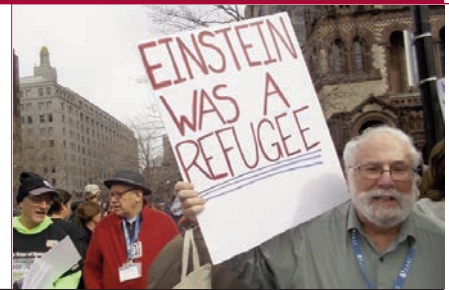


MIT Faculty Newsletter

<http://web.mit.edu/fnl>

in this issue we offer several views on the new administration in Washington (below, pages 3-7); a brief history of MIT's Institutional Research (below, pages 12-15); a piece on the one-year anniversary of MITili (page 8); and an introduction to MyLife Services (page 10).



At the Boston Rally for Science

Redevelopment of Volpe Site Offers MIT Rare Opportunity

Frederick P. Salvucci

THE ANNOUNCEMENT THAT MIT has been designated to redevelop the John A. Volpe National Transportation Systems Center site is very good news. That is, if the MIT administration realizes that the Institute has been given the rarest of gifts in life – a second chance to correct a major mistake – and revises the plans for the Kendall Square area in a manner that prioritizes the academic mission of MIT over the narrow investment priorities of the MIT Investment Management Company (MITIMCo). With the availability of the huge and valuable Volpe site, there should be plenty of room to prioritize the land on the MIT West side of Kendall Square for academic uses, especially graduate student housing.

Let's review the largest flaws in the current MIT Kendall plan:

continued on page 7

30 Years of Institutional Research at MIT

Kristen Bulger

THIS PAST OCTOBER, the Institutional Research group celebrated 30 years of research, data collection, analysis, and service to the MIT community. What was originally a group conceived as a branch within the Planning Office to provide accurate data and support to the academic budget process and the physical planning activities at MIT, Institutional Research (IR) is now a foundational and instrumental asset for staff, faculty, and students alike, with a reach far exceeding its initial purposes.

A core activity of Institutional Research is the compilation of MIT data commonly characterized as people, money, and space. Institutional Research works with the data custodians to identify sources and definitions of data. Charts based on this historical dataset are often seen in the M.I.T. Numbers section of the

continued on page 12

Editorial Faculty Voices from the Resistance

THE MULTIPLE EDITORIAL VOICES in this issue of the *Faculty Newsletter* reflect some of the heightened concerns being expressed by faculty members responding to the new administration in Washington. Many of our colleagues perceive serious threats to strongly held democratic values, programs, and policies. Four pieces follow: Voices from the rally in Copley Square; Call from more than 40 faculty, "Do We Act Now?"; Statement by the HASTS steering committee; and "Destabilization from Modernizing Nuclear Weapons Capabilities?"

"I first learned about the planned Copley Square rally of January 29 the previous afternoon, as the immediate enforcement and chaos of the executive order was becoming clear. I had already been planning on going. The morning of January 29

continued on page 3

contents

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Vol. XXIX No. 3 January/February 2017

	01	Redevelopment of Volpe Site Offers MIT Rare Opportunity Frederick P. Salvucci
	01	30 Years of Institutional Research at MIT Kristen Bulger
Editorial	01	Faculty Voices from the Resistance
Editorial	03	Do We Act Now?
Editorial	05	Statement by the Steering Committee of HASTS
Editorial	06	Destabilization From Modernizing Nuclear Weapons Capabilities?
	08	MIT Integrated Learning Initiative Celebrates One-Year Anniversary John Gabrieli, Parag Pathak
	10	MyLife Services Offers Unique Support to Institute Personnel Sandy Alexandre
M.I.T. Numbers	13	Profile of MIT Faculty (AY 2017)
M.I.T. Numbers	14	MIT Faculty By Gender (AY 2017)
M.I.T. Numbers	15	MIT Faculty By Age Distribution (AY 2017)
Numbers	16	Status of World Nuclear Forces

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Faculty Voices from the Resistance

continued from page 1

I learned of the noontime MIT rally in Lobby 7 via Krishna Rajagopal's email to the entire faculty of the Institute. I came for that rally and walked with everyone to Copley Square. This was among the most moving rallies I have attended in recent memory. I was close enough to hear the moving and inspiring speeches given by several of our political leaders, including Senators Elizabeth Warren and Ed Markey, Boston Mayor Marty Walsh, and MIT alum/Cambridge City Councilor Nadeem Mazen. The event gave me inspiration and hope for the work ahead of us of defending our values in the weeks, months, and years to come."

Roger Levy

Associate Professor
Department of Brain and Cognitive Sciences

"I headed towards Copley Square filled with anger at the racist, xenophobic, misogynist, islamophobic, transphobic, ableist, anti-Black, anti-science positions and policies of this administration. I was glad that a protest response was organized so quickly, but to be honest, after the huge turnout for the Women's March the previous weekend, I was secretly skeptical about whether non-Muslim Bostonians

would turn out en masse. As I walked through the Boston Common, though, I noticed more and more people carrying signs, obviously headed to the protest as well. My rage began to shift towards a shared sense of collective strength and power in solidarity, best expressed by one of the day's protest chants: 'Immigrant rights are under attack! You've got my back? (We've got your back!)' Copley was full, and the political speeches from the church steps were nice, but the highlight for me took place elsewhere: on the edge of Copley Square near the fountain, a group of a thousand people led by high-school age immigrant youth sang, chanted, and danced. When the official rally was done, these youth shouted out 'Whose Streets?' and the crowd roared 'Our Streets!' Then, several hundred of us marched into the street, up towards the common, in an unpermitted street protest led by immigrant youth. We ended at the State House, where one after another young people directly affected by different aspects of this administration spoke out. To see young people angry, ready to protest, but also full of love and solidarity for one another across lines of difference, left me feeling like the future is in good hands."

Sasha Costanza-Chock

Mitsui Career Development Associate Professor
Comparative Media Studies/Writing

"I went to the January 29 Copley Square Immigration rally. I was not initially planning to cross the bridge with the group of students who departed from MIT, only to offer my support at their gathering in Building 7 at noon. But I'm glad I did. There are few things as energizing as a crowd coming together for a peaceful public protest and a good cause."

Paloma Dunong

Assistant Professor of Latin American Studies
Global Studies and Languages

"I was alarmed and disturbed by the President's travel ban, so I very much wanted to register my protest against it. Thanks to social media and the emails from the MIT administration I heard about the rally at Copley Square, and joined thousands of others there. It was heartening to see so many people turn out at such short notice, just a week after the Women's March."

