

Inforum collection

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Sent: Sunday, February 18, 2018 6:02 PM

To: Wendy Duff; Lari Langford

Cc: Kathleen Scheaffer; Nalini Singh; Elisa Sze

Dear Wendy Duff, Lari Langford, and whomever else it may concern,

I am hearing through word-of-mouth, rather than official communication, of the plans to remove the Inforum collection and integrate them with Robarts as of May 1, 2018. This news is incredibly upsetting, especially given the main themes to emerge from the town hall about the Inforum hours was a lack of communications to students, including Inforum staff, regarding significant decisions or events at the iSchool. I find it interesting that the change to the library's hours was reported with no explanation, followed by a survey, in which students indicated that one of the values of the Inforum after-hours was space to study and how this space was lacking within regular hours due to an influx of students unaffiliated with the faculty. Now, the Inforum collection removal is being justified by creating more study space. As conspiratorial as it sounds, it almost seems as though the issue with the Inforum hours was manufactured in order to produce complaints about studying space in the Inforum, despite them being out of context. I am certain a new survey, given the context of the possibility of collections removal would result in responses in defence of the collection. In fact, an earlier Inforum survey circulated, inquiring about the difficulty in accessing resources offered, such as the collection. In this survey, I indicated that there were no current difficulties, as current handling of the Inforum collection is a system that works - a system that does not require changing.

This change will make the items in the collection harder to access, and given the values of openness the Inforum exhibits in allowing all students to utilize the space, it seems contradictory to remove the collection. It also seems to be against the very nature of being a Library program - if the collection is absorbed by Robarts and other libraries - students, faculty, and librarians will lose a valuable resource which makes the iSchool unique. Conversations with Inforum librarians and staff also indicate that the removal of the collection of materials from the Inforum will make reference work more challenging and that upon graduation I will lose the ability to obtain an Inforum external borrower card.

Finally, it does not seem to be economically prudent to make such a decision - from my discussion with Inforum librarians and staff, I have gathered that the collection was already moved once to accommodate construction. Now it will be moved again and there will be construction again? This seems inefficient and a waste of resources. To be frank, this plan sounds like a waste of my tuition money and as though the iSchool administration does not care about its students and their needs. In addition, as a soon-to-be alumnus, why would I ever consider donating to a faculty which does not seem interested in making decisions that benefit its students, alumni, librarians, or faculty members?

Best,
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