



Master of Information Student Council

University of Toronto, Faculty of Information

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Master of Information Student Council (MISC)

2019-20 Annual Report

Prepared by Patty Facy, MISC President 2019-20

April 30, 2020

Summary

This report outlines the work accomplished by the MISC team during the 2019-20 year (May 1 2019-April 30 2020). With the year starting off with the fight against the Ontario Government's controversial Student Choice Initiative and ending with the onset of the COVID-19 global pandemic, the 2019-20 year was a very active one for MISC both in terms of events and initiatives planned and projects undertaken. It should be noted that MISC is a volunteer-run student society composed of MI students in all years of study, and that all work was undertaken by council members on top of their regular course loads and employment.

Major 2019-20 highlights are summarized below and explained in greater detail in this report, along with other MISC activities/initiatives undertaken throughout the year:

- Held a total of 67 events this year, and cancelled 9 due to the COVID-19 pandemic
- Created two new International Student Representative positions and two new Working Groups
- Revived the Part-Time Students' Working Group
- Fundraised a total of \$2285.80 in charity donations
- Successfully lobbied for the creation of convocation awards for students in all concentrations, and for the creation of diversity-oriented omnibus/in-course awards
- Completed the first phase of a project to revamp the 7th floor student lounge

On behalf of the 2019-20 MISC team, we hope that MI students benefited from the activities we carried out throughout the year, and that we were able to create a positive impact on your academic year.

~ 2019-20 MISC Team

Table of Contents

Summary	2
1. Council Members	4
Executives	4
Committee Chairs	4
Representatives	4
Working Group Chairs	4
2. Finances & Funding	5
2.1. 2019-20 Budget and Expenses	5
2.2. Student Sponsored Initiative (SSI) Funding	6
3. Events	6
4. Elections & Referendums	7
4.1. Fall 2019 Elections	7
4.2. Spring 2020 Elections	7
4.3. 2019-20 Tech Fund Referendum	8
4.4. 2019-20 MISC Outstanding Instructor Award	8
5. Projects & Initiatives	9
5.1. Student Issues & Advocacy	9
5.1.1. Convocation Awards	9
5.1.2. Diversity Awards & Scholarships	9
5.1.3. International Student Representative Positions	10
5.2. Student Projects	10
5.2.1. Yoga at the Inforum	10
5.2.2. Charity Bake Sales	10
5.2.3. Student Lounge Revamp	11
5.2.4. Merchandise	11
5.2.5. Alumni PechaKucha Night	11
5.2.6. MI Hart House Farm Retreat	12
5.3. MISC Internal Projects	12
5.3.1. Council Restructuring	12
5.3.2. MISC Operating Guidelines	12
5.3.3. Square System	13
5.3.4. Student Surveys & Feedback	13
5.3.5. Annual Student Experience Survey (ASES)	14
6. Appendices	15
Appendix A: Full Event Listings	15

1. Council Members

Executives

President: **Patty Facy**
Vice-President: **Katy Czajkowski**
VP-Operations: **McKinzey Manes**
VP-Finance: **Jason Batten-Carew**
VP-Communications: **Gaurav Bamezai**
VP-Academic Affairs: **Nicholas Lindsay-Lewis**

Committee Chairs

Professional Development Co-Chair, Upper-Year: **Akram Wahdan**
Professional Development Co-Chair, First-Year: **Savannah Li**
Social Committee Co-Chairs: **Laura Windhorst, Abbey Krueger**
Survey Committee Co-Chair, Upper-Year: **Sharon Lam**
Survey Committee Co-Chair, First-year: **Grace Chen**
Mental Health Committee Co-Chair, Upper-Year: **Val Masters**
Mental Health Committee Co-Chair, First-Year: **Lena Zhao**

Representatives

Alumni Association (FIAA) Representative: **Cher-Ann Chai**
MISC-MUSSA Liaison: **Sydney Stype**
MRAC Representative (VPAA): **Nicholas Lindsay-Lewis**

Tech Fund Representatives, Upper-Year: **Vipasha Shaikh, Maya Pasternak**
Tech Fund Representative, First-Year: **Vacant**

Awards Committee Representative (Pres): **Patty Facy**
Programs Committee Representative, Upper-Year (VP-AA): **Nicholas Lindsay-Lewis**
Programs Committee Representative, First-Year (EVP): **Katy Czajkowski**
Committee on Standing Representative (VP-AA): **Nicholas Lindsay-Lewis**
Masers' Recruitment & Admissions Committee (MRAC) (VP-AA): **Nicholas Lindsay-Lewis**

