

The MISC and MSGSA's First Annual 2011/2012 Tech Fund Report

The Tech Fund: Who we are and what we do

The Tech Fund is a student-centered initiative at the iSchool that focuses on supporting the information, communication, and technology needs of the Master of Information (MI) and Master of Museum Studies (MMSt) students at the iSchool. During the 2011/2012 school year, full-time equivalent (FTE) students in the MI and MMSt programs contributed \$100 to the fund, while the Provost's office contributed \$50 for every FTE enrolled in the faculty.

The Tech Fund committee members have used the fund in the past to purchase new hardware and software for the faculty, fund workshops to promote the development of professional skills, and supply the funds for facilities and lounge improvements.

Ultimately, the Tech Fund is dedicated to improving the student experience at the iSchool. While this report will not only discuss the findings of our recent Tech Fund survey, it will also highlight past and current initiatives we have undertaken to foster and enhance the learning and research services for MI and MMSt students.

Your Tech Fund Reps

In 2011, the MMSt students began contributing to the Tech Fund; therefore, the MMSt students now elect two representatives to sit on the Tech Fund. The MI students continue to elect three representatives to the Tech Fund. All of the student members are given one vote, while the committee's faculty and Information Technology Services members fulfill an advisory role.

Your student representatives for the 2011/2012 academic year are:

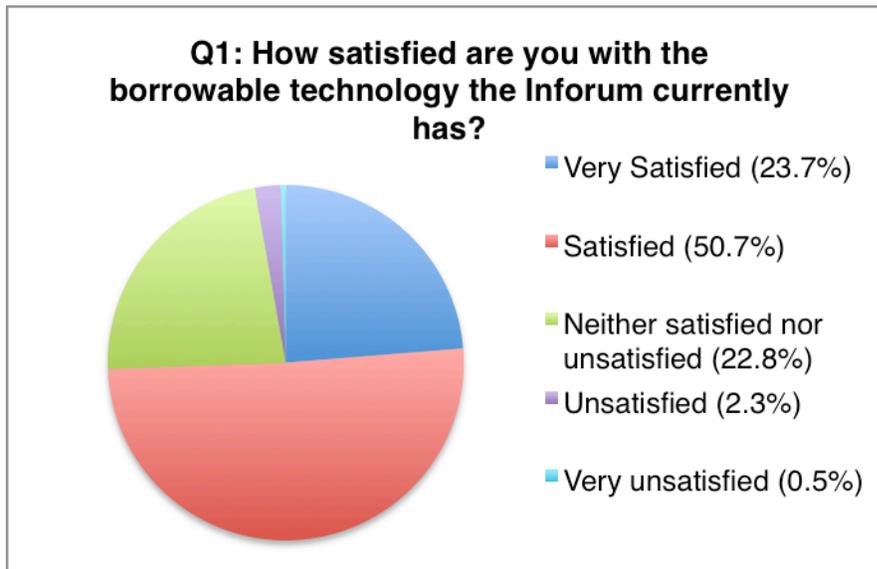
- 2 second-year MI students (Claudio Munoz & Stephanie Quail)
 - claudio.munoz@utoronto.ca
 - stephanie.quail@utoronto.ca
- 1 second-year MMSt student (Rebecca Michaels)
 - rebecca.michaels@utoronto.ca
- 1 first-year MI student (Emily Porta)
 - em.porta@utoronto.ca
- 1 first-year MMSt student (Jennie Fiddes)
 - jennie.fiddes@utoronto.ca
- This year we also have a first-year MI student acting as a non-voting information technology consultant (David Jorjani)
 - jorjani@cs.toronto.edu

Students can also contact the Tech Fund by sending an email to our new account:
techfund.ischool@utoronto.ca

The Tech Fund Survey

On February 1, 2012, the Tech Fund held an iTea to raise awareness of Tech Fund purchases and to gather student feedback; however, as not all students are able to attend the iTeas, we also distributed an electronic survey to help us develop a better understanding of student needs. Currently, there are 433 MI students and 76 MMS students enrolled at the iSchool. The survey had a participation rate of approximately 39%, as 199 students at the iSchool completed the survey. The following report will summarize the findings of this survey, while also highlighting past and current Tech Fund initiatives.

