

University of Toronto – Faculty of Information  
Master of Information Student Council  
April 11th, 2013; 4:00-6:00pm  
Student Lounge, 7th Floor, Claude Bissell Building

Agenda

**Present:** Jessica Gallinger, Alexandra Kwan, Mari Vihuri, George Raine, Wendy Traas, Sean Hayes, Ned Struthers, Jessica Samuels, Kim Pham, Ashley Bodiguel, Octavio Escalante Menchaca, Sarah-Anne de Groot, Brooke Gardhouse, Emily Porta, Allison Moore, Laura Chuang, Katrina Cohen-Palacios, Mary Gu, Alia Ahmad, Kate Restivo, Gillian Eguaras, Laura DeVouge, Nonna Volodina, David Jorjani.

**Official Regrets:** Daniela Cancilla, Melody Tacit, Darrell Joyce, Simren Singh, Laura Sorbara, Pam Murray, Kyra Folk-Farber, Hannah Loshak, Ramona Sansait, Sanjin Kuduzovic.

**Absent:** Brooke Windsor

**Recorder:** Alexandra Kwan

**The meeting was called to order with quorum established at 4.14pm.**

1. Approval of Agenda  
Motion: Emily  
Seconded: Mari  
Vote: Passed—Unanimous

2. Reading and Approval of the Minutes:

*Last month's minutes were still being circulated among members, and were approved later in the meeting.*

Motion: Allison  
Seconded: David  
Vote: Passed—Unanimous.

3. Business Arising from the Minutes: None.

4. Reports by Executives:

- a. President (Jessica)

- i. Introductions: Jessica informed council members that Dean Ross may visit during the meeting to meet the new council. Old and new council members introduced themselves.
- ii. Exit reports and shared drive documents: All outgoing council members should write an exit report. Jessica will request exit reports from council members if they are not submitted by next week. Also, MISC has a shared drive which has not been used much this year; however, files and records of outgoing council

should be uploaded to the drive by next week so they are available to next year's council. In particular, the Secretary, Webmaster, Treasurer, Social Chairs, PD Chairs and Academic Affairs Chair should upload their files. Jessica will remind council members again if their files are not added to the shared drive by next week.

- iii. Art group recommendations: There is a new quilt hanging on the lounge's wall. Jessica recalled January's call for artwork for the lounge. Although initial interest in producing art had diminished as the term progressed, one student remained steadfast and completed the quilt. Simultaneously, MISC's Art subcommittee corresponded by email and met in person to evaluate and provide estimates based on the artist's description. Their initial estimate for the quilt was \$350. Upon completion, the artist produced a report indicating the time and cost of the project: it took 37.5 hours to make the quilt and the cost of materials was \$60. The Art subcommittee wants to approve \$500 compensation to Valerie Miller. Jessica noted that most of MISC's purchases do not need to be put to council because it is already budgeted for. Compensation for artwork comes from MISC's reserve funds, and MISC has a policy to spend a portion of this money on special projects and occasions; however, expenditures from this fund needed to be approved by council. Jessica noted that the cost of additional materials required to mount the quilt would be purchased by MISC at cost.

Motion by Jessica: Be it resolved that council approve \$500 as compensation to the quilting artist, using the MISC-RF, and up to 50\$ in incidental/logistical fees (e.g., cost of rod and nametag/plaque beside the art).

Seconded: Wendy

Passed: Vote—Unanimous.

- iv. Canvas print for MISC office: Jessica ordered a canvas print of the photograph taken of council members at a prior meeting. This print would be installed in the lounge once it is printed. Jessica would like additional canvas prints of the student body installed the lounge space.
- v. Survey group update (Wendy): The Survey subcommittee put together an online survey to survey the MI students' experiences. The survey closed last night with 173 responses. Wendy has not yet performed analysis on the data, but she offered to share results with council members who are interested. From the survey's preliminary results, half of respondents indicated that they do not have anyone to talk to about their personal issues. Another theme from the data is that students feel a disconnect between theory and practice. There is also feedback on MISC and Student Services, as well as a wealth of other information for the next council to review and perform analysis on. If anyone is interested, please let Wendy know. Jessica said that MISC will be sharing the results with the Dean and other interested parties, but results will remain confidential. After the draw for the gift card prizes, contact information (and other identifying details) will be unlinked from responses to increase anonymity.
- vi. Breaking open the safe: Jessica has worked on this for the past year, but with no success. Jessica has contacted past presidents and alumni. She asked Facilities

Coordinator Glen Menzies to open the safe with a crowbar; however, he needs a blowtorch to do so. She also contacted security companies, but the estimated cost would be about \$150 and she has not heard back from some of them. Hopefully next year's council will be able to open it. Allison asked if Jessica had spoken to generic locksmith; Jessica is passing the project to the next president, so if anyone knows a locksmith who can open safes, please let Octavio know. The safe rattles when shaken; thus, Jessica would like to be notified of its contents if the safe is opened in the future.