Graduate Student Union Representative (Pres): **Patty Facy**
Graduate Student Union Representative (EVP): **Katy Czajkowski**
Graduate Student Union Representative: **Robyn Forman**

Faculty Council Representative (Pres): **Patty Facy**
Faculty Council Representative (EVP): **Katy Czajkowski**
Faculty Council Representative (VP-AA): **Nicholas Lindsay-Lewis**
Faculty Council Representatives: **Eric Hanson, Jillie Reimer, Kaitlyn Simpson, Lily Clarke, Victoria Yang, Wing Lam Tse**

Working Group Chairs

Accessibility Interests Working Group: **Adrian Petterson**
Diversity Working Group: **Tomoko Shida, Tamara Rayan**
Part-Time Students' Working Group: **Meagan Lau, Andrew Micak**

2. Finances & Funding

2.1. 2019-20 Budget and Expenses

MISC is funded through our annual MISC Society Fee (\$25/year for full-time students; \$12.50/year for part-time students) and the UTGSU’s annual course union head grant. Our annual budget is based on expenses and leftover funds from previous years, as well as projected revenue for the upcoming year. Due to COVID-19 our larger end of year events were cancelled, which resulted in a sizable surplus.

MISC 2019-20 Budget and Expenses

as of April 30, 2020

Category	Item	Budget	Expense
General			
	Meeting Food	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 937.25
	Bank Fees	\$ 96.00	\$ 132.44
	Audit Fee	\$ -	\$ -
	Office Supplies	\$ 300.00	\$ 283.71
	Contingency (5-10%)	\$ 1,250.00	\$ -
	Projects	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 3,628.25
	Awards & Recognition	\$ 100.00	\$ 181.51
Committees			
Social Committee	Social	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 3,448.98
Prof. Dev. Committee	Professional Dev.	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 713.92
Survey Committee	Survey	\$ 470.00	\$ 534.66
Mental Health Committee	Mental Health	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 904.16
Working Groups			\$ 2,444.96
	Accessibility	\$ 600.00	
	Diversity	\$ 600.00	\$ 146.39
	PT Students	\$ 600.00	\$ 212.69
SSI Funding		\$ 6,000.00	\$ -
Total:		\$ 25,016.00	\$ 13,568.92
Budget Remaining:			\$ 11,447.08

2.2. Student Sponsored Initiative (SSI) Funding

Every year, a portion of MISC’s budget is allocated towards funding Student Sponsored Initiatives planned by MI students at the iSchool. More information and funding criteria can be found on our [SSI Funding webpage](#).

This year MISC budgeted **\$6000** towards SSIs and distributed a total of **\$2444.96** in funding. Unfortunately due to COVID-19 MISC was unable to fund any events taking place in March-April, which is usually when many large SSI requests are made.

2019-20 Student Sponsored Initiatives

- Peer Mentoring @ iSchool Fall & Winter Pizza Lunches
- Yoga at the Inforum (Winter 2020)
- AMIA UofT October Meeting
- AMIA UofT January Meeting
- AMIA Lyrasis Oral History Event
- Cookies with CAPAL
- ACA-LWB 5th Annual Human Library
- World IA Day Toronto 2020

3. Events

MISC is responsible for planning a wide range of events for MI students throughout the year. A large portion of our budget is dedicated towards events in different areas. All MISC events are promoted through the [MISC Calendar](#), our weekly MISC-y Business newsletter, and MISC’s social media channels.

MISC held a total of **67** events this year; a major increase compared with previous years. Due to COVID-19, **9** events planned for March and April were cancelled, including the 15th Annual Employer Showcase and our End-of-Year Formal, two major annual MISC events.

A detailed listing of all 2019-20 events, including cancelled ones, can be found under [Appendix A: Full Event Listings](#).

Event Category	Number of Events
Social	12
Professional Development	7
Mental Health	4
Accessibility Interests Working Group	6

Diversity Working Group	7
Part-Time Students	1
Wellness	12
MISC Meetings	11
Other	7
Cancelled Events (due to COVID-19)	4 x Social 2 x Professional Development 1 x Mental Health 1 x Accessibility Interests Working Group 1 x Part Time Students Working Group

4. Elections & Referendums

MISC held **three** elections and **one** referendum this year.

