



**Master of Information Student Council**

University of Toronto, Faculty of Information  
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Claude Bissell Building, 7th Floor, Student Lounge  
July 8th, 2014 at 6:00-8:00pm

# MISC Meeting

## Minutes

**Present:** Jessie Wionzek, Mari Vihuri, Hannah Saunders, Catherine Lamoureux, Diana Kulpa, Mehreen Athar, Amanda Chernawski, Matthew Gertler, Leah Strudwick, Hilary Barlow (via chat), Carolyn Dineen

**Regrets:** Akash Venkat, Junoh Kim

**Absent:** Kyra Folk-Farber, Laura Chuang, Karolina Grzeszczuk, George Raine

### 1. Approval of the agenda

- a. Motion to approve the agenda
  - i. Motioned by Mari; seconded Jessie; passed unanimously

### 2. Reading and approval of the minutes

- a. Motion to approve the minutes from June 4, 2014
  - i. Motioned by Mari; seconded by Catherine; passed unanimously

### 3. Business arising from the minutes

- a. N/A

### 4. Reports by executives

- a. **President (Hilary Barlow) - Report delivered by Mari Vihuri**
  - i. Unfortunately, Hilary is unable to join us in person for the meeting today due to a personal loss. She has asked Mari to chair the meeting in her place. (Note: She was

also present for the meeting via chat, and Catherine kept both Hilary and council up to speed.)

- ii. Diana Kulpa has expressed interest in filling the vacant Committee on Standing Representative position. A reminder that anyone appointed to their position will hold them until the fall elections, at which point they will need to run for the position (which we highly encourage them to do, if interested).
  1. **Motion to appoint Diana Kulpa as Committee on Standing Representative.**
    - a. Motioned by Mari; seconded by Leah; passed unanimously
- iii. Ria Riaz was a little overstretched and decided to resign as Academic Affairs Chair. Carolyn Dineen has expressed interest in serving as interim Chair for the remainder of the summer. Carolyn works until 7 pm, so if council prefers, we can wait until then to vote. If there are no objections, we can go ahead and vote now.
  1. **Motion to appoint Carolyn Dineen as Academic Affairs Chair.**
    - a. Motioned by Mari; seconded by Hannah; passed unanimously
- iv. We have heard reports that the two iSchool students currently in South Africa for the Mandela internship have fallen ill due to the chemicals they were using to process archival documents, and will be returning home as soon as they are well enough to travel. MISC will get in touch with these students as soon as possible to offer any support we can provide to ensure this incident is addressed appropriately. We hope for their speedy recovery and safe journey home.
- v. Alexander Sodiqov is a UofT PhD candidate who was detained Tajikistan while conducting research. Because of the political situation there, Alex's family and colleagues fear for his safety. The GSU has put together a working group to find ways to promote his case and hopefully get him back to Canada safely. If you are interested in participating, the working group meeting times are posted on GSU's [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) feeds. There is also a [petition](#) that you can sign.
- vi. Kathleen O'Brien asked if the Class of 2014 banner (which was signed after the convocation ceremony by much of the graduating class) could be put up in the student lounge in the coming year. Hilary told her this would be fine, but speak up if you have any opinions on this.
- vii. Today is our deadline for budget change proposals. Does anyone anticipate that their funding needs will be different from last year? If not, we will base it off of last year's (the exact funding we get is based on enrollment, so the overall amount will likely be a little different this year than last year).

1. Mari asked everyone to upload any budget proposals to your respective folder on the shared drive so it will be easily accessible. Also, please email Lucy so she's aware that the budgets have been uploaded.
- viii. As many of you have already heard, the iSchool has launched a pilot internship program this year called [TALINT](#) (for "Toronto Academic Librarianship Internship"). The iSchool has partnered with the University of Toronto Libraries (UTL) to offer special Graduate Student Library Assistant (GSLA) positions to iSchool students under the TALINT name. UTL's long-running GSLA program has up until now been open to any iSchool students and other UofT graduate students in good standing. Many current and former iSchool students have been employed as GSLAs. However, application for the new TALINT positions will be restricted to incoming iSchool students who are a) full-time, and b) have a grade average of A- or above. A committee at the iSchool will short-list applicants, and forward their selections to UTL hiring managers, who will ultimately making any hiring decisions. Because this is a pilot year, some positions are also open to second-year students, but in the future they intend to offer TALINT positions only to incoming students.

