



Master of Information Student Council
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Claude Bissell Building, 7th Floor, Student Lounge
September 16th, 2014 at 4:00-6:00pm

MISC Meeting

Minutes

Present: Jessie Wionzek, Hannah Saunders, Carolyn Dineen, Diana Kulpa, Catherine Lamoureux, Lucy Szczesniak (left 5:20), Mari Vihuri, Hilary Barlow, Akash Venkat (arrived 4:35; left 5:45), Leah Strudwick (arrived 4:50), Mehreen Athar (arrived 5:00)

Regrets: Amanda Chernawski

Absent: Junoh Kim

Observers: Christopher Piché, Brandon Fratarcangeli, Mark Marji, Christopher Hogendoorn, Karen Lees, Kelly Turner

1. **Approval of the agenda**
 - a. Second: Jessie; approved unanimously
2. **Reading and approval of the minutes**
 - a. Second: Jessie; approved unanimously
3. **Business arising from the minutes**
4. **Reports by Executives:**
 - a. **President (Hilary Barlow)**
 - i. Prof. Wendy Duff will be with us today to answer your questions about the TALINT program. Her class finishes at 4 pm so we will proceed with other agenda items until she arrives. See **Appendix B** for a copy of the report presented to Professor Duff, as well as the minutes from the discussion.

- ii. Hilary, Mari, Catherine and Stephanie Abba (a part-time student) met today with Dean Locke Rowe of the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) and Dean Seamus Ross regarding the program length for part-time students. Please see **Appendix A** for a copy of the report delivered to Deans Rowe and Ross by MISC and additional documentation. There were two main outcomes from this meeting:
1. The meeting provided MISC with new insight into how the part-time MI program is funded. As communicated by SGS, professional master's programs like the MI program are funded in two ways: 1) through student tuition fees, and 2) through funding from the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. Unfortunately, the way that the ministry pays the university for part-time students is based on a calculation that, for a 2-year program at full-time is stretched over 5.5 years for part-time students. If a part-time student finishes their degree faster than this 5.5-year calculation, the ministry does not provide the remainder of the funding for that student to the university, resulting in a significant financial loss for the university. The calendar changes that were undertaken by the SGS in late 2012 intended to address this funding issue, by changing the minimum length of part-time programs at UofT so they correspond with the ministry's funding approach. MISC reiterated the reasons why we believe this increased part-time program length is detrimental to our students and our program overall, but it is unlikely that we will be able to solicit any changes through the SGS at this time. Since the Graduate Student Union (GSU) has already been in communication with the ministry about this issue, MISC will follow up with the GSU to see where those discussions stand and how we might be able to contribute.
 2. However, MISC is very happy to announce that we have successfully negotiated for part-time students who began their degree in September 2013 to be "grandfathered" into the earlier calendar definition of part-time studies, allowing them to complete their degree in 3.5 years instead of 5.5. Please see **Appendix A** for a letter confirming this decision from Dean Rowe at the SGS. MISC will send a follow-up e-mail to the part-time students we have been in contact with about this issue. We will also follow up with the Faculty of Information until we are satisfied that all Fall 2013 part-timers have been contacted and made aware of their options.

- iii. Orientation post-mortem: will leave more detail to Hannah & Leah, but just wanted to say that the events went very well and the turnout was great! Thanks to everyone who came out and helped, led a tour etc.
- iv. Hilary heard from the students who became ill while interning at the Nelson Mandela Foundation in South Africa. At this point, they consider the issue resolved. Documentation has been submitted and they have both received medical care. They will let us know if there are any updates.
 - 1. Mari asked whether the Faculty would be continuing this program in the future, and that we should keep an eye on their decisions regarding/in response to this matter in the future.
 - 2. It was noted that Adriana did not discuss this at an Information Night this summer because she was uncertain whether or not the iSchool would be continuing this program.
- v. A few months ago, a student came forward concerned about the issue of sexual harassment on campus. She expressed interest to MISC in having a Wen-Do session at the iSchool. Wen-Do is a self-defence and safety class for women. It's free and provided through the Community Safety Office, and we just need to have 10 or more participants to host one. Hilary is planning to arrange one for October.
 - 1. Catherine asked if we could add a caveat that self-defence tends to put the onus on the victim rather than the harasser. If MISC supports this, we'd have to be careful about how we advertise it.
 - 2. Mari noted that MISC could investigate similar workshops that are more gender-inclusive/take a different approach. Hilary suggested looking into community safety/non-profit organizations that do similar things.
- vi. CALL (the Canadian Association of Law Libraries) is looking for students to start Special Interest Groups or SIGs. Amanda has contacted CALL expressing interest in starting a SIG so email her if you want to get involved (amanda.chernawski@mail.utoronto.ca).
 - 1. Mari noted that the PD chair could take on a "stewardship" role of iSchool student groups that are defunct or floundering (eg. not passed on year-to-year) - for example, by listing them on the website, and bringing them up at the Clubs Showcase and similar

events to make people aware of these organizations. Jessie and Mari will discuss.