Findings: Question 1

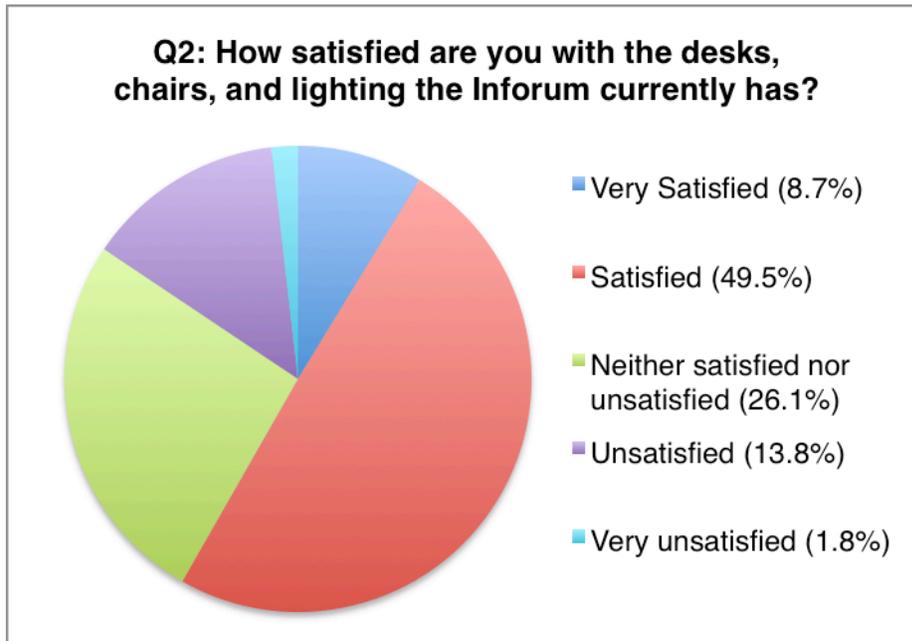


Question 1 asked students to rate their satisfaction with the borrowable technology available at the Inforum. Overall, the satisfaction rate of students was fairly high; however, the open-ended response section of **Question 1** gave the Tech Fund a variety of ideas for improving the borrowable technology in the Inforum:

Student Ideas	The Tech Fund's Response
Current Solutions from the Tech Fund	
Scanners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We purchased new flat bed scanners in January 2012 - they will be installed by the end of March 2012.
USB mice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We purchased 30 USB mice in May 2011 - they can be borrowed from the Inforum.
Issues that require further discussion	
Purchase MS OneNote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are always happy to purchase software that supports student activities. We will discuss site licensing for OneNote at our next meeting and keep students posted.
French keyboards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current idea: purchase French keyboards that can be borrowed at the Inforum. We will report back to students.

Longer borrowing periods for equipment & overnight laptop rentals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will discuss this with the Inforum and report back to students.
Open source software for laptops and netbooks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We already have some open source software such as Open Office on the laptops and netbooks. Please email additional suggestions to the Tech Fund.
Consistent hardware/software updates and maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hardware/software updates are performed 3 times a year. We will work with the Inforum to create a better maintenance policy.
Projects that will be completed before or by September 2012	
Better video camera equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be purchased by September 2012 – if you have specific suggestions such as brands or models, email a Tech Fund rep.
Kindle Fire/New Kobos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be purchased by September 2012.
More Mac power cords	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be purchased ASAP.
More tablets and different types of tablet brands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be purchased by September 2012 - if you have specific suggestions, email a Tech Fund rep
New MacBooks, PC laptops, and netbooks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be purchased by September 2012.

