Recommended Tactics for the

Strategic Plan for Graduate Advising and Mentoring at MIT

DRAFT

Table of Contents

Page

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GOAL 1

Ensure an Institutional Culture of Excellence
in Advising and Mentoring

Objective 1.1 **Define excellence and communicate the definitions throughout MIT.**
Strategy 1.1.1 Determine the attributes that define a culture of excellence in graduate advising and mentoring.

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 1.1.1
 	
● Attributes may include:
    ○ A definition of mentorship that aligns with the <u>National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine (NASEM) Report on the Science of Effective Mentorship</u>.
    ○ A statement on how mentoring and advising relate to MIT's <u>Statement of Values</u>.
    ○ A list of essential competencies and expectations of mentors and mentees. Recommended competencies and expectations are provided in <u>Appendix A</u>.
    ○ A list of acceptable and unacceptable behaviors of faculty, thesis supervisors and graduate students.
 	
Ownership
 	
● The development of the draft definition could be led by the <u>Institute Committee on Graduate Advising and Mentoring</u> in collaboration with key stakeholders including <u>FPC</u>, <u>CGP</u>, <u>GSC</u>, <u>OVC</u>, <u>OGE</u>, the <u>Advising and Mentoring Grievance Response Team</u> and <u>MIT's Center for Excellence in Graduate Advising and Mentoring</u>. Useful information for the Committee to include in their deliberations may be extant best practices of mentoring and advising in DLCs.
● The <u>Institute Committee on Graduate Advising and Mentoring</u> could be responsible for reviewing and updating the definition periodically as appropriate.

Strategy 1.1.2 Communicate the attributes that define a culture of excellence in graduate advising and mentoring.
Recommended Tactics for Strategy 1.1.2 ● The <u>Institute Committee on Graduate Advising and Mentoring</u> could raise awareness of the attributes defined in Strategy 1.1.1 through various means including but not limited to, during Institute and Department faculty meetings.

- MIT's Center for Excellence in Graduate Advising and Mentoring could raise awareness of the attributes defined in Strategy 1.1.1 via its website and through a poster campaign, professional development workshops and other programming offered.
- DLC leadership may affirm and enhance as desired the attributes defined in Strategy 1.1.1.

Objective 1.2

Provide Institutional resources designed to foster excellence.

Strategy 1.2.1

Develop a Center that provides resources to faculty, thesis supervisors and graduate students to support excellence in advising and mentoring.

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 1.2.1

- The primary role of MIT's Center for Excellence in Graduate Advising and Mentoring could be to offer an array of programming including professional development workshops, as well as to provide tools and other resources to graduate students, faculty and thesis supervisors to support excellence in advising and mentoring.
- The Center could reside within the Office of the Provost and could be led by full-time, PhD-level personnel, as is the case in comparable Centers at other academic institutions.
- The Institute Committee on Graduate Advising and Mentoring may serve in an advisory role to the Center.

Objective 1.3

Incentivize excellence throughout the organization.

Strategy 1.3.1

Incentivize and reward DLCs that collectively excel in graduate advising and mentoring.

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 1.3.1

- The Schools and the College may wish to reward DLCs that demonstrate excellence in advising and mentoring from Strategy 3.2.2 in the form of supporting graduate student recruitment. Examples of activities that could be supported include sending DLC representatives to colleges and universities, meetings, conferences etc.; inviting students to visit their department; and funding "visit weekends" for students who have been accepted.

Strategy 1.3.2

Identify and highlight advising and mentoring best practices that have been demonstrated in the Schools, the College, and the DLCs.

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 1.3.2

- The Schools, the College and the DLCs may be asked to report on the adoption of mentoring-based programming, activities and structured feedback systems.

Ownership

- MIT's Center for Excellence in Graduate Advising and Mentoring could be responsible for:
  - Gathering information from the Schools, College and the DLCs on a biennial basis.
  - Drafting a report summarizing adopted best practices.
  - Communicating the report to FPC, CGP, Institute Committee on Graduate Advising and Mentoring, Advising and Mentoring Grievance Response Team, Academic Council, the Schools, the College and the DLCs.
  - Highlighting adopted best practices across the Institute via the Center's website, communications and programming.

Objective 1.4

Assess MIT's progress in advising and mentoring on an ongoing basis.

Strategy 1.4.1

Conduct assessments in order to identify Institute, School, College, and DLC-specific trends in graduate advising and mentoring.

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 1.4.1

- Assessment could be in the form of a survey that:
  - Is implemented by developing new or adapting existing survey frameworks such as the Quality of Life Survey.
  - Assesses quantitative and qualitative aspects of graduate student experiences with their advisor, their research group, and the overall DLC.
  - Provides opportunities for graduate students to comment on what is working well, what needs improvement and provide recommendations.
  - Anonymizes information related to a specific faculty or thesis supervisor.
  - Highlights resources available to graduate students in the case of negative advising and mentoring experiences (Goal 4).

Ownership

- [MIT's Center for Excellence in Graduate Advising and](#) Mentoring in collaboration with [IR](#) could administer and summarize the survey results.

