

Fwd: Dissolution of the Inforum

Ilana Newman [hallie.ilana.newman@gmail.com]

Sent: Tuesday, March 06, 2018 9:42 AM**To:** Nalini Singh; Lari Langford; Eden Rusnell; Kathleen Scheaffer; Elisa Sze

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Ilana Newman <hallie.ilana.newman@gmail.com>**Date:** 6 March 2018 at 09:40**Subject:** Dissolution of the Inforum**To:** wendy.duff@utoronto.ca, lisa.habib@utoronto.ca

Dear Professor Duff,

I'm a recent graduate of the iSchool (spring 2017), and am grateful to the iSchool for all that I learned during my time as a Master's student there. I enjoyed my coursework and feel that it's due in large part to my educational experience at U of T that I've been successful in finding employment in the field after graduating.

I recently heard of the iSchool's decision to dissolve the Inforum and to disperse the collection. I have to say I'm truly shocked to learn this. This is a baffling decision, and really casts doubt for me on the legitimacy of the program. If I were considering applying now, knowing that the program didn't host its own collection would have a negative impact on my decision.

It's my understanding that the Faculty has been questioning the fundamentals of what it means to be a school of information/information science now that so many aspects of the field are changing: the field is no longer restricted to librarianship and archiving; the iSchool now graduates students with expertise in UXD, information policy, information systems, and more. However, library science remains (or at least, I believe it remains) a core component of the iSchool's programming, and for a school of librarianship to dissolve its own library is near-laughable in the degree to which it's shocking. While I assume that the collection will be dispersed to other libraries in the UTL system, it still beggars belief that a faculty of librarians would decide it no longer needs a library.

Aside from the absurdity of it all, there are material problems with this decision. MISC and the DSA have, as I'm sure you're aware, made statements condemning this decision, and I agree with them. Dissolving/moving the collection makes access to specialized research resources more difficult, and it's unclear to me why the Faculty would want to obfuscate its own students' research efforts. I'm also concerned that the Faculty would remove the opportunity for student work-study positions in the Inforum, not to mention removing the jobs of longstanding members of the iSchool community. In the absence of more information regarding permanent Inforum staff, I'm forced to conclude that they will be looking for employment elsewhere.

I understand that the Faculty is not willing to change its mind regarding this decision, and I understand that as an alumna, my opinion on this may be considered as less than salient. But after having spent two years of my life and \$21,000 on my education at the Faculty of Information, I feel I would be remiss in not speaking up about what I feel is an appalling and inexplicable decision.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Ilana Newman