Edward Fleming

Associate Professor
Department of Linguistics and Philosophy

Do We Act Now?

FOR MANY MIT FACULTY, staff, and students, the election and inauguration of Donald Trump as the 45th President of the United States is cause for alarm. The words and actions of the President have for us animated a real fear: that this administration may undo the gains that have pressed the United States to become an increasingly just and equitable society for everyone, regardless of race, ethnicity, identity, gender, sexuality, religion, ability, or class. Many of us are afraid that normalizing the actions of this administration will erode

concern for the suffering of others and undermine aspirational American commitments to human rights and dignity for all people. As MIT faculty, we are particularly troubled by this President's blatant disregard for the scientific method and by his administration's attempts to gaslight the American public with the presentation of "alternative facts," a dangerous absurdity that threatens the tenets of empiricism, the rigor of rational argument, and the judgments that might follow from reasoned debate. Democracy and the rule of

law depend upon facts. We cannot cede these.

Protests, petitions, and calls to action here on campus as well as around the world have demonstrated that there is wide worry about the direction in which President Trump seeks to lead the nation. We believe that collective acts of resistance are necessary.

For us as members of the faculty of MIT it is not enough to add our individual voices in protest. We need to harness

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Do We Act Now?

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the power of our identity as faculty of MIT to meet the challenge we face. The first step is clearly to name the situation before us. Many of us believe that Trump is moving toward authoritarianism, and we believe that this represents an attack on democracy. Those of us who have studied the history of fascism believe Trump's administration represents a significant step in this direction.

We have seen in American history the failure of academics to actively oppose and resist the continuing oppression of African Americans – after Reconstruction, in the days of civil rights, and today in the era of Black Lives Matter. We have seen our male colleagues accept the exclusion of women from advancement within the academy and without. We have heard the silence of academics during the McCarthy period, when many intellectuals were targeted in an anti-Communist witch hunt.

We understand that naming what is happening now as the first steps toward

authoritarian government or even fascism does not sit well with many of our colleagues. Many faculty will consider such a characterization to be premature or extreme. But the history of the rise of fascism in Italy, in Germany, in Spain, and in Romania shows us the peril of refusing to recognize fascism in its infancy. It is perhaps better to err on the side of overstatement now, than to try to temper our concerns for too long.

Indeed, as academics we are often more comfortable creating the conditions to individually debate back and forth than collectively to act. This is particularly true given our dedication to having the academy be a place for the free and open exchange of ideas. And as journalist Rachel Shabi wrote in a recent Al Jazeera Op-Ed:

“. . . we are caught somewhere between not wanting to belittle history, nor make inaccurate comparisons – but also not wanting to underplay current realities either. We struggle to find a useful space between normalization and alarmism.”

Trump presents us not with business as usual. We need to prepare for effective responses – every day, short and long term – to any steps taken by the Trump administration that would undermine the democratic processes, or that would slow progress towards a more just and equitable society in America. We must insist on *facts* not propaganda. We must oppose the dissemination of lies. Propaganda is a primary tool of undemocratic regimes. We can best prepare together if we are clear that we are a collective of faculty united in our commitment.

Let us call ourselves Faculty for Democracy and at the same time put forth before the MIT faculty a resolution recognizing the danger of the rise of an authoritarian regime in America and declaring our dedication to collectively fight, as faculty of MIT, and with faculty of other institutions of higher education, to ensure that the root of fascism does not take hold in this country. ■

Editor's Note: For an up-to-date list of signees or to add your name to the list, see: faculty4democracy.org.

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Statement by the Steering Committee of the MIT Doctoral Program in History, Anthropology, and Science, Technology and Society (HASTS) on the 27 January 2017 Executive Order Restricting Immigration to the United States of America

ON JANUARY 27, 2017, President Donald Trump issued an executive order of extraordinary breadth restricting legally recognized refugees and the nationals of seven majority-Muslim countries (including U.S. legal permanent residents) from entry into the United States. As a university community, MIT depends on the open exchange of ideas across borders and has a large number of

students who are foreign nationals. The Steering Committee of the HASTS doctoral program therefore finds our basic research and educational mission imperiled by this executive order. We emphatically affirm our support for the members of our HASTS community, and for all MIT faculty, students, and staff, affected by the executive order.

As of January 29, 2017, at least five

federal courts – in New York, Virginia, Washington, California, and Massachusetts – have temporarily enjoined enforcement of key parts of the executive order on the grounds that they likely violate due process and equal protection. These injunctions suggest that the President's directive is being recognized for what it is: a religious

continued on next page

Steering Committee Statement

continued from preceding page

test for admission to the United States for the nationals of the seven majority-Muslim nations affected, with a thinly veiled exception for Christians written into the very language of the order. Such a policy recalls some of the most troubling episodes of nineteenth- and twentieth-century U.S. immigration law, including the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the National Origins Act and Asian Exclusion Act of 1924.

The court orders were preceded and accompanied by major public demonstrations at international airports around the country, most notably at JFK in New York,

as well as rallies in major public spaces such as Copley Square in Boston. The outpouring of public support for Muslim immigrants and refugees evokes the best aspects of our nation's tradition as a haven for those of all races, religions, and backgrounds seeking protection and a new life. It is consistent with the commitment of the HASTS program and MIT to create a diverse community united in its goal to improve our world through research and education. ■

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Destabilization From Modernizing Nuclear Weapons Capabilities?

AMONG THE MOST CONTROVERSIAL pronouncements of President Trump has been his call that “The United States must greatly strengthen and expand its nuclear capability until such time as the world comes to its senses regarding nukes.” – Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) December 22, 2016. It seems to us very more likely that if the U.S. embarks on an extensive and enormously expensive modernization of its nuclear weapons triad, this will provoke a similar response from Russia and China, and possibly lead to more nuclear weapons proliferation.

The U.S. currently maintains more than 4,500 active nuclear weapons, including some 900 nuclear warheads on high alert, ready to be launched on President Trump's command within 30 minutes of warning. Over half of these warheads are mounted atop long-range missiles in 14 relatively invulnerable Ohio-class submarines. Keeping within the limits of the New Start Treaty, one submarine can launch 90 independently targeted nuclear warheads (MIRVs), each many times more powerful than the Hiroshima or Nagasaki atomic bombs. The destructive power of missiles launched by one nuclear submarine could obliterate many major cities. If the submarine were Russian they could obliterate all the cities of the Eastern U.S. The total explosive power of a single sub-

marine exceeds all the bombs delivered by the Allies in World War II.