- vii. Many second-year students have been communicating their frustrations with course enrollment for fall, particularly not being able to take courses they were anticipating taking in their second year, including courses that are part of their personal career goals. The Association of Canadian Archivists student chapter is trying to get another ARM class for the winter semester. Since Hilary received some of these messages, additional sections were added for several high-demand classes. What are your thoughts on course offerings this semester (and what we can see from the winter semester) and the accommodations with new sections?
 - 1. Kelly said that the main push for more courses came mainly from an array of ARM students and not just the ACA.
 - 2. Catherine asked if there's a system in place to regulate what time instructors and staff go on sabbatical. Kelly noted that Wendy addressed this at the ACA meeting: because many instructors were hired at the same time, their sabbaticals came at the same time, and since this was the first sabbatical for many of them they were reluctant to postpone it.
 - 3. Mari noted that complaints about the timetable have been common over the years. She also mentioned that she compiled a lot of data this summer on the classes that have been taught during the past few years (as part of organizing previous class reps and reports), so she suggested the Academic Affairs Chair could take a look at this to get a rough sense of how many courses were offered each term, in what concentrations, etc.

b. Vice President (Vacant)

c. Secretary (Jessie Wionzek)

- i. Elections & nominations - spread the word!

d. Treasurer (Lucy Szczesniak)

- i. Would like to update on preparing documents for audit exemption. Working towards pulling together final components and tying loose ends. There is some overlap into this year's fiscal year, but this can be easily explained in a side note (and is expected).

- ii. Waiting to hear from Kirsten Wallace regarding setting up an appointment - she will be able to provide more info/direction regarding applying for the GSU head grant for 2014/2015 year.

e. Webmaster (Mari Vihuri)

- i. Announcements form has been redesigned and launched
- ii. MISConnect: Card sorting exercise forthcoming, to help develop a good information architecture for our shared drive
- iii. Will be in touch with committee chairs (Social, PD, Merch) soon to redesign their sections of the website, allow chairs ability to update their own spaces

5. Reports by Committee Chairs:

a. Academic Affairs (Carolyn Dineen)

- i. Just a quick reminder to MISC members to remind their profs to elect a class rep

b. Professional Development (Jessie Wionzek)

- i. Our Clubs Showcase is tomorrow! Free food! Tell your friends! (@ 4pm in the student lounge)

c. Social (Leah Strudwick & Hannah Saunders)

- i. Hannah noted that the next Social event will be the Trivia Night next Friday at 7:30.
- ii. Leah noted that Sammy's changed their format for events like this, so their last call is earlier. If the turnout for this event is good, we can justify having a bar deposit and thus stay later in the future.

d. Merchandise (Mehreen Athar)

- i. One person is purchasing two mugs!
- ii. Mehreen noted she needs a receipt book. Lucy volunteered to help her get one.

e. Survey Committee (Diana Kulpa)

- i. Mary Gu has forwarded the data for the 2012/13 survey which will be put into report format for the beginning of October. Hannah Loshak is working on the 2013/14 survey and she expects to have it finished by the beginning of October as well.
 1. Hilary said she'll email Hannah re: her working on the 2013/14 survey data.

6. Reports by Representatives:

a. Alumni Association (Catherine Lamoureux)

- i. No report (first FIAA meeting of the year not until September 17)
- ii. Office hours
 1. Catherine said other MISC members are welcome to join her during her office hours in the lobby. She suggested creating a signup sheet (eg. a Google doc) for people to join her.
 2. Diana asked what the hours are. Catherine hasn't decided yet but confirmed that they will be consistent once decided upon.
 3. Diana also asked if conference grants are only available to people who are presenting. Catherine confirmed that this is correct.

b. MISC-MUSSA Liaison (Vacant)

- i. Hilary noted that Marianne had to resign, so the position is open. MUSSA has received one nomination for the position.

c. Admissions Committee (Vacant)

- i. This position has been reopened for election as well.

d. Faculty Council (Hilary Barlow et al.)

- i. First meeting of the fall semester is on October 17.
 1. Mari expressed concern about MISC committee reps being added to Faculty Council committee listservs and being informed about meetings and discussions now that Areti Vourinaris and Andrew Drummond are no longer at the faculty. She recommended that Hilary email the chairs of the FC committees to ensure our reps are kept in the loop.

e. Graduate Students' Union (Mehreen Athar)

- i. Mehreen said she has a problem since she has class at the same time as the GSU meetings. A GSU Rep position is open as well as the Vice-President position. Hilary responded that we will try to coordinate more on this issue once elections are over.

f. Student Tech Fund (Akash Venkat & Junoh Kim)

- i. Akash reported that things are going well at Tech Fund - equipment has been added and updated. TF is interested in purchasing more Macbook Pros but needs MISC approval since the purchase is over \$3000.
 1. Akash motioned to purchase the Macbook Pros. Second: Jessie; approved unanimously.
- ii. TF has lots of ideas for events throughout the school year (eg. Ideas Fair). TF is also looking for a first-year rep.

g. Information Services Committee (Mari Vihuri & Leah Strudwick)