- vii. Gift for SS, janitorial staff, thank you cards: MISC purchased a gift basket from Edible Arrangements to thank the staff at Student Services. Student Services emailed everyone on MISC to thank them. MISC also purchased two \$20 gift certificates for Bissell's full-time caretaking staff. Jessica purchased thank you cards (which were signed by MISC's Executive). She suggested that council members who have a comment for or who have worked on projects with individual staff at FI should thank them.
- viii. Meeting with the Vice Provost; matching to Tech Fund, referendum notice: Octavio and Jessica met with the Vice Provost Students. The Provost's office had cut funding to the Tech Fund two years ago (and only notified the Tech Fund as of one year ago). It was revealed that the Faculty of Information is also responsible for cutting the fund. The Vice Provost's office used to fund more things, but began decentralizing their funding about ten years ago. Yet, the expectation was that individual Faculties would choose to continue funding student initiatives (for example, the Tech Fund in the Faculty of Engineering still receive funding). FI chose not to match the Tech Fund fees and not notify us. Jessica will bring this up at the next Faculty Council meeting. Ned added that the Faculty told students that the Provost was responsible for the funding cut. During the meeting with the Vice-Provost, Jessica also complained about the Office of Student Life's bureaucratic referendum process.
- ix. Open meetings: In November FC meeting, Jessica brought up idea of open meetings by concentration to provide feedback and support/praise; it would be an opportunity for students to interact with their Concentration Liaison. These meetings are responding to students' concerns about tech skills; they would engage faculty without a set agenda. When this was first suggested during November's Faculty Council meeting, it was met with an overwhelmingly negative response. Consequently, Jessica met with the Dean who supported the idea of having open meetings. Yet, the meetings were continually postponed because Dean Ross wished to discuss them with his Advisory group. When Jessica followed up with him at the beginning of March, the Dean reiterated his support for the open meetings, and it appeared that these meeting would happen. By the second last week of March, Jessica found out from Dean Ross that the concentration meetings were not happening this year after all. Although they were not treated as a priority this year, open meetings were included in FI's next strategic plan.

b. Vice President (Laura) – NO REPORT

c. Secretary (Alexandra)

- i. Spring election: Alexandra welcomed the incoming council members and thanked the outgoing council members who assisted with the election tables. The UelecT voting system was used for this election. 112 students voted in the Spring 2013 election, almost twice the turnout of the Fall 2012 elections.

Motion by Alexandra: Be it resolved that council approve the election results.

Seconded: Jessica

Vote: Passed—Unanimous.

Mari asked whether the percentage of the student body who voted in the MISC elections should be posted on the website. Jessica indicated that she is not ashamed of having a 25% voter turnout. Allison pointed out that MISC election voter turnout is not shameful, but its results could be criticized.

*At 4.46pm, the Dean briefly entered the lounge to greet the incoming MISC members and to inform us of his plans to attend the MI students' year-end celebration.*

- ii. Instructor award: results and future voting system: Alexandra reiterated that the first Outstanding Instructor Award was awarded to Dr. Keren Dali, who will receive a framed certificate on Convocation Day in June. 33 nomination statements were received for 13 nominees, and 147 students voted (146 online votes, plus one paper ballot). Unfortunately, the UelecT voting system did not allow for preferential voting/ranked balloting; it would be good if the next year's voting procedures/system allows for preferential voting.

d. Treasurer (Sanjin)

*Jessica briefly left the room to retrieve the Treasurer's report. In the meantime, council members skipped to the Webmaster's report.*

- i. On/off budget: Executive, Social, PD, Merch: Most of the 2012-2013 council finances should be submitted by now, and all finances should be wrapped up by next week. Social, PD and Merchandise are under budget. Executive will be on or over budget.
- ii. SSI status: Jessica stated that groups requesting SSI funds should ideally spend close to their budgets because MISC is always under budget. Jessica recalled that she oversaw this year's budgeting process during the summer months and really promoted SSI to enable students to organize non-MISC events. ~\$4000 was allocated to SSI funding; despite Jessica's suggestion to groups to request more money, SSIs was under budget again. She hopes next year's SSI budgeting process is overseen and started earlier. Jessica said MISC will be mostly on budget this year. Jessica reminded council members that all figures are tentative until claim forms and receipts are submitted.

