Spring 2021 Planning Discussion

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AILG
Spring 2021 questions being considered

- Can MIT safely bring 1st, 2nd and 3rd year students (and SHARP and graduate students) to MIT in the spring?
- What are the major hurdles/risks?
- What could we do (and what will be required) to overcome or mitigate these major risks?
Guiding principles and goals

• Prioritize the safety of our community and our neighbors
• Aspire to invite everyone to one semester on campus
  • Take advantage of new housing capacity available in spring
  • Build on experience operating during a pandemic thus far
• Deliver an academic and student experience that is as excellent as possible
• Support the mental health and well-being of our community members
Our plans for fall...

Bringing some students back to campus (a measured approach)

- Leadership worked collaboratively with the community to determine options
- Prioritizing UG seniors as well as others who need to be on campus
- Allowing most grad students + researchers to be on campus
- Modifying policies and adapting services
- Significantly reducing capacity on campus
How things are going...

Campus life
- 780 undergraduates (24% occupancy); 1,334 grad students (58% occupancy)
- Student Housing Assistance Review Process (SHARP): 308
- ~1,250 meals served daily in all UG residences and W20’s Lobdell Dining Hall
- Expedited COD Process: 185 (10/18/20)
- Number of students positive/isolating: 19

Teaching and learning
- Strong enrollments (esp. class of 2024); less than 5% took a leave, and 6-7% of UGs took gap year
- Majority of courses remote, some with in-person and lab elements; emphasis on collaboration

Testing and compliance
- 4,000+ tests per day; low wait times; ~95% compliance (100,000 tests, over 8 weeks, .05% positive rate)
Fall 2020 lessons learned

- **Measured approach is working**
  - Policies, procedures, monitoring compliance, implementation & decision making
  - Research operations & in-person (e.g., classes, UROPs) conducted concurrently
  - Rigorous testing, tracing, and isolating, effective space management, access control, policy implementation

- **Managing ~7000 students** living on- and off-campus (2200 + 5000), including 2600 off-campus graduate students accessing campus for research + classes
  - Low transmission on campus
  - Time consuming: monitoring compliance, COD response, and student support

- **Learning from peers:** strategies for supporting larger cohorts of students
Fall 2020 lessons learned (continued)

● Diminished student experience for on- and off-campus students
  o Mental health and isolation is a concern
  o Students want to be together with friends
  o Pods: wellbeing benefits; have introduced some risks when intermixing
    ▪ > 6 in a Pod “family or friend-group”
    ▪ Relax strictures (e.g., face covering, physical distancing)

● Improving the on-campus student experience
  o In-person instruction, UROPs, experiential learning opportunities
  o Making the outdoor campus better (e.g., lighting, seating, heat, music)
  o Spaces for “safe” gatherings (although they increase safety risks)
Spring 2021 Housing Options  (anticipated need = 3000)

**Option 1:** Housing 1 per room, using FSILGs, No Site 4 for UG (67% in on-campus halls) = 3007 students

**Option 2:** Housing with 2 per room, No FSILGs, UGs in Site 4 (85% in on-campus halls) = 3052 students

**Option 3:** Facility condition adjustment, 2 per room, No FSILGs, pod lounges, UGs in Site 4 & Eastgate (68% in on-campus halls) = 2630 students
De-risking winter

- Academic calendar will include a delay of semester start + more fully-remote time in the beginning *(being finalized by APART)*

- Considerations:
  - Begin 2 weeks later
  - 62 Teaching days
  - 3 Reading days
  - 6 break days
  - 2 (4 day weekends)
  - Commencement in June
Recommendations & possible approaches

• **Balancing safety/ Residential density/ Quality of experience**
  • Invite three undergrad classes, + SHARP process, & grads to live on campus
  • Operate similar to Fall 2020 (quarantine week, strong testing, etc.)
    • Preference: Limit on-campus undergraduate residential population ~2630
  • Continue off-campus graduate student access to campus for research or class
  • Increase in-person learning opportunities
  • Invest in staffing and infrastructure (IT, student support, monitoring)

• **Considerations for managing residential density of ~3000**
  • Increase residential density beyond preferred density of ~2630
    • Limited opening of FSILGs, with FSILG students granted access to campus?
      • Wastewater testing would provide increased comfort level
    • Grant access to campus for students residing in apartments off-campus?
Discussion questions

• What has your experience been this term? What challenges have you faced?

• Would you prefer to stay closed, supported by MIT, or open? Pros/Cons?

• What challenges do you anticipate facing, and how will you address them?
Background
Testing compliance is currently > 95% which puts us in a strong position (and working to improve it)