



Master of Information Student Council

University of Toronto, Faculty of Information

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Claude Bissell Building, 7th Floor, Student Lounge

January 13th, 2015 at 4:00-6:00pm

MISC Meeting

Minutes

Present: Hilary Barlow, Jessie Wionzek, Chris Hogendoorn, Catherine Lamoureux, Mari Vihuri, Mehreen Athar, Leah Strudwick, Calvin Tennakoon (left at 4:35), Lucy Szczesniak, Peymon Montazeri, Elisabeth Spalding, Sophia Kesik, Karen Lees, Amanda Chernawski, Stephanie Abba (present 4:10-4:40, 5:25-end), Haleigh Fox, Junoh Kim (left 5:35), Lilly Rigling, Katrina Cohen-Palacios (arrived (4:30) Janel Cheng (arrived 4:50), Julia King (arrived 4:55), Carolyn Dineen (arrived 5:30), Diana Kulpa (arrived 5:40)

Regrets: Hannah Saunders, Maya Cruz, Nuree Lee

Absent: Akash Venkat

1. Approval of the agenda

- a. Seconded by Jessie; passed unanimously

2. Reading and approval of the minutes

- a. Seconded by Jessie; one abstention; motion passed

3. Business arising from the minutes

4. Reports by Executives:

a. President (Hilary Barlow)

- i. On 17 December, Dean Ross distributed a copy of the much-anticipated [report](#) on Inforum/UTL collaboration and remodelling. The ideas outlined are consistent with what Hilary and Christopher had heard before. Two dates were given for “town hall” sessions where students could give their feedback.

Major kudos to Stephanie, who successfully petitioned the administration to add a third session.

- ii. What did you think of the town halls? How should MISC act with regard to the Inforum renovation issue going forward?
 1. Catherine brought up the issue of separating the physical aspects from the service aspects of the Inforum changes, and discussing centralization as a different issue. Hilary agreed that the loss of specialized services for iSchool students is one of the biggest concerns.
 2. Hilary asked if anyone had noticed if there were groups of students missing from the town halls (ie. KMD, etc students). Leah responded that she noticed many Semaphore and critical making representatives when she attended. Chris replied that someone brought up the idea of the Inforum “doing one thing well” and being a “model library”, which was misconstrued by some faculty members as meaning the Inforum should only be a library and not provide services to other groups. This was not the student’s intention.
 3. Hilary asked if MISC members would be comfortable collaborating on and submitting a document in response to the town halls as MISC. The council agreed unanimously.
 - a. Mari noted that Dean Ross has made it clear that they’re looking for concrete solutions to be used by the working group. Thus, MISC’s document will present an issue and pair it with potential solutions.
 - b. Librarians: Hilary noted that the vast majority of the response on this issue was that we need Inforum-specific librarians, not liaison librarians. Hilary motioned to include the need for our own librarians in the document.
 - i. Motion passed unanimously
 - c. Collections - course reserves: Chris and Leah noted that Dean Ross would like to move the course reserves and most of the collection to Robarts - in the case of course reserves, for access purposes. However, now that the Inforum’s hours have been extended, access is less of an issue. Hilary motioned to

include our being in favour of keeping the course reserves in the Inforum.

i. Motion passed unanimously

- d. Collections - general: Another key issue is whether or not all the information specialist-related print collection remain together or become integrated together with the Robarts stacks. Lucy brought up the point that Robarts already has overflow issues. Chris noted that it's also difficult to locate items in the Robarts stacks. Hilary asked if the Inforum has alumni cards that give access to only the Inforum (as opposed to the entire UTL system). Mari responded that this is the case. Hilary summarized the discussion by noting the majority of MISC believes that keeping the print collection/stacks in the Inforum is a good idea. Mari noted that the Inforum staff are well aware of what should be kept, added to, or discarded from the collection. Hilary motioned to include in the document a suggestion that we defer to the librarians regarding issues about the collection.