In addition to the damage in the targeted country, a single submarine could possibly cause worldwide climatic changes due to the release of large amounts of soot. It has been shown, using current atmospheric models, that there is a significant probability of a decrease in global temperatures that could lower agricultural output to levels resulting in widespread worldwide famine. The Navy typically has six-to-eight of the 14 submarines at sea, each of which could unleash a similar bombardment. The comparable firepower of our silo-based missiles and nuclear-armed bombers greatly increase the overkill capacity and represent a fundamental danger to the Earth and its inhabitants. A full-scale nuclear war would lead to worldwide nuclear winter for over a decade [Toon et al., *Phys. Today*, Dec. 2008].

We are not alone in our overkill capacity. Russia also has about 900 nuclear weapons on high alert. A number of experts assess that Russia's early warning system is insufficiently robust, increasing the danger that a mistaken signal of a U.S. attack could precipitate a massive “preventive strike” from Russia. (Numerous such erroneous attack signals are documented in Eric Schlosser's excellent book,

Command and Control. In one case, a potential disaster was averted only by the prudence of the Russian officer on duty.)

Current modernization plans are to spend a trillion dollars over the next 30 years on upgrades to all three nuclear weapons delivery systems as well as the associated nuclear weapons. These plans represent enormous long-term expenditures from the federal budget. A February Congressional Budget Office report estimated that the program would cost \$400 billion in taxpayers' dollars from 2017 to 2026. With the administration intent on cutting taxes and limiting growth of the deficit, the likely result will be to cut civilian programs in environmental protection, education, basic research, housing, and transportation. It is unlikely that the NIH and NSF budgets will be protected, deeply damaging all U.S. research universities.

President Trump, in view of the present overkill capability of both the U.S. and Russia, it certainly is time that “the world comes to its senses regarding nukes.” The U.S. should lead the way. We would all be safer if you propose to President Putin to start negotiations to reduce this terrifying arsenal as your highest priority. ■

Editorial Subcommittee

Redevelopment of Volpe Site

Salvucci, from page 1

First, MIT originally acquired the Kendall land when it was inexpensive and in the process of being abandoned by the earlier industrial users. MIT committed to use that land for academic purposes, not just in news releases, but also in legal agreements with the City of Cambridge and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). It may, unfortunately, be accepted practice among real estate developers to change public benefit commitments when it is financially convenient, but one would hope that a prestigious university would hold itself to a higher standard than, “if we can get away with it, it must be ok.”

Second, as was documented by the MIT Graduate Student Council a few years ago, there is a severe shortage of affordable graduate student housing on or near campus at MIT. At least 4000 graduate students and postdocs, who are essential to the educational and research mission of MIT, are being dumped into the fiercely expensive rental housing market in Cambridge, Somerville, and Boston. This is clearly to the detriment of the students, who are spending too much money on rent, too much energy dealing with unscrupulous landlords trying to game an overheated market, and too much time commuting; as well as to the detriment of the communities which are experiencing very significant gentrification pressures. The MIT land near Kendall is a perfect place to serve part of this need – essentially on campus, but also near an exciting growing urban hot spot that would be an exciting place to live for graduate students and potentially junior faculty.

Third, there may well be other academic uses that ought to be considered for some of this land. But because MIT has outsourced its planning function to MITIMCo, which acts like a private developer, there is not a coherent long-range plan documenting the need for laboratory, library, and classroom space over the next several decades, now that it is clear

that MIT is located in an area of very limited additional land. There ought to be a planning function that looks to secure the physical development needs of the academic institution over the next several decades, that would prioritize the use of Institute land for academic purposes – which is not the dominant driver of MITIMCo decision-making.

The current MITIMCo plan includes a parking garage for over 1000 cars within a half-block of the Kendall Square T station, costing over \$100 million (based on the recent experience with the Sloan School

The current plan also proposes to locate a commercial office building and a commercial laboratory on MIT land adjacent to Main Street and the Kendall-MIT T stop, presumably for real estate profit motives. But these are activities that would be much more appropriate on the newly available Volpe site, leaving the Main Street sites available for academic purposes such as graduate student and junior faculty housing.

underground parking). It is hard to believe that, adjacent to the center of federal research on innovative transportation technology, guidance from leading experts on automobile technology and policy to “stop building new parking” (<https://www.planetizen.com/node/91147>) given the emerging capabilities and disruptive potential of autonomous vehicles, would be disregarded.

The current plan also proposes to locate a commercial office building and a commercial laboratory on MIT land adjacent to Main Street and the Kendall-MIT T stop, presumably for real estate profit motives. But these are activities that would be much more appropriate on the newly available Volpe site, leaving the Main Street sites available for academic purposes such as graduate student and junior faculty housing.

Private companies such as Google and Microsoft, names that are suggested as possible tenants for the proposed MITIMCo plan, have an extremely different culture than is appropriate for an academic campus. They prioritize proprietary ownership of ideas and non-

disclosure, while the academic spirit of open inquiry in the interest of society is the priority of the Institute.

Recently, with the new administration in the White House, we have been proud of the principled stance taken by President Reif and other MIT leadership to protect our community and all its members from the hateful intervention of the most powerful government in the world. This is a reminder of the quintessential importance of the balance of power among the federal government, the states, the private sector, and espe-

cially academic institutions, and of how academic institutions must protect the spirit of free and open inquiry. By blurring the distinction between the private sector and academic culture, the current Kendall Square plan erodes the campus’ fundamental role in making the Institute’s spaces a sanctuary for the free and open exchange of ideas.

The designation of MIT to develop the Volpe site gives the Institute an amazing second chance – an opportunity to prioritize the land originally purchased for academic purposes near Main Street for those academic purposes, while placing valid but culturally inconsistent private activities on the Volpe land, along with affordable housing, to make up for the gentrification pressures that past activities of MIT have imposed on our host community.

MIT should take advantage of this rare opportunity to secure its academic priorities in the rapidly diminishing land available to the Institute. ■

Frederick P. Salvucci is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering (salvucci@mit.edu).

MIT Integrated Learning Initiative Celebrates One-Year Anniversary

John Gabrieli
Parag Pathak

IN FEBRUARY OF 2016, as reported by *MIT News*, MIT President Rafael Reif announced the creation of the MIT Integrated Learning Initiative (MITili, pronounced “mightily”) to “combine research in cognitive psychology, neuroscience, economics, engineering, public policy, and other fields to investigate what methods and approaches to education work best for different people and subjects.”

