MINUTES OF THE MEETING

PRESENT:

Members (ex officio): Jens-Erik Mai.

Chair: Joe Cox.


Professional Librarians: Tasha Caswell, Kathleen Scheaffer, Nalini Singh, Elisa Sze.

Senior Administrative Officers: Susan Brown, Judy Dunn.

Associate Instructor or Sessional Lecturer: Susan Maltby.

Administrative Staff: Kathy Shyjak.

Students:

Doctoral: Lysanne Lessard

Masters (MIST): Klara Maidenberg, Katherine Clubine, Jonathan Lofit, Meaghan Morgan, Terri Rodak, Rebecka Sheffield, Erica Sum.

Masters (MMSSt):
Alumni/Alumnae: Bob Henderson, Kelly McKinley.

External Members: Mary Ann Mavrinac.

Assessors: Costis Dallas, Andrew Drummond, Kate Johnson, Christina Kim, Eva Piorkowski, Christine Marton, Nadia Moro, Chryss Mylopoulos, Kathleen O’Brien, Corrie Playford, Alan Stanbridge.

Recorder: Areti Vourinaris

REGRETS:

The President of the University of Toronto, Interim Vice-President and Provost, Chief Librarian of the University, Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, Emily Beliveau, Julia Brewster, Matthew Brower, Juris Dilevko, Max Dionisio, Twyla Gibson, Caroline Higgins, Rachel Issac-Menard, Cheryl Meszaros, Marte Misiek, Brian Cantwell Smith (on leave 2008-2009), Leslie Thomson, Cassandra Tilson.

1. Call to order and acceptance of Agenda

The meeting was called to order at 10:09 a.m., with quorum established. The Chair, Joe Cox, welcomed all present members and assessors to the second regular meeting of the Faculty of Information Council. Introductions were carried out and attention was drawn to the updated Council membership list.

It was moved that the Agenda be accepted. CARRIED


Motion to accept minutes was made and CARRIED.

3. Business arising from minutes: None

4. Dean’s report

Acting Dean Jens-Erik Mai gave an overview of the financial and political downturn in the economic system. There is a huge impact on University endowments which fund many Chairs and Departments and their operating budgets. There is no money being paid out from University endowments and it’s unclear what is happening at the University as a whole. This Faculty is marginally affected because we are in a healthy budget position. The provincial budget situation is also unknown in terms of the BIU’s (the money values that are assigned and/or allocated per student). The graduate expansion plan here at the Faculty is ongoing until 2010 as an initiative from the Province. If the provincial expansion plan is discontinued or put on hold, it would affect the Faculty’s expansion plans. In light of these
budget issues, the iSchool would be looking closely at enrollment and registration numbers.

Acting Dean Mai announced that there are two faculty searches going on and emphasized that we are not freezing these searches in the areas of Museum Studies and Archives and Records Management.

He noted that major recruitment efforts have been going on through student services and the re-branding of the school in terms of attracting students.

The revision of the programs and curriculum of the Master of Information and the Master of Museum Studies has already begun and the process to revise the Ph.D. program had also begun.

Acting Dean Mai expressed his appreciation to everyone for their patience during his term as Interim Dean.

5. Council Committees’ Reports

a) Executive Committee – No report.

b) Standing Committees

i) Admissions Committees

Administrative admissions report submitted and presented by Judy Dunn.

For fall 2008 the Faculty had a targeted registration of 209 full-time equivalent (fte) students and the actual enrollment was 185 fte students. The total enrollment target was 463 students and the actual number was 426. In general, the Faculty’s mandate for enrollment is much higher. Judy Dunn also mentioned all the recruitment fairs in which the Faculty has participated.

(1) MMSt Admissions Committee

Submitted and presented by Professor Joan Cherry.

She remarked that the admissions process was at an early stage and that 136 applications had been received including a handful of completed applications. There might be some concern about actual enrollment numbers after the offers are made. The Committee has discussed how to increase the yield. It seems that what affected previous applicants’ decisions to attend the iSchool here was conversations with faculty members.

(2) MMSt Admissions
Submitted and presented by Professor Lynne Teather.

