

To: Wendy Duff, Dean, Faculty of Information (iSchool)

CC: Lari Langford, Interim Director of the iSchool Inforum
Kathleen Scheaffer, Inforum Librarian, Outreach and Instructional Services Coordinator
Nalini Singh, Inforum Librarian, Reference Services Coordinator
Elisa Sze, Inforum Librarian, Collections & Public Services

February 26, 2018

Dear Professor Duff and members of the Faculty of Information Revitalization Committee,

We are writing to voice our concerns regarding the proposed plan to relocate and redistribute the Inforum's onsite print collection. As academic librarians and alumni of the Faculty of Information, we believe that the Inforum's print collection is an integral part of the Faculty, and should remain at the Inforum as a cohesive collection.

The Inforum serves as a model library to iSchool students thanks to its very carefully curated and maintained collection, exemplary services, and dedicated librarians and staff. The Inforum plays a key role in the training of future librarians; its specialized print collection provides rich and varied opportunities for experiential learning. Similar to lab schools developed in the field of education, the Inforum serves as a place of innovation and testing ground for future practitioners.

Two of us (Jenaya and Navroop) were fortunate to have the opportunity to work as interns at the Inforum during the course of our M.I. programs. The librarians, staff, services, and collections at the Inforum modeled all aspects of an academic library, which was pivotal in preparing us for careers in academic librarianship. Learning about collection maintenance, shelving, reference, instruction, and collection development within a small, specialized collection helped us develop valuable skills we now apply in our current roles.

As professional academic librarians, we have all continued to draw on the collections at the Inforum to support our teaching, research, and practice. As a new sessional instructor at the iSchool in 2014 and 2015, I (Monique) relied heavily on the support and specialized knowledge of Inforum staff and librarians, for everything from ordering the materials on my reading list, to ensuring that these were catalogued and available in time for the start of the course, to placing items on course reserves, to keeping me informed about new items added to the collection which would support topics taught in my course. In addition, Inforum librarians provided timely, in-depth research support for my students as they worked on their course assignments.

As the landscapes of information studies and academic libraries continue to shift, academic librarians are constantly asked to demonstrate their value to their communities. By dismantling its remaining print collection, the iSchool signals to current and future students that collections and library studies are no longer a priority at the Faculty of Information.

We sincerely hope that the Faculty of Information Revitalization Committee will reconsider the proposal to relocate and redistribute the Inforum's specialized print collection, and will engage in broad consultations with the iSchool community - its students, staff, faculty, instructors, and alumni - before making any final decisions about the collections.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Monique Flaccavento
Director, OISE Library
Sessional Instructor, iSchool: Design and Evaluation of Information Literacy Programs
(2014 & 2015)
University of Toronto iSchool Alumna (M.I.St. 2009)

Navroop Gill
Instruction and Liaison Librarian
Inforum Intern (2013-2015)
University of Toronto iSchool Alumna (M.I. 2015)

Jenaya Webb
Public Services and Research Librarian
Inforum Intern and Student Assistant (2010-2011)
University of Toronto iSchool Alumna (M.I. 2010)