Over the course of its first year, MITili’s accomplishments include the following:

- President Reif’s February 2016 announcement and a subsequent MITili announcement in May included our appointments as MITili Director (Gabrieli: Brain and Cognitive Sciences) and Associate Director (Pathak: Economics). The diversity of our work underscores the interdisciplinary breadth of MITili’s focus, investigating PK-12, higher education, and workplace/lifelong learners ranging from networks of neurons via fMRI, EEG, and MEG in a single brain to hundreds, thousands, or even millions of learners via randomized control trials at a city, state, MOOC, or national level.

- In May of 2016, MITili convened a retreat at MIT’s Endicott House in Dedham, MA. Faculty members Sanjay Sarma (Vice President of Open Learning), Joshua Angrist (Economics), Angela Belcher (Biological Engineering), Isaac Chuang (EECS/Physics), David Pritchard (Physics), Mitch Resnick (Media Lab), and Matt Wilson (Brain and Cognitive Sciences), plus key Office of Digital

Learning (ODL) staff joined us to brainstorm generally on paths forward for MITili and to tackle specific issues including the differences in brain development before PK-12 students are able to read, the learner’s socioeconomic status, and educational policy.

In February of 2016, as reported by *MIT News*, MIT President Rafael Reif announced the creation of the MIT Integrated Learning Initiative (MITili, pronounced “mightily”) to “combine research in cognitive psychology, neuroscience, economics, engineering, public policy, and other fields to investigate what methods and approaches to education work best for different people and subjects.”

- August 2016 saw the hiring of MITili’s first two staff members: Associate Director Jeff Dieffenbach and Program Coordinator Steve Nelson. Jeff and Steve work closely with MITili-associated faculty and ODL staff to raise corporate, foundation, and other funding to support learning effectiveness research; support on-campus faculty interactions; and assist in the internal and external dissemination of research-supported best practices.

- In September of 2016, MITili created its framework for a learning effectiveness consortium. The consortium, drawing on those of CSAIL, the Energy Initiative, the Initiative on the Digital Economy, and the Media Lab, brings together companies and others to fund and participate in transformational research on academic and workplace learning effectiveness.

- In October of 2016, Professor Sarma delivered a keynote at the Elliott Masie Learning conference in Orlando. MITili and ODL staff supported separate sessions by Professor Sarma and Brain and Cognitive Sciences post-doctoral student Kana Okana. Dr. Okana’s session reported findings from work with a leading con-

sulting firm – MITili’s first research project – on capturing and measuring attention in a video-based workplace learning environment.

- MIT’s McGovern Institute hosted a November 2016 gathering of 50 Chief Learning Officers and their designees from 30 companies, government agencies, and universities, including AIG, Babson, Fidelity, GE, Google, IBM, McKinsey, Office of Personnel Management, and Pepperdine. The meeting, part of a three-day event co-run by Future Workplace, shared MIT’s thinking on learning and heard from the participants about how they create and deliver learning experiences, about how they measure those learning experiences, and about the biggest learning challenges they face.



Dr. Okano explains the workings of the EEG cap to a conference attendee (October 2016)

• November 2016 also kicked off MITili's series of faculty conversations on transformational learning effectiveness research.

Professor Gabrieli briefed the group on a research effort aimed at improving the ability of all students to be reading and

doing math proficiently by the end of third grade. In December, Professor Pathak shared ideas on a universal enrollment system designed to provide access to quality education for all students and families. Professor Laura Schulz (Brain and Cognitive Science) led the February talk on early childhood cognition.

Across its learning research, MIT's *mens et manus* motto – mind and hand – guides MITili's approach to learning research. Researchers develop theories, rigorously test them in the lab, then work to see them through to implementation in the field. With 2017 underway, MITili is excited to continue its mission to promote, support, and disseminate transformational Institute research investigating learning effectiveness. ■

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Dr. Gabrieli addresses participants of the November CLO meeting

MyLife Services Offers Unique Support to Institute Personnel

Sandy Alexandre

IT'S THE START OF a new year. Congratulations to all of us who have the opportunity to participate – in whatever way we ultimately can – in the fresh start that this annual event tends to symbolize. Some of us will make resolutions. Some of us have made them already. Some of us do not believe in making them anymore. Some of us never did.

Whatever side of the “to reset or not to reset” question you are on, during this time of the year, it is probably worth remembering that nothing contributes more to self-directed change than a combination of first knowing that the very resources you might need are actually available to you and subsequently using those resources to the fullest extent possible. Otherwise, we risk cheating ourselves of the help, the relief, the information, or the knowledge that could make our complex lives so much better – that is, more manageable, less stressful, and maybe even more intelligible. Indeed, data from the 2016 MIT Quality of Life Survey indicate that faculty members at MIT are experiencing stress in various aspects of their lives:

- 78% experience stress due to lack of time for family and friends (because of work commitments);
- 47% feel overwhelmed by all they need to do;
- 34% are either not satisfied or neutral about their ability to balance work and personal life.

For these and other reasons, we certainly owe it to ourselves to know about and make full use of MIT's new benefit for all of its employees: MyLife Services (hrweb.mit.edu/worklife/mitmylifeservices), which is a one-stop resource providing all MIT faculty, staff, postdoc associates, postdoc fellows, and their families, with confidential, free, 24/7 access to a network of experts who are ready to assist you with various life concerns. MyLife Services is provided by an external vendor, KGA Inc., and replaces the counseling provided by the Personal Assistance Program previously administered by MIT Medical. However, graduate and undergraduate students should still be referred to MIT Medical for counseling assistance.

Knowing about this new benefit can give you a different perspective on your potential to improve your challenging circumstances and on your ability to get the assistance you need to achieve a personal goal. MyLife Services is available 24/7 and is completely confidential. One phone call connects you to a licensed, Master's or PhD-level counselor right away. You or a family member can also ask to see a counselor in person, near work or near home, for up to five sessions per concern at no cost to you. And MyLife Services will work with you to make sure the counselor is in your insurance network should you wish to continue beyond the five initial visits.

The suite of benefits available through MyLife Services includes:

- **Legal Assistance:** Legal consultation with an attorney, with referrals for most legal issues.
- **Financial Consultation:** Help with debt management, budgeting, and financial planning.
- **Stress Reduction:** Assessment of stress level and techniques/tips for managing stress.
- **Short-term Counseling:** Face-to-face, phone, or video sessions to help address emotional and relationship issues, and problems with addictions for yourself or a family member.
- **Crisis Counseling:** Counseling and consultation for individuals, HR, managers, and the community before, during, and after traumatic events, such as suicide, violence, and natural and human-made disasters.
- **Grief Counseling:** Supportive counseling and consultation for individuals and families who have experienced a loss.
- **Work-life Resources:** Targeted research and referrals for everything from relocation services to pet care.
- **Parenting/Child Care Resources:** Personalized guidance, research, and referrals for a variety of child care needs and parenting questions.
- **Sleep Consultation:** Tips and tools to help you get a good night's rest.