Strategy 1.4.2

Review and discuss with appropriate protections, the results of Strategy 1.4.1.

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 1.4.2

Ownership

- The summary generated from Strategy 1.4.1 could be discussed at Academic Council, by Visiting Committees, during annual reviews by the Deans of the Schools and College and by [FPC](#), [CGP](#), [OVC](#), [OGE](#) and the [Institute Committee on Graduate Advising and Mentoring](#).
- DLCs could provide a summary of the results to and host a discussion with their faculty, thesis supervisors and graduate students.

GOAL 2

Enhance Knowledge and Skills in Effective Advising and Mentoring

Objective 2.1

Provide faculty and thesis supervisors with evidenced-based resources that support excellence in advising and mentoring.

Strategy 2.1.1

Provide professional development workshops for faculty and thesis supervisors.

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 2.1.1

- Workshops could focus on enhancing skills and knowledge around the essential advising and mentoring competencies defined in Strategy 1.1.1.
- Workshops could be tailored to faculty at different career stages and in different disciplinary fields.

Ownership

- MIT's Center for Excellence in Graduate Advising and Mentoring could implement Institute-level professional development workshops.
  - Example of precedent: In September 2021, MIT piloted a one-day CIMER-based workshop that was available to new junior faculty across the Institute. The workshop used case studies, activities and small group discussions to help new faculty cultivate effective relationships with their mentees. The workshop focused on the following mentor competencies: (1) effective communication, (2) assessing understanding, (3) aligning expectations, (4) fostering independence, (5) promoting professional development, (6) cultivating ethical behavior, and (7) addressing equity and inclusion.
- The Schools, College and DLCs could supplement the Institute-level workshops with localized workshops with guidance MIT's Center for Excellence in Graduate Advising and Mentoring.
  - Example of precedent: In Spring 2020, the School of Engineering piloted a CIMER-based 5 session workshop focused on the following mentor competencies: (1) aligning expectations, (2) effective communication, (3) creating an welcoming and inclusive environment, (4) fostering independence, (5) work-life integration and well-being.

Strategy 2.1.2

Increase awareness of resources that support faculty and thesis supervisors in their roles as graduate advisors and mentors.

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 2.1.2

Ownership

- [MIT's Center for Excellence in Graduate Advising and Mentoring](#) could compile and communicate:
  - Evidence-based tools and information to support best-practices in advising and mentoring.
  - Support resources and professional development resources for graduate students.
  - Professional development opportunities for faculty and thesis supervisors.

Strategy 2.1.3

Establish programs and provide discussion opportunities to share experiences and best practices.

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 2.1.3

1. ***Establish a faculty and thesis supervisor peer mentoring program.***

   - More senior faculty mentors could be paired with junior faculty from the same School or College.
   - Senior faculty -> junior faculty and junior faculty -> senior faculty mentorship opportunities could be provided.

   Ownership

   Program could be implemented by [MIT's Center for Excellence in Graduate Advising and Mentoring](#).

2. ***Convene graduate students, faculty and thesis supervisors to facilitate the sharing of resources, experiences, and best-practices.***

   Ownership

   - DLCs could implement teaching and learning town halls.

3. ***Establish a community of practice for faculty and thesis supervisors to discuss challenges and best practices in advising and mentoring.***

- Faculty and thesis supervisors from diverse DLCs could be convened regularly.
- Discussions could take place among faculty and thesis supervisor cohorts and/or faculty and thesis supervisors at different career stages.

Ownership

- This could be led by [MIT's Center for Excellence in Graduate Advising and Mentoring](#).

Objective 2.2

Provide graduate students with evidenced-based resources that enable them to establish and maintain effective mentorships.

Strategy 2.2.1

Provide information to graduate students on how to establish a mentoring network.

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 2.2.1

Ownership

- [MIT's Center for Excellence in Graduate Advising and Mentoring](#) could provide general guidelines and resources that help graduate students establish a mentoring network.
- Schools and/or DLCs could offer information sessions during orientation proceedings and IAP that help graduate students establish their mentoring network, particularly within the DLC and School or College. Students could also be made aware of expected (good) treatment by a faculty member or thesis supervisor, what is deemed unacceptable treatment and where to find help and support in the case of negative advising and mentoring situations. [MIT's Center for Excellence in Graduate Advising and Mentoring](#) could provide guidance as needed.

Strategy 2.2.2

Provide workshops and information to graduate students on how to excel as *mentees*.

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 2.2.2

Ownership

- [MIT's Center for Excellence in Graduate Advising and Mentoring](#) could work with DLCs and the [GSC](#) to develop and deploy effective mentee training workshops and offerings.

Strategy 2.2.3

Provide workshops and information to graduate students on how to excel as *mentors.*

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 2.2.3

- Implementation of the strategy could be accomplished by continuing the Graduate Mentorship Certificate Program that was piloted during IAP 2022 in collaboration with CIMER. CAPD has agreed to offer this program again and plans to have staff and campus partners trained as facilitators. The Certificate Program focused on the following mentor competencies: (1) effective communication, (2) assessing understanding, (3) aligning expectations, (4) fostering independence, (5) addressing equity and inclusion, (6) sources of self-efficacy and (7) fostering well-being.