MISC was contacted by a student who was concerned that part-time students are being excluded from this program. Other students have also communicated issues about this program to MISC members. The executive discussed the issue and began outlining some potential pros and cons:

1. Potential pros:
  - a. Could be a good opportunity for students who come into the MI program with good grades but not a lot of work experience, because even student jobs can be competitive at UofT.
  - b. Provides an assistantship of sorts that could be attractive to prospective students and boost enrollment. This seems to be the main motivation for the iSchool to launch this program.
2. Potential cons:
  - a. It is unlikely that the iSchool is funding the creation of new GSLA positions for TALINT due to financial issues. This suggests they are limiting positions that were once open to all iSchool (and other graduate) students.
  - b. Grades are often not a predictor of a student's ability to succeed at work and, with a cut-off for participation at an A- average, this could limit jobs available to talented students with grades below the cutoff.

- c. At least in the pilot year, this program is only open to full-time students. We asked Wendy Duff about this and she said that the program's details, such as the full-time requirement, will be assessed and possibly changed at the end of the pilot year. However, no explanation was provided as to why part-time students were excluded. This seems to disadvantage part-time students who otherwise meet the requirements, and might rely on GSLA jobs to pay their way through school.
3. Discussion: What do you see as potential pros or cons to this program? What follow-up questions would you like to ask of Wendy Duff et al? What kind of stance, and what kind of actions, do you think MISC should take moving forward?
  - a. Mari says that MISC should definitely follow up with Wendy Duff and the iSchool about this, but since GSLA positions are unionized, we may be able to pursue more substantive changes through [CUPE 1230](#). Mari has e-mailed the CUPE 1230 President, Wasyl Sydorenko, to find out more information about how this program developed. She has not received an answer yet, so she will continue to follow up.
  - b. Matthew asked what percentage of GSLA jobs will be taken by TALINT. He noted that if this program leads to the creation of new positions, it would be desirable, as it would lead to job growth. Mari answered that there is no clear answer about this as of yet, but she is investigating.
  - c. Jessie noted that the hiring process is unclear, and UTL hiring managers do not understand the program well. Mari reiterated that the TALINT committee will review applicants, decide which ones are competitive, then forward those selected applicants to the hiring managers. However, she noted that the iSchool has not been transparent about the makeup of the TALINT committee (so far, we only know Wendy Duff is reviewing applications) or the criteria by which they are short-listing applicants.
  - d. Matthew noted that many GSLAs at the Map & Data Library are not iSchool students, as they need expertise in certain skills and technologies (e.g. GIS) that are not taught in-depth at the iSchool.
  - e. Catherine noted that the program does have some redeeming qualities, but it also definitely has faults that should be addressed. One of the issues with the existing G/SLA system is that incoming students often aren't aware of these positions until they arrive at the iSchool. The iSchool could simply promote the existing job opportunities to incoming students.
  - f. Mehreen asked about creating an action list with things to bring up with the iSchool and/or CUPE. Mari noted that the executive has already begun

work on such a document, and this can be found on the shared drive. She will e-mail this doc to council after the meeting to ask for further input.