- **Career Counseling:** Help for you or a family member with career exploration and job search questions.
- **Nutrition Consultation:** Support from a nutritionist on weight management and other dietary concerns.

Such abundant and readily available resources might help someone go from mumbling a helpless “I can’t” to a more hopeful “I think I can.” To be sure, the vast array of services available through MyLife Services may feel paralyzing initially. But each time you access MyLife Services, your specific question or problem will be targeted and a customized solution will be developed for you. In glowing terms, one user described his experience in this way:

“What a fantastic improvement to find a counselor. Previously I was sent to the BCBS website, which was totally overwhelming. With this new service, I got the assistance I needed. Total game changer. Patrick is awesome, please let him know he truly helped. Calm and reassuring. He efficiently found a counselor to refer to me.”

And, of course, the more you access the new benefit, the more navigable and user-friendly MyLife Services will become for you. In the initial six months (May 1, 2016–October 31, 2016) of this MIT benefit, 869 people used MyLife Services. This is an estimated annualized utilization rate of 13.1%. Approximately 8% of MIT’s total faculty have used MyLife Services in that same time frame. Moreover, faculty, staff, and postdocs have called from each of MIT’s Schools. This is all very good news!

In a world that often demands we pull ourselves up by our own bootstraps and that appears, very much, to esteem the culture of doing it yourself, using this resource helps to exercise an important skill that many of us tend to underutilize: asking for help. I intentionally call “asking for help” important, and I also call it a skill because it is far too often stigmatized as a

sign of weakness. That outlook can change, and we know at least one member of our community plans to spread the word on behalf of those who may not yet know how truly helpful MyLife Services can be:

“I’m amazed that such a great service as MyLife Services is available to MIT employees. For five years I’ve been at MIT as a graduate student, then post-doc, and now employee; and I’ve never experienced such a useful service as this in all that time. I plan on spreading the word about MyLife Services to all staff in my department.”

In a world that often demands we pull ourselves up by our own bootstraps and that appears, very much, to esteem the culture of doing it yourself, using this resource helps to exercise an important skill that many of us tend to underutilize: asking for help.

It is our sincere hope that this person on a mission will not be alone. Don’t forget to remind your families, your colleagues, your staff, and your postdocs about this new and very helpful benefit.

Perhaps it wasn’t during a ritual, resolution-making January that MIT resolved to establish a resource to attend to the holistic needs of its employees. But, so far, the end result of that decision is, indeed, MIT’s overall improvement: employees are beginning to know that the help they need is readily available and that a resource endorsed and paid for by the university actually encourages them to ask for that help. Sometimes the help involves making a difficult decision (“I called and spoke with the lawyer. I did not like anything he said to me . . . but he told me exactly what I needed to hear. He was a real help.”) Overall, people who have used MyLife Services seem immensely grateful not only for its very existence, but also for the quality of care its counselors exhibit in

addressing their needs. For example, one caller writes: “I am pleased to say I got outstanding assistance and follow-up from Andrea. I have been struggling with a number of personal issues and she stayed connected to me. She even talked with a nurse at my request. I am very thankful.” In all, when Human Resources’ Work Life Center added MyLife Services to its suite of programs, MIT effectively acknowledged the humanity of its employees – that we are people with full personal and professional lives whose effectiveness, at work and at home, can suffer if we have nowhere to go for help. MyLife Services is here to change that. It’s

an actual new year, and as a consequence of this new benefit, it’s also a proverbial “new day!” Let us make seeking and receiving whatever help we need the method by which we also make the most of this fresh start and this new resource.

For more information on MyLife Services, call: 844-405-LIFE (5433) or visit the MIT Work-Life Center Website: hrweb.mit.edu/worklife/mitmylifeservices. For more information on other Work-Life Center programs, including planning and paying for college, senior care planning, and children with special learning needs, visit: hrweb.mit.edu/worklife/about-center. Also, the seminar series changes each semester. The current offerings are found here: hrweb.mit.edu/worklife/seminars. The Work-Life Center staff is always available to support your work-life balance. Call them at 617-253-1592. ■

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30 Years of Institutional Research
Bulger, from page 1

Faculty Newsletter. Other visualizations are accessible to the community on the IR Website: web.mit.edu/ir.

Some of the earliest projects tackled by Institutional Research, which at the time consisted of two people housed in Building 12, involved assisting in the assessment and deliberations over Institute space, including the construction of the Biology Building as well as working on a study of the animal care facilities to ensure that adequate space was available to researchers. Another less appreciated project was the analysis work IR did which resulted in MIT's decision to charge for parking and subsidize public transit passes for employees. Over time, Institutional Research provided analyses for a variety of Institute projects and Lydia Snover, IR's first and only Director, became an important resource for faculty, senior administrators, and staff.

Early in its existence, the Institutional Research group was given the responsibility for responding to data requests from external organizations, including the many ranking organizations such as *US News and World Report*, *Times Higher Ed*, and *QS World University Rankings*. As the number of rankings has grown, IR has worked with old and new organizations to define the range and depth of metrics used by ranking organizations to evaluate universities, helping to better articulate what is valued in higher education (web.mit.edu/ir/rankings/index.html).

Probably the most visible activity associated with Institutional Research is the administration of surveys to the MIT community and the dissemination of analysis. IR administers a number of surveys to MIT students, some in conjunction with peer institutions. Recent surveys include the biennial Transportation Survey, the Faculty and Staff Quality of Life Survey, biennial Senior Surveys, and the Admitted Graduate Student Survey. The results of many of the central surveys administered by IR are available online:

web.mit.edu/ir/surveys/index.html. In addition to the large institutional survey, IR is a resource for any group that plans to run a survey for research or administrative purposes.