Strategy 2.2.4

Increase awareness of resources for the professional development of graduate students.

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 2.2.4

Ownership

- The Schools, College, DLCs, CAPD, and MIT's Center for Excellence in Graduate Advising and Mentoring could raise awareness of professional and mentorship-related development opportunities.
  - Example of precedent: CAPD started the Graduate Professional Development Partners group in summer 2021 to coordinate and amplify graduate professional development resources with campus partners.
- MIT's Center for Excellence in Graduate Advising and Mentoring and DLCs could promote participation in professional development programs for graduate students that emphasize mentoring skills.

GOAL 3

Incentivize and Reinforce Individual Excellence
in Advising and Mentoring

Objective 3.1
Include consideration of advising and mentoring plans in the hiring of faculty.

Strategy 3.1.1
Encourage graduate advising and mentoring statements in applications for faculty positions.

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 3.1.1

1. ***Candidates could be requested to provide a mentoring philosophy plan.***

   - Candidates who lack mentoring experience could comment on their mentoring philosophy plan.

Ownership

   - [MIT's Center for Excellence in Graduate Advising and Mentoring](#) in collaboration with the [Institute Committee on Graduate Advising and Mentoring](#), [FPC](#), and [CGP](#) could develop recommendations as to the type of information a candidate might be requested to provide and whether the mentoring plan would be in addition to or combined with a teaching statement and DEI statement.
   - Implementation details may be determined by each School, the College and/or DLC.

2. ***Candidates could be requested to provide a list of letter writers (references) who can attest to their past mentoring experiences and/or potential for mentoring excellence.***

   - Letter writers may include undergraduate students, peers or professionals outside of the applicant's area of research.

Strategy 3.1.2
Provide best-practices to search committees for evaluating the graduate advising and mentoring potential of faculty candidates.

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 3.1.2

Ownership

- [MIT's Center for Excellence in Graduate Advising and Mentoring](#) in collaboration with the [Institute Committee on Graduate Advising and Mentoring](#), [FPC](#) and [CGP](#) could develop a list of best-practices.
- Implementation details may be determined by each School, College and DLC.

Strategy 3.1.3

Discuss graduate advising and mentoring with faculty candidates during their interviews.

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 3.1.3

Ownership

- A list of sample questions could be developed by [MIT's Center for Excellence in Graduate Advising and Mentoring](#) in collaboration with the [Institute Committee on Graduate Advising and Mentoring](#).
- List of questions may be provided to those who participate in the interview process.
- At least one member of the Search Committee could be delegated to inquire about mentorship.
- Candidates could meet with graduate students and Postdocs in the Department as part of the interview process. Feedback provided by graduate students and Postdocs on the candidate's views and potential for excellence in mentorship could be considered as part of the candidate's evaluation.

Objective 3.2

Use structured feedback systems both to evaluate the mentorship competencies of faculty and thesis supervisors and foster continuous improvement.

Strategy 3.2.1

Implement two-way feedback mechanisms for the purpose of continuous improvement.

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 3.2.1

Ownership
- DLCs could implement annual two-way feedback forms of all graduate students.
- [MIT's Center for Excellence in Graduate Advising and Mentoring](#) could provide sample documents.

Strategy 3.2.2

Establish annual assessments to evaluate the advising and mentoring experiences of all graduate students.

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 3.2.2

- See Strategy 1.4.1.
- In years that the survey described in Strategy 1.4.1 is not conducted (for example, if the survey is part of the Quality of Life Survey which does not occur on an annual basis), graduate students could have the opportunity to provide responses to the same questions to ensure annual feedback.
- Survey results pertaining to specific faculty and thesis supervisors could be made available and reviewed by DLC Heads and not shared publicly.
- DLCs could have all-faculty meetings which speak to trends prevalent in the DLC and strategize ways to improve.

Strategy 3.2.3

Conduct exit surveys of graduate students.

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 3.2.3

- Assessment could focus on student experiences within the DLC, their advisor/mentor, their research group (if relevant), their peers within the DLC and any experiences that led to the student switching groups or leaving the program.
- Survey results pertaining to specific faculty and thesis supervisors could be reviewed by the DLC Head and not shared publicly. Recommended uses of these survey results are described in Strategy 3.2.4.
- DLCs could have all-faculty meetings which speak to trends prevalent in the DLC and strategize ways to improve.

Ownership

- [MIT's Center for Excellence in Graduate Advising and Mentoring](#) and [IR](#) could develop a general survey framework.
- DLCs could work with academic administrators, graduate officers, student leadership, faculty and thesis supervisors to customize.

Strategy 3.2.4

Include graduate student feedback in annual merit performance review and promotion and tenure processes.