- g. Based on the discussion so far, the major issues that have been noted are 1) restrictions on eligibility, 2) the lack of transparency, and 3) the extent and legitimacy of the iSchool's newfound authority over the hiring of GSLAs.
  - h. Mari also suggested potentially getting in touch with UTL (either the administration or any hiring managers) to discuss the issue with them. Mehreen added that we would need to form a strong proposal about exactly what we want to happen if we do this. Mari agreed that we should keep this idea on the backburner for the moment and try other avenues first.
- ix. We are discussing two sets of proposed constitutional amendments at this meeting. As a quick reminder, any motions to amend the constitution must be tabled for one week, and the MI student body must be informed via the MI listserv(s). After one week, MISC may vote on the motion. A vote of two-thirds of the MISC members present shall render the motion approved.
- 1. Mari is proposing some minor amendments to clean up the numbering of articles in the constitution.
    - a. Motion to approve constitutional amendments as described in Section 1A of the Appendix.
    - b. Tabled. Details will be disseminated to students via e-mail & through the website.
  - 2. Hilary is proposing amendments to the constitution to institute a new structure allowing MISC to create working groups, and establish our first three working groups: Part-Time Students, Student Experience Survey & Mental Health. Read the proposed changes in full in the appendix.
    - a. Motion to approve constitutional amendments as described in Section 1B of the Appendix.
    - b. Some discussion occurred regarding the necessity of the amendments. Diana asked why these areas (e.g. part-time student issues, annual survey, and mental health) can't be made the responsibility of existing positions. Mari and Jessie explained that this had been discussed at length during previous MISC meetings and also by the executive. A few council members argued from experience that the workload associated with each of these three areas is too much for any one member to take on. Also, no existing

positions fit naturally with these areas, and we are reluctant to create new positions when MISC already has difficulty filling existing ones.

- c. Matt expressed confusion over the creation of working groups, when MISC already has standing committees and can form ad hoc committees. Mari and Jessie explained that standing committees are currently positions that are elected directly by the student body. If we wanted to make these areas standing committees, we would need to either 1) create new positions for them, or 2) revise substantial amounts of the constitution to distinguish chairs elected by the student body from chairs elected within MISC. The new working groups are also intended to be distinct from ad hoc committees, which are formed for a short period of time and dissolved after their work is completed. The appointment of MISC members to working groups will be a regular activity for MISC, to ensure their work continues. They will continue until MISC votes to dissolve them. This structure allows us to mobilize existing MISC members to participate in these working groups, and ensures a chair is appointed to coordinate their work.
- d. Based on the discussion, council generally appears to support this amendment, but some changes are still needed to improve the wording. The draft will be sent out to both MISC members and the MI student body, to allow some time for review and revision. If some consensus is reached on the draft by next meeting, the motion can be voted on. Otherwise, we will revisit the discussion.

**b. Vice President (Vacant) - NO REPORT**

**c. Secretary (Jessie Wionzek) - NO REPORT**

**d. Treasurer (Lucy Szczesniak) - NO REPORT**

- i. Lucy suggested creating a spreadsheet to track trends re: budgets and similar documents.

**e. Webmaster (Mari Vihuri)**

- i. Progress report on development of MISConnect intranet.
  - 1. Document transfer: Mari has been going through the contents of the old shared drive on the computer in the MISC office, which go back to 2001. She has been renaming documents and placing them in the appropriate folders on Google Drive, so make sure you check your folders if you haven't lately. We've uncovered all sorts of oldies but goodies! Percy Lo has also installed Dropbox and Google Drive on the MISC office computer for us so MISC files are synced, up-to-date, and easy to access when needed.

2. New developments: The Google Drive is part of the MISConnect intranet, but it's not everything. What do you think MISC needs? Discuss options: listserv and/or forums (Google Group), stable and ad hoc chat rooms (HipChat), voting, etc. Mari is working on allowing all MISC members to log into a unified portal on the MISC website where they will be able to access all of this (ideally with their Google accounts). She shared a very early prototype of this, and will ask MISC members for their suggestions.
- ii. The student guide needs to be updated for the 2014-2015 school year. Hilary and Mari would like some feedback on the guide. The current guide is available online at <http://misc.ischool.utoronto.ca/guide>. Mari has set up a Google doc for us to collaborate on updating the guide: <http://goo.gl/CT6Qjc> (MISC members may edit this directly, non-MISC members may provide feedback via the comments feature.)
    1. Mari is especially looking for examples of good student guides or similar resources online.
  - iii. Other website updates forthcoming: some updates to the list of student activities and the timeline of achievements.