In 2000, Institutional Research moved to the Office of the Provost, and the primary focus became the academic

Probably the most visible activity associated with Institutional Research is the administration of surveys to the MIT community and the dissemination of analysis. . . . Recent surveys include the biennial Transportation Survey, the Faculty and Staff Quality of Life Survey, biennial Senior Surveys, and the Admitted Graduate Student Survey.

enterprise. IR provides an array of services to the academic Schools and departments, as well as providing data and other resources to the numerous committees, task forces, and working groups at the Institute. These committees have included the Committee on Women Faculty in the School of Science, The Initiative for Faculty Race and Diversity, task forces on graduate student housing and tuition, the working group on rankings, the task force on The Future of Education, and many others. The IR staff assist in the various accreditation processes, including the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) and New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC).

Further, 10 years ago, Institutional Research was charged with spearheading the production of the MIT *Briefing Book*, an essential yearly publication sponsored by the Vice President for Research and the MIT Washington Office. The *Briefing Book*, researched and written by a variety of MIT faculty and staff, particularly members of Institutional Research, serves as a compilation of information about MIT as well as MIT's many research activities, highlighting projects funded by federal agencies, industry, and nonprofit institutions (orgchart.mit.edu/node/27/bbook).

Institutional Research is also the official liaison to the Association of American Universities Data Exchange (AAUDE) and to the Institutional Research group in Consortium on Financing Higher Education (COFHE), both organizations serving highly selective universities. The group is responsible for compiling data on

the faculty hiring process and graduate student admissions.

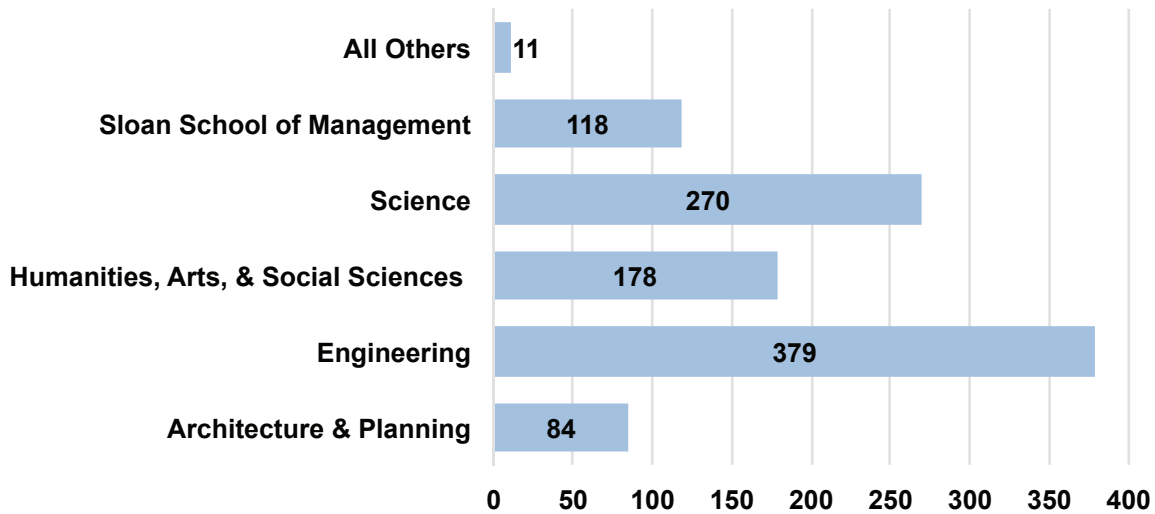
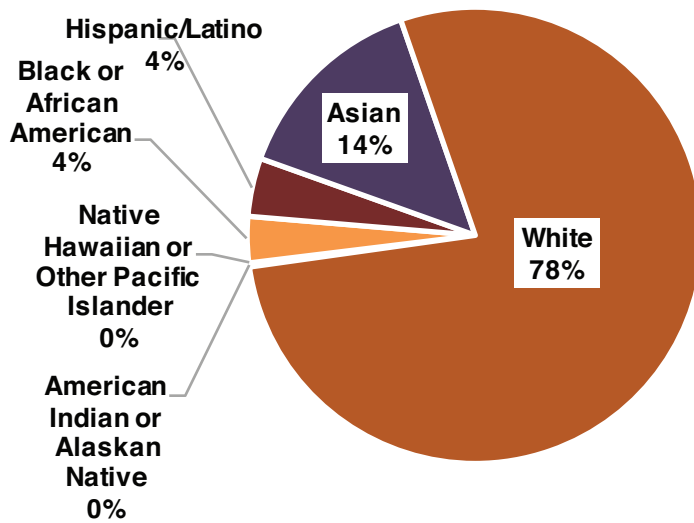
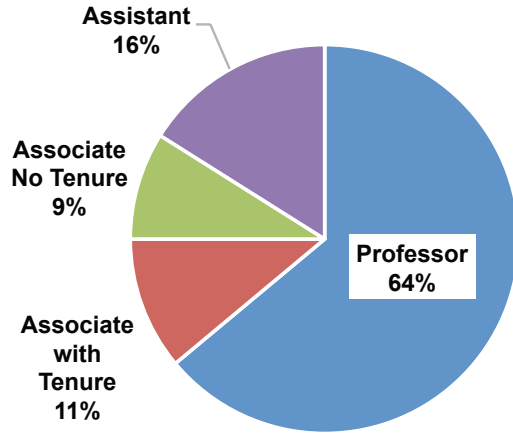
Finally, several years ago the group was tasked with the development and maintenance of the Institute-wide Electronic Professional Record (ePR). This application, which originated in the School of Engineering, was developed as a central repository for faculty and staff to compile, in one central location, information of their professional activities. In 2014, Institutional Research took on the role of trustee (gatekeeper) of data collected from MITx courses, so that it could be used for educational research.

For Snover, her own vision of the office has always been a simplistic one: to provide accurate, unbiased data and analyses that support decision-making and document changes in the Institute over time. By maintaining such a mission, Snover has ensured the relevance and usefulness of the Institutional Research function. In marking 30 years as head of IR, she puts it: "We are an office that cannot say no." Certainly, it is a sentiment for which many at the Institute are grateful. ■