4.1. Fall 2019 Elections

Nomination Period: September 16-23, 2019

Voting Period: September 26-October 3, 2019

Results Announced: October 9, 2019

Fall elections take place annually in September/October to fill all first year positions, Faculty Council representative positions, and any upper-year positions not filled in the preceding Spring election cycle. Elections were held on UofT's U-elecT platform.

In this election a total of 40 students ran for positions. 15 positions (12 first year, 3 upper year) were filled. 151 students voted, an increase of 89% compared with Fall 2018 elections. MISC made concerted efforts to promote MISC and the Fall election cycle during Orientation week and throughout September, with positive results. This election cycle had a high level of engagement compared with previous election cycles, with competition for each position and a record 9 candidates running for the Executive Vice President position.

4.2. Spring 2020 Elections

Nomination Period: March 16-29, 2020

Voting Period: March 30-April 6, 2020

Results Announced: April 9, 2020

Spring elections take place annually in March/April to fill all upper year positions, including committee chairs, representatives, and the MISC executive. Any positions unfilled in the Spring

elections are elected during the following Fall election cycle. Elections were held on UofT's U-elecT platform.

This election cycle took place at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic as students were transitioning to working from home. As a result, the nomination period was extended by 5 days (from March 24 to March 29), and the voting period was pushed back from March 26-April 2 to March 30-April 6.

A total of 16 students ran for 12 positions (compared with 26 students in the Spring 2019 cycle). 3 positions had no candidates running (VP Finance, VP Operations, Upper Year Tech Fund Rep #2) and will be filled during the Fall 2020 election cycle. A total of 89 students voted, a decrease of 15% compared with Spring 2019 elections.

While this election cycle saw comparatively fewer students run and vote compared with the Spring 2019 and Fall 2019 election cycles, turnout and participation was higher than expected considering the circumstances surrounding COVID-19. Spring elections also take place towards the end of the semester when students are working on final assignments, which may have been a contributor to decreased engagement.

4.3. 2019-20 Tech Fund Referendum

The MISC-MUSSA Tech Fund holds a referendum every two years to assess students' interests in paying the annual MISC-MUSSA Tech Fund fee. The Tech Fund is administered by the Student Tech Fund Committee and is used to fund student technology requests at the iSchool. This year's referendum proposed a reduction in the annual Tech Fund fee from \$50/year and \$25/year for full-time and part-time students respectively, to \$40/year and \$20/year for full-time and part-time students respectively.

The referendum took place from March 27-April 3 and was hosted on UofT's U-elecT platform. Voting was open to MI and MMSt students, all of whom pay into the annual Tech Fund fee.

The 2019-20 referendum question was:

BIRT the MISC/MUSSA Student Tech Fund fee be reduced to \$40.00/year for full-time MI and MMSt students, and \$20.00/year for part-time MI and MMSt students.

72 MI and MMSt students voted in the referendum. 85% of voters voted in favour of the motion. The results were ratified by MISC and MUSSA and approved at the April 27th University Affairs Board meeting. The fee change will take place as of the Fall 2020 semester.

4.4. 2019-20 MISC Outstanding Instructor Award

Nomination Period: April 6-19, 2020

Voting Period: April 20-26, 2020

Results Announced: April 27, 2020

The MISC Outstanding Instructor Award is awarded annually to recognize the iSchool's exceptional course instructors. More details and past recipients can be found on MISC's [Instructor Award](#) webpage. MI students nominate instructors, then vote from the nominees to select the recipient. Voting took place using UofT's U-elecT platform and was open to all MI students. 77 students voted.

2019-20 Recipient: Velian Pandeliev

2019-20 Nominees: Arik Senderovich; Dan Ryan; Jenna Hartel; Karen Suurtamm; Rohan Alexander; Siobhan Stevenson; Velian Pandeliev

5. Projects & Initiatives

5.1. Student Issues & Advocacy

5.1.1. Convocation Awards

Each year the iSchool hosts a post-convocation graduation reception for Spring graduates. The reception includes several awards given to graduating students for academic performance in courses or particular concentrations. Up until this year, the majority of these awards have been targeted towards LIS or ARM concentrations, with no awards for newer concentrations such as CIPS, C&T, HCDS, UXD, ISD, or KMIM.

Our President raised this at the iSchool's Awards Committee and recommended creating additional awards so that graduating students from each concentration can be recognized for their efforts. As of April 2020 the awards are in the process of being created, with the goal of presenting them at the Spring 2020 convocation reception.¹ Moving forward the Awards Committee will ensure that in-course awards, particularly those without any concentration-related criteria, are being awarded to students in all concentrations.

