King

State Housing Policies and Their Impact on MIT Students, Faculty, and Staff

Rep. Mike Connolly

THOUSANDS OF MIT GRADUATE students, postdoctoral fellows, and faculty are impacted by decisions made by our state legislature. One of the areas where the legislature can have the biggest impact is with our housing policies. As the State Representative for Cambridge and Somerville's 26th Middlesex district – my constituents include many MIT staff and students. In this legislative update, I'll focus on just one aspect of our housing justice work – the struggle to lift the statewide ban on local rent control.

As someone raised in public housing that was built and financed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and as a lifelong renter – housing justice is near and dear to me. When the voters of our community first sent me to Beacon Hill in 2017, rent control was still considered a far-fetched concept, but it quickly

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Dealing with the Lack of Student Engagement in Lectures

Richard de Neufville

IN HIS ARTICLE, "NEVER MIND the Firehose, You Can't Even Lead Them to Water" (*MIT Faculty Newsletter*, November/December 2022), Craig Carter correctly confronts us with the fact that many of our students are not engaging with our lectures. They are out in cyberspace, playing games, watching sports, IM'ing, etc. As Prof. Carter points out, this phenomenon is easy to observe, when we take the time to do so. Intuitively, we also know this is happening.

As faculty we need to address this issue. When our teaching format fails to engage students, we are far from doing our best; we are wasting both our time and theirs. This is unacceptable.

We can and should be able to engage students effectively in the cyber age. Although the headline title associated with the article suggests that we "Can't",

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Editorial In Memoriam Melvin H. King

BOSTON AREA NEWSPAPERS have carried many articles recently describing the extraordinary contributions of Mel King to the social and political life of Massachusetts. He was a leader in struggles for school desegregation, a brilliantly effective affordable housing advocate, and the first Black man to run for mayor of Boston.

Less is known about his role at MIT as director of the Community Fellows Program. This groundbreaking program brought community leaders to MIT who were not scholars or researchers, but were influential in the social and economic struggles of our time. They added a much needed locally aware dimension to MIT and to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning, often more focused on projects in Dubai than on local public housing and the need for low income

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In Memoriam: Melvin H. King

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housing in the neighborhoods adjoining MIT.

Mel was an individual of the highest moral fiber, who opposed injustice locally, nationally, and internationally. In the mid 1980s, students formed the Coalition Against Apartheid, pressing MIT to divest its considerable stock holdings in corporations doing business in South Africa. Faculty support was led by Willard Johnson of Political Science, and Mel and Gretchen Kalonji of EECS. The students built visually dramatic symbolic shanty town structures to call attention to conditions in South Africa. The administration leadership of President Paul Gray, Bill Dickson, and Jay Keyser had them torn down. Votes calling for divestment and also opposing the administration's actions on the shanty town structures were taken at intense faculty meetings. On one occasion, Ruth Perry reported being knocked down by the campus police in a melee with students trying to protect the shanty town. On another, when Mel King walked into 10-250 for one of these faculty meetings, Paul Gray

stopped the meeting to announce that Mel did not have voting rights in the meeting. Mel remained his usual calm, respectful, and principled self.

The faculty voted in support of divestment and of the shanty town exhibits, but President Gray and the MIT Corporation refused to divest from South African stocks. However, many other universities did divest, which pushed the US government to reduce its support for the Apartheid regime.

During his historic run for mayor, Mel reached out to all sectors of the Boston electorate, polarized by the battles over busing. Jackie Dee King, Mel's press secretary and Jonathan King's wife, regularly accompanied him into South Boston bars and other venues throughout the city where Black people had been actively unwelcome throughout the city. He was open to and embracing of all of Boston's residents. The election was won by Ray Flynn, but it opened the path for subsequent Black and Latino candidates for city council, state representative, and mayor.

Every Sunday morning for decades, Mel and Joyce King hosted an open breakfast for individuals and organizations with ideas for a better community. Mel person-

ally cooked fried fish and prepared fruit salad for all.

In later years, Mel led the building of the large Tent City housing project in the South End, which continues as a model community for low- and middle-income tenants. But before that he had supported the earlier Tent City encampment here in Cambridge at the site of the former Simplex Wire and Steel Factory that is now high-tech offices along Sydney Street. Local tenants who were afraid of being forced out formed the Simplex Steering Committee back then, which for years tried to protect the low-income housing on the site from MIT/Forest City real estate development plans.

May Mel King's example continue to provide a beacon for our students, staff, and faculty for many years to come! ■

**Jonathan A. King, Ceasar McDowell,
Ruth Perry, Sally Haslanger**

For more on Mel King please see:

<https://news.mit.edu/2023/mel-king-community-fellowship-program-legacy-0407>; and <https://news.mit.edu/2023/remembering-mel-king-0404>.

Dealing with the Lack of Student Engagement in Lectures

de Neufville, from page 1

this overstates the case. Carter's conclusion is that "the classroom behavior that [he] is observing defeats MIT's mission, and that our faculty should consider a remedy carefully. The sooner the better."

I agree. We should pick up Carter's lead. We can find solutions and we "Can" engage students effectively. We need to think about how the lecture format often does not deliver for us. In this vein I offer a diagnosis, suggest an approach, and describe a solution that delivers well for me.

A Diagnosis

The lecture format developed as a means of delivering information when books or other written materials were expensive or otherwise unavailable. It has been a necessary device in the past; perhaps still 50 or 100 years ago. It isn't any more.

Frankly, the lecture format is fundamentally unappealing. Few of us like to be talked to for an hour or more. It's especially challenging when we try to grasp new ideas we don't yet understand. We get lost. Our minds wander. And many students miss words or struggle with accents or phrases. Simply put, lectures are not the best way to pass on information!

The information age offers many new possibilities for sharing information efficiently and effectively. We use them all the time. We "read" newspapers online when we please. We watch television. We listen to podcasts. In short, we get our information in many ways, when we are ready. Importantly, we can get it in short bursts, with the ability to pause and consider. Lectures do not provide this capability. Simply stated, lectures generally are not compatible with the possibilities of how we now expect to receive and absorb information.

Moreover, lectures inherently do not engage students. A lecture talks at students, it does not engage them individually. Yes, we can pause our lectures and ask for questions, but this is imperfect process. Many students hesitate to display their misunderstanding. Others like to

grandstand. And if we cold call on students the results can be embarrassing. In many ways the lecture format is not fit for the purpose of engaging students.