The first work of the Chair was to meet with Judy Dunn and Laura Jantek to go over the admissions process, as they reviewed the first time use of SAM (Student Academic Management) system by this Committee and considered how it could best help the Committee. She reported that the number of applications is up due to the success of the Information Nights this year, thanks to Judy and all of her staff. Professor Teather is hoping to continue using the same admissions structure as in the past as it allowed a personal engagement about the specifics of the MMSt Program and the application process.

(3) Ph.D. Admissions Committee

Submitted and presented by Professor Wendy Duff.

She reported that the Ph.D. website for potential students had been revamped. The aim was to have all relevant information the students needed easily available from one page. The committee had sent out emails inviting applications and highlighting our program. Faculty members circulated the email message to listservs and other schools. As of December 4, 2008, there were 52 applicants – the numbers are down from last year. All potential candidates (except those whose travel was exorbitantly expensive) would be invited to visit the Faculty on one of two weekends, near the end of January and beginning of February. The candidates would be interviewed by the Ph.D. committee and also faculty members in their research area of interest. An idea has been proposed to mini-recruit at the iSchool Conference. The goal would be to have incoming Ph.D. students become matched with faculty members as, although Ph.D. students do not result in Faculty income, they enrich the academic environment. All completed applications would be reviewed before the Christmas break.

Professor Lynne Howarth asked if the faculty members as a whole would be able to review all the applicants. Professor Duff affirmed that, yes, all the applicants would be reviewed in a secure online forum where faculty could be part of the recruitment process. Additionally, faculty members that would be interested in working with the Ph.D. students would be able to compare the areas of research of the candidates to their own.

Particular appreciation was expressed to Laura Jantek for all her special efforts during this process.

ii) Awards Committee

Submitted by Adriana Rossini and presented by Judy Dunn.
The number of applications for awards was down and students were encouraged to take advantage of them as they directly benefit them. Rebecka Sheffield inquired about the possibility of having some workshops on the application process and the various formats by perhaps launching RSS feeds from the website. In general, it was felt that the awards deadlines were tight and the applications were confusing as well as intimidating.

iii) Committee on Standing – No report.

iv) Information Services Committee

Submitted by Chair Joe Cox and presented by Professor Eric Yu.

Prof. Yu reported that there are a number of systems-related improvements on their way, such as a ticket system for technical requests and work orders. Professor Yu also announced that the new website would be launched in the New Year. He also mentioned that the committee had discussed the issue of what should and what should not be collected within the scope of the collections development policy, given changes in faculty, curriculum and research areas. The collections policy is thus in need of revision. Terri Rodak asked how people of the iSchool community could forward input and Professor Yu recommended directing all remarks to the Chair of the Committee.

v) Programs Committee

Presented by Acting Dean Jens-Erik Mai.

He reported that the Committee had been very busy with course proposals for regular courses, special topics courses, and the Master of Information curriculum proposal. Acting Dean Mai recommended reviewing and approving each of the course proposals singly.

- Proposal to change the course description of FIS 1332H - Archives Programs and Services:

  Because course content changes were made to include records management, the course description needs to change. Professor Wendy Duff explained the rationale for the course description to be updated to reflect this change in course content.

  Motion to approved change in course description moved by Acting Dean Jens-Erik Mai, seconded by Professor Lynne Howarth. CARRIED.

- Approval of course FIS 2187H - Introduction to Inclusive Design:
Jutta Treviranus described the course as providing an introduction and critical analysis of the inclusive design of information and communication technologies and practices. Inclusive design (ID) enables, invites and supports the participation of individuals and groups representing the full range of human diversity with respect to ability, culture, language, gender, age and other forms of human difference. Inclusively designed systems and practices can be optimized to meet the individual needs of each user. The theoretical background, underpinning social and economic motivations, design methods employed, controversies, as well as the major challenges would be addressed.

It was moved by Acting Dean Jens-Erik Mai to approve the course proposal, seconded by Professor Nadia Caidi. **CARRIED.**

- Approval of course FIS 2331H - Introduction to Digital Humanities:

Professor Alan Galey described this course as a way to introduce students to this evolving field, with a focus on the cultural histories and possible futures of books, libraries and archives. The readings would survey topics such as the ontology of born-digital artifacts, disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity, theories and practices of text encoding, the gendering of texts and technologies, the politics of digital archiving, the materiality of digital texts, and the epistemology of digital tools in the humanities.