5.1.2. Diversity Awards & Scholarships

In keeping in line with the Faculty of Information's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, the Diversity Working Group drafted a proposal to increase the number of awards/scholarships awarded to BIPOC students, which was brought to the iSchool's Award Committee. In response, the Awards Committee agreed that going forward the Omnibus award application will include a category for students to identify as BIPOC.

Additionally, the DWG made three concrete proposals to diversify iSchool awards:

- Creating matching scholarships for BIPOC students awarded external diversity awards;
- Creating an iSchool scholarship targeted towards BIPOC students;

¹ Note that due to COVID-19 the Spring Convocation ceremony and iSchool reception scheduled for June 2020 is indefinitely postponed. The iSchool has confirmed that an in-person celebration/reception for the Spring Class of 2020 will take place once social distancing measures are lifted.

- Repurposing existing iSchool awards with no specific criteria to be awarded to BIPOC students.
-

5.1.3. International Student Representative Positions

With a growing international student population in the MI program and no concrete channels to communicate directly with international MI students, MISC created two new International Student Representative positions on MISC (one Upper-Year, one First-Year). These new representatives will act as the liaisons between international MI students, MISC, and the Faculty of Information going forward and will focus specifically on ensuring that international MI students are heard and advocated for.

5.2. Student Projects

A portion of MISC's budget goes towards annual or one-off projects organized by the MISC Executive, or that don't fall under any of the Committee/Working Group activities. Below is a summary of major MISC projects along with associated revenue/expenses.

5.2.1. Yoga at the Inforum

Total expense: \$548

Total revenue: \$0

Total cost: \$0

MI Student Chelsea Humpries organized a series of 40-minute yoga sessions for iSchool students held bi-weekly in the Inforum. A total of 12 sessions were held over the course of the year (6 in the fall term, 6 in the winter term). These sessions were sponsored by MISC, with promotional support from MUSSA.

5.2.2. Charity Bake Sales

Total expense: \$0

Total revenue: \$0 (all proceeds donated to charities)

Total cost: \$0

MISC held 2 charity bake sales this year, one of which was organized in partnership with the UofT Chapter of Librarians Without Borders. Each bake sale event included a raffle draw with prizes sponsored by the Tech Fund. Both bake sales yielded very high donation amounts, likely due to the use of MISC's Square system, which allowed for donations and raffle ticket purchases to be made by both cash and card. Details for each bake sale found below.

MISC + LWB Holiday Charity Bake Sale

Date/Time: November 27, 2019, 9:00am-3:00pm

Proceeds Raised: \$724.55

Charity: AbleGamers Foundation

Bake Sale for Wet'suwet'en

Date/Time: February 26, 2020, 9:00am-3:00pm

Proceeds Raised: \$1561.25

Charity: Unist'ot'en Camp Legal Fund

5.2.3. Student Lounge Revamp

Total expense: \$0 (purchases made through Tech Fund)

Total revenue: \$0

Total cost: \$0

Members of MISC began a three-phase project to revamp the 7th floor student lounge. Phase I involved purging the lounge of broken appliances and clutter, working with the Tech Fund to purchase new appliances and materials, and creating a plan for subsequent MISC members to follow for more extensive upgrades, such as additional technology purchases (Phase II) and space reconfigurations, new furniture purchases, and aesthetic upgrades (Phase III).

As of April 2020, most of Phase I is complete. Key updates include:

- New microwave arrived and installed in the lounge
 - New kettle, extension cords and whiteboard markers/materials arrived and to be installed in the lounge once Bissell building reopens
 - Space purged of unwanted/leftover items
 - Plans and suggestions created for Phases II and III
-

5.2.4. Merchandise

Total expense: \$ 2734.92

Total revenue: \$1702

Total cost: \$1132.92

Each year MISC procures Faculty of Information-branded merchandise for sale for MI students. Items from previous years include hoodies, crewnecks, t-shirts, notebooks, mugs, pencils, and other small items. Merchandise available for sale throughout the year included hoodies, crewnecks, notebooks, cotton kerchiefs, t-shirts and mugs. Due to COVID-19, the sale of new merchandise items planned for March and April 2020 are delayed until Bissell reopens. 2019-20 merchandise items and prices below. Photos can be viewed on MISC's [Merchandise](#) webpage.