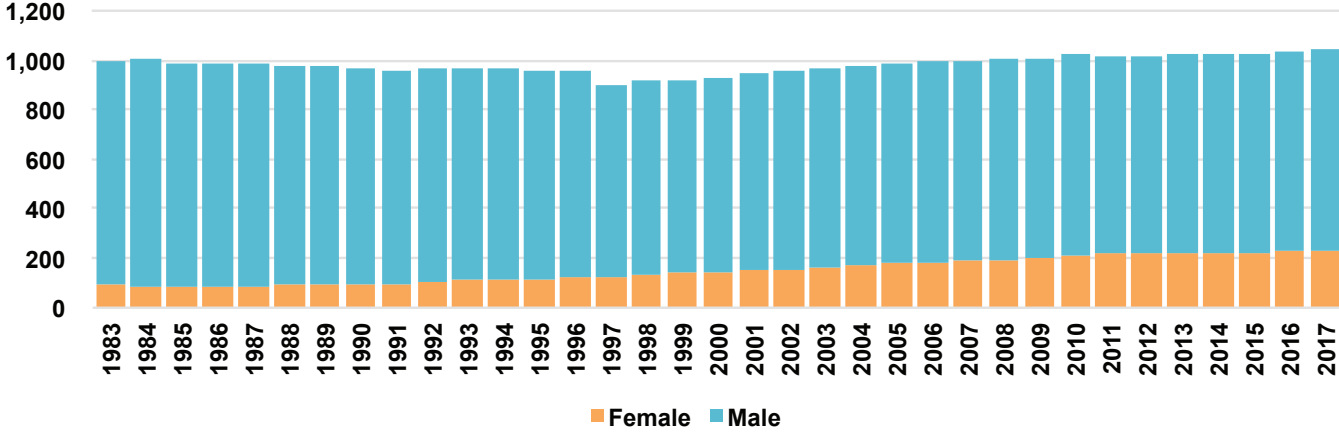
Editor's Note: See pages 13-15 for recent examples of information generated by Institutional Research.

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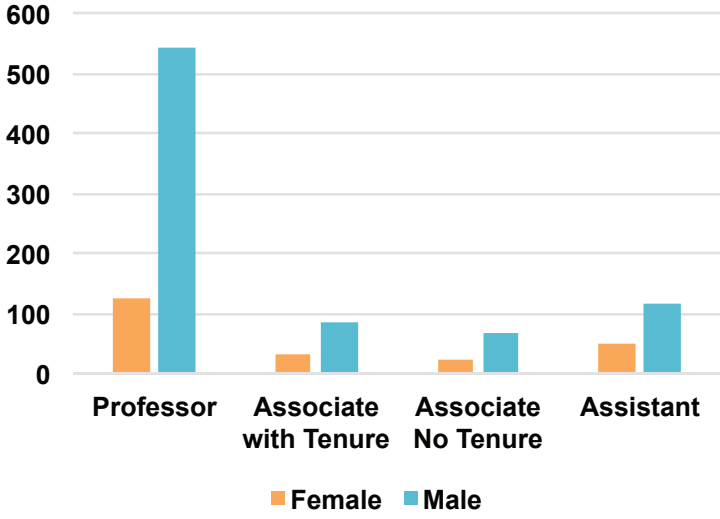
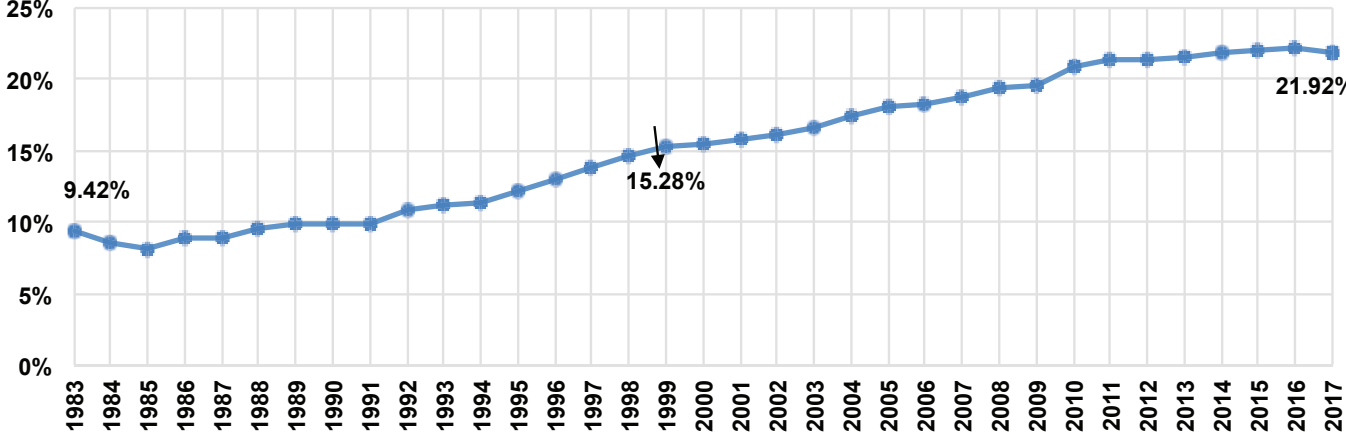
M.I.T. Numbers Profile of MIT Faculty (AY 2017)



M.I.T. Numbers
MIT Faculty By Gender (AY 2017)

