

January 14, 2025

**Office for Accreditation**

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Attn: Gail Dickinson, Chair, ALA Committee on Accreditation

Re: Special Report for the Winter 2025 Meeting, updating the 2024 Dalhousie biennial narrative reporting.

Dear Gail and Committee on Accreditation:

As per our letter of April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, I am providing our responses to the following questions, and attaching the relevant TOR's.

***Q1 - How are members of the Information Programs Committee determined, and what are their qualifications.***

Members of the Information Programs Committee are determined by the interest and expertise of faculty, and the requirements of the program, as set out in both Terms of Reference of the Information Programs Committee, as well as the Faculty of Management Terms of Reference (relevant sections are included below).

Prior to the launch of our new structure (July 1<sup>st</sup> 2023) – an invitation was sent out to all faculty to invite them to submit their preferences. As noted below, as terms end, people will be invited again to submit their preferences.

As also noted below the Nominating Committee (**3.2.5 Nominating Committee** - The Chair, Vice-Chair, and Foundation Director (Inclusion) serve as a Nominating Committee for the purposes of proposing committee membership to Faculty Council. They work collaboratively with the Information Programs Director to choose the appropriate Faculty members.

**From FOM TOR**

**4.2 Committee Appointments**

**4.2.1 Process for appointment to committees**

Not later than March 30 of each year, the Assistant Dean (Planning and Accreditation) will request committee preferences from faculty members whose term on their assigned committee is about to expire. This information will be shared with Nominating Committee who will propose a slate of committee membership to Faculty Council for review and approval by May of the year

**FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT**

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proceeding the committee appointment, respecting the principles for appointment and the preferences of faculty members. The Nominating Committee may alter the total number of committee members if appropriate under the circumstances and if the total committee membership of any committee does not violate the collective agreement or spirit of the committee terms.

#### **4.2.2 Principles for appointment to committees**

In addition to the membership guidance in committee membership descriptions, the following principles should be followed in appointing faculty members to service on committees:

- staffing program committees in line with their membership requirements should be the priority;
- committee membership should be balanced between those with previous experience and new members and should reflect EDIAD considerations;
- faculty members with educational leadership in their job descriptions should be considered for Chairing roles, where appropriate;
- attention should be paid to expertise and ability to contribute effectively to the committee; and
- colleagues in their earlier years of appointment (pre-tenure or instructors) should be given lighter responsibilities, if possible, in executing their responsibilities on committees.

The following section of the **Information Program Committee** TOR sets out their membership requirements and priorities:

#### **4.12.2 Membership**

The voting members of the Committee are:

- The Program Director, who will serve as chair
- 2-4 faculty representatives with experience or interest in the program. Faculty representatives should be selected to ensure committee reflects an understanding of both the on-campus and blended programs.
- 1-2 student representatives from the “Information” family of programs.
- The Program Manager for the Information programs

Based on our experience over the first year – the following updates will be added this spring:

1. That one of the faculty representatives is the Chair of the Department of Information Science (DIS)
2. The student representatives are selected based on their role within our student society – The Information Science Students Association (ISSA). The Academic Chair, and the EDI & Special Projects Chair will typically be the voting student representatives
3. All Information Program Meetings are open to all faculty within DIS.

To ensure connections between DIS and the Information Programs Committee, the Chair of DIS has a standing agenda line to provide updates. Similarly, the Information Committee Program Director has a standing agenda line in DIS meetings.

The Information Program Committee has a mandate to consult broadly – for example as part of the Program Governance, the committee:

*Reviews the overall program goals and outcomes in consultation with faculty members teaching in the program and relevant disciplinary expertise, recommending changes to the Graduate Coordinating Committee.*

The Information Programs Committee can also establish standing and ad hoc committees as required. This year the **Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Accessibility, Indigenization and Decolonization (EDIAID)** Committee was established, and members selected from within DIS.

The purpose of the committee is as follows:

The Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Accessibility, Indigenization, and Decolonization (EDIAID) Committee is a standing committee of the Information Programs Committee. The purpose of the EDIAID Committee is to evaluate how EDIAID principles are integrated into the Information programs.

The EDIAID Committee will report to the Information Programs Committee in the following areas:

- Recommend definitions of the concepts of equity, diversity, inclusivity, accessibility, Indigenization and decolonization
- Recommend Departmental statement pertaining to its commitment to EDIAID
- Recommend program-level EDIAID competencies
- Recommend program-level EDIAID learning outcomes
- Monitor and report the extent to which EDIAID principles are incorporated into the programs' curriculum and activities
- Monitor and recommend pedagogical approaches to teaching EDIAID principles
- Recommend key performance indicators for measuring how EDIAD is delivered in departmental programs.
- Recommend EDIAID practices related to areas such recruitment, enrolment, and so forth.

The EDIAD Committee consists of the following members:

- 3-4 full-time Faculty members who teach in the Information programs, one of whom will be selected to serve as Chair by the Committee
- 1 representative from the Information Science Students Association (ISSA)

It is also noted that the Committee may choose to consult with any outside parties, as necessary.

