

Dismantling of the INFORUM Library

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Sent: February-22-18 12:07 PM

To: Larry Alford; Lari Langford; Wendy Duff

Cc: Elisa Sze; nalin.sahni@gmail.com; Kathleen Scheaffer

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing to express my deep concern over the dismantling of the Inforum Library collection in our community and how the process has been unfolding. The University of Toronto's professional program for librarians is a long-standing, historical program. The collection in the Inforum is rich in materials that speak to the profession's history over many decades and on-going student needs. Special collections, which bring together a rich past and contemporary context in ONE LOCATION, are valued by our current and past students, as well as, by current professionals in the field. Moreover, the Inforum is fortunate to have librarians who are knowledgeable about the collection and who can direct students to the specific materials in their research. Our current options to locate materials as researchers, professionals and students is often restricted by cumbersome access to our collections, the catalogue is a nightmare to navigate, as our students know only too well. Specialized assistance, when needed, is greatly valued, as is the case for ALL OUR SPECIAL departmental and disciplines programs. Moreover, not all research is founded on publications available electronically – who really believes that?

Lastly, I would urge colleagues to pursue a 'collegial process' as per our policies that engages ALL STAKEHOLDERS. Our rich departmental collections are an important part of the specialized knowledge and research that is undertaken at the University of Toronto. I realize there are many considerations being discussed in this case and my view may be limited, but, please do reconsider this and examine the broader ramifications for our community down the road. Robarts is not equipped to handle special collections integrated into the stacks – that is the reality, we all know this. Harriet

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