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 3.2.4

1. *For merit performance reviews:*

   ● As part of the annual merit performance review process, DLC Heads could incorporate the feedback into the determination of merit increase and communicate with each faculty member and thesis supervisor the results from Strategy 1.4.1, Strategy 3.2.2 and Strategy 3.2.3 to enable them to understand the progress they have made from the previous year. When performance is weak or of concern, direct meetings to determine improvement plans or approach could take place with the DLC Head.
   ● In cases where faculty are in a leadership position (for example, DLC Head), their supervisors (Dean) would incorporate the survey results and progress into the performance review of the DLC leader.
   ● The frequency of the meetings may be increased based on performance, i.e., more frequent meetings for faculty who receive lower reviews. Unsatisfactory reviews should be approached with a constructive mindset. If little-to-no progress has been made since the last review, then educational programming, coaching or peer learning opportunities may be recommended. Long term persistent issues should be addressed with greater concern and appropriate actions.

2. *For promotion and tenure processes:*

   It is critical that graduate students be able to provide candid, constructive feedback on the advising and mentoring of their faculty thesis advisor and with appropriate protections in place. We recommend two general mechanisms for doing so – survey results and letters. These are meant to enhance (not replace) current practices in the Schools and College, such as "mentoring letters," which generally are written by a faculty member or, in some DLCs, by graduate students. Moreover, the combination of quantitative data and narrative data emulates current practices at MIT for consideration of teaching contributions: A compilation of teaching evaluations and a "teaching letter," generally written by a faculty member in the same DLC as the promotion candidate.

   ● **Surveys**: Feedback from surveys (Strategy 1.4.1, Strategy 3.2.2 and Strategy 3.2.3) should be considered in promotion and tenure. Satisfactory mentorship or significant and sustained improvement in mentorship based on these surveys should be demonstrated in promotion and tenure cases. Note that MIT Policies and Procedures 3.2 (Tenure Process) already indicates that outstanding mentoring and advising must be demonstrated.
   ● **Letters**: One approach would be for a third party to write a summary letter based on multiple individual letters provided by current and/or former graduate students. Another approach would be for a third party to conduct interviews of current and/or former graduate students, to anonymize the feedback received, and to write a summary letter that would be included in the promotion and tenure case. Still another approach would be that confidential letters from

14

current and/or former graduate students are requested and included in promotion and tenure cases.

Objective 3.3

Incentivize and recognize faculty and thesis supervisors for exceptional advising and mentoring.

Strategy 3.3.1

Incentivize faculty and thesis supervisors to be proactive in amplifying their advising and mentoring practices.

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 3.3.1

- Faculty could be highlighted on [MIT's Center for Excellence in Graduate Advising and Mentoring](#) website who:
  - Are the first cohort to participate in programming (Strategy 2.1.1) offered by the Center.
  - Share how they receive feedback from their students about advising and mentoring.
  - Share their perspectives about advising and mentoring.
  - Provide examples of how they have improved their advising and mentoring.
  - Are willing to share templates they have developed such as a mentoring compact and how it has improved their advising and mentoring.

Strategy 3.3.2

Create an Institute-level award that recognizes excellence in mentoring and advising.

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 3.3.2

Option A – Committed to Caring (C2C) award recipients might receive:
- Graduate student support (RA or partial RA, for example), or
- Cash award, or
- Discretionary funds

Option B – Develop a new award modeled after the MacVicar Faculty Fellows program.

Strategy 3.3.3

Highlight demonstrated excellence in advising and mentoring throughout the Institute.

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 3.3.3

- Time could be allocated at Department meetings or related Department-wide events to recognize excellent mentors and implemented practices.

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GOAL 4

Address Negative Advising and Mentoring Experiences

| **Objective 4.1** |
| **Enhance support for graduate students experiencing negative advising and mentoring situations.** |

| **Strategy 4.1.1** |
| Identify a centralized Advising and Mentoring Grievance Response Team. |

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 4.1.1

- This cross-functional team of subject-matter experts could be modeled after the [Bias Response Team].
- As such, this Team could include representatives from [OGE] and/or [IDHR] and/or HR.
- In addition, faculty members (2) experienced with graduate advising and mentoring matters could serve in a consulting capacity. The duration of service in this role for faculty members would be anticipated to be two years.
- Team could be chaired by the Vice Chancellor or designee within the Office of the Vice Chancellor.

General roles:

- Serve as an entry point for graduate students to file a formal advising and mentoring grievance report (Strategy 4.2.1).
- Make DLC Heads aware of response options.
- Write an annual aggregated report.

| **Strategy 4.1.2** |
| Raise awareness of resources whose aims include fostering reconciliation (when possible and appropriate) between graduate students and faculty or thesis supervisors. |

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 4.1.2

Ownership
- [MIT's Center for Excellence in Graduate Advising and Mentoring] could raise awareness of resources such as those shown in Figure 1 (below) via its website and through professional development workshops and other programming offered.
- The [Institute Committee on Graduate Advising and Mentoring], the Schools, the College and DLCs could raise awareness of resources such as those shown in Figure 1 (below) through various means, including during DLC meetings.

Institute-Wide Resources

Advising and Mentoring Grievance Response Team
(NEW)
Provide guidance and recommendations to graduate students who file an advising and mentoring grievance.

MIT Center for Excellence in Graduate Advising and Mentoring
(NEW)
Provide tools, best-practices and recommended resources for graduate students, faculty and thesis supervisors to foster productive mentoring and advising relationships.