To facilitate our continuous planning related to Accreditation, the Information Programs committee is establishing an Accreditation standing committee, which includes all full-time faculty who teach in the Master of Information Program.

While the name of the committee has changed, there has been minimal changes to our planning processes.

***Q2 - How are the members of Curriculum Committee determined, and how is the work of the Committee operationalized within a systematic planning process requiring input from all stakeholders;***

With the new structure we do not have a curriculum committee, the governance for the program is through the Information Programs Committee. As per the mandate for this committee, it

- a. Conducts a review of each course that is part of the core program curriculum at least once every three years, or as requested by the Program Director, drawing on insights from current or past course instructors or, in cases where those instructors are unavailable, the relevant disciplinary expertise in the Faculty. Insights from the reviews will be shared with those teaching in the program.
- b. Conducts a review of each course administratively owned by the program but not generally required of every student in the program (e.g., elective courses or courses required for certificates) at least once every five years, or as requested by the Program Director, on insights from current or past course instructors or, in cases where those instructors are unavailable, the relevant disciplinary expertise in the Faculty. Insights from the reviews will be shared with those teaching in the program.
- c. Reviews the overall program goals and outcomes in consultation with faculty members teaching in the program and relevant disciplinary expertise, recommending changes to the Graduate Coordinating Committee.
- d. Examines and monitors the contents of courses to identify duplication, redundancies, discrepancies and omissions among the courses drawing on relevant disciplinary expertise.

The committee includes representative faculty members, and students in the program. To provide broader feedback for our ongoing strategic planning, an Advisory Committee is being established which included members from the information professions broadly.

All our established planning processes including the Incoming Student Survey, Course Evaluations, Exit Survey are continuing, and the survey results are discussed by the Information Programs Committee. The Information Programs Director continues to hold All Students meetings, and has shifted these meeting to twice a year. In summary, and as noted above, there has been minimal changes to our planning processes.

### ***Q3 - How are faculty hires managed in the restructured environment, and how are teaching assignments for new faculty members determined;***

#### ***New Hires:***

There has been minimal change to our hiring and teaching allocation processes. In our previous structure hiring decisions were determined by the Dean, and this process continues. Previously the Director of the School would have worked with the Dean to determine hiring needs. Now the Information Programs Director, as well as the Chair of DIS would work with the Dean. When a faculty member retires or leaves, the Dean, the relevant Department Chair, and the relevant Program Director, as well other members of the senior administrative team would consider the needs of programs, of budgets, and the FOM strategic plan. Once a decision has been made for a limited term, tenure track, or teaching stream position to be posted, the Dean would work with the Department Chair, and the Department Appointments, Tenure and Promotion committee, along with Human resources, to establish a Search Committee. Search Committees include three to four faculty members with relevant experience and background, consider Equity and Diversity, and the level of hire. For example, for a teaching stream hire, we would include at least one member on the committee who is a teaching stream professional. All hiring committees and position descriptions are submitted and approved through multiple levels within

Dalhousie, including through the faculty, human resources and through to the Provost's office. All hiring processes also follow Dalhousie Faculty Association (DFA) guidelines. The Information Programs Director, if they are not on the search committee, would meet with all short list candidates, and submit feedback to the committee. All hiring recommendations are to the Dean. This has not changed.

#### Teaching Assignments:

There has been minimal change to our process of assigning teaching. Prior to the implementation of the new structure all faculty were invited to provide a list of courses they felt confident teaching, and those courses they would like to develop or teach. In the fall of 2023, the Information Programs Director and Coordinator created a draft timetable for the 2024/2025 year. The Chair of DIS used this timetable to determine needs, and mapped this to the list from all DIS professors of their priorities. The Chair worked with each faculty to determine their teaching for the 2024/2025 academic year, considering faculty and program needs. This is a consultative process, faculty can make changes and suggestions, and together the faculty member and Chair make final decisions. The Program Director and Chair work closely during this process to ensure all is aligned. The result of the new process is that faculty for the most part continued teaching what they had previously been teaching, unless faculty members themselves had asked for a change. The Information Program Director sets the timetable and ensures that the needs of the program are prioritized.

#### *Q4 - Are students permitted to take Faculty courses outside of the MI program, and, if so, how are those courses assessed for alignment with the program's program and student learning outcomes.*

There has been no change to our policy regarding the ability of students to take courses outside the program. Our program has consistently allowed students to take up to 4 courses outside of the program. Students must first check with the Information Programs Director and Coordinator, and provide a copy of the syllabus for the proposed course. A decision is made regarding the fit with our program goals, and the students' goals. Relevant faculty are invited to help make the decision, for example for Computer Science course we would confirm the syllabus with our Advanced Technology professors. Overall, it is only a small percentage of students who do take external electives. We include a question related to this in our exit survey.

Please let me know if there are any additional questions.

Sincerely,



Sandra Toze, PhD,

Information Programs Director & Associate Professor, Department of Information Science.