## 5. Reports by Committee Chairs:

### a. Academic Affairs (Vacant) - Report by Mari Vihuri

- i. Hilary and Mari have been sharing Academic Affairs responsibilities so far this summer, but are ready to welcome Carolyn to her new position. A big thank you to everyone who stepped up to be a class rep or asked a friend to do so! Thanks to your help, we had reps for 70% of the F and Y classes.
- ii. End-of-term reports for F classes: We had reps for 2 of the 3 F classes this summer. We received reports for both of the classes with reps. Feedback for both courses was positive, nothing notable to report.
- iii. Mid-term reports for Y classes: We had reps for 5 out of the 7 Y classes this summer. Mari has been sending reminder e-mails to class reps to submit their reports. We've received 3 out of 5 reports.
- iv. Recruitment of class reps for S classes: E-mails have been sent out to the two instructors teaching S classes this summer. If you're in INF2161 History of Books & Printing with Greta Golick, or KMD2002 Technologies for Knowledge Media with Mark Chignell, please remind them to elect a rep!
  1. Diana has volunteered to be the class rep for KMD2002. Thank you Diana!

**b. Professional Development (Jessie Wionzek) - NO REPORT**

**c. Social (Leah Strudwick & Hannah Saunders)**

- i. Orientation BBQ developments (budget, promotional logistics, catering, MUSSA collaboration)
  1. Hannah reported that there have been some budget issues: MUSSA wants to keep their budget at around \$150-200, but this amount is unrealistic. Hannah reported that \$10 per person is more accurate. Hannah also noted that the cost is often higher due to taxes and other related costs.
    - a. Hannah said that the question now is whether we can afford to fund  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the total in order to run it the way we would like (eg. “proper” food, not just ice cream), but we would still expect MUSSA to pay \$10 per person.
    - b. Mari reminded council that MUSSA’s overall operating budget is much lower than MISC’s due to their smaller student body. She also recalled that, at an orientation BBQ several years ago (Fall 2011?), budgeting issues and a lack of cooperation between the two councils resulted in MI and MMSt students not being able to enjoy the event equally (e.g. if she recalls correctly, food was free for MI students but MMSt students had to pay; MMSt students couldn’t participate in the raffle). This made the event and the relationship between MI and MMSt students a bit awkward. She recommends that Hannah and Leah work with Hilary to try to come to some kind of fair arrangement with MUSSA.
    - c. Diana kindly offered to help make desserts.
  2. Hannah next mentioned her meeting with Adriana Rossini about promotion of MISC’s orientation events. Adriana said she would include info in Student Service’s e-mails to new students if Social sends her the blurbs. She also said we can create an image to go on the iSchool website front page slider which can link to the MISC website.
    - a. Mari mentioned that the MISC President has direct posting access to the two MI listservs. She said she will talk to Hilary and see if they can determine whether or not we can reach incoming students via the new-mi listserv yet.
  3. Hannah then discussed the orientation swag bags. The bags would include some useful pamphlets as well as things like candy and tea. Mari recommended e-mailing the executive about including some items (e.g. flyer about the MISC website and calendar, information about elections, mental health material from Grad Minds, etc.) She also recommended talking to Akash to see if Tech



Fund is interested in contributing any swag, as this is something previous iterations of the Tech Fund have considered.

4. Hannah said that Social has talked to the Inforum about orientation needs as well.
5. The BBQ has been scheduled for Wednesday September 3. The lawn has been booked for 11-3; the BBQ will likely take place from 12-2, allowing for setup and cleanup. Volunteer tours will also take place on Wednesday, and the pub night will be on Thursday.

**d. Merchandise (Mehreen Athar) - NO REPORT**

## **6. Reports by Representatives:**

**a. Alumni Association (Catherine Lamoureux) - NO REPORT**

**b. MISC-MUSSA Liaison (Marianne Williams) - NO REPORT**

**c. Admissions Committee (Amanda Chernawski) - NO REPORT**

**d. Faculty Council (Hilary Barlow et al.)**

- i. There was a Faculty Council (FC) meeting on June 6, 2014, the last one until September. Hannah Loshak and Hilary fielded questions from the faculty about the Student Experience Survey, particularly from Professor Krmpotich. Hannah's in-depth knowledge of the process and content of the Survey was extremely helpful.
- ii. Nalini Singh is the new Chair of the Life & Times Committee. There will be fewer iTeas in the coming year (three per semester) and Nalini is planning to continue some of the more successful iTeas from last year (Halloween, cafe, etc). Hilary pitched some events and discussed the iTea lineup with Nalini, and will continue communicating with her about it.
  1. Several council members expressed concerns about the reduction in iTeas, noting that this event is important to the social cohesion of the faculty.
  2. The Life & Times Committee Representative position has been vacant since April, so MISC does not have much context for this decision yet.
- iii. Andrew Drummond sent out the FC meeting schedule for the 2014-2015 school year. Hilary put the dates on the main MISC calendar for reference.

