

MIT-Portugal Program
External Review Committee

Report of Assessment
October 2007

The External Review Committee of the MIT-Portugal Program met on October 11 and 12, in Lisbon.

The Committee assessed the progress of the program and it was impressed by the achievements in the first year of the MIT-Portugal Program: 4 PhD Programs, 3 Professional Masters and 17 signed contracts with Institutions.

The MIT-Portugal Program is becoming a role model for academic institutions, which has the potential of developing into a leading example in Europe.

The Committee is very pleased with the Program's developing relationships with the corporate world, which are expected to grow strongly in the upcoming years.

The Program and Focus Areas should therefore strive to be self-sustaining in four years. It is suggested to create a private MITP Business Development foundation raising seed money for new initiatives and investments and funding a MIT P Corporation.

This fine example of public-private partnerships should be supported by an appropriate private foundation to facilitate a full further development of the Program. A model could be a partnership of an MIT P Corporation (51%) and a foundation MIT P (49%).

The Committee met with the Deans of the institutions involved and is very pleased with their constructive support.

Focus areas and program leadership should provide "Vision Statements" to the Deans and Rectors which go beyond simply using the MIT brand as a magnet. There are many enabling features of the program which, if elucidated, could serve as talking points for administrators that would emphasize the added value of the program.

The Program exemplifies the synergistic interaction between institutions, which could be accompanied by new initiatives for Graduate School programs, for international fellowships and for top research programs.

It is advised to allocate budgets to institutions on the condition that capacity for the MIT P program is compensated for other tasks.

The Committee suggests to translate the goals and objectives of the program and the sub-programs into measurable metrics, addressing quality, productivity, vitality and relevance.

Attention should be paid to the availability of fellowships for students from no EU countries.

We would recommend the establishment of a Curriculum Committee with representation from each of the four focus areas. This committee should meet at least twice a year so that there can be coordination in the development of new courses and in the refinement of existing courses.

Program leaders should provide the ERC with student evaluations and the opportunity to meet with students at the next meeting.

The Committee appreciates the ongoing presentation of cases showing a variety of insights in the principles of Engineering Systems.

However, the legitimacy of these principles and the supporting foundations requires attention and good expectation management.

Members of the ERC,

Prof. dr. Henk Sol, Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Groningen University, the Netherlands (Chair)

Dr. Peter Cavanaugh, D.Sc., Chairman of Biomedical Engineering, Cleveland Clinic, USA

Prof. Roland Clift, Ph.D., CBE, Distinguished Professor of Environmental Technology, University of Surrey, UK

Prof. César Dopazo, Ph.D., Full Professor of Fluid Mechanics, University of Zaragoza, Spain

Prof. Nick Oliver, Ph.D., Head of Management School and Economics, University of Edinburgh, UK

Dr. Robert Skinner, Ph.D., Executive Director, Transportation Research Board, National Academy of Sciences, USA