

[A Report on the Status of Women Faculty in the Schools of Science and Engineering at MIT, 2011](#)

Overall implementation score: 35%

Science Recommendations to Ensure Equity

Implementation score per item

Recommendation: 1	Oversee the hiring of women faculty, at the level of the Deans and Associate Provost. The action items needed, regarding recruitment of women, include equity of resources, and training search committees to recognize subtle forms of discrimination in reference letters and the interview process. It must be transparent that women hired at MIT are exceptionally accomplished.	
Status:	There is no longer an associate provost to oversee the hiring of and climate for women faculty. Most search committees do not receive training. SHASS follows the recommended practices.	0.25
Recommendation: 2	Address the persistent need for childcare slots, increased financial support for childcare, and continuation of tenure clock flexibility. This support is critical, but it also is essential that women faculty members without children are not unduly burdened with administrative tasks.	
Status:	More childcare slots are available for faculty following the expansion of the Technology Childcare Centers in 2013. Tenure clock flexibility continues.	1
Recommendation: 3	Improve mentoring of junior faculty. Many faculty and possibly department heads are unaware that there exist recommendations for effective mentoring procedures, which should continue to be used permanently in all departments. Departments should have a clear mentoring plan in place prior to making new hires.	
Status:	No change in procedures since 2011, although SHASS and some departments in other schools provide a guide for mentors.	0.25

Recommendation:	4	Disseminate reference information regarding policies relevant to women, including maternity leaves, family leave (that encompass caring for aging parents, as well as other family members, including children), tenure clock extension and other benefits.	
Status:		This information does not appear to be uniformly disseminated to new faculty. Most of it can be found on the web. There is no formal policy for faculty leave associated with pregnancy and childbirth, although there is a new policy for non-faculty employees, https://policies-procedures.mit.edu/node/56/#sub6 . Faculty are guaranteed only a 12-week unpaid leave under the Family Medical Leave Act, https://policies-procedures.mit.edu/node/56/#sub2 . While departmental practice generally grants mothers paid time, the lack of a stated policy creates uncertainty and increases the chances for inequitable treatment across departments.	0.25
Recommendation:	5	Continue and improve tracking of faculty salaries and resources for equity. Conduct a study on equity of individual retirement packages.	
Status:		Salary equity (based on 9-month faculty salaries) continues to be tracked.	0.5
Recommendation:	6	Monitor service commitments and ensure that these are fairly distributed, such that women do not carry a greater burden than men.	
Status:		SHASS has implemented this recommendation (and tracks service of URM faculty, too).	0.25
Recommendation:	7	Implement more formal mechanisms to deal with gender-based harassment.	0.75

Status: Largely accomplished with revisions to Policies and Procedures <https://policies-procedures.mit.edu/relations-and-responsibilities-within-mit-community/harassment> and the implementation and expansion of Title IX efforts <http://titleix.mit.edu/>. Procedures are still not fully satisfactory when faculty are the perpetrators.

Recommendation: 8 Continue to lead nationally and internationally in recommending solutions to gender bias outside of MIT, in representation at scientific meetings, in publishing, and in funding of research. The women faculty of MIT can advocate for issues (e.g., extensions of student or postdoctoral fellowship support for child bearing) that can build up the pipeline and increase the number of women choosing to enter the academic ladder.

Status: MIT's visibility in recommending solutions to gender bias has diminished since 2011. National leadership resides in ADVANCE programs and Project Implicit, international leadership in the UK Athena SWAN system -- not MIT. 0

Engineering Recommendations

Recommendation: 1 Improve selection of and educate department heads. The ability to deal appropriately with junior faculty and women faculty should be an important criterion when choosing a new department head, and women should be consulted during the selection process. Training of department heads would be useful, e.g., to understand that women are less likely to refuse an assignment than men are, and to ensure that faculty members hired under broad searches have the resources they need to succeed.

Status:	Unclear whether the ability to work well with junior and women faculty is an important factor in department head selection or how to assess whether such criterion has been effectively used. Although there is an orientation workshop for department heads, it does not include training on gender dynamics.	0
Recommendation: 2	Ensure fairness of committee assignments. The current attitude that there must be a woman on every committee needs to change, since this places an undue burden on women. We recommend putting in place a system that allows yearly monitoring of teaching, committees, and service for all faculty.	
Status:	SHASS does this.	0.25
Recommendation: 3	Prepare mentors. The specific problem that women noted is mentoring committee members who wanted them to change research directions. Mentoring committee members need training to understand what their responsibilities are and what is helpful.	
Status:	This does not appear to have been implemented, although some departments and at least one school (SHASS) provide information (not training) to mentors.	0
Recommendation: 4	Reexamine family policies. For example, is gender-neutral best with respect to childcare slots in the Stata center and parental release? In addition, consider providing financial support for childcare.	
Status:	Appears not to have been implemented. Parental leave policies for faculty have not changed since 2011.	0
Recommendation: 5	Develop ways to help dual-career couples, particularly with searching for jobs.	
Status:	Faculty Concierge program https://myconcierge.mit.edu/ helps with this; also, increased connection to administrators at area universities and other employers.	1