

MITOCW | MIT3_091F18_intro_300k

I want to tell you a thing, though, because here's the thing, goody bags are-- it's a little bit of what's going on here?

This is a lecture class.

Why are we getting goody bags?

And it's because I believe in the soul of MIT.

I believe in the soul of MIT.

And that is that we learn best by thinking and doing, by thinking and doing.

And even though this is a lecture class, I still want you to do.

I want you to have stuff in your hands so that you can play with the chemistry that we're learning about.

Now, this goes back.

I said the soul of MIT.

What do I mean?

This goes back, all the way back to before MIT was born, 1850s.

You've got a group of really smart people.

They're getting together and they're meeting.

And they're saying, OK, we're going to start up a new university.

What should we do?

And they wrote out a plan.

They wrote out a plan.

And it's called the institute plan.

That makes sense, 1860.

It's a great read.

But I want to pull out one part that's really important, that what they wanted to do with this great new institution was to do something that would serve the interests of the commerce and the arts, as well as of general education, call for the most earnest cooperation of intelligent culture with industrial pursuits, intelligent culture, industrial pursuits.

That is Mens et Manus.

Mind and Hand.

It's so important to MIT that we put it on our logo.

We put it on our logo.

That's how important it is.

We don't put some animal on our logo.

We put what matters, mens et manus.

We don't put the word truth.

Veritas, veritas, I mean, I'm not going to name names, Harvard.

But I mean, isn't that setting the bar kind of low?

You know, were they lying before?

I don't know.

I'm not-- look, honestly I don't know.

I don't know.

But what I know is that what we know is that, of course, the goal is truth.

The difference is, we know how to get it.

Mens et manus is how to get it.

Let me ask you a question.

Why are you here?

Not here in this classroom.

I know you're in the classroom because you signed up for it.

Why are you at MIT?

Why are you here at MIT?

I can tell you, you are here because you are some of the brightest, most gifted, most talented students on the planet.

Right?

Thank you, whoever said that.

Agreement.

That was like a like online.

But you are here because you want to use those talents to make the world a better place.

You are here because you know how to answer any question.

But you are also here because you are going to experience a transition.

You are going to experience a transition here.

You are going to make the transition from knowing how to answer any question to knowing which question to ask.

And that is the transition from student to scholar.

That is MIT.

That's mens et manus.

Now, it's not easy.

You don't come here-- nobody comes to MIT to phone it in.

If universities were restaurants, this wouldn't be that fancy one where you go in and you order, and then somebody cooks and brings you your food.

This would be the one where we all go back into the kitchen and together we make the best meal we've ever had.

That's the MIT way.

And it's not about-- you don't roam the halls here and bask in this reputation and think of it as some privilege to be here, because you are MIT's reputation.

Freshmen, raise your hand.

Yeah.

Starting-- There's a few of you.

Starting today, you are MIT's reputation.

Starting today.

It's on you.

So we don't walk around these great halls and feel privilege.

We feel responsibility.

That's what it means to be here.

OK?

All right.

Good.