

Name: Shasha Kamini Supramaniam  
Intake: MSCM 2019

Human Libraries. Dreading cold weather of Boston, and given the increased use of online learning, I wondered why at the high price of carbon footprints and other pecuniary expenses incurred to attend the IAP, and after 3 weeks, this was my answer. Collective knowledge, collaboration, patience and determination were key in navigating the MIT campus and completion of IAP activities.



**Outside the Strata Building which housed Room 32-123, where most of our classes were held**

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The cold and unwelcoming weather was balanced by the warmth of the participants who were eager to share experience, knowledge and cultural practices. We huddled together to, united by our need to complete assignments the common enemy, and unfamiliar faces turned from fresh connections to well filled data sets which integrated to form answers. Having spent months under the nurturing eyes of MISI faculty, it was rather overwhelming to be in a hall of 180 students of outstanding talent, yet it was most reassuring to have 179 other classmates to reduce the probabilities of being called upon to answer questions.



**With Malaysian Students for preparing for our Posters for submission for the Research Expo**

Whilst the IAP stands for Independent Activities Period, many times throughout the program it felt like it should have been called the Intense Application Period as the activities required participants to apply all the theories we had studied in an integrated manner and shape our understanding of Supply Chain Dynamics.

The wealth of information we were fed that had to be digested like snakes, we had to expand our minds as wide as possible for the volume of information supplied in the course of 3 weeks, as our Leadership Workshops, APICS Competition, the Fresh Connection Challenge, Industry Tours, Speaker Series, Llamasoft Workshop and Introduction to Python were our mental meals. Unlike snakes who slept while digesting such meals, the poverty of sleep was the only solution to enable consumption. Humour and inside jokes were behind the scenes of the many smiles that were photographed and powered us through another long day.

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**Receiving the Llamasoft Workshop Certificate**

Yet, there was more to IAP than the activities if you really looked, many times during the IAP, I was most grateful that the nature of my thesis (or my thesis advisor's guidance) required I hone

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my observational and listening skills as this changed my perspective and increased my extraction of data during IAP, for attention to detail was not only useful for coding in Python but also during a visit to a distribution centre and even working with classmates on presentations.

Classmates, from all walks of life and all ranges of age groups with diverse backgrounds and culture who imparted sage wisdoms in their own way whether of professional or personal nature and whether by word or deed. Their skills, talents and specialized skill sets made you grateful for technology that facilitated staying in linking up in a click, which in a way made the IAP an Increased Acquaintance Period as well.

Apart from IAP, the location of the Residence Inn and proximity to the campus and public transportation, facilitate exploring the historical richness of Boston, the beautiful landscape of the Boston river, rival institutions, inspirational museums and spread of cuisine.

### **3 Positive Key Highlights**

1. Approachability of the Professors and speakers from the speaker series, particularly from the Industry made such sessions engaging and provided industrial insight to students theoretical knowledge.
2. The Leadership Workshops were really eye-opening, teaching us a lot of soft skills which have not been captured as succinctly by the various management books that I have read so far. I particularly enjoyed the multi-cultural awareness workshop, and it was so easy to understand not just because of the presenter, but also due to the fact that we could immediately refer to our international classmates for real life examples.
3. The Llamasoft workshop was unique as we were required to complete preparatory work prior to the workshop and whilst it was a lot to process and learn in a short span of time, Gary Stickler's enthusiasm, approachability and patience during the course really made the course worthwhile even when at times there were bugs in the system to endure or tedium of the data entry aspects of the programme were irksome for a workshop that was fixed as the last slot of the day.

### **3 Points of Improvements**

1. It would be helpful if similar to the OBS program, students are recommended or forewarned on items/precautions to take such as winter boots, raincoats, flu shots , medical insurance coverage etc.
2. It would be useful if a link to a soft copy of the IAP schedule could be made accessible by Students via the E-class portal and would also recommend contrasting font for Room Location in the schedule to reduce any class location confusion. Additionally, when there are last minute classroom changes an updated soft copy could be easily updated.
3. It would be really helpful and useful if a quick tour of the crucial classrooms locations is conducted for non-residential students this could be integrated as part of the ice breaking sessions or in the alternative a soft copy of the map of MIT campus in Google Earth format or visual representations of the relevant buildings are included to aid in navigating around the campus.