- i. An Interim Director of Information Services has been appointed for this academic year. Lari Langford comes to us from Access and Information Services at Robarts Library (UTL), where she has been the head of the department for the past 20 years.
- ii. MISC has received frustrated comments from several students about the new Inforum hours. Many students enjoyed working and meeting colleagues in the Inforum during the evening and weekends. Part-time students have also expressed concerns that this prevents them from using the Inforum space to study or work on assignments with groups. Mari has proposed e-mailing the new ISC Chair (Rhonda McEwan) to communicate student feedback about this issue.
 1. A student brought up the fact that it's difficult to get books because of his course and work hours since several of the books he needs for class are on reserve in the Inforum. He suggested making copies available at the Robarts reserves. Several MISC members agreed that this was a good idea.
 - a. Mari recalls that the ISC discussed alternative solutions to staffing issues in a committee meeting during the 2012-2013 academic year (e.g. hiring more work study students, offering practicum placements, after-hours fob access for

students, etc.) but at the time none of the options were considered feasible.

- b. Mari suggested that students having trouble accessing course reserve books bring it up with their professors so the faculty is aware of the issue and can communicate their concerns to Information Services as well.

h. Life and Times Committee (Vacant)

- i. Hilary received confirmation from the Life & Times Committee that our clubs showcase and mental health event will NOT be iTeas. The iTea schedule will be three teas per term (the first was the September 10 welcome tea and the next one will be Halloween). The timeslot that was previously reserved for iTeas is now wide open for much of the semester, including for our clubs showcase (Wednesday, Sept 17).
 - 1. It has been communicated that the reduction in iTeas this year is mostly due to staffing issues (e.g. since key members of the L&T Committee like Jenna Hartel are on sabbatical), and that the iTeas will resume according to their normal schedule in the following academic year.
 - 2. MISC would like to note that we are very sympathetic about limited time and resources, but we look forward to the iTea series returning next year, as we believe a permanent reduction would be a huge loss to the faculty. We strongly feel that the iTeas play an important role in the social cohesion of the iSchool.
 - 3. MISC asked the Chair of the L&T Committee if we could use the “iTea” name and timeslot to run our own events this year, but permission was not granted. Carolyn asked why we are not allowed to use the name. Hilary responded that Nalini didn’t feel using the name would make much of a difference in regards to promotion, attendance, etc.
- ii. Proposal to run “iCheese” events in this timeslot instead for any MISC events that are of faculty-wide interest (e.g. Mental Health event)

i. Programs Committee (Carolyn Dineen)

- i. Unfortunately, Carolyn has a class that conflicts with Programs Committee meetings

1. Mari suggested that, if Carolyn resigns, we add her position to the nominations form ASAP.
2. Carolyn asked if the second Programs Committee chair has to be a second year (since the other position is a first year position). Mari replied that, when the second PC rep position in 2012-2013, the first and second years had completely different experiences of the program (as Fall 2012 entrants were no longer required to take the old core courses). Although this is not the case this year, having a senior student in the PC chair position is still beneficial since they are likely to be more familiar with the program.
3. Hilary told Carolyn to email her & Jessie re: her resignation.
4. Mari suggested sending an observer to the upcoming PC meeting in Carolyn's place if possible.

j. Committee on Standing (Diana Kulpa)

- i. Committee on Standing met Monday, September 8 and Wednesday, September 10, 2014 to cover developments and requests over the 2014 Spring/ Summer semesters. The next scheduled meeting will be on January 7, 2015.
 1. Mari asked Diana about her general experience of the meeting. Since most of the committee's discussions are obviously confidential, MISC does not know a lot about how the committee itself works. Diana noted that it was quite formal and fairly anonymous. Diana noted that one issue came up regarding a student and the registrar was given information re: their identity by the chair so that the registrar could address the issue.
 2. Mari asked if Diana could expand on the committee's policies and procedures for making decisions. Diana noted that university regulations were followed very closely, and that the committee tended to err on the side of the student.

7. New business

- a. Diana brought up ongoing issues with the IPS specialization (please refer to August 2014 minutes for more context). She is unsure of how to continue. She thinks there needs to be a more organized approach to addressing this. She'd like to contact the student body to gather information about those involved

with/interested in IPS and what their experiences with IPS have been. Hilary will put it in the digest.

- i. Mari said Hilary should bring it up at the Faculty Council meeting.
- ii. Diana brought up the fact that they're changing it to a collaborative program but are not making this fact public at all. She said it feels like false advertising.
- iii. Mari suggested that Diana help in the drafting of a Google form to send out via the digest to get the feedback we need in time to bring it up at Faculty Council.
- iv. Diana asked if it would be appropriate to send something similar out to alumni. Catherine responded that it would be appropriate, but that contacting alumni is very difficult, as there is no alumni listserv. Mari suggested using personal contacts to try to reach more alumni.

8. Adjourn

- a. Second: Jessie, approved unanimously

Appendix A: Part-time program length

Attach a copy of these documents to the body of the final version of the minutes.

A1. MISC report on part-time program length

A2. Letter from SGS following meeting

Appendix B: TALINT program discussion

Attach a copy of these documents to the body of the final version of the minutes.

B1. MISC report on TALINT program concerns

B2. TALINT Q&A with Wendy Duff