i. Motion passed unanimously

- e. Hilary asked for opinions on lab space. Chris noted that the Brian Cantwell Smith space is rarely used for its intended purpose; as such, it might be a good idea to research in the lab idea further - who would use them? For which projects? There's a very real chance that the labs will not be used. Karen brought up the point that tying specific courses/activities with the labs would give them a better chance of being used (and would make them useful). Stephanie noted that, at the town halls, the concrete aspects of the labs were not explained or discussed, even when she asked directly. She was met instead with words such as "corporate sponsorship." Chris responded with the new layout plan for the Inforum (~35% free space, the rest bookable - pods and labs, the latter linked to specific research/activities). Theoretically, it was agreed that the labs are a good idea; however, their nebulous nature makes many people unsure of its usefulness and value. Leah asked what our proposed solution would be; Chris responded that many people have suggested looking at the rest of the building for potential space. He brought up the example of

the Usability Lab, which was used well in the past but is now in disuse/underutilized. Leah added that the space needs to be planned with a longitudinal focus. Mari also brought up the point that the iSchool doesn't own all the iSchool space (eg. the third floor); Chris responded that we could potentially buy it back. Catherine responded that, since the iSchool is in a deficit, the University won't sell it back to us. Some MISC members suggested using the first floor. It was also noted that there is a museum studies lab on the first floor that is rarely used. Mari inquired about the ownership status of the lounge; Chris replied that an alumni at one of the town halls suggested looking at the lounge as potential space for revamping. Chris suggested soundproofing the study rooms in the Inforum. Hilary motioned that we include a suggestion that any lab space proposed must be accompanied with a curricular plan to ensure its long-term usability and value.

- i. Motion passed unanimously
- f. Collaboration pods: It was noted that the value of these pods is doubtful - being in a clear glass pod in the middle of a room is unlikely to facilitate valuable collaboration. Chris noted that group work/collaboration takes place all over the iSchool and cannot necessarily be "reined in" by creating bookable space. Mari noted that there are better ways to spend our money (ie. soundproofing the study rooms in the Inforum) than to build things that are not useful. Chris noted that the idea of renovating the Inforum could also be accomplished by knocking out the wall where the study rooms are and replacing it with glass, for example. Leah noted that having a glass wall would also make it clear whether or not the rooms are being used. Chris said that it's vital to be critical about whether or not the proposed ideas will actually facilitate collaboration or merely serve to make the Inforum look nice. Catherine added that it would be very easy to spend \$2.8 million merely renovating the Inforum, much less adding all these new things. It was widely agreed upon that the Inforum, which is a vital space for the iSchool community, does not look very good/is not very attractive. It would also be nice if we could have the asbestos removed. Haleigh asked if there was or will be an external audit about the space, as a

contractor's ideas re: the building will differ greatly from Dean Ross', etc. It was noted that Dean Ross would not likely be open to another external review. Hilary motioned to include the above suggestions and notes in the document.

i. Motion passed unanimously

g. Vending machines & technology: Chris brought up the issue that a vending machine would still rely on a technician to be restocked. Hilary motioned to include a suggestion along these lines, including our concerns about the sustainability and feasibility of the vending machines. Mari also noted that such implementations should serve to assist the staff and users of the Inforum.

i. Motion passed unanimously

h. Finally, Hilary noted that she'll be sending the document out to MISC members late Thursday or Friday. If a council member does not reply, their approval of the document will be assumed. MISC agreed that this was a good idea.

iii. MISC's annual mental health event is tentatively scheduled for 12 February at 4 pm in the student lounge. Program to include a presentation about Grad Minds by Mari, some de-stressing coping mechanisms by Leah, some discussion, and doggies. Any other ideas for the event?

1. Hilary has scheduled two massage therapists to be there for the duration of the event. We can also get refreshments.

iv. Prof Susan Sim put forward a plan to finally merge the two iSchool websites. The current plan is for the work to be done during a hackathon over winter reading week. Hilary attended a meeting on 21 January to discuss it with Prof Sim and the presidents of MUSSA and the DSA. The work will be unpaid but participants will be provided with breakfast, lunch and snacks, as well as the experience gained from working on the website and letters of recommendation. Hilary said she wasn't crazy about the unpaid aspect but recognized the opportunity for skills-building and the need to integrate the two websites. There is a [Google form](#) for signing up.

v. Hilary attended the 2015 Course Union Presidents Lunch on 21 January. It was very productive and a lot of unions have problems comparable to ours (or worse). U of T does not have a sexual assault policy in place and there is a

movement to change that. UTGSU exec Nickie Van Lier will be giving talks to unions about the issue in February and Hilary has signed up to schedule one. There will also be an event to address the issues particular to professional programs in March.

b. Vice President (Chris Hogendoorn)