Jonathan Lofft inquired about the course description that mentioned that students would receive a practical introduction to XML markup and related technologies and wondered what the expectations were for computer literacy. Professor Galey responded that no prior experience was expected and that the focus would be on students developing a broad understanding of the tools and methods involved in digital humanities research, with a focus on XML markup.

Professor Wendy Duff noted that it was unusual to include specific dates in the ‘Schedule of evaluation of course components’ area of the School of Graduate Studies New Course Governance Form C. Professor Duff proposed a change in the proposal to delete the dates in the second box of dates for the submission and grading section.

It was moved by Acting Dean Jens-Erik Mai to accept the course proposal with the amendment as noted above, seconded by Professor Lynne Howarth. **CARRIED.**

- Approval of course FIS 2241H-Critical Making: Information Studies, Social Values, and Physical Computing:

Professor Matt Ratto described the course as a theoretical focus on evaluating and exploring current critical themes in Information Studies through both
literature and hands-on work by establishing connections with technical and theoretical practices.

Chair Joe Cox commented that sixty percent of the work would be due at class in Week 13. Professor Wendy Duff noted that it is a project-based course and therefore the timing and grading structure is understandable to her.

Professor Matt Ratto mentioned that the final paper would require work at the last part of it that would show the interrelation between technical choices and social values.

It was moved by Acting Dean Jens-Erik Mai to approve the course proposal, seconded by Professor Wendy Duff. CARRIED.

- Approval of course MSL 2240H-The Photographic Record:

Professor Lynne Howarth described how this course would bring another dimension to the Faculty.

Professor Andrew Clement inquired as to whether or not the course would include conventional forms of photography. Professor Lynne Howarth noted that the course was designed to be inclusive and an opportunity to connect with the University of Toronto Art Centre.

Professor Wendy Duff expressed enthusiasm about the course and asked about the registration procedures. Judy Dunn explained that there would be room for non MMSt students and that registration would begin on Monday, December 8, 2008. Museum Studies students would have the first opportunity to enroll in the class.

Professor Lynne Teather and Kate Johnson expressed their enthusiasm about the cross-disciplinary nature of the course.

Kelly McKinley encouraged the use of the Art Gallery of Ontario archives and photographic collections.

It was moved by Acting Dean Jens-Erik Mai to approve the course proposal, seconded by Professor Wendy Duff. CARRIED.

- Approval of the special topics course FIS 23XXH – Laboratory in Inclusive Design:

Professor Stephen Hockema intended the course to be a companion to the course FIS 2187H-Introduction to Inclusive Design and was designed to be similar to the Design Studio course offered in the fall and winter sessions. Professor Hockema highlighted that this course would be investigating design
in assistive technologies similar to a consulting course in which the projects would come from the ATRC and beyond.

Professor Joan Cherry questioned the validity of the disclaimer that read “this syllabus is not fixed. Course policies, assignment dates, weighting of assignments and all other aspects of this course are subject to change. You will be notified of any changes in advance either in class or via SAKAI.” Professor Stephen Hockema agreed to remove the disclaimer.

Professor Andrew Clement asked for clarification about what the prerequisites and co-requisites were for the course. Professor Stephen Hockema explained that the co-requisite would be FIS 2187H-Introduction to Inclusive Design.

Professor Wendy Duff wondered what changes might be made to the course and would they come back to Council for approval. Chair Joe Cox explained that minor changes, such as in the weighting and evaluations of assignments, would return to Council.

Professor Eric Yu wondered about the status of having a stand-alone course being offered as a lab. He wondered what the perception of the course would be on student transcripts and how it would be weighted as academic credit. Judy Dunn clarified that performance courses, for example, were evaluated differently than lab courses which did have grades assigned.

Professor Matt Ratto remarked that this lab course covered academic deliverables.

Professor Nadia Caidi commented that labs were often associated with language departments.

Chair Joe Cox asked to receive further clarification from the Registrar at the next Council meeting on the status of a stand-alone lab course on transcripts.

It was moved by Acting Dean Jens-Erik Mai to approve the course proposal, with the above-mention deletion of the disclaimer, seconded by Professor Lynne Howarth. CARRIED.