A Suggested Approach

Students are easy to engage when they come to class prepared; when they have reviewed and thought about the material for the next class. They may not yet understand the topic, but they will have reactions and questions. They are then ready to engage with the instructors when we offer them opportunity.

Frankly, the lecture format is fundamentally unappealing. Few of us like to be talked to for an hour or more. It's especially challenging when we try to grasp new ideas we don't yet understand. . . . The information age offers many new possibilities for sharing information efficiently and effectively. We use them all the time.

How can we get students to prepare for class? You might well ask! If they don't come to class, or don't listen to the lecture in class, how can we expect them to make a special effort in advance?

It really isn't so hard to get students to prepare for class if we set our minds to it. Indeed, this is often the norm. Teaching in many schools and professions rests on the expectation that students must prepare in advance for each class.

Law schools and business schools, for example, commonly use the "case method." This approach requires students to prepare in advance as standard practice. Students know that they will be called upon to discuss the class material. They will hear different points of view and appreciate the issues and subtleties. They come prepared and do engage with instructors – and with each other.

In a similar vein, our colleague John Belcher in the Physics Department has led a team to develop Technology-Enhanced-Active-Learning – TEAL instruction at MIT. Its essence is to create an environment where student engagement is central to the learning process.

Keep in mind that student engagement is not the primary objective. It is a means to achieve more effective teaching and learning. As various comparative studies of TEAL instruction have demonstrated,

"The teaching methods used in the TEAL classroom produced about twice the average normalized learning gains for low-, intermediate-, and high-scoring students when compared to traditional instruction. These findings replicate the results of studies performed at other universities." (See <http://web.mit.edu/edtech/casestudies/teal.html>.)

The bottom line is that our teaching can not only engage with our students, but by doing so, we can improve the effectiveness of our teaching.

Engaging students for more effective teaching does require us to change our pattern. We need to move away from our ingrained, well-honed, received habits of lecturing. We need to adapt to the technical possibilities we now have at hand.

We need focus on ways to have our students come to class prepared. We need to provide them with materials designed to help them receive ideas and concepts in keeping with the new possibilities for sharing information efficiently and effectively.

We also need approaches that are scalable. For most of us, the TEAL approach is beyond our means. When built, many years ago, each TEAL classroom cost a reported \$1.5 million. This approach is not widely scalable, neither for us individually, nor for our departments or institutions.

Fortunately, we now have access to a broad range of applications with negli-

[continued on next page](#)

Dealing with the Lack of Student Engagement in Lectures

de Neufville, from preceding page

ble costs. Call this a silver lining to effort to teach during Covid, if you will. In any case, our institutions have provided us with all kinds of new electronic supports. And many of us have invested significantly in learning how to access and use these technologies.

The Solution That Works for Me

For the last two years I have abandoned lectures entirely. While I was good at it, I recognized the issues Prof. Carter described. Lecturing for an hour or more was simply neither a sufficient, nor an effective way to distribute information. Lectures were out of tune with recommended presentation practice.

I completely transitioned to the “flipped classroom” approach. Its crux is that students must come prepared for class. They can then participate in discussions, joint problem-solving, and meaningful Q&A with the instructor. This innovative approach has been widely discussed for years. My personal experience is that it’s now coming into its own, thanks to the range of apps now routinely available to us. (See for example <https://teachingcommons.stanford.edu/teaching-guides/blended-and-hybrid-teaching-guide/frameworks-blended-and-hybrid-teaching/flipped>.)

An essential difficulty with making the flipped classroom work, is to make sure that students come prepared. My solution is to make prior preparation an integral part of the grade for my courses. Simply put, my students earn 30% of the course grade by demonstrating that they have somehow prepared. It’s a strong incentive!

Instead of lectures, I distribute class material as sets of “pre-reads.” These consist of short slide sets, videos, Panopto recordings with closed captions, topical publications, etc. I try to keep each single element to 10 minutes or less. This seems essential to me. It allows students to consider each element of what might have been a lecture in their own time before passing onto the next element. This

approach mirrors the way we are increasingly used to receiving information. Each assigned set of “pre-reads” might take an hour.

How do I make sure the students have prepared for class? By also assigning an electronic questionnaire to each set of “pre-reads.” Google Forms is what I have been using. The questions on each Form invite comments and reactions on the pre-reads. Students get credit for preparation when they turn in their completed Form before class.

An essential difficulty with making the flipped classroom work, is to make sure that students come prepared. My solution is to make prior preparation an integral part of the grade for my courses. . . . Instead of lectures, I distribute class material as sets of “pre-reads.” These consist of short slide sets, videos, Panopto recordings with closed captions, topical publications, etc.

I don’t grade their responses – the questionnaires are not tests. The student reactions demonstrate a student’s pre-class preparation – and provide the basis for classroom discussions and engagement.

The questionnaires help me organize the class discussion and activities. Google Forms deliver the student responses in graphs, pie charts, and an Excel spreadsheet. I can display results on the screen to share points of view and stimulate discussion. I can focus discussion on the issues that are most bothersome. I can make connections between the class material and issues that students are confronting in their complementary classes. The student engagement is intense and seems to be most productive.

Student reaction is most positive overall. The students’ main pushback is that they do have to prepare for my classes! It’s not what they are used to. It shifts their study patterns. Instead of eventually reviewing the material when it comes time to do problem sets or other assignments, they have prepared in advance and explored the material in depth in class time. The students end-of-

class evaluations do not indicate any increase in time spent out-of-class compared to the lecture format.

Institutional administrative reaction to my adoption of the flipped classroom has been bizarre. When I inserted the “The class is flipped” into my course descriptions, I met all kinds of questions from the Dean’s Office, the Committee on Curricula, and the Registrar. If I wasn’t lecturing, was I really coming to class and teaching? Was I imposing a greater burden on the students? Why should we advertise

teaching style to students? With staff help, I overcome these objections. As we know, there is substantial inherent resistance to innovation. This is not a good reason to hold back innovative improvements to our teaching.