GradSupport
Provide advice and counsel to graduate students on a variety of issues including faculty/student relationships, changing advisors, conflict negotiation, funding, academic progress, interpersonal concerns, and a student's rights and responsibilities.

Ombuds Office
Help people express concerns, resolve disputes, manage conflicts, and learn more productive ways of communicating.

iREFS
Graduate students who provide peer support with the mission of ensuring wellness, especially in times of uncertainty, stress and conflict.

DLC Resources

Graduate Administrator
Provide a broad array of services and resources for graduate students including advising and counseling.

Graduate Officer
Advocate for graduate students, provide guidance, manage conflicts, enforce departmental policies, develop strategic programming and curricula, and approve final degree lists.

dREFS
Graduate students within a DLC who provide peer support with the mission of ensuring wellness, especially in times of uncertainty, stress and conflict.

Figure 1. Examples of Institute- and DLC-level resources for support.

Strategy 4.1.3

Raise awareness of the options available to graduate students for formal and informal reporting of advising and mentoring grievances.

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 4.1.3

- Develop and disseminate an interactive visual guide that describes options for reporting negative advising and mentoring grievances.
  - See Strategy 4.2.1 for reporting options.

- Guide to include reference to the [Possible Outcomes and Sanctions](#) following a formal complaint process—or, when appropriate, voluntarily through informal/adaptable dispute resolution.
- Guide to include reference to [MIT's non-retaliation policies.](#)

Ownership

- [MIT's Center for Excellence in Graduate Advising and Mentoring](#) could lead the effort.
- [MIT's Center for Excellence in Graduate Advising and Mentoring](#), [OGE](#), and the Schools, the College and DLCs could highlight entry points in associated websites, during orientation proceedings and related professional development programming.
- Guide could be shared with various constituencies and support resources such as REFS, GradSupport, Department leaders, Graduate Administrators and Graduate Officers.
- Guide could be disseminated using email, magnet, websites, and adding to existing resource lists.

Strategy 4.1.4

Increase awareness of [Potential Outcomes and Sanctions](#) and [MIT's non-retaliation policies](#).

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 4.1.4

- DLC leadership could raise awareness of [MIT's non-retaliation policies](#) and [Potential Outcomes and Sanctions](#) on DLC websites.
- As indicated in Strategy 4.1.3, the interactive guide could include reference to the [Possible Outcomes and Sanctions](#) and [MIT's non-retaliation policies.](#)

Strategy 4.1.5

Amplify awareness of the [Guaranteed Transitional Support Program](#) for graduate students who wish to change research advisors or groups.

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 4.1.5

Ownership

- [MIT's Center for Excellence in Graduate Advising and Mentoring](#), [OGE](#), and the Schools, the College and DLCs could highlight the [Guaranteed Transitional Support Program](#) on associated websites, during orientation proceedings and related professional development programming.

Strategy 4.1.6

Provide DLC Heads with information and resources for addressing advising and mentoring grievances.

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 4.1.6

Ownership

- DLC Heads could receive training and guidance from the Advising and Mentoring Grievance Response Team to understand what response actions are appropriate, legal and ethical in a given situation.

Objective 4.2

Enhance existing reporting processes, intervention mechanisms, corrective measures, and protections.

Strategy 4.2.1

Establish options for informal and formal reporting of an advising and mentoring grievance.

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 4.2.1

For informal reporting:

- Grievances that arise from some professional interactions, such as misunderstandings, may be resolved through one-on-one discussions between the graduate student and the faculty member or thesis supervisor. Resources such as those described in Strategy 4.1.2 (for example, the Ombuds Office) can help support the resolution process in these types of situations. If the grievance is not resolved in this fashion, the graduate student may choose to work towards a resolution by informal reporting of the grievance to the DLC Head.

For formal reporting (see Figure 2 for a summary):

Depending on the nature of the grievance, the student may choose to file a formal grievance report:

Option A:
- The graduate student can report the grievance anonymously to the EthicsPoint Hotline. See the FAQs for details.

Option B:
- The graduate student can report the grievance to the Advising and Mentoring Grievance Response Team.

The process for option B could be the following:

- The graduate student would prepare a clear written account of the grievance that includes the behavior or interaction in question, the frequency of the behavior, and the impact of such behavior. This written account would be provided on a web intake form.
- The web intake form would be routed to the Advising and Mentoring Grievance Response Team.
- The graduate student would indicate whether or not the written account of the grievance could be shared directly with the faculty member or thesis supervisor. The student would be informed on the web intake form that there are limitations on how a grievance may be addressed if the student does not allow their identity or identifying allegations to be disclosed to the faculty member or thesis supervisor.
- The Team would read the grievance and discuss it with the graduate student.
- Depending on the type of grievance being alleged, the Team may be mandated to forward the report to IDHR. IDHR provides a list of Potential Outcomes and Sanctions for Allegations Against Faculty that may be imposed at the conclusion of a formal investigation process if a faculty member is found to have violated an MIT conduct policy.