- e. Webmaster (Mari)
  - i. Shut down of old FLUG server and launch of new MISC website: Two weeks ago, Mari discovered that the old website vanished. Mari emailed tech support at the iSchool to investigate. IT staff informed her that the server that hosted the website had been shut down permanently. Fortunately, Mari had finished about 70% of MISC's new development site. Since the old server was shut off permanently, Mari resorted to gathering the old site's content from Google's cache. She noted that the shut down inconveniently occurred during the TF's Referendum and MISC's nomination period. The old server was shut down due to security issues that had caught the attention of the CIO's office at Simcoe Hall. Mari is still unsure why she was not notified of the shut down when it occurred since MISC was one of the biggest users of that server. However, Tony Lemmens sent out apologies for the abrupt shutdown to MISC on behalf of the IT team the following day.
  - ii. Outstanding projects to be passed on to new Webmaster: A couple of pages have not yet been updated, including those of the Social Committee and TF. Mari will be passing on the information to the incoming Webmaster. Tech Fund will be working on developing their own website because they have too much information for MISC's website.
  - iii. Propose investigation of options and creation of small MISC intranet: Mari suggested the future development of a small intranet for storing MISC documents, passing on knowledge from one year to another, and for conducting votes through email. Mari would like to work on this with Hannah in the upcoming academic year.

*After Mari finished her Webmaster report, Jessica resumed the Treasurer's report.*

- 5. Reports by Representatives:
  - a. Alumni Association (Brooke):
    - i. Spring reunion reminder: The Spring Alumni reunion is May 30<sup>th</sup>, and Brook encouraged everyone to go.
    - ii. FIAA Outstanding Student Contribution Award extended to Mon. April 15<sup>th</sup>. Brooke noted that FI's Careers Officer Isidora Petrovic conducted a survey of recent alumni, and presented the results at the last FIAA meeting. Isidora will make them publically available. She received 148 responses, a 40% response rate; also, 80% of respondents reported that they were employed within one year of graduating. A council member inquired about the survey's sampling methodology. Brooke responded that over 500 emails were sent out to recent grads. A council member argued that this is likely not a representative sample of recent alumni, rendering the data as useless. A council member suggested conducting this survey at six months after graduation, instead of waiting a year, because recent graduates are expected to begin paying back their student loans at six months after graduation. The graduating class will get a survey upon graduation, and will get another one year later. Allison mentioned that an outgoing survey is conducted in the fall, roughly six months after graduation.

- b. MISC-MSGSA Liaison (Katrina) – NO REPORT
- c. Admissions Committee (Wendy) – NO REPORT
- d. Faculty Council (Jessica et al) – NO REPORT
- e. Graduate Students' Union (Jessica, Laura, Ned)
  - i. Health/dental insurance survey: Jessica reminded council members about students receiving an email from GSU in response to concerns about our current health coverage's inclusion of homeopathy. No one on GSU's executive wants to continue funding homeopathy; however, the staff member running this program likes homeopathy. Jessica described the "magic water" treatment to council members, pointing out that it is unsafe and that our tuition is funding it. If GSU reallocated the funds currently allocated to homeopathy, students would be able to get coverage for physiotherapy at \$20 per session. A council member asked how popular the homeopathy treatments are, compared to physiotherapy. Jessica responded that homeopathic treatments are less popular than physiotherapy, yet such treatments number in the hundreds. It was suggested that the cost of physiotherapy (at least \$60-75 per session) may deter students from seeking the treatment; whereas, there is no annual cap on number of homeopathic treatments (which cost \$40 per session). Thus, the GSU is reconsidering the entire health plan, and looking into options other than Greenshield. They also want to improve access to mental health treatment and physiotherapy.
  - ii. Keep Back Campus Green rally: Jessica attended the rally last Monday, and described the Keep Back Campus Green campaign to new council members. She reiterated the issues that came up during the Governing Council meeting (i.e., the Governing Council using "students' interests" as the rationale for covering the field in artificial grass in accordance with PANAM games regulations in order to receive funding from the PANAM games.) During the meeting, it was revealed that the Governing Council did not even consider implementing a hybrid synthetic + real grass model; they did not conduct research into alternatives because they are principally concerned with meeting PANAM game specifications. The Keep Back Campus Green campaign is a movement to stop the University from covering this natural grass field behind Hart House with artificial grass. Jessica noted that a Toronto MPP attended the rally, and U of T Alumna Margaret Atwood tweeted about it. Jessica pointed out that the University's decisions can be reversed; a few years ago, the university attempted to turn the space into underground parking and/or develop it, which was stopped due to the amount of opposition. Jessica encourages all students to visit the campaign's website, as well as the GSU's site to write letters to their MPPs. Otherwise, the artificial grass will likely be installed on July 1<sup>st</sup>. If students are interested in participating in this issue, please let Jessica know.