- Crewnecks (3 styles): \$25
 - Tote bag: \$8
 - Stickers: 1 for \$2; 3 for \$5
-

5.2.5. Alumni PechaKucha Night

Total expenses: \$236.19

Total revenue: \$0

Total cost: \$236.19

MISC's President and FIAA Representative collaborated to host an inaugural Alumni PechaKucha Night highlighting the experience of recent graduates in all concentrations from the MI program. The idea was to connect current students with alumni and bridge a stronger connection between MISC and FIAA (the Faculty of Information Alumni Association). We had 6 alumni speakers share their stories in the PechaKucha format. The theme was transitioning from the life of a student to the life of an "information professional". The event was well attended and will hopefully continue as an annual tradition moving forward.

5.2.6. MI Hart House Farm Retreat

Total expenses: \$2076.04

Total revenue: \$920 (ticket sales)

Total cost: \$1156.04

An overnight reading week retreat for MI students at the Hart House Farm property in Caledon, Ontario. Tickets included transportation, lodging, and meals.

5.3. MISC Internal Projects

5.3.1. Council Restructuring

Several changes were made to MISC's structure to align with MISC's current priorities. Notably, this was the first year with an elected VP Academic Affairs tasked with representing and advocating for MI students' course-related needs.

Summary of Council Changes:

- Two new working groups created (the Diversity Working Group and Accessibility Interests Working Group),
 - Revival of the previously inactive Part-Time Students' Working Group
 - Creation of two committees (Survey Committee and Mental Health Committee; previously both working groups) with elected Upper Year and First Year Co-Chairs.
 - First year of the VP Academic Affairs role
 - Creation of two International Student Representative positions
 - Addition of social media management/promotional duties to VP Communications role
 - Transfer of management of MISC Website duties from VP Communications role to VP Operations role
-

5.3.2. MISC Operating Guidelines

MISC created an Operating Guidelines document that outlines MISC's internal administrative, financial and communications-related processes. Prior to this these processes were followed but not explicitly documented anywhere which led to confusion for incoming council members. The Guidelines now clearly articulate how council members may request MISC funds, how to submit

reimbursements, how the MISC budget is prepared, and how MISC utilizes its communication platforms.

5.3.3. Square System

MISC purchased a Square system through the Tech Fund for MISC use. The system was purchased to facilitate card payments for expenses such as event tickets, merchandise purchases, fee payments, and donations.

5.3.4. Student Surveys & Feedback

MISC’s Survey Committee ran 11 surveys this year and produced 2 full-length reports over the 2019-20 year. These surveys were conducted to gauge students’ opinions on particular iSchool matters or to collect suggestions/feedback for MISC projects. Survey reports can be found on the [MISC Survey Centre](#).

2019-20 MISC Surveys

Title	Description
Future of the Inforum	What should we do with the space now that the stacks are gone?
Accessibility in the iSchool	What barriers to iSchool students face, and what do they need to overcome them?
Student Lounge Revamp	How can the Student Lounge better fulfill student needs?
Yoga at the Inforum	How can Yoga at the Inforum sessions be improved?
iSchool Student Fun Facts	What are iSchool students like? (partnership with Student Services)
MISC Socials Feedback	What is MISC’s impact on the iSchool’s social life?
Professional Development Employer Showcase	What companies and employers would you like to connect with?
Part-time Students	How do part time students feel about the program, and how can MISC help?
International Student Experience	What do international students go through, and how can MISC best represent them?
Tech Fund	How are students using the Tech Fund?
MISC’s Annual Student Experience Survey	Provide feedback on your student council and iSchool services and academics.

5.3.5. Annual Student Experience Survey (ASES)

The ASES is held annually to assess MI students' experience with MISC and the iSchool. This was the first year that the ASES was conducted under the leadership structure of the Survey Committee with two co-chairs and the results were a great success compared with previous years, garnering responses from 162 iSchool students. The results of the report were shared with the incoming MISC executive, MI Students, Student Services and the Dean. The full report can be found on [MISC's Survey Centre](#).

