Introduction

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) is a private research university in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Founded in 1861 in response to the increasing industrialization of the United States, MIT adopted a European polytechnic university model and stressed laboratory instruction in applied science and engineering. Researchers worked on computers, radar, and inertial guidance during World War II and the Cold War. Post-war defense research contributed to the rapid expansion of the faculty and campus under James Killian. The current 168-acre (68.0 ha) campus opened in 1916 and extends over 1 mile (1.6 km) along the northern bank of the Charles River basin.

MIT, with five schools and one college which contain a total of 32 departments, is traditionally known for its research and education in the physical sciences and engineering, and more recently in biology, economics, linguistics, and management as well. MIT is often cited as among the world's top universities.

As of 2015, 84 Nobel laureates, 52 National Medal of Science recipients, 45 Rhodes Scholars, 38 MacArthur Fellows, 34 astronauts, and 2 Fields Medalists have been affiliated with MIT. The school has a strong entrepreneurial culture, and the aggregated revenues of companies founded by MIT alumni would rank as the eleventh-largest economy in the world.

The History

The history of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology can be traced back to the 1861 incorporation of the "Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Boston Society of Natural History" led primarily by William Barton Rogers.

Vision and mission

On April 10, 1861, the governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts signed a charter for the incorporation of the "Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Boston Society of Natural History" which had been submitted by William Barton Rogers, a natural scientist. Rogers sought to establish a new form of higher education to address the challenges posed by rapid advances in science and technology in the mid-19th century, that he believed classic institutions were ill-prepared to deal with.

Because open conflict in the Civil War broke out only two days later on April 12, 1861, Rogers faced enormous difficulties raising funds to match conditional financial commitments from the state. Thus, his recruitment of faculty and students was delayed, but eventually MIT's first classes were held in rented space at the Mercantile Building in downtown Boston in 1865.

Boston Tech (1865–1916)

Construction of the first MIT building was completed in Boston's Back Bay in 1866 and would be known as "Boston Tech" until the campus moved across the Charles River to Cambridge in 1916.

Francis Amasa Walker was elected President by the MIT Corporation on May 25, 1881. Walker established a new general course of study emphasizing economics, history, law, English, and modern languages.

New programs were also launched under Walker's tenure: Electrical Engineering in 1882, Chemical Engineering in 1888, Sanitary Engineering in 1889, Geology in 1890, Naval Architecture in 1893.

MIT was the first university in the nation to have a curriculum in: architecture (1865), electrical

engineering (1882), sanitary engineering (1889), naval architecture and marine engineering (1895), aeronautical engineering (1914), meteorology (1928), nuclear physics (1935), and artificial intelligence (1960s).

World War I (1917–1939)

A pilot training program was necessary as the United States Navy prepared for the emerging technology of naval aviation for World War I. Following the United States declaration of war on 6 April 1917, the Navy implemented a three-part pilot training program beginning with two months of ground school, followed by preliminary flight training teaching student pilots to fly solo, and advanced flight training to qualification as a naval aviator with a commission in the Naval Reserve Flying Corps.

World War II and Cold War (1940–1966)

MIT was drastically changed by its involvement in military research during World War Two. Bush, who had been MIT's Vice President was appointed head of the Office of Scientific Research and Development which was responsible for the Manhattan Project.

Social movements and activism (1966–1980)
Co-education
MIT has been nominally coeducational since admitting Ellen Swallow Richards in 1870. Female students, however, remained a tiny minority (numbered in dozens) prior to the completion of the first women's dormitory, McCormick Hall, in 1964. Women constituted 45% of the undergraduates and 31% of the graduate students enrolled in 2013.

Anti-war protests
However, by the late 1960s and early 1970s, intense protests by student and faculty activists against military-related research required that the MIT administration spin these laboratories off into what would become the Charles Stark Draper Laboratory and Lincoln Laboratory.

Social movements
MIT's particular strain of anti-authoritarianism has manifested itself in other forms. In 1977, two female students, juniors Susan Gilbert and Roxanne Ritchie, were disciplined for publishing an article on April 28 of that year in the "alternative" MIT campus weekly Thursday. Entitled "Consumer Guide to MIT Men," the article was a sex survey of 36 men the two claimed to have had sex with, and the men were rated according to their performance. Gilbert and Ritchie had intended to turn the tables on the rating systems and facebooks men use for women, but their article led not only to disciplinary action against them but also to a protest petition signed by 200 students, as well as condemnation by President Jerome B. Wiesner, who published a fierce criticism of the article.