

## SAT April Newsletter



Dear Staff,

Hello and welcome to our April newsletter! In this email we want to give you an update on **our recent meeting with Laurie Patton about communication, compensation and rewards at MIIS**. Also below are upcoming events and ongoing activities you may find interesting on campus.

After our presentation to the Board of Overseers last December, Laurie Patton asked us to work on two things: 1) find out why interdepartmental communication at MIIS is an issue, and 2) propose ways that she might be able to help raise staff morale despite the challenging financial issues we are facing. We gathered information through the focus groups in January/February and finalized our recommendations this past month. We met for an hour with Laurie in late March. Below are our findings and recommendations that we shared with her:

**Interdepartmental communication at MIIS:** The most commonly reported root of ineffective communication on campus is a lack of information sharing between low-level staff and top MIIS administrators. Most staff report not liking the town hall format, and feeling they do not hear relevant updates from other departments in a timely manner. We recommend reformatting the Town Hall meetings and creating a bidirectional information flow with the Institute Leadership Group. Our next steps are to present a series of specific changes to Jeff Dayton-Johnson at our next monthly meeting and meet with the Institute Leadership Group this week to get their input and support.

**Compensation, rewards, and morale:** While all staff we spoke with agree there is a need to better compensate and recognize staff for their contributions, we did not see one universally agreed upon reward that was not monetary. As such, we recommend presenting staff with a variety of options when it comes to recognition. We also gave Laurie a list of ideas to ameliorate staff morale, and from this she picked the following and promised us the budget to make these happen:

*1. Modest budget for monthly department informal gatherings:* this will be similar to the department open houses that happened last year, but it won't be as structured. We hope to

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2. *MIIS staff membership to the Aquarium*: staff will be able to borrow this pass for use with friends or family similar to our employee Costco card benefit. Details will be worked out in the coming months.

3. *Monthly credit for one employee at Samson cafe*: this will be part of a staff rewards program that will need to be developed.

We also want to report that in our meeting with Laurie, it was very clear how happy she is with MIIS staff overall. She greatly appreciates the work we all do and is committed to supporting us however she can. It was very encouraging to spend time with her and hear about the ways in which she hopes to see the MIIS staff experience develop.

This month we will be meeting with Jeff Dayton-Johnson and working more on details of our proposed SAT election. If you are curious about potentially representing your department as an elected SAT member, we would love to hear from you.

If you have questions, comments, or suggestions, please let us know! And don't forget to scroll down for upcoming events.

~Staff Advisory Team

(Grace O'Dell, Rachel Muradyan, Rebecca Vander Schaaf, Gustavo Mercado, Carol Johnson, Rogers Walker)

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## Staff Events

**SAT-Sponsored Field Day:  
Lawn games with prizes and food!  
Date and time TBD**

Join us for an afternoon filled with games like corn hole, ladder toss, and more!  
Prizes and snacks will be provided.  
Stay tuned for more information in the coming weeks.

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## Professional Development and Wellness

**Middlebury 102: Leadership & Governance  
Thursday, April 26th, 11:00am-11:50am, MG100**

Session Facilitator: Melissa Sorenson

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our organization, come learn about the leadership and governance structures that guide and connect Middlebury. We will delve into some structures and groups that are location-specific, as well as those that work across our entire organization. You can submit questions ahead of time using the sign-up form, but there will also be time for questions at the end of the session.

Sign up here: [go.miis.edu/midd102](http://go.miis.edu/midd102)

### **Geek Out with the MetaLab**

**Fridays, CF 442**

**Geek Outs** are introductory workshops to data-related topics through learning useful software programs. Our team carefully develop each session so you can experience a smooth start or a fun refresh!

During Spring 2018 we will be covering data manipulation, data analysis, data visualization, qualitative analysis, basic programming, and much more! In order to explore each topic, we will be learning how to use the greatest hits such as Excel, Tableau, R, Python, SQL, Dedoose, and MongoDB.

Geek Outs happen on Fridays at the Pac Lab (CF 442).

[Check out the calendar](#) or visit our [Facebook page](#) to stay tuned!

### **Open Drop-in Writing Group**

**Monday - Friday, 11 am - 12 pm, MG220- C**

Have you been “meaning to write more”? Drop in and write Monday-Friday with other writers on campus. This open drop-in writing group has been created so that you can have a regularly-scheduled time to write during the week. It’s also an opportunity to meet with like-minded people at MIIS (faculty, staff, and students) who also want to write. It’s open to everyone in the MIIS community. No writing critiques or sharing your writing, unless you want to. We just get together and write.

[Learn More](#)

### **MIIS Community Yoga**

**Mondays at 5:15pm, MG215**

**Fridays at 7:30am, MG215**

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## New Hires

Please extend a warm welcome to our newest employee:

**Breanna Donofrio**

Associate Director Graduate Alumni Engagement  
Alumni Relations

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## Questions, Comments, or Suggestions

We'd love to hear your ideas, suggestions, and questions regarding things like newsletter content, the Modern Think survey, and anything else.

Email us at [sat@miis.edu](mailto:sat@miis.edu) or submit anonymous message at <http://go.miis.edu/sat>

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