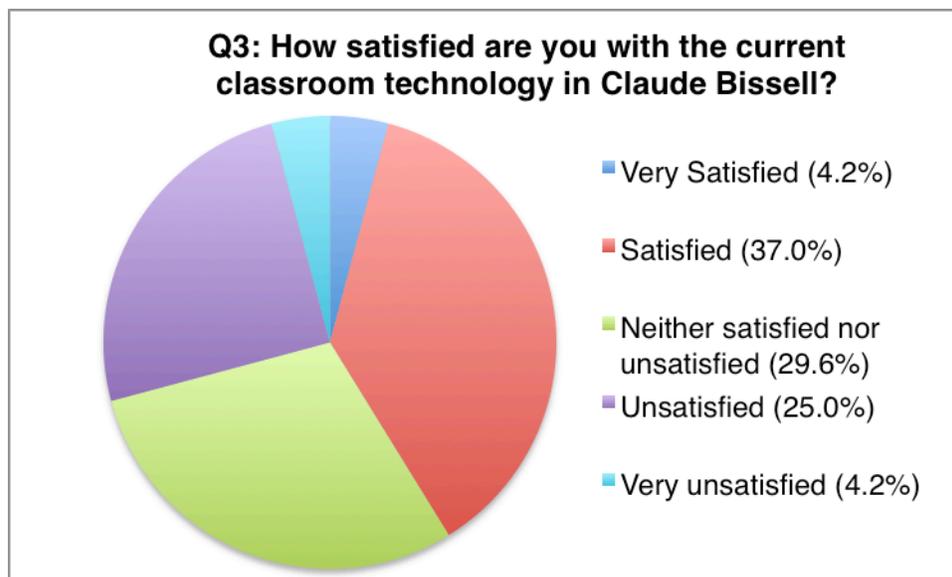
Question 2



Question 2 asked students to rate their satisfaction with the desks, chairs, and lighting in the Inforum. Once again, a majority of students were somewhat satisfied with the Inforum's furniture and lighting. However, the open-ended response section indicated a number of areas for improvement:

Student Ideas	The Tech Fund's Response
Issues that require further discussion	
More plants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are some plants in the Inforum currently. We will consult with the Inforum and ask if they have room for additional plants.
Projects that will be completed before or by September 2012	
Foot stools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be purchased by or before September 2012
More comfortable reading nook chairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be purchased by or before September 2012
Replace computer desks and chairs, as well as keyboard trays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are putting together a proposal and hope to have them by September 2012 – if you have suggestions, email a Tech Fund rep.
Projects outside of the Tech Fund's jurisdiction	
More electrical outlets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This matter is outside of the Tech Fund's jurisdiction. We will bring this to the attention of the administration on behalf of students.
More quiet study space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This matter is outside of the Tech Fund's jurisdiction. The Faculty is putting together new a space proposal for the iSchool and more quiet study space should be addressed in this proposal.
Replace burnt-out light bulbs in desk lamps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This matter is outside of the Tech Fund's jurisdiction; however, we will speak to the Inforum about this and report back to students.
Sound proof group study rooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This matter is outside of the Tech Fund's jurisdiction. However, more insulation is supposed to be added to Room 415 and 416 in the summer. If you want to book a quieter study space, check out Room 310. Book here!