Overall, I certainly have a lot to learn about how to be most effective. Your collegial guidance will be most helpful. I hope that some of us can work together to overcome the issues that Craig Carter has highlighted. I look forward to this. Thank you in advance! ■

Richard de Neufville is Professor of Engineering Systems in the Institute for Data, Systems and Society, part of the Schwarzman College of Computing (ardent@mit.edu).

In Defense of Student Engagement

Sam Christian

IN A RECENT FACULTY NEWSLETTER article (“Never Mind the Firehose, You Can’t Even Lead Them to Water,” November/December 2022) W. Craig Carter discusses a noticeable drop in student engagement during lectures, with many students either not attending lecture or being distracted by electronic devices. Dr. Carter postulates remedies to this problem, concluding that the issue cannot be solved on a class-by-class basis due to predicted pushback from students, and that instead, some sort of institutional policy is needed.

I, as an undergraduate student, write to present my differing perspective on this issue. First, I agree that there are many factors that actively inhibit student engagement during lectures. It is all too easy to sleep in and skip lecture, or open one’s phone and read through emails instead of paying attention, as we have all experienced.

But I believe that faculty should not try to police student engagement during lecture, and that in fact, overall student engagement with class material is currently healthy.

It is important to differentiate between classes where active vocal participation is a core component of the class, and those where it is not. Some classes, primarily in the humanities, require discussion and back-and-forth participation during class time. For these, I agree that policies enforcing student engagement are warranted. However, for classes where students are passive listeners to a professor lecturing, as is more typical in STEM courses, I believe that there shouldn’t be, broadly speaking, policies enforcing student participation.

Save for a graduation requirement here and there, students are fundamentally motivated by a desire to learn the material presented in the class. This is broadly true thanks to the large amount of freedom MIT allows students in choosing their major and courses. In this sense, the intentions of professors and students are well-aligned: the professor wants the students to learn the material thoroughly, and the students do as well.

Since students generally have the same educational goals as professors, the actions of students should be treated in good faith, as autonomous individuals, and not adversarially.

Dr. Carter mentions that there is inevitably pushback from undergraduate students towards any policy restricting electronics in class or requiring attendance. But the reason behind this resistance is important: a wish for more autonomy in the learning process.

We undergraduates have all had bad days where we realize during a lecture that we can’t concentrate. This is no fault of the professor – simply the foregoing circumstances of our day. At this point, we might, as autonomous adults, open social media, or check our emails. But this doesn’t mean we have given up on the learning process. Our fundamental goal is still to learn the material, and MIT students spend many, many hours outside the classroom doing just that.

Many students at times would appreciate a policy forcing them to not be distracted. But there are circumstances where they would resent such a policy because they truly want or need to do something on their device, and use their autonomy to

do so, all-the-while knowing that they will need to catch up on lecture material outside of class. Ultimately, it is not the responsibility of faculty to teach students how to balance their life.

As aforementioned, the classroom is a small part of the MIT student’s learning experience. Although the professor might view the lecture as the core component of the class, the average student sees the lecture as just the starting point in their journey to understand the material. After attending lecture, students will spend on average nine – and often many more – hours per week sharpening their understanding of their material through working on problem sets, talking to their peers, and reviewing course material.

No possible classroom policy could modify the root motivation of students. If students are taking a class because they actually want to learn the material – which is true for the vast majority of students – they will still work diligently towards a comprehensive understanding of the material, regardless of how they act inside the classroom. If a student, only taking a course because it is required, is forced to pay attention during lecture, they will still not review material outside of classes. They will still submit rushed, lackluster problem sets and will still often perform poorly on exams. ■

Sam Christian is a sophomore in the School of Science (samdc@mit.edu).

Some Thoughts on the Decline of Students' Focus

Alexander Slocum

I TOO HAVE OBSERVED a steady decline in focus of students. (See: “[Never Mind the Firehose, You Can’t Even Lead Them to Water](#),” *MIT Faculty Newsletter*, November/December 2022.) Adding insult to injury is when I recently politely asked a student who showed up consistently late and opened their laptop and just did not seem to be paying attention if there were any issues perhaps S³ might help with, I received then a lawyer-written email accusing me of being unwelcoming. . . . Over the past decade I have documented many such attacks, and there is no penalty for false accusations and slander, so I expect a lot more to come.

As we have been trying hard to be empathetic to students' statements that they feel faculty are too often too demanding and sometimes downright mean, the pendulum seems to have swung hard over and there is an invitation to use the system as an excuse to make up for being unprepared and inattentive. All that matters is to “get” an MIT degree to make M-O-N-E-Y. “Earn” the degree is no longer in the vocabulary.

Welcome to the Massachusetts Institute of Tawdriness ranked #1 by *US News* (for now until reality catches up with us).

The solution is simple, TRUTH in advertising and jettison *US News* rankings, something I have been advocating for years.

Of course, I offer the following poem. (Please note this poem was written totally by me, no AI help. You can tell because a critical part of the message is the SHAPE of the poem.)

It's Rank

Ranking of schools
Is a game for simple fools
For all US to rely on the News
Is for many good people to lose

And it drives schools
To behave like fools
To spend and hype
Such sad tripe

Often late for class?
No time to study & pass?
Just accuse thine professor!
They are guilty as oppressor!

Thus if embrace the rank
Expect an accompanying stank
Or cast off hype and hocus pocus
Discover true magic of passion & focus

For what some rank the best
May not be for all the rest
Focus on your passion
Not what's in fashion

To attend for the name
Is a very foolish game
You may get degree
But not be free

If one is too much a mental boot camp
To another school take the off ramp
Embrace what you truly love
And be free as a dove

Truth in advertising
Is what I am simply advising
Replace quotas with aspirations
Motivate all with high expectations ■

Alexander Slocum is the Walter M. May and A. Hazel May Professor of Mechanical Engineering (slocum@mit.edu).

State Housing Policies

Connolly, from page 1

became an issue I championed, based not just on my own experiences and convictions, but also on a clear sense of the reality faced by so many renters here in Cambridge and Somerville.

What I figured out right away, is that when we talk about lifting the statewide ban on rent control – we need to be clear we are interested in seeking fairness for all concerned. Local rent stabilization is about empowering our city officials to bring everyone to the table – that includes renters, homeowners, housing developers, and landlords alike – to craft tenant protections that can work on the local level and win approval on Beacon Hill.