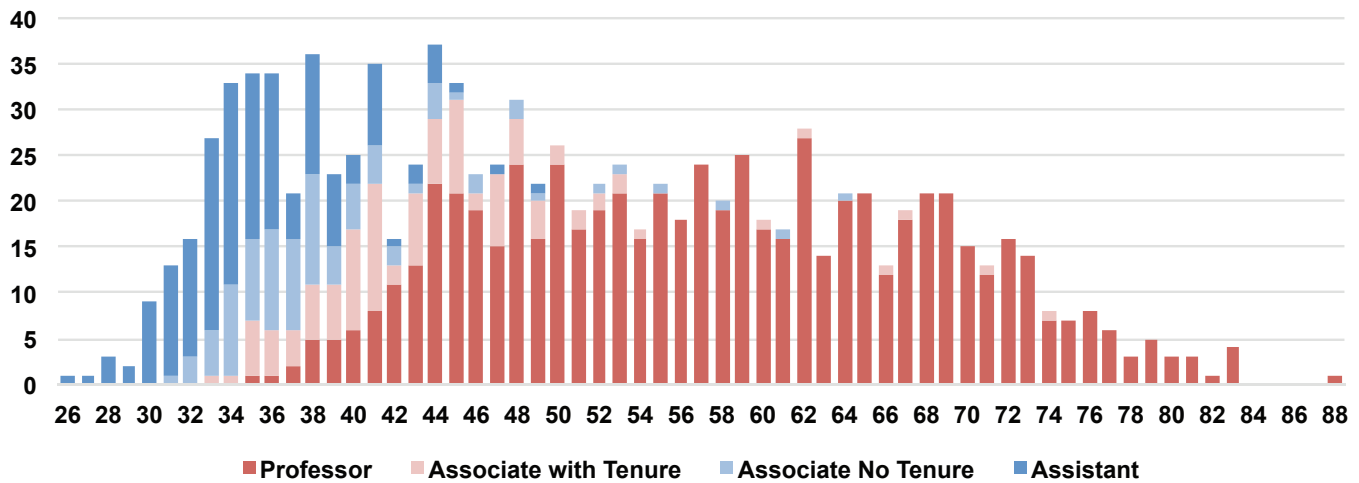


Percent of Faculty Who Are Women

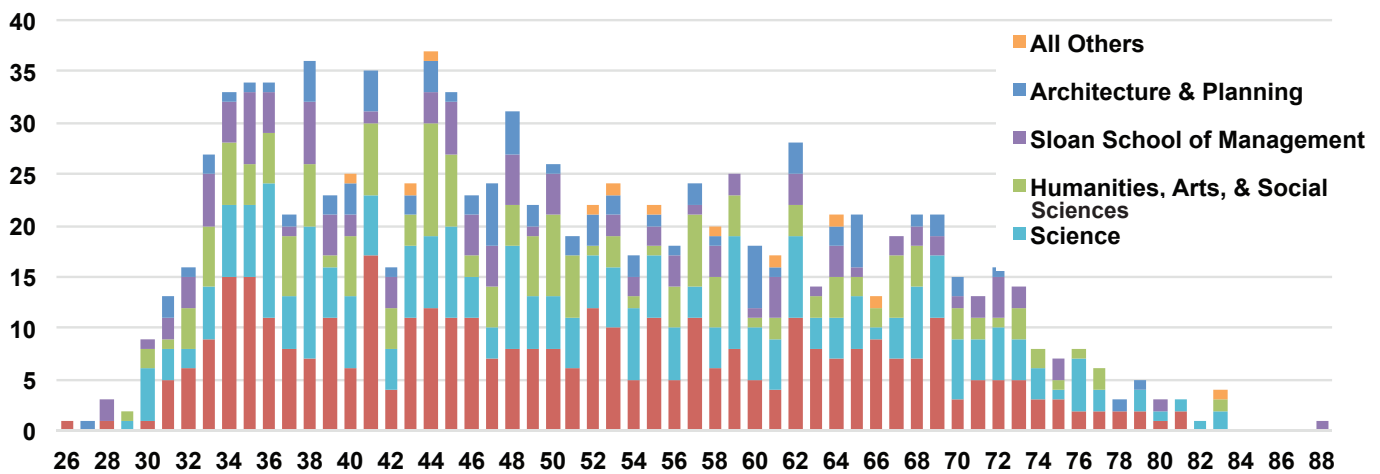


M.I.T. Numbers MIT Faculty By Age Distribution (AY 2017)

Age Distribution All Faculty

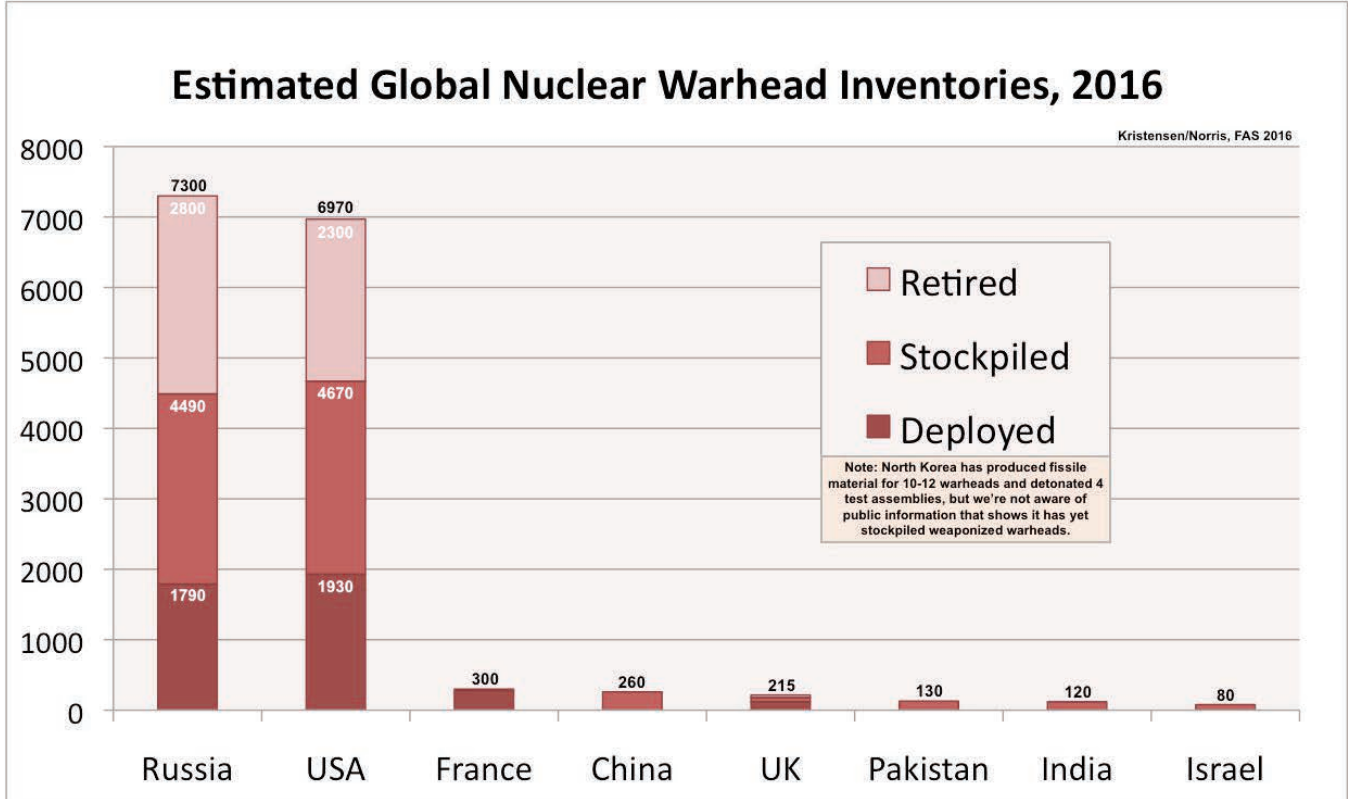


Age Distribution By School



Source: Office of the Provost/Institutional Research

Numbers Status of World Nuclear Forces



Note:

- Nearly 1,800 U.S., Russian, British, and French warheads are on high alert, ready for use on short notice.
- The approximately seven (7) North Korean weapons are not shown in the above figure.

Source: Federation of American Scientists (FAS)