



## Official MUSSA Statement on Inforum Collections & the Issue of Transparency and Communication

Dear Students,

On February 20, 2018, Dean Wendy Duff released a statement to all students within the faculty about the decision to disperse the onsite book collection at the Inforum to other libraries within the University of Toronto Library System. The administration settled on this course of action as a result of a space audit conducted as part of the Faculty of Information Revitalization Plan, which was completed in August 2017. This audit indicated to the faculty administration that the space in the Inforum could be used more efficiently in order to help alleviate the space shortage students have been coping with over the last academic year. This decision was further supported by feedback collected through the recently conducted Inforum hours survey, which demonstrated to the administration that students within the iSchool need additional study space.

Since the initial statement was released, several things have occurred and MUSSA members have been working hard to keep informed in order to disseminate information to you, the students, as promptly as possible.

The following are updates on the matter:

1. MUSSA executive members met with Dean Wendy Duff to further clarify when the decision to move the books was made and by whom. MUSSA members agreed to get feedback from MMSt and CRO students on the situation, and we did this through the short survey which was sent out on February 27, 2018. A summary of the results and the raw data of this survey were sent to Dean Duff and to a student representative in the Feasibility Study Group, who will present this information at their next meeting.
2. To deal with the space issue, the coffee tables in the Inforum have been temporarily moved to make room for study spaces that can be reserved by iSchool students only.
3. MUSSA learned that the Inforum librarians were not included in the decision to relocate the print collection. This lack of transparency and communication is worrisome and MUSSA stands to support the librarians in their request for open dialogue with all stakeholders when major decisions like these are made in the future at the iSchool.
4. The full Revitalization Plan was shared with the students in an email sent by iSchool administration on March 6, 2018. Additionally, On March 6, 2018, Dean Duff sent a link to a Revitalization Plan survey encouraging student input for the redesign of the Bissell building.

5. Students (including MUSSA) have yet to receive a follow-up on the situation of the collection being moved; however, there is another Faculty Council meeting on Thursday, March 22 from 4-6 pm in room 728.

There is a clear issue at the iSchool, and it revolves around poor communication. In the future, MUSSA would like to see the faculty and students engaging in better communication processes by inviting a MUSSA representative to sit on project committees that will affect student life at the iSchool. This should be done to keep a clear line of communication between the students and faculty when major decisions are being made.

MUSSA is grateful to see that changes recommended by students (i.e. the coffee tables in the Inforum have been exchanged for study tables) have been implemented and it shows that the faculty is open to student feedback. MUSSA would like to see this communication maintained. MUSSA respects the willingness for feedback, comments, and ideas that the Dean and faculty have expressed since the initial statement was released. There has been a clear recognition that communication has been insufficient, especially over the past year, and there is an incentive to improve this through a proposed Communications Committee.

At the Faculty Council Meeting on March 1, Dean Wendy Duff suggested creating an iSchool Communications Committee that could help the faculty achieve effective communication and transparency in the future. MUSSA requests that this Committee comes to fruition and that it welcomes a MUSSA Committee Representative to relay information to MUSSA and in turn, to MMSt and CRO students.

If you feel strongly about this decision, we encourage you to communicate these feelings to Dean Wendy Duff at [wendy.duff@utoronto.ca](mailto:wendy.duff@utoronto.ca). If you prefer to remain anonymous, please email us at [mussa.ischool@utoronto.ca](mailto:mussa.ischool@utoronto.ca), and we will gladly relay any respectfully written messages to the Dean on your behalf.

We will continue to work to ensure students have their needs met regarding both space and collections access. We sincerely want the design process to include active participation with the key stakeholders of this organization, including you, the students. Please continue to reach out to us about your opinions and thoughts on this matter.

Sincerely,

Master of Museum Studies Student Association