I'm convinced when we present rent stabilization in this fashion an overwhelming majority of Cambridge and Somerville residents support it – and with Governor Healey including local rent stabilization in her housing platform as well, we now have a real opportunity to pass meaningful tenant protections into law.

This session, I'm proud to have refiled [An Act Enabling Local Options for Tenant Protections](#) in the House of Representatives (H.1304). Sen. Jamie Eldridge has refiled the bill in the Senate (S.872). The bill is also known as the Tenant Protection Act and was recently assigned to the legislature's Joint Committee on Housing.

The Tenant Protection Act lifts the statewide ban on rent control and provides cities and towns with a variety of flexible options for implementing rent stabilization and other eviction protections. Our bill doesn't attempt to prescribe the parameters of any local ordinance. We leave the decision on rent increase percentages up to a local city council or town meeting.

The reason for this flexibility is because the rental market – not to mention the political appetite for rent control – is different in different parts of the Commonwealth. But to have the ability to consider any local rent stabilization, we need the legislature's approval. This is

because the Rent Control Prohibition Act has been in effect since the mid-1990s. This law, also known as Chapter 40P, was passed in controversial fashion in 1994 over the objections of Cambridge, Boston, and Brookline, the only three communities that had rent control in Massachusetts at that time.

Despite the hurdles, our flexible approach – focusing on fairness and allowing for local decision-making – has helped us make real progress on this issue over the past few years. Last year, Boston Mayor Michelle Wu [offered testimony](#) to the Joint Committee on Housing in support of the Tenant Protection Act, urging favorable action. Cambridge Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui and Somerville Mayor Katjana Ballantyne also testified in support of our bill, as did many of our City Council members.

This month, the Cambridge City Council voted 8-1 and the Somerville City Council voted 11-0 to declare support for the Tenant Protection Act. Somerville has also announced plans to draft [a home rule petition](#) on this topic, and Cambridge officials are considering further action as well. It's been remarkable to see how strong the support for this issue has been across our three cities.

In Boston, Mayor Wu recently submitted a rent stabilization home rule petition to the Boston City Council that will cap rent increases at 6% plus CPI, up to a maximum increase of 10% annually. Like the Tenant Protection Act, the mayor's proposal would also fully exempt small, owner-occupant landlords and new housing construction for a period of 15 years.

When WGBH asked me to comment on Wu's proposal – I found myself struck by the historic significance of it. For my entire adult life, it was almost inconceivable that the mayor of Boston would be actively working to return to a policy of rent control or rent stabilization – for so long, the issue was considered a “third rail of politics.” But thanks to our collective efforts over the past several years, we have moved rent control from the fringe to the mainstream – and that is how we pass bold progressive concepts into law.

[The reaction](#) to Mayor Wu's home rule proposal was swift: many on the Right and some in the real estate industry blasted it as too aggressive, even going so far as to label Mayor Wu a communist for making this altogether reasonable proposal. Meanwhile, many of my friends on the Left also blasted the mayor's proposal, saying it didn't go far enough. I stand in solidarity with everyone who is organizing for housing justice, and yet I think it's important to emphasize the need for consensus. Everyone should understand that the real estate industry's strategy is to convince legislative leaders that opening the door to any form of rent regulation will only lead to never ending conflict at every level of government. I worry some of the initial reaction to the mayor's proposal played right into that narrative.

After hearing all the arguments, the Boston City Council voted 11-2 in support of advancing Mayor Wu's rent stabilization petition to Beacon Hill, where it now needs approval from both branches of the legislature. Meanwhile, I have been reaching out to colleagues on both the Cambridge City Council and the Somerville City Council to encourage both bodies to consider passing rent stabilization home rule petitions of their own. Each home rule petition will send a signal to legislative leaders that our communities are asking for these basic protections. And if Cambridge and Somerville home rule petitions can reach Beacon Hill by this fall, that would give us a window of at least 7 to 10 months to try to move local rent stabilization over the finish line during the current legislature term.

In the meantime, we will continue pushing for the Tenant Protection Act, which would allow our municipalities to craft these local ordinances without the need for any further legislative approval. I am grateful for the leadership of my colleagues, Sen. Pat Jehlen of Somerville and Rep. Dave Rogers of Cambridge, who have each taken on leadership roles in advancing rent control legislation, and for all my Cambridge and Somerville colleagues who are generally in support of this concept.

[continued on next page](#)

State Housing Policies

Connolly, from preceding page

Finally, we should keep in mind that rent control or rent stabilization is not a complete solution to the housing emergency. That's why my goal is not limited to any single bill or tactic. I am focused on advocating for a [universal program of guaranteed Housing For All in Massachusetts](#) – one that does more to achieve functional zero homelessness and supports public investments in affordable housing, with new revenue (such as a local option [real estate transfer fee](#), an [Empty Homes Tax](#), and new taxes on large corporations) along with a new proposal for a [Massachusetts Social Housing Program](#) and support for Community Land Trusts, first-generation homebuyers,

expanded rental voucher programs, sustainability upgrades, anti-foreclosure protections, and so much more.

In other words, even if we win the battle for rent control, it does not mean we will have won the war for housing justice. Rent control is necessary, but not sufficient. The ultimate goal is Housing as A Human Right.

I'd like to close with the following fact: [Massachusetts had rent control in the 1920s, the 1940s, the 1950s, and from 1970 until the mid 1990s](#). It's been a common policy feature over the past 100 years. In the year 1920, our state legislature passed our first rent control act. The concept of limiting out-of-control rent hikes was supported by Republican Governor Calvin Coolidge. Then in the early 1950s, Massachusetts held a referendum on whether to continue with the

World War II-era rent controls, and a majority of voters approved, as did a majority of our cities and towns. The real estate industry is going to do their best to portray this as a radical, hopelessly divisive issue. But an accurate reading of Massachusetts history will show that, in fact, rent control is a fairly moderate policy intervention. Indeed, it is today's ongoing crisis of cost burden, displacement, homelessness, and unlimited rent hikes that is the radical anomaly.

As always, please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns about this or any other matter.

Yours in service,
Rep. Mike Connolly

Mike Connolly is the State Representative for Cambridge and Somerville's 26th Middlesex district (mike.connolly@mahouse.gov).

