



MIT UNDERGRADUATE ASSOCIATION

52 UA Council 24 Agenda

April 27th, 2021, 8-9 PM ET, Zoom

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|----------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Roll Call | 8:00 - 8:05 |
| 2. Minutes Approval | 8:05 - 8:10 |
| 3. Divest | 8:10-8:45 |
| 4. Nominations Committee | 8:45-8:50 |
| 5. MBTA Passes & Policy Platform | 8:50-8:55 |
| 6. Value Statement Forum | 8:55-9:00 |



MIT UNDERGRADUATE ASSOCIATION

52 UA Council Session 24 Meeting Minutes

April 27th, 2021, 8-9 PM ET, Zoom

Living Group	Representative	Present?
Baker	Emily Wang	Y
Burton-Conner	Sarah Aaronson	N
East Campus	Brendan Vaughan	Y
MacGregor	Shruti Ravikumar	Y
Maseeh	Octavio Vega	Y
McCormick	Adina Golden	Y
New House	Christian Camacho	N
New Vassar	Tina Lu	Y
Next House	Meghana Vemulapalli	Y
Random Hall	Margaret (Ret) Wang	Y
Simmons	Shaida Nishat	Y
Interfraternity Council	Jaya Kambhampaty	Y
Interfraternity Council	Ivan Marshall	Y
Interfraternity Council	Nick Mannhardt	N
Interfraternity Council	Max von Franque	N
Living Group Council	Jason Ye	N
Off Campus	Leif Clark	Y
Panhellenic Association	Ashleigh Teygong	Y
Panhellenic Association	Catherine Washburn	Y
Panhellenic Association	Maria Ascanio	N

8:00 Meeting begins

8:05 Minutes approval

Living Group	Representative	Vote?
Baker	Emily Wang	Y
Burton-Conner	Sarah Aaronson	N
East Campus	Brendan Vaughan	Y
MacGregor	Shruti Ravikumar	Y
Maseeh	Octavio Vega	Y
McCormick	Adina Golden	Y
New House	Christian Camacho	N
New Vassar	Tina Lu	Y
Next House	Meghana Vemulapalli	Y
Random Hall	Margaret (Ret) Wang	Y
Simmons	Shaida Nishat	Y
Interfraternity Council	Jaya Kambhampaty	Y
Interfraternity Council	Ivan Marshall	Y
Interfraternity Council	Nick Mannhardt	N
Interfraternity Council	Max von Franque	N
Living Group Council	Jason Ye	N
Off Campus	Leif Clark	Y
Panhellenic Association	Ashleigh Teygong	Y
Panhellenic Association	Catherine Washburn	Y
Panhellenic Association	Maria Ascanio	N

Minutes approved.

8:05 Divest

- Special guest: Professor David Hsu
 - Proponent of divestment

- Associate professor in DUSP, part of MIT Energy initiative and many other climate related groups on campus
 - Research and teaching focused on democratic institutions in energy system
 - Presentation on UA endorsement of divest
 - Five points
 - Leadership inside MIT
 - Admin working on new climate action plan
 - Is this plan, a “leading” plan
 - Has engagement with fossil fuel companies had positive impact on climate change?
 - Importance of our generation
 - Huge role to play in avoiding a climate catastrophe
 - Older generations unlikely to push for the changes needed to mitigate climate change
 -
 - Non -financial implications of money
 - Influence of money
 - Drug trialss
 - Soft power in politics
 - Journalism
 - Global health
 - Conflict of interests in working with fossil fuel and promoting sustainability
 - Previous MIT scandals
 - Epstein
 - Saudi Arabia
 - Koch brothers, fossil fuel companies, ...
 - Financial risk
 - Jeremy Grantham of GMO investment believes that there is no downside to divesting in fossil fuels because of financial underperformance
 - Argues that there is only downside to fossil fuel investment if we are in a ‘carbon bubble’
 - Leadership outside of MIT
 - Peer institution
 - Stanford: divested from coal 7 years ago and -80% carbon goal by 2021
 - Umass Amherst, UMichigan, and others with -100% carbon goals and ambitious divestment goals in the next few years
 - Harvard:-100% by 2026, unsure about divestment
 - MIT: far far behind, -32% carbon goal and uncertainty in divestment
 - Who is going to lead on climate at MIT?
 - Could be the students in the UA.
- Q&A
 - Has shareholder engagement ever worked with fossil fuel companies?
 - Huge market cap of these companies so shareholders like MIT with very little sway on company direction
 - Size and scale as well as trajectory of companies themselves indicate very little probability in engagement actually working
 - These companies will likely still want to work with MIT because we provide unparalleled innovation/research for them
 - Why is research and innovation not enough?