Question 3

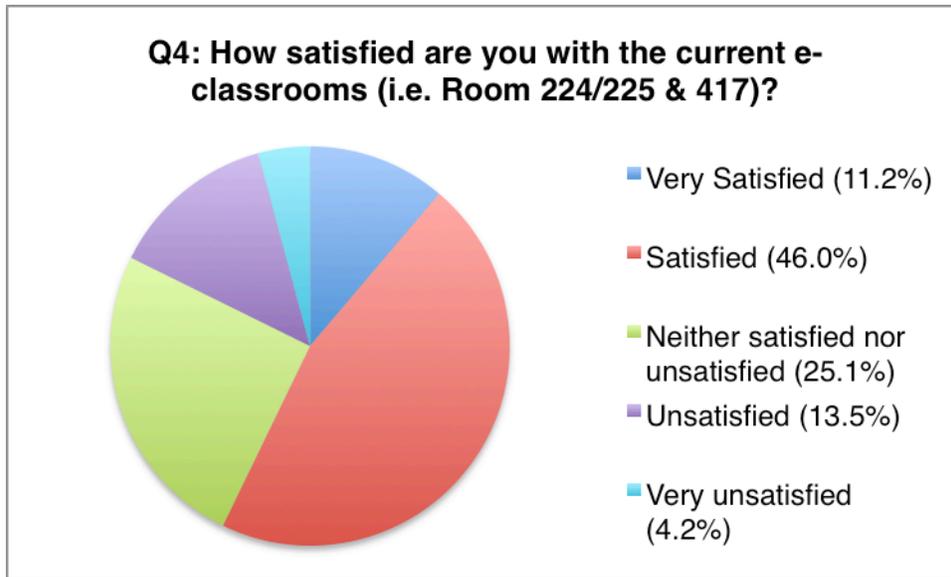


Question 3 asked students to rate their satisfaction with the current classroom technology at the iSchool. The results showed that student satisfaction was not as high in this question. The open-ended response section provided the Tech Fund with great ideas for future improvements:

Student Ideas	The Tech Fund's Response
Current Solutions from the Tech Fund	
Computers in the Inforum are slow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Tech Fund purchased new computers for the Inforum and Room 417 on January 12, 2012. The shipment has been in UofT's procurement facility for over a month and hopefully they will be installed by the end of March 2012. We will be getting 38 new Windows workstations (which will have Windows 7) and 6 new iMac workstations.
Lower the computer monitors in Room 224/225	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We purchased new brackets so the computer towers can be mounted underneath the desks. This will help address the height issue of the monitors. They should be installed by September 2012.
Issues that require further discussion	
Room 224/225 needs a better sound system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We purchased a better quality microphone for the room in February 2012, but we will look into purchasing a better sound system as well and report back to students.
Smart boards instead of projectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will discuss the viability of purchasing smart boards instead of projectors and report back to students. Smart boards are quite expensive and the current Smart boards installed within the Faculty have not been used extensively.
There are too many icons on the computer desktops, which slows them down	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have discussed different short cut options with our IT advisor. Currently, faculty members request that specific software be displayed on the computer desktops. We will discuss additional solutions and report back to students.
Computers in Room 116 are slow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will be looking into purchasing new computers for Room 116 during the summer and we will report back to students.
Projects that will be completed before or by September 2012	
All classrooms should have clocks and they should have the correct time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will purchase more clocks and have them installed and set properly by September 2012.
Better access to specialized software, i.e. Visio, SPSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Tech Fund purchased Visio Pro, which will be installed on the new computers. We also purchased copies of OmniGraffle for Mac users. The iSchool currently has 5 licenses of SPSS and we will be purchasing 8 more licenses in September 2012. If students have any specific suggestions, please email the Tech Fund.
New white boards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will replace the old white boards in the study rooms in the Inforum and hopefully have them installed by September 2012.
Projects outside of the Tech Fund's jurisdiction	
Classroom projectors are old and need to be replaced (Room 205 and 313/319 specifically)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unfortunately, we are unable to replace the projectors in Room 205 and 313/319. The Faculty of Information does not own these rooms. The Office of Space Management (OSM) owns these rooms. Please check here to see what other rooms the OSM owns in Bissell.
Create dedicated seminar rooms, instead of split electronic classrooms/seminar rooms (i.e. 224/225)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This project is out of the Tech Fund's jurisdiction; however, we will bring student concerns to the administration and report back to students.
Inconsistent wireless access throughout the building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving the wireless access in the building is outside of the Tech Fund's jurisdiction.
Install Dropbox on all computers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We discussed this with our IT adviser and due to issues with the University of Toronto network, we would not be able to install Dropbox on all of the Faculty's computers.
Not enough outlets in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is outside of the Tech Fund's jurisdiction.

classrooms for laptops	
Room 538 is nice, but the other classrooms (i.e. 224/225, 205, 313/319) are poorly configured	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We can discuss new furniture options and room configuration options with the administration, but this issue is also outside of the Tech Fund's jurisdiction.
Room 205 needs a better sound system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Office of Space Management owns this room; therefore, we are unable to change this.