Planning for Commencement 2023

James Poterba

MIT INTRODUCED A NEW format for Commencement last year. Rather than awarding all degrees at a single marathon event on Killian Court, the practice prior to the 2020 and 2021 online ceremonies, the 2022 celebration involved three components: a OneMIT Ceremony for all degree candidates, the Undergraduate Degree Ceremony, and a series of Advanced Degree Ceremonies for the students in each School and the College. This format, which spanned two days, was generally well received. There were several lessons learned from the 2022 experience, however, and we have tried to incorporate them in planning for this year's festivities.

Commencement 2023 will follow the same basic format as last year, but events will take place over three days instead of two and the OneMIT Ceremony will be on Thursday afternoon rather than Friday morning. These changes are designed to reduce conflicts for graduates

and faculty who would like to attend multiple ceremonies.

Activities will begin on Wednesday afternoon, May 31, with the Advanced Degree Ceremony for the School of Science and the combined ceremony for the School of Engineering and the College of Computing. On Thursday morning, June 1, there will be Advanced Degree Ceremonies for the Schools of Architecture and Planning; Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences; and several programs within the Sloan School of Management. On Thursday afternoon, the OneMIT Ceremony, featuring the address by Commencement speaker Mark Rober, President Kornbluth's charge to the graduates, and the traditional turning of the class ring, will take place on Killian Court. Finally, the festivities will conclude on Friday, June 2, with the Undergraduate Degree Ceremony at 10 am on Killian Court and two ceremonies for Sloan advanced degree programs.

I hope that you will make every effort to participate in one or more of the Commencement events, which celebrate important life milestones for our graduates. Our students are thrilled when they see their instructors sharing in their joy and accomplishment.

You should have already received an email invitation to participate in Commencement. This year, it is possible to register and order regalia on your mobile device via a new section of the MIT Atlas app. Detailed instructions are included in the invitation email. The deadline for ordering regalia is Wednesday, April 19.

I welcome your feedback as we continue to refine the new format and look forward to seeing you at one or more ceremonies. ■

James Poterba is the Mitsui Professor of Economics and Chair, Commencement Committee (poterba@mit.edu).

A Response to the Article by the Coalition Against Apartheid

Daniel Jackson

A RECENT FACULTY NEWSLETTER (Vol. XXXV No. 1; September/October 2022) included a two-page article entitled “Palestine, MIT, and Free Speech: A Letter from Student Activists to Our Professors” alleging encumbrances limiting the free speech of Palestinian activists at MIT.

Readers will draw their own conclusions regarding the article’s arguments that ensuring that activities “fall within the guidelines set by the administration” is an unreasonable burden, or that President Reif overstepped his office in a 2013 letter condemning a boycott of Israeli academics as antithetical to MIT values.

But as a member (and former president) of the board of directors of MIT Hillel, I feel obliged to respond to their complaint that the Jewish community, and MIT Hillel in particular, suppresses Palestinian rights by “defamatory claims of antisemitism.”

The article’s criticism of Hillel rests primarily on a claim that a workshop provided by a Hillel staff member “conflated anti-Zionism and antisemitism.” The presentation in fact included a slide with a Venn diagram explaining precisely that the categories of antisemitism, anti-Zionism and anti-Israel speech are distinct and do not fully coincide. That this accusation is untrue is hardly surprising given that, by the authors’ own admission, their material was in part based on hearsay (“stories submitted to us from the MIT community,” in this case from unnamed “MIT staff members”).

The article insinuates, more broadly, that the Jewish community is oversensitive to criticism of Israel, and that one cannot “write the phrase ‘Israeli

Government’ without being called antisemitic before the ink dries.” This is a strange claim, given that criticism of the Israeli government is widespread throughout the Jewish community itself. A Pew survey¹ found that fewer than half of American Jews gave Netanyahu a positive rating (even while a vast majority repudiated BDS, the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement) – and that was in 2020, before Netanyahu assembled an extremist coalition and pushed a judicial reform bill that elicited massive demonstrations within Israel itself and that has been denounced by Jewish American leaders².

At the same time, there is indeed a growing perception in the Jewish community – justified in my view – that anti-Zionism and antisemitism, despite being distinct doctrines, are increasingly intertwined.

When Wellesley’s student newspaper endorsed the BDS “mapping project” that provided the locations of almost all Jewish organizations in the Boston area (including the school that my children attended) in order that they might be “disrupted” in the fight against “colonialism,” a columnist in Haaretz (Israel’s left-leaning broadsheet) wrote: “There is no delicate way to

say this: Following and marking out Jewish businesses and institutions, wherever they are, is antisemitism of the lowest kind”³. A month after the Wellesley paper walked back their endorsement of the mapping project, MIT’s Coalition Against Apartheid retweeted a thread from the project, calling for a “dismantling of MIT”⁴.

Zionism takes many forms: from the 5th century BCE⁵ through medieval⁶ to modern⁷ times; from religious⁸ to secular⁹; from collectivist binationalism¹⁰ to irredentist expansionism¹¹; and, within

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³ Anat Kamm. The Pro-Palestinian Left Must Reject BDS. *Haaretz*, October 12, 2022. <https://www.haaretz.com/opinion/2022-10-12/ty-article-opinion/.premium/wellesley-college-women-caught-in-the-bds-web/00000183-cd93-da47-abcb-fd97281b0000>

⁴ MIT Coalition Against Apartheid Twitter account retweets Mapping Project’s thread “Dismantle MIT.” https://twitter.com/mit_caa

⁵ Psalm 126. *When the Lord brought back the captives to Zion.* <https://www.sefaria.org/Psalms.126.1>

⁶ Judah Halevi. *To Zion.* <https://www.poemhunter.com/poem/to-zion/>. See also:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judah_Halevi

⁷ Wikipedia. *Hovevei Zion.* https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hovevei_Zion

⁸ Wikipedia. *Abraham Isaac Kook.* https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abraham_Isaac_Kook

⁹ Wikipedia. *Cultural Zionism.* https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_Zionism

¹⁰ Wikipedia. *Martin Buber.* https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Buber

¹¹ Wikipedia. *Greater Israel.* https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greater_Israel

¹ Pew Research Center. *Jewish Americans in 2020: U.S. Jews’ connections with and attitudes toward Israel.* May 11, 2021. <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2021/05/11/u-s-jews-connections-with-and-attitudes-toward-israel/>

² Michael Crowley and Ruth Graham. *Israel’s Judicial Overhaul Plan Ignites Debate Among American Jews.* *New York Times*, March 8, 2023. <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/08/us/politics/israel-judicial-overhaul.html>

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Israeli politics, on the left¹² and the right¹³. So an outright condemnation of Jews for being Zionists amounts in practice only to rejecting the common denominator of all forms of Zionism, namely a Jewish right to self-determination. Telling Jews they shouldn't be Zionists is like telling Palestinians they should have no nationalist aspirations.

