

Dear Senior House residents:

We write to share with you some troubling data about the Senior House community, to outline some important decisions we have made as a result, and to describe the path forward from here.

First, the [data](#): For the MIT Classes of 2008 to 2015, 83.7% of students graduated within four years, and 7.7% have yet to graduate. For residents of Senior House in those same class years, just 59.7% graduated within four years, and 21.1% have yet to graduate.

We see a vital need to act based on these data alone. However, the seriousness of the situation is further underscored by our significant concerns about issues of illegal drug use in Senior House.

As MIT's senior leaders, we take seriously our responsibility to you. Our job is to provide every MIT student an excellent education and a healthy residential experience. To be clear, many students in Senior House are doing well, but we know that many are not.

We have thought hard about the best immediate course of action and concluded that we must take the following steps:

1. In September, Senior House will re-open with an enhanced house team, additional live-in staff, and new student support services.
- 2.
3. Chancellor Barnhart will appoint and chair a "turnaround team" of faculty, Senior House students, and staff who will work closely with you to understand the underlying issues, find and implement solutions, and determine appropriate ways to measure Senior House's progress toward becoming a healthier community.
- 4.
5. No first-year students will be placed in Senior House in the 2016-2017 Academic Year.

As we considered the right way forward, we consulted with others who know MIT very well: the Chair of the Faculty Krishna Rajagopal, the five School Deans, your Head of House Jay Scheib, and all the other Heads of House. We also spoke with a diverse set of faculty members who are deeply versed in MIT culture and values, including a number who attended MIT as undergraduates, some as residents of Senior House. Given the seriousness of the situation, we all agree on the immediate actions outlined above.

With this letter, we now begin a conversation with you. In the context of the data and the steps we are taking, we want to work together with you to create in Senior House a healthy, supportive learning and living environment that fosters the best aspects of Senior House culture. For example, more than three quarters of Senior House residents consistently say that they find artistic expression and creative work very important or essential. Senior House residents are

also known for being very supportive of each other. We want to focus our work with you on ways to enhance these and other positive aspects of the Senior House community.

We know you will likely have many questions, and we want to address that need right away. For those undergraduate residents of Senior House who are on or near campus and would like to meet with Chancellor Barnhart after 3PM this afternoon, please reply to this email now with the best way to contact you. Based on this afternoon's conversations, she and Professor Scheib will propose plans for the most effective way, over the coming days and weeks, to continue the conversation directly with all of you who will be living in the house this fall. We also invite all of you to send your questions to chancellor-reply@mit.edu, and we will provide responses next week.

If you decide, after considering the steps we have described, that you would prefer not to return to Senior House, MIT Housing will help you with relocating to a different residence hall for the 2016-2017 Academic Year. You may indicate your decision to move by writing movemyhousing@mit.edu or calling 617-253-2811 during business hours. The deadline for students who wish to cancel their housing without penalty will be extended past June 15, 2016.

At MIT, it is our practice to address difficult challenges by examining the data, engaging in honest self-review, and collaborating until we solve the problem. We ask respectfully that you join with us in this process now, to solve some serious problems and improve the well-being of the Senior House community.

Sincerely,

L. Rafael Reif
President

Cynthia Barnhart
Chancellor

Martin A. Schmidt
Provost

Maria T. Zuber
Vice President for Research