Question 4

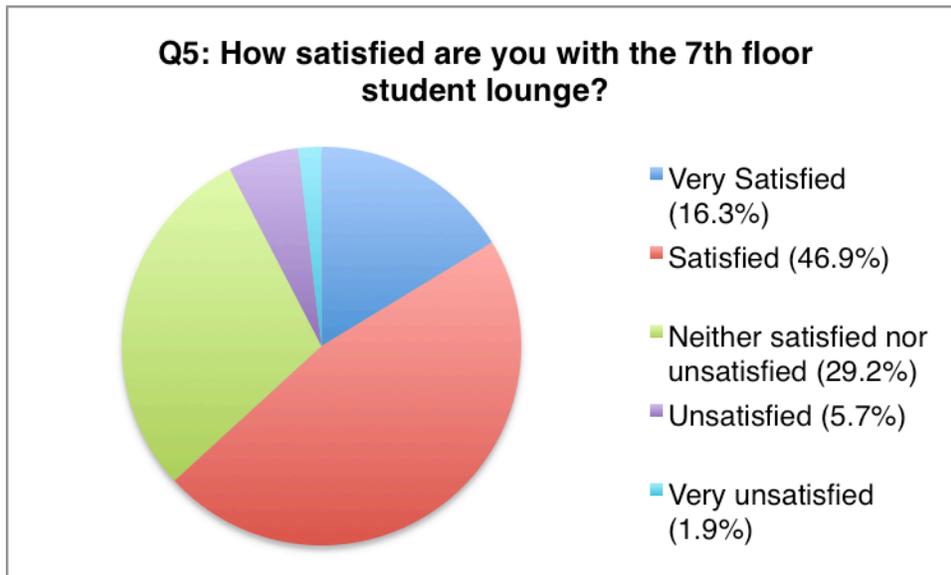


Question 4 asked students to rate their satisfaction with the electronic classrooms in the iSchool, such as Room 417 and 224/225. While students seemed mostly satisfied with the electronic classrooms, the open-ended responses provided the Tech Fund with the following feedback:

Student Ideas	The Tech Fund's Response
Current Solutions from the Tech Fund	
The monitors in 224/225 are too large and distract from classroom participation	We purchased brackets so that the towers can be mounted under the desks. This improvement should be completed by September 2012.
Issues that require further discussion	
Room 417 is too small for popular courses	We will bring this issue up with the administration and see if there is anything the Tech Fund can do and report back to students. There is currently a proposal being circulated in the Faculty that suggests moving all of the computer desks up so that an additional row of computers can be added to accommodate larger classes.
The Tcard reader for the printer in 224/225 does not always work	We will discuss replacing or having this Tcard reader repaired and report back to students.
Room 116 computers are slow / not enough computers in 224/225	We will be looking into purchasing new computers for Room 116 and more computers for Room 224/225 during the summer and we will report back to students.

Projects that will be completed before or by September 2012	
The acoustics in Rooms 224/225 and 116 are inadequate	We will be purchasing better microphones and will look into better sound systems for these rooms. We hope to have this completed by September 2012, but the installation process may take longer.
Projects outside of the Tech Fund's jurisdiction	
More electrical outlets	This is outside of the Tech Fund's jurisdiction.