Not surprising, then, that anti-Zionist activists frequently borrow the libels of classical Jew hating. Mohammed El-Kurd, for example – brought to MIT as a guest speaker last October by the CAA – has accused Israelis of eating the organs of Palestinians and having an “unquenchable thirst” for Palestinian blood¹⁴. Such sentiments fit a pattern in which anti-Zionists often express antisemitic views¹⁵.

Antisemitic attitudes have practical consequences. Attacks against Jews have risen steeply in the last few years, with the

sad distinction of happening at a higher per capita rate than attacks against any other ethnic group^{16,17}. And while it has become de rigueur to validate the “lived experience” of every minority group, this courtesy has not been extended to Jews¹⁸. With all this, is a sense of unease in the Jewish community unwarranted?

The situation in Israel/Palestine is not encouraging. Gaza is still controlled by Hamas; the Palestinian Authority has not had an election since 2005; and Israel's first joint Jewish-Arab government has been replaced by a coalition dominated by rightwing Jewish extremists. Given that the electoral losses of Israel's Arab and center/left parties were due in large part to failures to form broader coalitions (and to poor voting rates, especially amongst Arab citizens), this does not seem like a good time for a hardening of positions.

At MIT, we have an opportunity to set a tone for respectful and constructive dialog, and to show that reason and generosity offer our best chance for progress in a discordant world. As faculty, we can play a part in encouraging all members of the community – faculty, staff and students – to express their opinions, even if we will sometimes choose to disagree.

In representing the faculty, the *Newsletter* has a role too. In this case, the editors told me they made an exception to their policy in publishing an article not only from a non-faculty source but also with unnamed authors. Especially under such circumstances they should have fact-checked the article and questioned the inclusion of criticism, based on hearsay alone, of another MIT organization and community.

My experience at MIT suggests that anonymity, far from encouraging productive conversation, more often degrades it. Should the CAA choose to join other MIT organizations in making their leadership public, I believe they would be pleasantly surprised by the eagerness of faculty and other members of our community to engage with them. I for one would welcome getting together with the authors of the article, and working with them to make MIT a place where important issues can be discussed with empathy and candor. ■

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¹² Wikipedia. *Meretz*.
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meretz>

¹³ Wikipedia. *Likud*.
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Likud>

¹⁴ Anti Defamation League. *Background: Mohammed El Kurd*.
<https://www.adl.org/resources/background/mohammed-el-kurd>

¹⁵ Edward H. Kaplan, Charles A. Small. Anti-Israel Sentiment Predicts Anti-Semitism in Europe. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 50, No. 4 (Aug. 2006), pp.548–561.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/27638506>

¹⁶ American Enterprise Institute. *Based on 2019 FBI Data, Jews Were 2.6X More Likely Than Blacks and 2.2X More Likely Than Muslims to Be Victims of Hate Crimes*.
<https://www.aei.org/carpe-diem/based-on-2019-fbi-data-jews-were-2-6x-more-likely-than-blacks-and-2-2x-more-likely-than-muslims-to-be-victims-of-hate-crimes/>

¹⁷ Department of Justice. *Hate Crime Statistics, 2020*.
<https://www.justice.gov/crs/highlights/2020-hate-crimes-statistics>

¹⁸ David Baddiel. *Jews Don't Count*. Harper Collins, 2022.
<https://www.harpercollins.com/products/jews-dont-count-david-baddiel>

A Response to “Open Letter to Presidents Biden, Putin, and Zelensky: Pursue Diplomatic Solutions to Avoid Nuclear War”

David Gamarnik
Pavel Etingof

February 2, 2023

A RECENT EDITORIAL LETTER, “Open Letter to Presidents Biden, Putin, and Zelensky: Pursue Diplomatic Solutions to Avoid Nuclear War,” published in the *MIT Faculty Newsletter* November/December issue of 2022, issues a call to the three presidents to initiate immediately ceasefire negotiations, and urges to pursue a diplomatic solution to the war in Ukraine. To quote, the letter says “We call upon you, as the leaders of the most involved nations, to initiate bilateral and multilateral talks aimed at rapidly negotiating a ceasefire, and then actively pursuing the difficult but necessary steps to effective peace treaties.”

While we hold no doubts whatsoever about the best intentions expressed by the signees of the letter, we strongly disagree with the position stated in the letter, and believe that negotiations and ceasefire in the present stage would be a grave strategic and moral mistake. On February 24, 2022 Russia invaded Ukraine with a very clear goal of the occupation of the entire country and regime change. The result of the invasion, thanks to the heroic efforts by the Ukrainian forces, and thanks to an unprecedented military support by its western allies, was far less than what Russia might have hoped for, and at this stage Russia managed to occupy only the eastern part of Donbas region and other nearby territories (along with Crimea which it occupied in 2014). Ukraine launched several powerful counteroffen-

sives, ridding several major regions from the Russian occupation, including areas north and east of Kyiv, areas of Kharkiv and Liman, and importantly the Kherson city and the surrounding territories.

Initiating a ceasefire at this stage and stopping the counteroffensive by Ukraine would then hold in place the Russian occupation of the remaining regions, and this is precisely what Putin wants! In fact he called for a ceasefire and negotiations

While we hold no doubts whatsoever about the best intentions expressed by the signees of the letter, we strongly disagree with the position stated in the letter, and believe that negotiations and ceasefire in the present stage would be a grave strategic and moral mistake. . . . Initiating a ceasefire at this stage and stopping the counteroffensive by Ukraine would then hold in place the Russian occupation of the remaining regions, and this is precisely what Putin wants!

repeatedly, likely recognizing his failure to gain more territories from Ukraine, thereby attempting to maintain the status quo. The call for a ceasefire from Zelensky, Biden and western European Union leaders would be an extremely welcome news to Putin, and thus a grave mistake. He would love that! It will provide him with the much-needed breathing room and time to regroup. This is an opportunity he cannot be afforded. So why call for a ceasefire now?