Otherwise:

- Level 1: In certain situations, the Team may recommend tools or other resources to help the graduate student resolve the grievance via productive discussions between the student and the faculty member or thesis supervisor. Such resources may include the Ombuds Office. If the student wishes to explore this path, the Team would follow-up with the student after an agreed upon time-frame. If the student reaches a resolution, a brief description of the course of action taken would be provided on the original intake form. Both the Team and the graduate student would then sign off on the intake form. A copy of the signed form would be provided to the DLC Head. Alternatively, a copy of the signed form would be provided to the Dean if the DLC Head is the advisor or mentor to the graduate student filing the grievance.

- Level 2: If the student wishes to advance the grievance beyond Level 1 for any reason, the written account of the grievance would be signed by the Team and forwarded to the DLC Head. Alternatively, the Team would forward the written grievance to the School or College Dean if the DLC Head is the advisor or mentor to the graduate student filing the grievance. See Strategy 4.2.2 for next steps.

Strategy 4.2.2

Implement resolution practices and enforce retaliation policies related to advising and mentoring grievances.

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 4.2.2

For grievances that proceed to Level 2 (Strategy 4.2.1):

- The DLC Head (or Dean*) may choose to consult with the [Advising and Mentoring Grievance Response Team](#) to determine the best course of action to take and are encouraged to consult with Human Resources to confirm that this course of action is consistent with MIT policy. Per MIT policy, individuals may not be disciplined for conduct policy violations unless there is a formal investigation and finding of responsibility.
- The DLC Head (or Dean*) would discuss the grievance with the faculty member or thesis supervisor and the course of action to be taken.
- The DLC Head (or Dean*) would affirm the seriousness of retaliation and raise awareness of MIT's retaliation policies [(P&P 9.7)](#) to the faculty member or thesis supervisor. Retaliation safeguards may be put in place, such as semester or annual meetings with thesis committee chairs and/or second advisors, monitoring recommendation letters, and monthly or semester check-ins to foster professional development.
- The DLC Head would sign off on the web intake form indicating that they have discussed the grievance with the faculty member or thesis supervisor. For confidentiality reasons, specific information pertaining to the outcome cannot be shared.
- The graduate student would receive a copy of the web intake form that is signed by the DLC Head, thus notifying the student that the grievance has been discussed with the faculty member or thesis supervisor.

On an annual basis:
- The [Advising and Mentoring Grievance Response Team](#) would prepare an annual aggregate document summarizing logistical information including the number of grievances reported at the School, College and Institute levels. The summary would preserve the anonymity of faculty members, thesis supervisors and graduate students and not disclose details that would reveal a particular case. The report would be available to the MIT community.
- The Deans and DLC Head would identify and discuss patterns or escalation of problems within the DLC. This discussion would also provide the DLC Head an opportunity for constructive feedback as to how situations were handled and to also establish best-practices that may be applicable School-wide or Institute-wide.

* The School or College Dean would be the responsible party when the DLC Head is the mentor/advisor to the graduate student reporting the grievance.
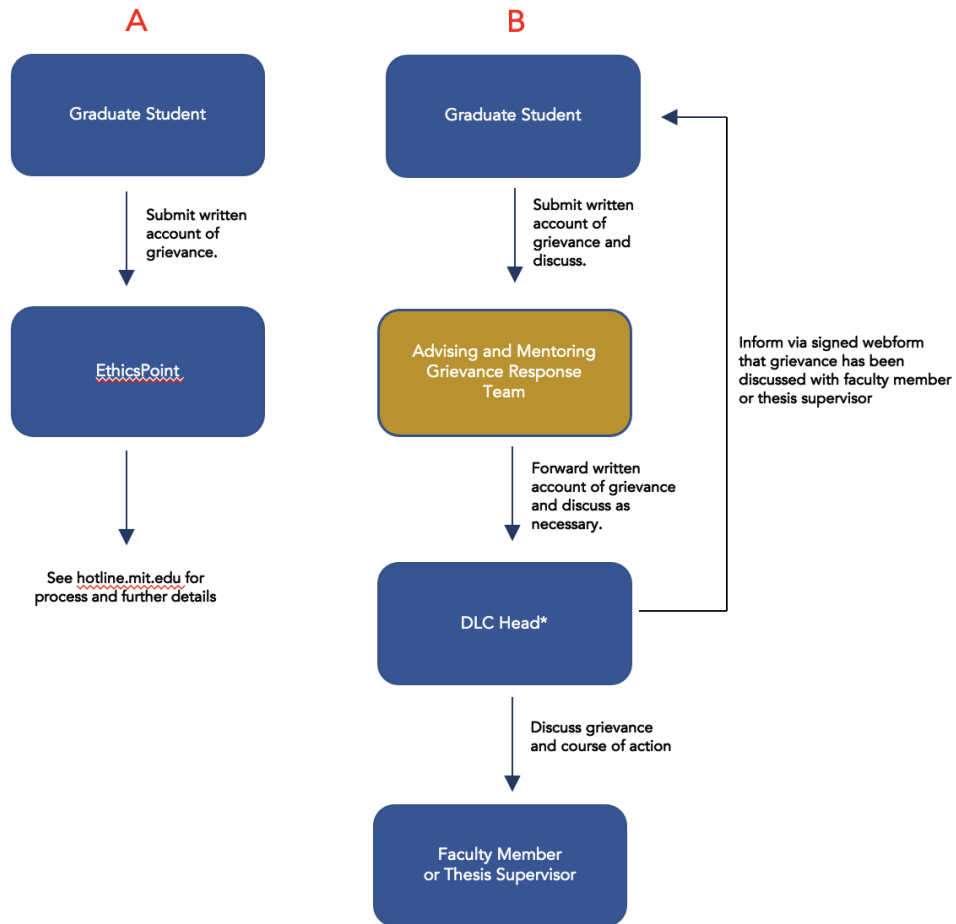
Figure 2. Options for the formal reporting of an advising and mentoring by a graduate student. *The written grievance would be provided to the School or College Dean if the DLC Head is the advisor or mentor to the graduate student filing the grievance.