Question 5

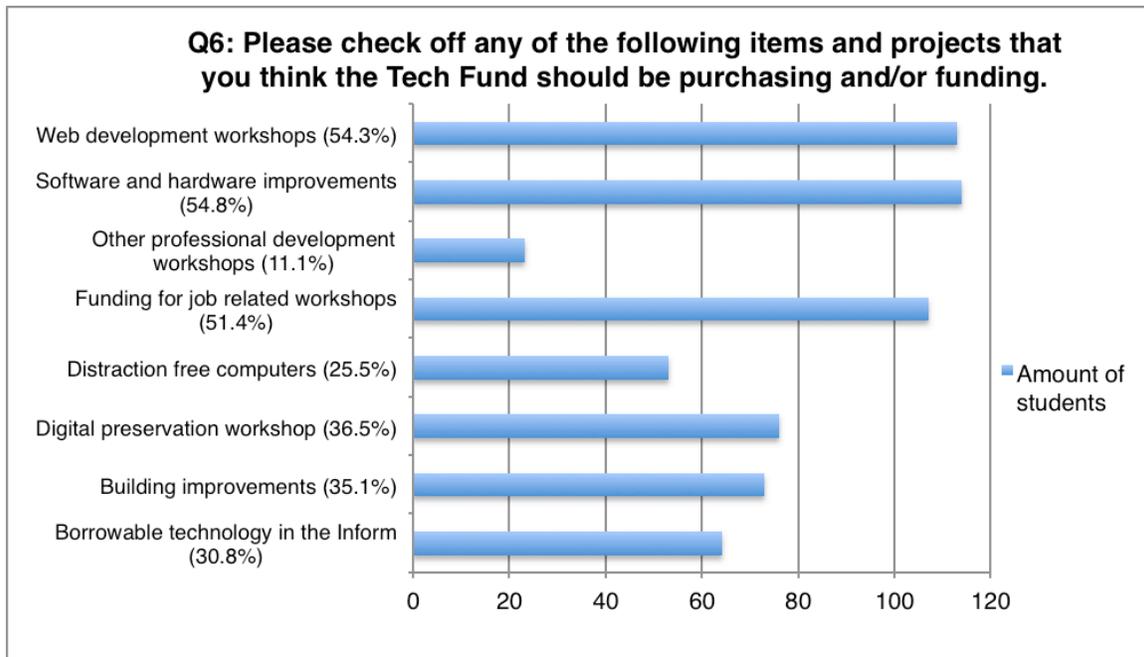


Question 5 asked students to rate their satisfaction with the 7th floor student lounge. A majority of students were satisfied with the lounge; however, the open-ended responses indicated a number of improvement areas:

Student Ideas	The Tech Fund's Response
Current Solutions from the Tech Fund	
Purchase computers and a printer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Tech Fund will be moving a computer into the student lounge by the end of March 2012 and will be installing a keyboard for the Mac mini currently in the lounge. We will discuss the viability of purchasing a printer.
Issues that require further discussion	
A second microwave for busy periods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will discuss this with the facilities administrator, as the room currently has circuit issues and having a second microwave would likely overpower the circuit.
An electronic device charging station (i.e. iPods, e-readers, laptops)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students can currently borrow chargers for a number of devices from the Inforum; however, we will discuss the possibility of having a permanent station in the lounge and report back to students.
Fix the circuit issue in the lounge so that more than	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This will require an electrical assessment of the student lounge and would probably require rewiring. This may be outside of the Tech

one kitchen appliance can be used at a time	Fund's jurisdiction; however, we will look into this and report back to students.
More couches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because the lounge is a multi-purpose space, there is not a lot of room for additional couches.
Purchase a TV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once we install the computer and supply the Mac mini with a keyboard, students will be able to watch movies using the Smartboard. Therefore, there is no need to purchase a TV.
Projects that will be completed before or by September 2012	
Better labeled garbage/recycling cans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members of the MISC are currently working with the university's Sustainability Office to implement a green bin program for the lounge and a better recycling policy by September 2012.
Better lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will look into purchasing more lamps. We will also be working with the Sustainability Office to replace the overhead lighting with energy efficient fixtures by September 2012.
Beautify the lounge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We welcome ideas for beautifying the lounge from students. If you have any specific ideas, please email the Tech Fund.
Access to a sink	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The administration will be putting a T-card reader outside of the kitchen door next to Room 728. This will allow students to have access to a sink and a dishwasher. This should be done by September 2012.
Projects outside of the Tech Fund's jurisdiction	
Access to the balcony	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This issue has been brought up by the MISC in the past. The council was told that we are unable to have access to the balcony for various legal and safety reasons.