President Zelensky made it plenty clear: he will not negotiate with Russia until not a single Russian soldier is still in the Ukrainian territory. President Biden made it plenty clear, he supports Zelensky in this. This is a right, principled, strategic and moral position, which we and many many people fully agree with. We thus strongly disagree with our esteemed colleagues, who under the premise of pursuing peace and ending hostility, call for

something else, the result of which will be a Russian victory and Ukrainian defeat. Once again, negotiation and ceasefire now will cement Russian victory, let Putin get away with occupying still a large portion of Ukraine, and give him an opportunity to regroup and relaunch.

Ceasefire and negotiations is a very sound option in a symmetric warfare situation, where maintaining a status quo will not significantly alter the situation where the warring parties were prior to the

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beginning of the hostilities. This would be the case for example on February 23 of last year, before the Russian invasion began. This applies as well to the Cuban Missile Crisis, a case in point used by the letter writers. Ceasefire now, however, in light of the asymmetric situation that Ukraine and Russia find themselves in, would be a strategic mistake for the reasons stated above. It would also be a tragic moral mistake as well. Calling on Zelensky to negotiate at this stage is akin to calling a victim of a crime to negotiate with a perpetrator. Is this a position we are willing to leave Ukraine in?

The calls for negotiations and a ceasefire, voiced in the published open letter, are certainly not new. A few months ago a letter articulating a similar sentiment was drafted by several members of the progressive caucus of the US House of Representatives, calling on Biden for direct talks with Putin aimed at ending hostilities. The letter was retracted later by the chair of the caucus, Pramila Jayapal. A wise and a responsible decision which many have applauded.

Now, finally on the difficult issue of a nuclear threat emanating from Russia, the main theme which the letter writers underscore. Let's begin with a brief background. Ukrainian borders, currently internationally recognized, were secured in part in 1994 by the so-called Budapest Memorandum, agreed and signed by the Russian Federation. According to this agreement Ukraine rids itself from its nuclear weapons (which it had when it was still a part of the Soviet Union) and, at the same time the Crimea Peninsula was recognized as an undisputed part of the Ukrainian territory. This agreement was violated by Russia when it occupied Crimea in 2014. The West stood by helplessly, responding with meek sanctions, which, as by now is abundantly clear, had minimal to no deterrent effect. Ukraine was left without Crimea and without the

nuclear weapons, which would certainly deter Russia from the aggression, if Ukraine had them before the invasion. Russia ignored the memorandum it signed and will easily ignore any other agreements it signs now or in future.

Calling on the ceasefire now, as a means to minimize the likelihood of a nuclear disaster, is then based on a flawed calculus. This calculus ignores the potential and serious downstream implications of such a ceasefire agreement, which Putin will simply use as a convenient and much needed pause. It will not minimize the nuclear threat but instead will escalate it, as Russia will regroup, rebuild its military nuclear and conventional arsenal and re-engage in Ukraine and possibly elsewhere.

Calling on the ceasefire now, as a means to minimize the likelihood of a nuclear disaster, is then based on a flawed calculus. This calculus ignores the potential and serious downstream implications of such a ceasefire agreement, which Putin will simply use as a convenient and much needed pause. It will not minimize the nuclear threat but instead will escalate it, as Russia will regroup, rebuild its military nuclear and conventional arsenal and re-engage in Ukraine and possibly elsewhere. There is no end to Putin's territorial ambitions, we should be clear about that. The nuclear saber-rattling by Russia was there since Putin came to power and continues to this day. This is a threat which is perpetuated extensively by Russian media and Russian officials, quite possibly to elicit support for peace and negotiation from the West, but with little indication as to how credible the threat actually is. There is no reliable information suggesting that Russia is actually planning or preparing to use nuclear weapons. Thus the only strategy which minimizes the threat of a nuclear strike is sending a loud and clear message to Putin: “Engaging nuclear weapons, tactical or strategic is a red line,

crossing which will have severe consequences for Russia.” The western allies went as far as articulating very concrete and specific countermeasures they are prepared to take should Russia be foolish enough to use said tactical nuclear

weapons, the kind which will achieve minimal military gains for Russia anyway.

Freedom and democracy, the values which all of us share and cherish, don't come for free and need to be defended. Sadly, often this has to be done by military means, when all other options have been exhausted, as is the case today with the Ukraine and Russia war. The call to end the hostilities now, voiced by the letter's signees, while certainly well-intentioned, is misguided. It will not end the hostilities, just delay and elongate them, and will not decrease the likelihood of a nuclear confrontation. Far from it. Instead, it will be simply used by Putin as an opportunity to regroup, re-strengthen and re-launch. This is a sad state of affairs, but we should hold no illusions about this. ■

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Pavel Etingof is a Professor in the Department of Mathematics (etingof@math.mit.edu).

Candidates for Upcoming Election to Faculty Newsletter Editorial Board

THE MIT FACULTY NEWSLETTER has represented the views of MIT faculty for almost 35 years. Since its inception, the *Newsletter* has been maintained by a volunteer Editorial Board, over time involving more than 50 members of the faculty from all Schools of the Institute. Since 2008 we have followed a formal nomination and election process with direct electronic election of Board members by an electorate of the full faculty and emeritus faculty. Given the absence at MIT of a faculty senate or elected council, the FNL is one of the very few independent voices of the MIT Faculty. We hope you will participate this year when you receive the email ballot.

The origin of the *Faculty Newsletter* (FNL) was in response to the dissolution by then-Provost John Deutch, of the Department of Applied Biological Sciences (ABS) in December of 1988. The

administration's process was in violation of the *Rules and Regulations of the Faculty*. In response, a group of senior faculty prepared a petition calling for a reversal of the administration's actions. At the time they had difficulty in circulating the draft, due to the unwillingness of the administration to make faculty mailing lists available. In addition, with the faculty meeting agenda set and the faculty meeting chaired by the president, fully open discussion was not easy. The FNL emerged as an effort to establish open lines of communication among faculty (web.mit.edu/fnl/volume/201/fnl00.pdf).

