

# Visiting Committee and the Departmental Strategic Plan

Peter Fisher

Feb. 13, 2014

# Congratulations and Thanks

- ▶ Hong Liu - promotion to Full Professor
- ▶ Scott Hughes - promotion to Full Professor
- ▶ Markus Klute - promotion to Associate Professor

Thanks to Jim and Sylvia Earle for establishing a graduate fellowship in the name of George Clark

and congratulations to George!

## Visiting Committee

“Visiting Committees were established at MIT in 1875, and their recommendations have had a strong influence on the course of education and research at the Institute for over 120 years. The committees operate as advisory groups to the Corporation and the administration, offering appraisal, advice, and insight on each academic program and on other major activities at the Institute, ”

“The visiting committee system at MIT is among the strongest and most active at a major research university and provides valuable counsel on current activities and future directions. Each of the 31 visiting committees normally convenes every two years for a one-and-one-half day session.”

<http://web.mit.edu/corporation/visiting.html>

# Physics Department Visiting Committee

The next visiting committee will meet October 6-7, 2014

Iars Bildsten\*\*

John K. Castle

Susan N. Coppersmith\*

Persis S. Drell\*\*

George J. Elbaum\*

Thomas A.J. Frank\*\*

Wendy Freedman\*\*

Sylvester J. Gates, Jr.

Shirley Ann Jackson

L. Robert Johnson

Robert W. Lourie\*

Richard B. Millard

Cherry A. Murray\*

David R. Nelson\*\*

A. Neil Pappalardo

Antonia D. Schuman

A.J. Stewart Smith\*\*

Juan C. Torres\*

Viktor F. Vekselberg

Names without asterisks indicate nominees from the Corporation

\*=Nominees from the Association of Alumni and Alumnae of MIT

\*\*=Nominees from the President

# Visiting Committee Chair

Chair: Phillip “Terry” Ragon, SB 1971

Founder of InterSystems, [www.intersystems.com](http://www.intersystems.com), software for health care, finance

Phillip T. and Susan M. Ragon Institute at the Massachusetts General Hospital, \$100 M over 10 years to fight AIDS.



I have met with Terry twice on campus. He is interested and engaged in the process. I plan to have him meet with other Physics faculty in the coming months. There is no agenda to this aside from getting to know him.

# Function of the Visiting Committee

The function of the Visiting Committee is to communicate to Corporation what the department needs in order to fulfill our aspirations.

Our needs may be:

- ▶ Resources
- ▶ Positions, especially senior
- ▶ Policy changes

We need to make the case for what we ask for, as well as responding to the comments and recommendations of the previous Visiting Committee report.

# Inputs to the Visiting Committee

We have two primary inputs to the Visiting Committee:

1. A Strategic Plan, the topic of today's talk
2. Presentations and personal interactions during Oct. 6-7 with the Committee as a whole and the individual members

We will focus on the Visiting Committee agenda later. Today, we will begin discussing the Strategic Plan.

# Strategic Plan: Structure

The Strategic Plan has three main parts that the department assembles together:

1. Description of departmental things (organization, education, services, some finances, etc.) as well as the things we need to flourish. Includes an executive summary of 2-3 pages.
2. Description of each division's research field, the position of the division in that field and where the division sees itself going. Includes an executive summary of 2 pages for each division. Should include hiring plans and needed resources, if necessary.
3. Short biographies for each faculty member.

The document as a whole needs to hang together.



# Strategic Plan - Purposes

The Strategic Plan should be viewed as having two purposes:

1. A report to the visiting committee of where we are now, where we want to go and what we need to get there.
  2. A stimulus for use to engage in discussion of where we are, where we want to go and what we need to get there.
- ▶ The Strategic Plan **is not** a proposal or request for what we want from the Institute.
  - ▶ The process of producing the Strategic Plan is as important as the final plan. Self-examination and making choices should be clear in the narratives.
  - ▶ There is no page limit, but I suggest approximately ten pages for an average size division. We may need to edit to balance the lengths of different sections.

# Timeline for writing the Strategic Plan

Three ideas guide the timeline:

- ▶ The Plan must go to the printers on Aug. 10
- ▶ I do not want to burden all of us or myself with having to write the Plan over the summer.
- ▶ The Plan will be circulated to the faculty for comment prior to being finalized.

Feb. 13	Now
Apr. 2	First drafts from divisions due to me
Apr. 9	Comments back top divisions
May 9	Final drafts due back to me
May 16	Final draft complete - send out for comment to faculty
June 3	Comments due back to me
June 14	Final draft
June, July	Assembly of ancillary material
Aug. 10	Send to printer

## Next steps

For the Oct. 27, 2014 faculty lunch, I will moderate a first discussion on the top level direction, starting with the 2012 Strategic Plan and Visiting Committee report.

I will schedule one or two additional meetings later in the Spring.

I will post recent strategic plans, visiting committee reports and other documents on

[http://fisherp.scripts.mit.edu/wordpress/?page\\_id=384](http://fisherp.scripts.mit.edu/wordpress/?page_id=384).

I will send URL and password later today.