Question 6



Question 6 asked students to indicate which types of student-centered initiatives the Tech Fund should support. The open-ended response section gave the Tech Fund in-depth feedback about specific initiatives students are interested in:

Student Ideas	The Tech Fund's Response
Current Solutions from the Tech Fund	
Programming and web development workshops (i.e. HTML, CSS, PHP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Tech Fund is currently hiring a web development tutor to run a series of workshops in April and May. These workshops will be video recorded and made available to current students through the iSchool website.
More Mac computers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Tech Fund purchased 6 new iMacs and they will be installed at the end of March 2012. We will also be purchasing new MacBooks by September 2012.
More resume/cover letter workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The iSchool's Careers Officer, Isidora Petrovic, offers a number of resume and cover letter workshops throughout the year and the MISC and MSGSA offer specific resume and cover letter workshops for students. Also, the Tech Fund purchased a subscription to JobSpice in 2010 to allow students to build an online resume. Please click here and check out more information about JobSpice. We will look into providing additional resume/cover letter support. If you have any suggestions, please email the Tech Fund.
Issues that require further discussion	
Cloud computing workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Inforum already offers a cloud computing workshop; however, we can develop a more in-depth workshop series for students. We will discuss this and report back to students.
Cloud-based iSchool website that would allow students to access their work from anywhere	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will discuss this idea with the administration and tech fund advisers and report back to students on the viability of implementing a cloud-based website that allows students to access their work from anywhere.
Gallery space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing MMSt with a gallery space may be outside of the jurisdiction of the Tech Fund. We will look into this issue and report back to students.
Offer the fall and winter workshops more often	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will discuss this issue with the Inforum and suggest that the Inforum video records their workshops and makes them available to current students via the iSchool website.
Reimbursement for poster printing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Tech Fund has been discussing this issue and currently has decided not to institute a poster printing reimbursement to students. Instead, we are looking into subsidizing the poster printing costs for students. We will give students more information about this after we have discussed this with the Inforum.
Projects that will be completed before or by September 2012	
Adobe Creative Suite training (specifically Dreamweaver)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will be creating more in-depth workshop series on Adobe Creative Suite for September 2012. They will also be video recorded and made available to current students via the iSchool website.
Business etiquette and writing workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will be purchasing Association of Computing Machinery (ACM) memberships for all current iSchool students. This will give students access to a wide-variety of self-paced business etiquette and writing courses, as well as a variety of web development, design, and database courses. Also, Isidora will be holding a workshop on business etiquette on Monday April 9th. Please click here for more details.
Distraction free computers in a quiet study area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are currently exploring the viability of having distraction free computers in a quiet study area. Due to the lack of quiet study space rooms in the iSchool, this may not be implemented by September 2012.
Exhibition supply kits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are putting together a proposal for developing exhibition supply kits for MMSt students and hope to have them ready by September 2012. Please email the Tech Fund with specific ideas and input

	about what you would like in the kits.
Linux-based operating system and workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Inforum currently has a workshop on Linux, but we are looking into creating a more in-depth workshop on Linux for September 2012. This workshop series will also be video recorded and made available on the iSchool website.
Video game consoles and mobile devices for game research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are hoping to purchase game consoles and mobile devices by September 2012, which will be loaned out by the Inforum. If you have any specific suggestions for consoles or mobile devices, please email the Tech Fund.
Database workshops (i.e. SQL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The iSchool currently has a course dedicated to Database Development (INF1343). However, we will look into providing introductory workshops about database development.

Question 7

Question 7 was an open-ended question that served to wrap-up the Tech Fund's survey by asking students for any additional feedback they had regarding the Tech Fund. Many students repeated a number of the concerns brought up in **Questions 1-6**. However, many students indicated that they would like to be better informed regarding purchases, current technology proposals, and the spending of the Tech Fund's money in **Question 7**.

The Tech Fund agrees completely with these sentiments and plans on focusing more on outreach initiatives in the future by holding a tech fund survey earlier in the academic year and providing students with updates on current proposals and purchases. We have recently acquired a Tech Fund email and hope that this additional method of communication will help us reach students more efficiently.