- i. At the request of Madam President, I was present at the Information Services Committee meeting on 12 December.
 1. A new collections policy document for the Inforum was passed conditionally. The reason for this is the uncertainty around the Inforum redesign. It included such things as the intention to continue the reduction of print periodicals, and the potential to set up a vendor-approval plan. The librarians were obviously frustrated, as this took a long time to complete, and it may be swept aside if the collection is moved to Robarts.
 2. Dr. McEwan voiced her disapproval of Dean Ross' delay in dispersing the working group's Inforum report, as well as the fact that it seems to have bypassed the ISC altogether, which would violate the faculty's governance policies. The raised existential issues amongst the membership, and people wondered if the ISC was becoming a redundant body if all the changes would be done in working groups.
 3. The issue of rooms 313 and 319 were brought up, as the curtain wall is no longer functioning, and the university's central space office, which has control of the room, needs to decide if they want one or two rooms, as the next time they move the curtain will be the last. This is due to the inability to find a replacement part for the curtain's mobility mechanism. The revelation that we do not own the room is also explains why the technological equipment in the room is substandard.
 4. The committee determined that finding a new faculty web content curator was desirable. This position has been vacant since Nalini Singh resigned from it a few years ago. At Faculty Council, a "committee," which is really just Dr. Sim, was struck to fix the website. As recent e-mails have noted, this effort is apparently moving forward in the form of a "Hackathon" movement.

- 5. Nalini Singh announced the return of reasonable Inforum hours for the winter semester: Monday-Thursday, 8:45-22:00; Friday, 8:45-17:00; Saturday, 10:00-18:00.
 - ii. Please do not plug more than one kettle into the designated outlet at once. Facility Services has informed Chris, after turning the power back on, that half of that wall is on the same circuit, and this will cause the fuse to blow. If you absolutely must boil two kettles at once, use an outlet on the other side of the room.
 - c. **Secretary (Jessie Wionzek) - no report**
 - d. **Treasurer (Lucy Szczesniak)**
 - i. Lucy and Hilary reminded everyone to submit cheque requisition forms and to cash their cheques; thus far it looks as though we are under-spending.
 - ii. Lucy has submitted our application for the GSU head grant.
 - iii. Lucy is going to look into setting up a savings account for MISC.
 - iv. Chris asked if surplus budget was carried over; Lucy and Hilary responded that this is the case.
 - e. **Webmaster (Mari Vihuri) - no report**
5. **Reports by Committee Chairs:**
- a. **Academic Affairs (Carolyn Dineen)**
 - i. Currently recruiting class reps - slower sign-up than last term, so please remind your profs if you don't already have a class rep!
 - ii. Class rep pizza party (for all terms) - Feb 3, 4-6pm in the Lounge. Invite your friends! I will be sending out an announcement to class reps when we have some more of them so they can let their classes know
 - b. **Professional Development (Jessie Wionzek & Julia King) - no report**
 - c. **Social (Leah Strudwick & Hannah Saunders)**
 - i. Upcoming Event - January 23rd - Games night! Come and bring some games, have a jolly good time
 - ii. Therapy dogs to return in March

- iii. Keep an eye out for more food bombs
- iv. End of semester party was a success! Thanks to all who came :)
 - 1. If anyone has any requests for this semester's end of term party please pass them along

d. Merchandise (Mehreen Athar)

- i. Button Making Workshop - Feb 4th?
 - 1. There was general consensus that this is a good date.
- ii. MISC hoodie sale - coming up in March (with more colours!)
- iii. Any interest in a MISC sweatpants sale?
 - 1. Several MISC members expressed interest in sweatpants.

6. Reports by Representatives:

a. Alumni Association (Catherine Lamoureux)

- i. Silent auction funds to go to Grants & Awards in 2015
- ii. Bertha Bassam lecture by R. David Lankes will be March 11th
- iii. November research/conference grants have been allocated; recipients not yet announced
- iv. FIAA soliciting feedback from alumni on the Inforum proposal

b. MISC-MUSSA Liaison (Haleigh Fox) - no report

c. Admissions Committee (Karen Lees)

- i. No report (Admissions Committee meeting is Jan 22)

d. Faculty Council (Hilary Barlow et al.)

- i. Next Faculty Council meeting is 6 February.

e. Graduate Students' Union (Lilly Rigling & Karen Lees)

- i. Please see report in appendix

f. Student Tech Fund (Akash Venkat, Junoh Kim & Nuree Lee) - no report

g. Information Services Committee (Janel Cheng)

- i. Chris attended the latest ISC meeting, see Vice-President's report.

h. Life and Times Committee (Amanda Chernawski) - no report

i. Programs Committee (Catherine Lamoureux & Calvin Tennakoon)