- Approval of the special topics course FIS 23XXH-Reading: Theories, Practices, and International Perspectives:

Professor Nadia Caidi described Keren Dali’s proposal as having emerged from a need to offer a course on the global theories of reading and to understand the process as a phenomenon.

Professor Clare Beghtol commented that mandatory attendance cannot be made a requirement of the course and that this requirement be amended.
It was moved by Acting Dean Jens-Erik Mai to accept the course proposal, with the above amendment, seconded by Professor Jennifer Carter. **CARRIED, with one abstention.**

- Approval of the special topics course FIS 23XXH-The Information Experience in Context:

  Professor Jenna Hartel explained that this course was based on information seeking in a broader social context for the iSchool field.

  Professor Siobhan Stevenson and Christine Marton expressed their appreciation for the refreshing approach to the course.

  Chair Joe Cox recommended changing the language from “This class” to “This course” in the course description.

  Katherine Clubine wondered about the prerequisites and requirements for the course for students who have completed all core courses and are in the latter stages of their studies.

  Acting Dean Jens-Erik Mai offered the suggestion that Professor Hartel consider that, as a pre-requisite, there must be a solid understanding on the part of the students of research methods.

  Discussion and approval of this course was tabled while Professor Hartel reconsidered the course requirements. (See further discussion and approval below).

- Approval of the special topics course FIS 23XH- Special Topics: Issues in Children’s and Young Adults’ Services:

  Wendy Newman stated that the course evolved out of strong student interest and demand for these skills among professionals. Some of the issues that this course is concerned with are the legal, ethical, organizational, and physical space issues for children’s and young adults’ services.

  Kate Johnson asked when the course would be offered and Wendy Newman answered that it would be given during the winter 2009 academic session.

  Professor David Phillips extended his full support but asked how different the course would be compared to FIS 2139H - Young People: Collection Development and FIS 2140H - Young People: Current and Emerging Information Practices. Wendy Newman explained the differences in courses.
It was moved by Acting Dean Jens-Erik Mai to approve the course proposal, seconded by Prof. Lynne Howarth. **CARRIED.**

- Resumption of discussion and approval of special topics course FIS 23XXH-The Information Experience in Context:

  Professor Jenna Hartel expressed a desire to re-tool her course by making FIS 1240H – Research Methods, and FIS 1210H - Information and its Social Contexts, requirements for her course. FIS 1210H - Information and its Social Contexts would be a pre-requisite, while FIS 1240H would be pre- or co-requisite. Prof. Hartel added that the course would be a good transition for students from academia to professional life.

  It was moved by Acting Dean Jens-Erik Mai to accept the course proposal, with those amendments, seconded by Prof. Wendy Duff. **CARRIED.**

- The proposal to approve changes in the degree requirements for the Master of Information was brought forward for consideration.

  Acting Dean Mai enumerated some of the changes to the proposed course options and thesis option of the Master of Information degree.

  The requirements for the course option will change:
  **From:** 1.5 core FCE, 2.0 required FCE in an area of focus, and 2.0 elective FCE at the 2000-level  
  **To:** 2.0 FCE core courses and an approved program of study

  The requirements for the thesis option will change:
  **From:** 1.5 core FCE, 2.0 elective FCE at the 2000-level, and complete a thesis (equivalent to 2.0 elective FCE)  
  **To:** 2.0 FCE core courses, completion of a research methods course appropriate to their program of study, approval of a program of study, and completion of a thesis, equivalent to 3.0 FCE.

  Rebecka Sheffield wondered about the pragmatic and practical considerations in terms of the professional preparedness for the field once the changes to the MI degree program were to be approved and implemented.

  Acting Dean Jens-Erik Mai commented that the combination of these established streams, outreach programs, and professional development programs will broaden the perspectives and expand the knowledge in terms of policy, technology, and ethical issues. Overall, the MI curriculum changes respond well to the professional field.
Professor Wendy Duff added that the new MI curriculum as compared to the current core courses will be a valuable combination of project work and a reflection on that project work.