Strategy 4.2.3

Enhance the EthicsPoint Hotline for graduate students who wish to report an advising and mentoring grievance using this mechanism.

Recommended Tactics for Strategy 4.2.3

- MIT staff members who are knowledgeable in responding to negative experiences in graduate advising and mentoring could be included among the small group of MIT representatives who currently review the reports.

APPENDIX A

Recommended competencies and expectations of both mentors and mentees.

Competency/ Expectation	Mentor	Mentee
DISCUSS AND AGREE ON WHAT MENTOR EXPECTS FROM MENTEE, AND VICE VERSA	The mentor makes expectations explicit and creates a safe space for mentees to make their expectations explicit. The mentor and mentee make a plan for meeting the expectations of both parties.	Mentee communicates expectations explicitly and engages in a constructive dialogue with mentor(s) to align expectations.
ASSESS KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITY	The mentor works with the mentee to understand what the mentee knows and is capable of. The mentor considers what the mentee can do to further develop and achieve success.	The mentee engages in self-reflection to identify areas for professional growth. Mentee can articulate these areas and seek guidance from mentor(s) to find resources to facilitate growth.
COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY	The mentor engages in active listening with the mentee, provides timely and thoughtful constructive feedback, and recognizes that communication styles differ. Mentor attempts to resolve conflicts through direct discussion. Mentor continuously assesses and co-identifies strategies for improving communication.	The mentee communicates effectively across a diversity of styles and dimensions, co-identifying communication styles and approaches that work best for the relationship. Mentee accepts and uses constructive feedback, asking clarifying questions when needed. Mentee attempts to resolve conflicts through direct discussion. Mentee continuously assesses and co-identifies strategies for improving communication.
FOSTER WELL BEING	Mentors take responsibility for achievable workload assignments and maintaining a healthy working environment.	Mentee reflects on essential components of work-life balance and works with mentor to mitigate potential challenges.
ADDRESS EQUITY AND INCLUSION	The mentor reflects on and accounts for the biases and assumptions they may bring to a mentoring relationship and	The mentee reflects on and accounts for the biases and assumptions they may bring to a mentoring relationship

	acknowledges and accounts for how their background might differ from the background of their mentees. Mentor fosters an inclusive working environment where all trainees feel welcomed and actively manages interpersonal situations which may lead to hostile working environments.	and acknowledges and accounts for how their background might differ from the background of their mentors. Mentee contributes to fostering a welcoming environment by valuing and respecting the voices and efforts of other members of the group.
FOSTER/ACHIEVE INDEPENDENCE	The mentor works to motivate the mentee, build their confidence, stimulate their creativity, acknowledge their contributions, and navigate their path toward independence.	The mentee can define and identify sources of self-efficacy (Bandura, A. (1997). Self-efficacy: The exercise of control. W H Freeman/Times Books/ Henry Holt & Co.). Mentee can articulate their role in building their own research self-efficacy and assess the influence of others on their research self-efficacy.
PROMOTE/SEEK PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	The mentor helps the mentee to set career goals, develop and refine plans related to career goals, develop a professional network, and access resources that will be helpful in their professional development. The mentor is supportive of their student's involvement in extra-curricular activities related to their professional and intellectual development. The mentor also recognizes the impact they have as a professional role model. Mentor recognizes and engages in open dialogue on balancing the competing demands, needs, and interests of mentors and mentees.	Mentees identify the roles mentors play in their overall professional development and work with the mentor to develop and revise the individual development plan. The mentee seeks out extra-curricular activities that support their intellectual and professional development. Mentee recognizes and engages in open dialogue on balancing the competing demands, needs, and interests of mentors and mentees.

Appendix B

Essential Infrastructure

Excellence in advising and mentoring requires that resources and support be available to all faculty, thesis supervisors and graduate students across MIT. The Committee therefore proposes that MIT expand its current infrastructure to include the following:

- Center for Excellence in Graduate Advising and Mentoring
- Institute Committee on Graduate Advising and Mentoring
- Advising and Grievance Response Team

1. *MIT's Center for Excellence in Graduate Advising and Mentoring*

As illustrated in Figure 3 left, the **primary role** of the **Center** would be to offer an array of **programming** including professional development workshops, as well as to provide **tools and other resources to graduate students, faculty and thesis supervisors** to support excellence in advising and mentoring. Such offerings are detailed in Goal 2. The Center would also support and provide expertise to stakeholders in the implementation of select Strategies defined within Goal 1, Goal 3 and Goal 4.