Though the dissolution was not reversed, the faculty resistance resulted in all ABS faculty and students remaining employed at MIT. The report of the Committee appointed to review the affair can be found at web.mit.edu/jbelcher/www/ABS/.

During the ensuing years, the *Newsletter* has provided a forum for expression of faculty concerns and views, a major channel of communication among the faculty, and a means for candid debate on difficult issues. The primary guiding principles have been to provide open access for faculty and emeritus faculty to express views on issues of concern. This is ensured through control of editorial policy by the faculty Editorial Board, independent of influence by the MIT administration.

The *Newsletter* has come to be widely read, not just at MIT but outside as well, through the online edition at fnl.mit.edu. The FNL – though focused on MIT – also serves as a forum for discussion of critical national and international issues. With the support and involvement of MIT's faculty, the *Newsletter* will continue to play an important role at MIT and beyond. ■



Nicholas Ashford

Nicholas Ashford

<http://ashford.mit.edu/>

Nicholas Ashford is Professor of Technology & Policy and Director of the Technology & Law Program at MIT, where he teaches courses in Environmental Law, Policy, and Economics; Law, Technology, and Public Policy; and Technology, Globalization and Sustainable Development. He is a Faculty Associate of the Center for Socio-technical Research in the School of Engineering; the Institute for Work and Employment Research in the Sloan School of Management; and the Environmental Policy Group in the Urban Studies Department. He holds both a Ph.D. in Chemistry and a Law Degree from the University of Chicago, where he also received graduate education in Economics.

Dr. Ashford is the co-author of two textbooks/readers used in his classes: *Technology, Globalization, and Sustainable Development: Transforming the Industrial State* and *Environmental Law, Policy and Economics: Reclaiming the Environmental Agenda*. He has recently written two articles for the MIT Faculty Newsletter on Misinformation and on Distracted Driving. Other publications include writings on community participation in energy policy, addressing inequality, universal basic income and inclusive capi-

talism, the role of environment in cancer, the four-day workweek, the precautionary principle, and major challenges to education for sustainable development. These research areas should encourage views from the MIT faculty in the FNL Editorial Board as important sources of ideas and reforms in the exercise of academic freedom.

Dr. Ashford was a public member and chairman of the National Advisory Committee on Occupational Safety & Health, served on the EPA Science Advisory Board, and was chairman of the Committee on Technology Innovation & Economics of the EPA National Advisory Council for Environmental Policy and Technology. Dr. Ashford is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and former chair of its Section on Societal Impacts of Science and Engineering.

Editorial Board Candidates
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Christopher Cummins

Christopher "Kit" Cummins (current Editorial Board member)
ccclab.mit.edu

I am an MIT alum (PhD 1993, Chemistry) and joined the faculty here in the same department immediately following my first MIT Commencement; subsequently it seems as if I graduated many more times during my time as an Associate Faculty Marshal and member of the Institute's Commencement Committee, representing the School of Science. I've enjoyed serving on Institute committees over the years, including the CAP, as a vehicle not only to serve but also to get to know the Institute and our faculty. I'm a first year and major advisor, and have served also as our department's UROP coordinator. My research interests reside in devising methods for the synthesis of new molecular forms of matter, and I love to read, write, and edit pieces both inside and outside of my comfort zone. It would be a great honor for me to be re-elected to the FNL Editorial Board, where I may practice and sharpen those skills in service of the true and independent voices of the MIT faculty.



Helen Elaine Lee

Helen Elaine Lee (current Editorial Board member)
<https://cmsw.mit.edu/profile/helen-elaine-lee/>

Service on the Faculty Newsletter's Board is an opportunity to bring my background as a writer to the MIT community. I am aware of the power of words to unite and inspire us in addressing academic, ethical, social, and political issues, and in agitating for change. The Faculty Newsletter is the MIT forum where we are all able to raise our voices, in affirmation and dissent, and I look forward to continuing to foster faculty engagement in discussions of our community's pressing issues. Through this forum we can all have a role in shaping the Institute and ensuring that we are self-critical, inclusive, equitable, and creative in meeting the myriad challenges and opportunities before us.

Editorial Board Candidates

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Anthony Patera

Anthony Patera

https://meche.mit.edu/sites/default/files/cv/Patera_shortCV.pdf

I arrived at MIT in 1975. I obtained my SB and SM in Mechanical Engineering, and my PhD in Applied Mathematics. I then joined the faculty of Mechanical Engineering. I am currently Professor of Mechanical Engineering and Ford Professor of Engineering. My research and teaching interests center on mathematical modeling and computational methods for partial differential equations, with applications in solid mechanics, acoustics, fluid dynamics, and heat transfer.

The Faculty Newsletter plays an important part in the articulation and promotion of faculty participation in the research, education, and service missions of the Institute. Some traditional roles of faculty are now increasingly transferred to professional offices within the Institute. In some cases this shift is well warranted and all parties benefit. However, in other cases, although we might improve our efficiency, we may also sacrifice the holistic academic spirit which has long been a hallmark of MIT. In this context, I believe the Faculty Newsletter can provide a forum for extended and deliberate discussion of faculty imperatives in the MIT of the future.



Nasser Rabbat

Nasser Rabbat (current Editorial Board member)

<https://architecture.mit.edu/people/nasser-rabbat>

Nasser Rabbat is the Aga Khan Professor and the Director of the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at MIT. He has been a faculty member for the last 32 years and completed his PhD at MIT as well. An architect and a historian, his scholarly interests include Islamic architecture, urban history, heritage studies, Arab history, contemporary Islamic art, and post-colonial criticism. He has published eight books on topics ranging from Mamluk architecture to Antique Syria, 19th century Cairo, Orientalism, and urbicide. His most recent books are *Writing Egypt: al-Maqrizi and his Historical Project* (2022) and *'Imarat al-Mudun al-Mayyita (The Architecture of the Dead Cities)* (2018). He has been a contributor to several Arabic newspapers on cultural, political, and artistic issues since 1998.

“Serving on the MIT Faculty Newsletter Editorial Board will allow me to advocate for a more committed engagement with the less fortunate parts of the world at MIT, to promote a better integration of the humanities in MIT’s mission and image, and to bring my journalistic experience to the institution in which I have spent all of my career.”