- Community, values, and culture as important as research contributions to climate advocacy
 - Hypocritical to fund research with dollars from these fossil fuel companies
 - How can we divest without losing policy power?
 - Actually, we help provide legitimacy to these fossil fuel companies which we retain (and may even strengthen) by divesting from them
- Discussions
 - Some councilors able to gauge constituents, polls showing overwhelming support
 - But, want to make sure that council stays informed and involved in this issue after the resolution vote
 - Use this resolution to lobby administrators on this topic, UA lends added credibility that the undergraduate body is in support of divestment
- Review of [resolution](#) document

Motion to vote to approve MIT divest consensus decision by Tina Lu. Meghana seconds.

Living Group	Representative	Vote?
Baker	Emily Wang	Y
Burton-Conner	Sarah Aaronson	Y
East Campus	Brendan Vaughan	Y
MacGregor	Shruti Ravikumar	Y
Maseeh	Octavio Vega	Y
McCormick	Adina Golden	Y
New House	Christian Camacho	-
New Vassar	Tina Lu	Y
Next House	Meghana Vemulapalli	Y
Random Hall	Margaret (Ret) Wang	Y
Simmons	Shaida Nishat	Y
Interfraternity Council	Jaya Kambhampaty	Y
Interfraternity Council	Ivan Marshall	Y
Interfraternity Council	Nick Mannhardt	-
Interfraternity Council	Max von Franque	-
Living Group Council	Jason Ye	-
Off Campus	Leif Clark	Y
Panhellenic Association	Ashleigh Teygong	Y

Panhellenic Association	Catherine Washburn	Y
Panhellenic Association	Maria Ascanio	-

15 yes votes. Resolution passed.

8:46 PM Institute Committees

- Institute Committees application launched yesterday in the UA Byte
- Official email from chancellor barnhardt coming tomorrow
- Institute committees are a huge opportunity to make change at the institute, on issues like climate change (re: divest resolution, etc.) and grading policy
- Learn more <http://ua.mit.edu/institutecomms>
- Reach out personally to constituents to apply
- Timeline
 - Application due may 6th
 - Nominations committee will read applications and interview people until deliberations
 - Council reviews and votes on nominations on May 18th
- If you as a councilor want to serve on the nominations committee, self nominate after this meeting

8:55 PM MBTA passes & Policy Platform

- Councilors need more time to gauge constituents, UA will resend materials

8:57 PM Value committee

- Forum tomorrow about making a values statement for MIT
 - MIT Values Statement Committee is holding a forum this Wednesday 6-7 PM
 - MIT has never had a values statement and our committee has been tasked with writing the values statement, so this is a super important period of time that will go down in history forever because the committee's work and writing will become MIT's values statement!
- The committee's charge is to not only craft the values statement but also compile a report pointing to places where MIT's policies, eg its outside engagements, hiring practices, grading policies, or anything else are not consistent with its values
- <https://valuescommittee.mit.edu/> - Share feedback here if you can't make the meeting

9:05 PM Motion to Adjourn.

Jaya motions. Ashleigh seconds.