**e. Graduate Students' Union (Mehreen Athar) - NO REPORT**

**f. Student Tech Fund (Akash Venkat & Junoh Kim) - Report by Mari Vihuri**

- i. Transition meeting finally held on June 23. First meeting of new Tech Fund scheduled for July 14.

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

- i. Report on June 5, 2014 meeting: This was the last Information Services Committee (ISC) meeting of the 2013-2014 academic year. Next year's chair will be Rhonda McEwen.
- ii. Elisa Sze has reviewed and incorporated much of the feedback from faculty and students into the Inforum Collection Development Policy draft. She also met with Dean Ross, who recommended additional revisions. Otherwise, the ISC supports the draft policy (with the discussed revisions), and if no major changes are forthcoming, the document will be brought up at the first Faculty Council meeting in the fall for approval. Elisa will also schedule wider listening sessions for additional feedback.
- iii. As previously discussed, the Inforum has begun transferring material to the UTL storage facility at Downsview. Criteria for transfers are outlined on this new page on the iSchool website: [Inforum collection & facilities changes](#). Examples include books published before 2008 that have not circulated since 2008, older editions of books that have been replaced by newer ones, and certain books and journals that are available online from reliable providers. Elisa also emphasized that any books sent to Downsview will be checked first to make sure their catalogue records are complete.
- iv. Dean Ross has asked Alex Dvornyak (Senior Web Developer) to look into re-integrating the recruitment microsite (at [ischool.utoronto.ca](http://ischool.utoronto.ca)) with the main website (at [current.ischool.utoronto.ca](http://current.ischool.utoronto.ca)). The microsite was a project introduced by Jerome Poon-Ting to make some immediate improvements to the site for recruitment purposes, but discussions are now returning to more long-term solutions.
- v. Kelly Lyons reviewed progress since the Task Force on Strategic Directions from Information Services (TSIF) final report was produced in May 2013. An ISC subcommittee met in Fall 2013 to discuss mechanisms for implementing the TSIF recommendations. A working group was struck, which included the ISC Chair, an Inforum librarian, Lynne Howarth, Glenn Cumming, and the Director of the iSchool Institute. A few meetings were held, but progress was stalled as they were waiting for results of the external review. Kelly mentioned a faculty retreat would be taking place on June 11 which might give some renewed direction to these efforts.

- vi. The Inforum is discussing the implementation of nominal fees to register for iSkills workshops, as many students sign up for these and don't attend. This will also allow the Inforum to consider opening remaining seats to non-iSchoolers for an additional fee. Mari reported to the ISC that both MISC and the Tech Fund have discussed charging nominal fees for workshops in the past and generally support this move.
- vii. Some discussion occurred about the move of the iSchool Institute (iSI) to the School of Continuing Studies (SCS). An advisory board will be convened at the iSchool that will consult regularly with the SCS regarding iSI courses. 10% of the SCS's iSI revenue should go back to the iSchool (specifically, Information Services.)
- h. **Life and Times Committee (Vacant) - NO REPORT**
- i. **Programs Committee (Carolyn Dineen) - NO REPORT**
- j. **Committee on Standing (Vacant) - NO REPORT**

## **7. New business**

## **8. Adjourn**

- a. Motioned by Mari; seconded by Jessie; passed unanimously

# Appendix

## 1. Proposed constitutional amendments

### A. Numbering of articles

The constitution has been moved from a Word document to a Google document. It has acquired some inconsistent article numbering over the years, so these and any internal cross-references have been fixed accordingly. This will make it easier to both read and edit the constitution. Further structural improvements will be needed, but cleaning up the numbering is an important first step in that direction.