As one of the primary functions of the Center is to develop and provide professional development resources for faculty and thesis supervisors, the Center would reside within the Office of the Provost and would be led by full-time, PhD-level personnel, as is the case in comparable Centers at other academic institutions.

2. *Institute Committee on Graduate Advising and Mentoring*

As illustrated in Figure 3 right, the **primary role** of the **Institute Committee on Graduate Advising and Mentoring** would be to serve as an **advisory body to MIT's Center for Excellence in Graduate Advising and Mentoring**. It would also stay apprised on trends in advising and mentoring across MIT, raise awareness of resources and best practices in advising and mentoring, as well as work closely with stakeholders on select Strategies described throughout the Plan.

The Committee would be a Standing Institute Committee that reports to the Chancellor. That the Center reports to the Provost and is advised by a Committee that reports to the Chancellor exemplifies the shared responsibility of faculty and graduate students in the professional relationship. The Committee would have a rotating chair with a membership described below.

Committee Membership

Rotating Committee Chair + Faculty Members (5 faculty total) - Chair of CGP or designee + Chair of FPC (Chair of the Faculty) or designee + two (2) faculty members who have demonstrated a commitment to mentoring and advising.

Graduate Students (5 total) - GSC President + four appointed graduate students

Staff (5 total) - Senior Associate Dean of OGE or their designee + Director of TLL or their designee + three Graduate Administrators
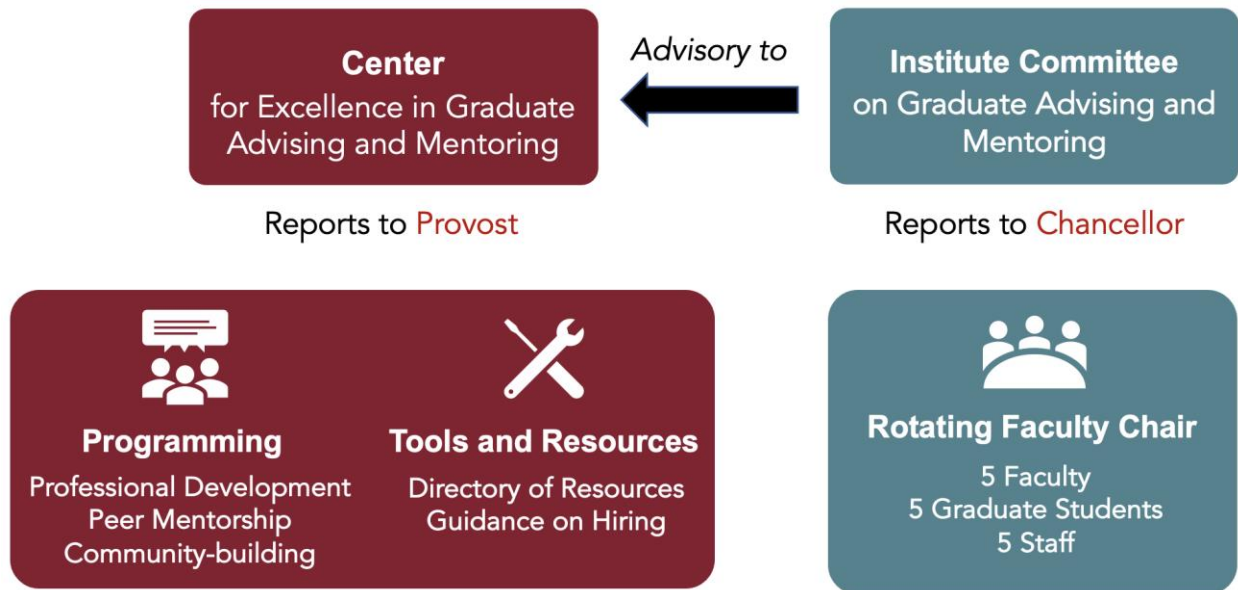

Figure 3. Summary of MIT's Center for Excellence in Graduate Advising and Mentoring and the Institute Committee on Graduate Advising and Mentoring.

3. ***Advising and Mentoring Grievance Response Team***

The **primary role** of the **Advising and Mentoring Grievance Response Team** would be to serve as an entry point for graduate students to report a grievance (Strategy 4.2.1). The Team would make DLC Heads aware of potential response options upon a graduate student filing a grievance, and would prepare an annual aggregated report that is shared with the MIT community.

This Team would be a centralized resource chaired by the Vice Chancellor or designee within the Office of the Vice Chancellor. It would be composed of representatives from OGE and/or IDHR and/or HR. Two faculty members experienced with graduate advising and mentoring matters would serve in a consulting capacity. The duration of service in this role for faculty members would be anticipated to be two years.