Tech Fund Purchases for 2011/2012

Major Purchases	Description and How to Access
Microsoft IT Academy License	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This product gives students access to self-paced learning modules that allow students to gain Microsoft Certification for software such as MS Excel, Project, SharePoint, and SQL server. The Tech Fund will be sending out an email by March 15, 2012 to advertise this product to students. Students can email us back, asking for access to training for up to 3 products. The Tech Fund will send them the lessons and activation key.
38 Windows stations (Dell Optiplex 790 workstations, 8 GB RAM, i7 processors, 22" LCD monitors, Quiet keyboards)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These computers will be located in the Inforum and Room 417. They will hopefully be installed by the end of March 2012. While they were purchased in January 2012, there was a delay in processing the order due to the university's policies and procedures.
6 Intel iMacs (21.5" monitors, i7 processors, 8 GB RAM) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 of the iMacs will be set up as multimedia stations with 2 Epson flatbed scanners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These computers will be located in the Inforum. They will hopefully be installed by the end of March 2012. While they were purchased in January 2012, there was a delay in processing the order due to the university's policies and procedures.
Software for the new Room 417 and Inforum computers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Windows 7 for PCs OS X Lion MS Office 2010 – Windows and Mac) Macs – iLife included with purchase (iPhoto, iMovie, iDVD, GarageBand) & iWorks (Pages, Numbers, Keynote) 25 floating licenses for Adobe CS3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once the new computers are installed, students will be able to access all of this software. However, we are always looking for more software suggestions. Please let us know if you have anything in mind that would help you pursue your academic goals. RE: Floating licenses. A floating license means that students will be able to access the Adobe CS3 suite on any of the iSchool's networked computers. We will have a total of 25 licenses. We anticipate that this will be

Design Premium (includes Acrobat Pro, Photoshop, InDesign, Illustrator, Bridge, Dreamweaver, Fireworks, and Flash) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open source software such as Open Office will be available on the new computers as well. 	sufficient for the needs of students at the iSchool. If students find they are unable to access the Adobe CS3 suite consistently we will purchase more. Please contact the Tech Fund if you notice this happens.
Quiet Keyboards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have been installed in Room 224/225.
2 Samsung 46" Skype-enabled LED Displays for Inforum Group Study Rooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have been installed and are currently in room 416 and 415 in the Inforum.
20 licenses for OmniGraffle Pro (OS X Version of Visio)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are able to access this software through the Inforum.
3 iPad 2's / 1 RIM Playbook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students can borrow this equipment through the Inforum.
30 Wireless Mice for netbooks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The wireless mice can be booked through the Inforum.
Data Projector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This purchase was intended for MMSt students interested in creating projected exhibits. The projector can be booked through the Inforum by both MI and MMSt students.
4 Sony Voice Recorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students can borrow this equipment through the Inforum.
1 toaster oven and 1 kettle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students can access these kitchen appliances in the student lounge.
7 frames for the student lounge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Tech Fund will be holding a photo contest in September 2012 and will frame chosen artwork in the frames.
2 DSLR cameras	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students can borrow the cameras from the Inforum.
6 plants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The plants can be found in the student lounge.

Upcoming Plans

As we outlined earlier, the Tech Fund has a number of projects that we are currently working on. Our priority projects are as follows:

- 1) Purchase new chairs and desks for the Inforum's computer workstations.
- 2) Purchase new chairs for Room 417.
- 3) Purchase new computers for Room 116 and some additional workstations for Room 224/225.
- 4) Develop effective web development, graphic design, Linux, and database workshops for students and deliver them in-person and online to meet the needs of all iSchool students.
- 5) Continue to purchase self-paced learning modules that will allow students to develop additional technology skills and business etiquette skills.
- 6) Make the student lounge more compliant with sustainability initiatives. This project will be in cooperation with both the Master of Information Student Council and the Faculty of Information.

We hope to have these projects completed by September 2012. We will also continue to work on the other projects we have outlined in the above sections. If you have any questions, concerns, or would like to offer your input or expertise to any of the outlined projects, please do not hesitate to contact the Tech Fund.

Conclusion

The Tech Fund representatives would like to thank all of the iSchool students who participated in the Tech Fund survey. Your feedback was greatly appreciated. We look forward to hearing from everyone next year when we send out our follow-up survey.