



University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process (UTQAP) Cyclical Review: Final Assessment Report & Implementation Plan

Program(s):	Master of Information, MI Master of Museum Studies, MMSt Doctor of Philosophy in Information Studies, PhD
Division/Unit:	Faculty of Information (iSchool at U of T)
Commissioning Officer:	Vice-President and Provost, University of Toronto
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	1. Dr. France Bouthillier, Director, School of Information Studies, McGill University 2. Dr. Ronald Larsen, Dean and Professor, School of Information Studies, University of Pittsburgh 3. Dr. Claire Warwick, Professor, Digital Humanities; Head, Department of Information Studies; Vice-Dean for Research, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, University College London
Date of review visit:	January 15 - 17, 2014
Date reported to AP&P:	October 28, 2014

1 Outcome

The Committee on Academic Policy and Programs (AP&P) has requested a two-year follow-up report on the review of the Faculty of Information from the Dean to outline developments with respect to the Faculty's management structure, strengthening communication among members of the Faculty, and time to completion rates of doctoral students.

2 Significant Program Strengths

- Good reputation of programs
- Strong course offerings

- Well-designed curriculum structure
- Active and engaged faculty with deep expertise and innovative research
- Commitment of alumni and professional groups to the Faculty

3 Opportunities for Program Enhancement

The reviewers recommended that the following be considered:

- Reducing the number of concentrations within the Master of Information (MI) program
- Exploring student recruitment strategies to help address MI enrolment challenges
- Strengthening administration of the graduate program
- Striving to increase faculty research funding
- Enhancing communication among Faculty members with respect to strategic direction, governance structures, and promotion processes
- Creating additional academic administrative leadership roles
- Re-visioning the relationship between the Robarts Library, the Bissell Building, and the Inforum
- Extending fundraising initiatives
- Conducting a re-branding exercise of the Faculty

4 Implementation Plan

The Dean undertook in consultation with the Faculty to support the following changes:

- Immediate Term (6 months)
 - Investigating reducing the number of concentrations within the Master of Information program
 - The Faculty has established a working group to review the concentrations and required courses and to recommend changes.
 - Exploring student recruitment strategies
 - The Faculty will continue to refer and to develop its *UofT iSchool Recruitment Strategy* in planning future recruitment activities.
 - The Faculty will provide targeted communities with specific program specialization information.
 - The Faculty has established a Working Group on Undergraduate Programming to explore means of increasing the Faculty's visibility among undergraduate students.
 - Strengthening administration of the graduate program
 - A Governance and Organization Structure Working Group will identify mechanisms of providing administrative and academic support.
 - Striving to increase faculty research funding
 - The Faculty appointed a Research Funding Coordinator who will work closely with faculty members to identify funding opportunities and prepare competitive grant applications.
 - Enhancing communication among Faculty members
 - The Faculty will continue to use its Strategic Plan, *Pathways to Our Future, 2012-2017* to guide progress towards its goals and objectives.
 - The Dean has encouraged faculty to discuss with him any questions regarding promotion matters and has directed them to relevant University resources.

- Creating additional academic administrative leadership roles
 - The Governance and Organization Structure Working Group will examine the Faculty's governance and senior administrative structure.
- Re-visioning the relationship between the Robarts Library, the Bissell Building, and the Inforum
 - A working group will work to establish a University of Toronto Libraries-iSchool partnership agreement.
- Extending fundraising initiatives
 - The Dean, the Senior Development Officer, and faculty are working on implementing the Faculty's *Advancement Priorities Plan*.
- Conducting a re-branding exercise of the Faculty
 - The Faculty will continue to increase awareness of its programs and will work to build more cross-divisional collaborations.
- Medium Term (1-2 years)
 - Exploring student recruitment strategies
 - The Faculty will continue to refine its recruitment communications, working with peers to develop effective messaging about the profession.
 - The Faculty will work with its Alumni Association, students and faculty to enhance their participation in recruitment activities.
 - The Faculty will strengthen its appeal to prospective students through the expansion of practica and introduction of a co-op option.
 - Strengthening administration of the graduate program
 - The Faculty will work to increase research funding, subsequently enabling increased support for research assistantships and postdoctoral fellows.
 - Striving to increase faculty research funding
 - The Governance and Organization Structure Working Group will explore the option of creating an academic administrative position in support of research.
 - Enhancing communication among faculty members
 - The Dean's Office will convene the intended Strategic Plan Implementation Working Group to maintain progress on the plan's delivery.
 - Extending fundraising initiatives
 - The Dean's Office will seek further support for fundraising efforts from the central Advancement Office.
 - Conducting a re-branding exercise of the Faculty
 - The Faculty will engage in a re-branding exercise in the coming year.
- Longer Term (3-5 years)
 - Investigating reducing the number of concentrations within the Master of Information program
 - The Faculty will continue to monitor and assess its concentrations and courses, making modifications as needed.
 - Striving to increase faculty research funding
 - The Dean's Office will pursue opportunities to build new laboratories, thereby helping faculty to seek research funding.

- Enhancing communication among Faculty members
 - The Faculty's stakeholders will be engaged in and updated on steps taken to implement the Faculty's strategic plan.

The Provost's Office will work with the Dean's Office to monitor progress in implementing the above plan of action through such mechanisms as receiving quarterly updates on progress.

5 Executive Summary

The reviewers identified the programs' strengths as their reputation; the strong course offerings and well-designed curriculum structure; the engaged faculty who possess deep expertise and conduct innovative research; and the commitment of stakeholders to the Faculty. The reviewers recommended that the followings issues be addressed: reducing the number of concentrations within the Master of Information (MI) program; exploring MI student recruitment and related branding strategies; striving to increase faculty research and doctoral student funding; enhancing communication among Faculty members; creating additional academic administrative leadership roles; re-visioning the relationship between the Robarts Library, the Bissell Building, and the Inforum; and extending fundraising initiatives. The Faculty has established a working group to review the MI concentrations and courses, and monitoring will continue over the long term. The Faculty will address recruitment and branding strategies through a multi-pronged approach including developing more effective messaging, increasing visibility through undergraduate teaching, and further engaging stakeholders in recruitment activities. A Faculty working group will identify means of providing enhanced administrative and academic support for the doctoral program. The Faculty will strive to increase research funding through support provided by a Research Funding Coordinator. To enhance communication among Faculty members, stakeholders will be engaged in and updated on steps taken to implement the strategic plan. A Governance and Organization Structure Working Group will examine the Faculty's governance and senior administrative structure. A working group will work to establish a University of Toronto Libraries-iSchool partnership agreement, which will be monitored over the long term. The Faculty will engage in a re-branding exercise in the coming year. The Committee on Academic Policy and Programs has requested a two-year follow-up report on the review of the Faculty of Information from the Dean to outline developments with respect to the Faculty's management structure, strengthening communication among members of the Faculty, and time to completion rates of doctoral students.