- f. Student Tech Fund (Emily, David, Octavio)
- i. Workshop vote: The Tech Fund would like council to vote on a \$4000 iSchool Institute (iSI) workshop on MySQL and PHP, taught by Keith Schengili-Roberts. The workshop will take place in BL 224/225 and run from 10am to 5pm on two days. The workshop would serve as an introduction to coding, with an emphasis on how to understand the people who code. Attendees will do some coding to learn how it looks and works. The workshop is capped at 25 students. Additional students cost \$1000 per 5 students. The format would be similar to HackerYou/LLC's model: 50% will be hands-on activities, and will be recorded for students. The TF anticipates lots of interest, and will promote the workshop if it is passed. Emily noted that other workshops of comparable quality cost about \$3000-4000. Emily described the iSI's cost recovery model, in which the iSchool does not profit from these continuing education courses, since funds go to salaries and the program. If students want to take iSI courses after graduation, they receive a discount on course offerings for a limited time. Emily pointed out that given the cost-recovery model, partnering with TF would also benefit the iSI. Yet, Emily acknowledged that workshops are not a sustainable model, since these skills should be taught to all enrolled in the MI program instead of just providing it to the 25 students who attend. Spots will be offered on a first-come, first-serve basis; however, TF needs to meet to determine the ratio of 2<sup>nd</sup> year students v. 1<sup>st</sup> year students who may attend.

Motion by Emily: Be it resolved that council approve the TF's proposal to spend 4000\$ on a mySQL and PHP workshop to be held in late April.

Seconded: Allison

Vote: Passed—Unanimous.

- ii. Referendum results: Octavio: TF held their Referendum from March 27-29, in which 111 MI students voted. 103 students (93%) voted "Yes" For students who had a problem with voting system, Octavio provided in-person help. He noted low voter turnout since the Office of Student Life's tight deadline made it difficult to promote the rushed Referendum. As a result of having insufficient time for planning and promotion, the TF iTea also had low attendance. Octavio added that MISC's current constitution states only 25 votes are sufficient to validate a referendum; however, this may change in the future. Jessica asked if MSGSA finished their referendum. MSGSA's referendum was successful, in which a single person voted "No". 30 MMSt students voted "Yes" to continue the TF. They had a 39% voter turnout.

Motion by Octavio: Be it resolved that council approve the Technology Upgrade Fund's referendum results.

Seconded: Mari

Vote: Passed—Unanimous.

- iii. Puppy party report: Two therapy dogs from St. John's Ambulance came to Bissell for 2 hours. Although this service is technically free, TF decided to

donate \$150 to St. John's Ambulance. 50 people attended this event, which was the winning idea of Fall 2012's Ideas Party. TF would like to host another Ideas Party next year.

