Chemistry Application Mentor Program (C.A.M.P) Guidelines

Thank you for volunteering your time as a CAMP mentor for this year’s admission cycle. Below you will find guidelines for your position. Should anything come up and you have questions or concerns, please contact Jennifer Weisman or Brandon Milardo. CAMP applications are accepted until November 1 in order for mentors to be able to provide feedback prior to the December 1 application deadline.

* CAMP application period: September 15-November 1.
* Time Commitment: Each applicant you mentor need not take up a significant amount of time. We anticipate there being around 3-4 emails of communication per mentor and applicant but this number may vary.
* Purpose of CAMP: Assist applicants from underrepresented groups – including but not limited to: groups underrepresented in the STEM field, 1st generation PhD applicants, and applicants from non-traditional academic backgrounds.

Overall Guidelines for the CAMP Mentor:

* We ask that you reach out to the applicant(s) you are mentoring within 48 hours of receiving their CAMP application information.
* CAMP applicants are informed that admission is not guaranteed for participating in this program – please do not inform applicant(s) otherwise.
* Do not tell any faculty members about the CAMP applicant(s) you are mentoring.
* If you are unsure about an answer please ask Jennifer Weisman or Brandon Milardo.

Information regarding the Admission Process:

* In recognition of the significant disruption caused by Covid-19, specifically due to the limited accessibility of tests and testing sites/dates, **MIT Department of Chemistry will not be accepting GRE scores for applications during the Fall 2023 admissions cycle.** We believe that this is necessary in order to avoid inadvertently privileging applicants who have easier access to test sites than others. All applications will be given full consideration without reference to GRE scores, this includes both the general test and Chemistry subject test scores.
* In response to the challenges of teaching, learning, and assessing academic performance during the global COVID-19 pandemic, MIT has adopted the following principle: MIT’s admissions committees and offices for graduate and professional schools will take the significant disruptions of the COVID-19 outbreak in 2020 into account when reviewing students’ transcripts and other admissions materials as part of their regular practice of performing individualized, holistic reviews of each applicant. In particular, as we review applications now and, in the future, we will respect decisions regarding the adoption of Pass/No Record (or Credit/No Credit or Pass/Fail) and other grading options during the unprecedented period of COVID-19 disruptions, whether those decisions were made by institutions or by individual students. We also expect that the individual experiences of applicants will richly inform applications and, as such, they will be considered with the entirety of a student’s record.
* The number of admitted students vary year by year. Information regarding the number of students to be admitted is not released.
* The admissions committee begins reviewing applications after the application deadline (December 1).
* Decisions are made on an ongoing basis after the admission deadline and we anticipate all decisions will be made by February 22.
* Admitted students are notified by a member of the admissions committee, students who are not admitted are notified via email.
* Applicants are welcome to contact faculty members but should know that this is a busy time of year and they may not receive an answer.
* Only admitted applicants are invited to come to the official visiting weekend.

What are we looking for in admitted applicants:

* The admissions committee views the application as a whole and no single score will disqualify an applicant. That being said the most important things that the admissions committee look at are the Statement of Objectives, Personal Statement, and the Letters of Recommendation.
  + Statement of Objectives: The recommended length for the Statement of Objectives is 1000-1500 words. Please describe your reasons for pursuing graduate studies in the MIT Chemistry Department. In your description, explain how your background has prepared you for this graduate program. Identify the research area(s) that most interest you, the scientific problems that motivate your pursuit of an advanced degree in chemistry, and how the resources and faculty of MIT’s program promote these interests and motives. Describe your long-term scientific goals, and specify the unique aspects of MIT’s chemistry program that will enable you to achieve these goals. If applicable, describe any specific academic or research challenges that you have faced and overcome. If there are any other factors concerning your prior academic, research, or work experience that you would like the Admissions Committee to be aware of, please describe them. Please feel free to prepare your Statement of Objectives in whatever format most effectively communicates your views.
  + Personal Statement: The recommended length for the Personal Statement is 500-1000 words. The MIT Chemistry Department is a community comprised of individuals from a diverse variety of backgrounds. We are interested in learning more about you as a person and how your background and experiences motivate you to make positive contributions to your community. There are no requirements for what to include; some possible prompts are below:
    - The MIT Chemistry Department has four core community values. These are respect, well-being, inclusivity, and integrity. Please identify one of these values that is important to you and explain why.
    - Describe your experience with resilience and/or perseverance. Give an example of a time in which you faced failure, a significant roadblock in making steady progress towards a goal. Describe how you approach this situation. What did you learn from this experience? How has this experience shaped the way you approach challenges today?
    - Describe a meaningful teaching or mentorship experience you have had and what you learned from that experience. What do you like most about teaching others? What are the biggest challenges you anticipate in serving as a teaching assistant to MIT undergraduates?
    - If there are any other factors concerning your prior academic, research, or work experience that you would like the Admissions Committee to be aware of, please describe them.
  + Letters of Recommendation: 3 Letters of Recommendations are required and preferably from people who have observed the applicant in a research setting.
* Coursework background
* Experience and ability to handle the material in our program.
* Interviews – more information coming soon.

What we anticipate you mentoring on:

* The tone, format and subject of their statements.
  + We anticipate this will be the main area of assistance. Please try to avoid any urge to re-write portions of an applicant’s statement and instead give constructive, editorial comments on how the statements can be improved.
* What it is like as a graduate student in our program.
* Research and faculty in our Department.
* Resume/CV.

The CAMP mentor is to help with the application itself. Things we ask that you do not provide answers to:

* Names of the admission co. members (should you happen to know the names of any faculty member).
* Give information as to the “chances” of someone being admitted.
* Answers as to if something can be waived (tests, fees, etc).
* Extensions for deadlines
* Questions that you may not know the answers to.