- i. No report (ProgCom hasn't met since last MISC meeting)
- ii. Hilary noted that there will be something before the Committee at the next meeting about the co-op program (Jan. 29th). From Wendy Duff on co-ops:
 - 1. \$50 application fee
 - a. Janel asked what the fee is for; Carolyn responded that it's fairly typical to have this type of fee - eg. for human resources
 - 2. Two 12-week co-ops, one in the summer after first year and one in the winter of the second year
 - 3. It costs \$600 per year extra to participate in the co-op on top of other tuition
 - 4. 30 students will be able to participate in the first year
 - 5. There will be classes attached - more like the museum studies ones, less like the practicum ones
 - 6. It was emphasized that CRO students can do an internship
 - 7. Since the co-op is for two years, students will have to return for a second year
 - 8. Wendy confirmed that she's in favour of a student representative being on a TALint committee
 - 9. Lilly asked if there was any discussion of how it would affect international students. Hilary said she would ask.
 - 10. Chris asked how the rate of pay worked - is it similar to other co-op payments, or is it appropriate to the workplace/level of work? This matter will be investigated.

j. Committee on Standing (Diana Kulpa)

- i. Committee on Standing met Wednesday, January 7 to vote on thesis committees, late withdrawals, and course extension issues that arose during the Fall 2014 semester
- ii. The next Committee on Standing meeting will be in May 2015; the exact date is still to be decided

k. MISC Student Survey Working Group (Diana Kulpa):

- i. **2012-2013 survey report** completed; after MISC review, it is ready for dissemination to the iSchool
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UYDjNMwlUXuBajbuFgaEa_7AOf37MSATDYpvNn8hoVw/edit
 1. Diana asked if there would be any need for a motion to be passed/a MISC review of the report prior to dissemination. Hilary agreed that passing a motion would be a good idea.
- ii. **2013-2014 survey report** still pending. Dian has not heard back from Hannah Loshak, but sent her a follow up email on December 27, 2014 and again today, January 21, 2015. If someone has any suggestions on how to get in touch with her, then please let her know.
- iii. **2014-2015 survey** to be administered at the end of January 2015. Peymon will be participating in this project too.
 1. Mari brought up the point that this might be too early. Hilary noted that the survey could be created earlier and the link sent out later. Diana noted some doubt about having a successor capable of handling the survey data and expressed interest in handling the data herself, in a timely manner.

7. New business

- a. During the meeting Diana noted a member of the caretaking staff emptying items from the various bins (garbage, green bin, and recycling) into the same bag. She inquired as to whether or not these items are really separated or if they end up in the same place. Chris will investigate.

8. Adjourn

- a. Seconded by Jessie; passed unanimously

Appendix

Written reports

GSU Shenanigans – General Council meeting 12 January 2015

- Introduced conflict of interest rules (finally) – defined by a financial connection to the issue
- Leah Bender lawsuit – argued over language redact/retract/rescind/remove
 - She retracted her statement from the September meeting and wanted it redacted from the minutes
 - Brad Evoy and MISC representatives among others wanted further negotiations to reflect the retraction in the minutes, but without actually removing the statement. We lost, it was redacted because everybody was sick of that lawsuit.
- Donations – the executives recommended \$600 for Black History Month Student Collective & it was approved
- Approved referendum question for Sexual Education Centre
- We appointed a CRO for next year’s executive elections. Notice we did not elect one because there was only one volunteer (/self-nomination/tribute). It was also a struggle getting volunteers to help on the elections committee.
- Callaghan vs. UTGSU
 - *In camera* – we got to see his argument but were not provided with the defense. If we go to the UTGSU offices and ask for the defense it is public information
 - General Council has no trust in the executives to handle it appropriately, so they placed responsibility on a committee made of two general members and two executives, though all the executives are allowed to attend
 - Three volunteered for the two general positions, the vote was counted unclearly, and in the confusion one person withdrew
- Litigation committee RE: CFS vote
 - Found out there were 290 online/distance students, 190 studying abroad, and over 2500 that graduated between quorum decision and vote
 - Technically the vote is not over because the CRO won’t respond to anything or finish counting the double envelopes
- Lawyer RE: CFS vote
 - *In camera* - All we can say is something legal is still being pursued?
 - Decision to be reassessed next meeting because we’re using up the UTGSU ‘s savings
- Finances
 - Have \$275,000 in savings built up over 25 years. No clear plans for it but potential scholarships discussed recently. Little will be left after all the lawsuits this year.
 - Need to ‘strike a new fund’ for current lawsuits, because the accounts have specific rules about what they can be used for. They set aside \$150 000 for this purpose.

- Meeting adjourned at 10:15 – 20 minutes after we were allowed to be in the room
- Agenda items skipped:
 - Executive vacancies (2)
 - Motions carried from AGM
 - Reports from November, December, and January
 - By-law and policy amendments
 - Mexican student association letter of support
 - Limiting paper use at council