- iv. 224/225: TF was contacted a month ago by Susan Brown (Assistant Dean, Administration) who informed them that major purchases would be made to outfit BL 224/225 with more computers. The estimated cost of these purchases would be \$90,000. TF had not previously been asked to provide input about these planned expenditures; yet the iSchool wanted to know if TF was interested in contributing to it. Regardless of whether TF supports this upgrade, the purchases will be made. Outgoing TF Reps emphasized that they are not interested, and strongly advised the incoming TF Reps to not support this initiative. Structural, infrastructural changes to facilities to support courses should not be funded by student's Tech Fund money. The point of the Tech Fund is for providing experimental and auxiliary items for students. Mari added that part of this plan would involve taking the computers in BL224/225 (which were recently purchased for students by the Tech Fund) and moving them to BL116, a room used primarily by the iSchool Institute. The new computers would go to 224/225. The computers currently in 224/225 would go to the basement, for iSI student use (primarily). The computers currently in the basement would go to faculty members. TF Reps also noted the continued confusion over the TF budget and how much funds are actually available. Jessica added that TF computer that was purchased for the MISC office has not yet been installed. Emily confirmed that the TF had purchased the computer, and expressed her surprise that it was not yet installed.
  - v. New Tech Fund: Mari and Ned are the incoming TF Representatives. Emily, David, and Octavio are no longer part of TF.
  - vi. Transition meeting: A 17 page exit report containing policy and procedures has been prepared for Mari and Ned. A meeting will be scheduled to facilitate the TF transition. On behalf of the TF, David thanked former Senior IT Administrator Ivan Sestak for all his help during the last 1.5 years.
- g. Information Services (Mari and Emily) – NO REPORT
  - h. Life and Times Committee (Daniela) – NO REPORT
  - i. Programs Committee (Sanjin): Jessica read a report prepared by Sanjin. There are plans for FI's undergraduate program at UTM to be integrated closer to what graduate students do at the St. George location. Jessica was informed that undergraduates may be sent to the St. George campus during their third and fourth years. There are also new reading course guidelines, which require a predetermined reading list.
  - j. Committee on Standing (Simren) – NO REPORT
6. Reports by Committees:
- a. Academic Affairs (Allison): no report.

- i. Class rep reports: Class representatives are no longer sending in reports at this time. They did send them in this term, only we moved to a mid-term report. Allison received some concerned reports, which were difficult to negotiate. A couple class reps did not want Allison or MISC to take action and talk to the implicated profs. The day before the last class, Allison went to another professor's office hours to discuss the situation, but no one showed up. Said professor did also not respond to her email. Although Allison will reach out to class rep about the circumstances, she is unsure how much can be done at this point in time. Jessica suggested reporting the prof's absence from office hours and lack of response to correspondence to the Dean; however, Allison pointed out that she is not enrolled in the class and would not receive any notifications of office hour cancellation. Allison suspects her email is broken, which may have been an obstacle to timely communication. In another case, there was no class rep, so students appointed one person to act as a class rep. In this class, the prof was not following SGS guidelines, as students were getting C's. Allison found that class reps did not want her to 'interfere'. She argued for better articulation of the class representatives' role to students and faculty in the future. Allison: "If you're going to be a class rep, you have to be able to Rep." Also, she encouraged MISC to make more use of class reps for communications. Allison suggested the creation of a process/protocol to deal with problems arising from negative class rep reports. It was also brought up that the iSchool does not currently have an Associate Dean, Academic to help address students' classroom concerns. Jessica responded that the iSchool has adopted concentration liaisons instead of having an Associate Dean, Academic. Jessica recommended to Allison that she include a scheme and some guiding principles in her exit report.
- b. Professional Development (Pam and Kim) – NO REPORT
- c. Social (Ashley & Darrell)
  - i. End of year party: The end of the year party is happening tomorrow at 7pm, on the second floor at Bedford Academy. As it is listed on Facebook as a "Public event", Ashley noted that many non-MI students are RSVPing (e.g., students who wish to bring their partners along, MMSSt friends, and people not from our faculty). Ashley reminded council members that MSGSA decided to pull out of a joint year-end party since some MMSSt students wanted to have their own party. Both Social Co-chairs were saddened by this and had hoped to bring MI and MMSSt students together, but because the MSGSA decided to have an exclusive event MMSSt students are unfortunately not invited to attend the MISC event; they chose not to participate and financially support the party. Teapots and gift boxes of relaxation items will be offered to MI students as door prizes.
  - ii. Outgoing report: Feedback from collaboration between MSGSA and MISC's Social Committee chairs will be included in the exit report. Ashley respects that MMSSt students are trying to push for their own community at the iSchool, but she feels MISC's new co-chairs should continue collaborating with MSGSA.
- d. Merchandise (Nonna) – NO REPORT

7. New business

Council members were reminded that March meeting minutes had not yet been approved. The meeting briefly returned to item #2 on the agenda. Council members were asked to submit any remaining receipts for reimbursement as soon as possible, since the outgoing council is wrapping up their financial accounts by next week.

Jessica expressed that it was great working with everyone on the outgoing council, and that she has much confidence in next year's council. She wished everyone all the best.

8. Adjourn

Motion to Adjourn: Ned

Seconded: David

Vote: Passed—Unanimous.

**Carried at 5:54pm.**