To review these changes, please compare the following documents:

- [Current MISC Constitution, last amended November 14, 2013](#)
- [Proposed MISC Constitution, with July 2014 amendments](#)

### B. Introduction of working groups

The following proposed text introduces a new structure for working groups, designed to support various MISC activities. There is currently no structure that allows for standing committees that are appointed within MISC. As per our constitution, MISC standing committee chairs must be elected by the MI student body, whereas ad hoc committees are intended to be short-term in nature, and dissolve after their work is complete.

Working groups are designed to a) ensure regular MISC activities that are too labour-intensive for a single position (e.g. the annual survey) continue to be carried out, and b) ensure that ongoing interests that are not otherwise addressed by a single position (e.g. part-time students, mental health) are adequately represented.

Hilary's original drafted text is provided below. Please make any additional comments and edits directly in the [constitution Google doc](#).

## 4. The Governing Council

### 4.5. Working Groups of MISC

- 4.5.1. A Working Group can be created by a majority vote by Governing Council. Working Groups can be created to address issues not covered by Standing Committees, or to address issues pertinent to Council and/or Standing Committees but with a specific focus.
- 4.5.2. Working Groups are distinct from Standing Committees in that the chair does not run for their position in MISC elections, though candidates are

encouraged to express interest in leading a Working Group in their candidacy statements during elections. If a candidate expresses interest in heading a Working Group in their candidacy statement and is subsequently elected to a Council position, they will automatically be chair of that Working Group.

In the event that two Councillors are elected who express interest in heading the same Working Group, the other Councillors will choose the Chair by majority vote at a meeting of Governing Council. In the event that no one expresses interest in heading a Working Group during elections, any Councillor may nominate themselves to the position and be appointed by a motion during a meeting of Governing Council.

4.5.3. MISC shall have the following Working Groups:

4.5.3.1. Part-Time Students

4.5.3.2. Student Experience Survey

4.5.3.3. Mental Health

4.5.4. The Part-Time Students Working Group shall look after the interests of part-time MI students at the Faculty of Information. This includes issues such as funding structures, financial aid, minimum and maximum completion periods, access to social and professional development resources, and/or whatever the Working Group deems appropriate.

The Chair and Working Group members are not required to be part-time students themselves. However, part-time students are highly encouraged to run for a Councillor position with interest in heading this Working Group, to become members of and/or to participate in meetings of this Working Group. The Group shall meet at least twice during the course of the fall and winter semesters, and at least once during the summer session. Part-Time Students Working Group meetings must be held in the evening to accommodate the schedules of students who work full-time.

4.5.5. The Student Experience Survey Working Group shall ensure that a Student Experience Survey gauging MISC's performance representing student issues and overall student satisfaction at the Faculty of Information be conducted at least once every academic year. The Working Group will also be responsible for presenting the data in a timely manner after the Survey has been conducted and publishing a summary of the data online.

4.5.6. The Mental Health Working Group shall plan and host a yearly Mental Health iTea or a similar event that promotes awareness of mental health issues among graduate students generally and resources available at U of T for

students suffering from mental health issues. Through the Working Group's initiatives, members should promote an environment of understanding and compassion while promoting dialogue about mental health among iSchool students. Programming should include mention of not only diagnosable disorders, but also cognitive symptoms that affect many without diagnosed disorders, such as depression, anxiety and stress.

Members of the Mental Health Working Group, and the Chair in particular, are highly encouraged to attend events with Grad Minds and/or other U of T organizations that focus on issues of graduate student mental health.

- 4.5.7. Candidates for the following Councillor positions are particularly encouraged to consider chairing a Working Group, since their duties often overlap with the issues addressed by Working Groups. However, participation is optional. Councillors other than those listed may also participate in a Working Group, as a Chair or general member:

4.5.7.1. Vice-President

4.5.7.2. Faculty Council Representative

4.5.7.3. MISC-MUSSA Liaison

4.5.7.4. Graduate Student Union Representative

4.5.7.5. Faculty Council Committee Representative (Admissions, Life & Times, Programs)