It was moved by Acting Dean Jens-Erik Mai to approve the proposal to the changes in the degree requirements for the Master of Information, seconded by Mike McCaffrey. **CARRIED.**

- Approval of new MI core courses: INF1001 – Knowledge and Information in Society; INF1002 – Representation, Organization, Classification, and Meaning-Making; INF1003 – Information Systems, Services and Design; and INF1004 – Information Workshop.

Acting Dean Mai moved approval of the new curriculum core course proposals INF1001, INF1002, INF1003, and INF1004 as a package, seconded by Professor David Phillips.

Professor Andrew Clement expressed his appreciation for the holistic re-fashioning of the core courses for the new MI curriculum framework. He expressed concern about the fact that students would not be meeting in smaller groups during these new core courses since the key feature of INF 1004 would be based on a seminar/lab format.

Professor Lynne Howarth was enthusiastic about the core courses but had some concerns stemming from her understanding of the original intention to provide the opportunity for smaller group work. She wondered if there would be some flexibility around the number of contact hours per course per week.

Professor David Phillips asked how much flexibility Council had with respect to modifying the core course proposals at this point.

Acting Dean Jens-Erik Mai said that Council could make changes as it sees fit as the first step, already completed, had been to send the course proposals to the Programs Committee (approved), then they went to the GWS posting service for comment from across the University, and now they are back to Council for comment and approval.

Professor Matt Ratto indicated that the structure of the core courses was still under discussion by faculty and hence difficult to approve at this stage.

Professor Lynne Howarth said that she was strongly supportive of the content but was concerned about the mechanics regarding the lecture formats and the opportunity for smaller group work and interaction for the students that would be enrolled in these core courses.
Christina Kim said she was concerned about part-time students being able to enroll in INF1004 as part-time students already face challenges in structuring their timetables.

Terri Rodak asked if Council was solidifying core course contact hours and formats at this meeting and Acting Dean Mai affirmed that this was the case.

Jonathan Lofft suggested deferring the vote on the core course proposals until content, structure, and delivery was clearly determined.

Professor David Phillips said he would like to have the catalogue of concerns that would be brought to the faculty and instructors before Council moved to approve them in good faith.

Acting Dean Jens-Erik Mai proposed that Council postpone the vote on these core courses until syllabi were drafted for them before they come back to Council.

Terri Rodak commented that Council had the opportunity to improve the experience of the students rather than having them take these courses as large lecture classes.

Acting Dean Jens-Erik Mai agreed that the concerns vis-à-vis the format, delivery, and mechanics of the courses, class sizes, and number of contact hours needed to be addressed.

Professor Stephen Hockema asked what the next step in the process was for Council.

Professor Lynne Howarth asked if Council needed a motion to postpone the discussion. Affirmative

Acting Dean Jens-Erik Mai moved that the motion to approve the INF core courses be postponed until the next meeting of Council, seconded by Professor Lynne Howarth.

Carried, with two nays and one abstention.

Acting Dean Mai noted that the changes to the MI degree requirements would be forwarded for approval at the next meeting of the Graduate Education Council (GEC) and that the core courses would be advertised as being under review in terms of content and mechanics.

Rebecka Sheffield expressed a desire to have faculty and staff articulate the dynamic shift in the field to inspire new students.

c) Special Committee
i) Life and Times – Written report submitted by Judy Dunn.

6) Additional reports

a) iSchool Students

i) MIS – No report.
ii) MMS – No report.
iii) Ph.D. – No report.

b) Alumni

i) MIS and Ph.D. – No report.
ii) MMS – No report.

c) Adaptive Technology Resource Centre – Report submitted by Jutta Treviranus to be presented at the next Faculty Council meeting.


e) Information Services Unit – Report submitted by Nalini Singh to be presented at the next Faculty Council meeting.

f) Professional Learning Centre – Written report submitted by Eva Piorkowski.

g) Academic Board – No report.

7) Question Period – None.

8) Announcements – None.

9) Other business

Christina Kim asked when registration would begin for new courses and Judy Dunn responded at twelve noon on Monday, December 8, 2009.

Professor David Phillips moved acknowledgement that Professor Jens-Erik Mai had too much fun being Acting Dean of the Faculty of Information and that the Faculty was greatly appreciative of his work on its behalf.

Unanimous approval and applause ensued.

10) Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 12:25 p.m.