6. Appendices

Appendix A: Full Event Listings

Social Events

- September 3: MISC & MUSSA Welcome Back BBQ (Orientation Day 1)
- September 4: iSchool Amazing Race and Pub Night (Orientation Day 2)
- September 5: MISC Trivia Night at Hart House (Orientation Day 3)
- September 6: Yoga at the Inforum (Orientation Day 4)
- October 15: MI Fall Social
- October 25: MISC & MUSSA go to the ROM Friday Night Live
- October 31: MISC Halloween Party
- December 5: Free MI Breakfast
- January 17: MI Coffeehouse Open Mic Night
- January 22: Monthly Pub Night #1 at Ein-Stein's
- February 13: MISC Valentine's Day Breakfast
- February 26: MISC Monthly Pub Night #2
- (cancelled) March 18: MISC Monthly Pub Night #3 (St Patty's Day edition!)
- (cancelled) March 25: End of Semester Pizza Lunch
- (cancelled) April 8: MISC Monthly Pub Night #4
- (cancelled) April 26: MISC Formal 2020

Professional Development Events

- September 18: MISC's Annual iSchool Clubs & Associations Fair
- November 29: Interview & Resume Clinics
- February 5: LinkedIn Headshot Sessions for MI Students
- February 6: Drop-in Interview/Resume Clinics
- February 13: Drop-in Interview/Resume Clinics
- February 26: PD Info Session: AI and Consulting
- March 4: PD Info Session: Research Beyond Academia
- (cancelled) March 13: PD Info Session: Launching an Adventurous Career with an Unknown Degree
- (cancelled) March 17: the 15th Annual MISC Employer Showcase

Mental Health Events

- February 13: iShare #1: Communication Strategies for Graduate Students
- February 27: iColour
- March 5: iShare #2: Mental Health at the iSchool - Barriers and Resources
- March 12: Homelessness in Libraries Webinar Training with Ryan Dowd
- (cancelled) March 26: iShare #3: Mental Health in the Workplace

Accessibility Interests Working Group Events

- November 12: Unwrap Accessibility Brownbag Lunch Seminar #1
- November 15: Unwrap Accessibility Brownbag Lunch Seminar #2

- November 19: **Unwrap Accessibility Brownbag Lunch Seminar #3**
- November 22: **Unwrap Accessibility Brownbag Lunch Seminar #4**
- February 28: **Talk: Building Inclusive Library Spaces**
- March 11: **Star Trek Viewing Party**
- **(cancelled) March 17: Field Trip to Tangled Art + Disability Gallery**

Diversity Working Group Events

- September 16: **Public Talk: In Conversation with Jarrett Drake (collaboration with Faculty of Information and the Toronto Area Archivists' Group)**
- October 16: **BIPOC Social Gathering**
- November 14: **DWG Reading Group #1**
- December 10: **BIPOC Working Session**
- January 20: **DWG Reading Group #2**
- February 7: **DWG Dance Party**
- March 5: **SyllaBye: a syllabus destruct-a-thon**

Part-Time Students Working Group Events

- November 7: **Part-Time MI Students' Fall Social @ Brewhaha**
- **(cancelled) February 27: Part-Time Students' Board Game Night**

Wellness

- September 26: **Yoga at the Inforum**
- October 10: **Yoga at the Inforum**
- October 24: **Yoga at the Inforum**
- November 7: **Yoga at the Inforum**
- November 21: **Yoga at the Inforum**
- December 12: **Yoga at the Inforum**
- January 14: **Yoga at the Inforum**
- January 28: **Yoga at the Inforum**
- February 11: **Yoga at the Inforum**
- February 25: **Yoga at the Inforum**
- March 10: **Yoga at the Inforum**
- April 2: **Yoga at the Virtual Inforum**

Meetings

- June 25: **June 2019 General Council Meeting**
- July 29: **July 2019 General Council Meeting**
- August 29: **August 2019 General Council Meeting**
- September 28: **September 2019 General Council Meeting**
- October 17: **MISC All-Council Retreat/Training**
- November 6: **November 2019 General Council Meeting**
- December 10: **December 2019 General Council Meeting**
- January 21: **January 2020 General Council Meeting**

MISC 2019-20 Annual Report

- February 27: **February 2020 General Council Meeting**
- March 19: **MISC's Virtual AGM + Town Hall (with Student Services and Dean Duff)**
- April 27: **April 2020 General Council Meeting**

Other

- September 27: **Information students attend the #ClimateStrike**
- October 21: **MISC watches #elxn43 at the UTGSU pub**
- December 5: **MI Students go to the UTGSU AGM**
- December 10: **MI End of Term Holiday Party**
- February 20-21: **MI Hart House Farm Reading Week Retreat**
- March 10: **Alumni PechaKucha Night**
- April 2: **Virtual Last Day of Class Happy Hour!**