

DIRECTORS REPORT TO SCHOOL COUNCIL  
SUBMITTED BY SANDRA TOZE, DIRECTOR  
May 2020

## Overview

The 2019/2020 Academic year will be one that will always be remembered. The unprecedented impact of Covid 19 cut our physical classes short, and meant that Convocation festivities had to be postponed. Thank you to all our Faculty, Students and Staff who rose to the challenge of this year, and ensured the transition to online was as smooth as possible.

But I do not want Covid to overshadow the exciting progress made by SIM in the last year. Since last May, the School launched the new name for our flagship degree, the Master of Information (MI). We completed our self-study over the summer, hosted the External Review panel visit in the Fall, met with the Committee on Accreditation in January, and were awarded Continued ALA Accreditation Status in February. This comprehensive review process is extensive, and I would like to thank all of our key stakeholders - Faculty, Staff, Students, Alumni, our Employee Partners, Dal Libraries, as well as Senior Administration at Dal for their part in this accomplishment.

We continue to review, expand and strengthen our Graduate degrees and our courses and Major within the Bachelor of Management degree. L. Spiteri has led a review of our MIM program, and has drafted a new set of competencies, a new outline of core courses, and a new outline of elective courses, as highlighted in the MIM report. The committee will continue to refine, and will present to School Council in December, and then move through the stages of a Major Program Change. SIM is formalizing its six concentrations into a suite of Certificates within the MI program, as will be discussed in this meeting. We have increased the number of course led by SIM within the Bachelor of Management, with our Working with Data (Data Literacy) course launched this fall, and Data Analytics and Applied Research (MGMT 3001) will be launched this Winter. We are offering a major and certificate in Managing Data and Information. We are beginning to market the “fast track” from our major to our MI degree.

We also launched our SIM 50 celebrations with a wonderful Cocktail Party at the Central library this fall, with many Alumni, Students, Faculty and friends in attendance. We held smaller events across the country. Unfortunately our plans for the Spring were cut short by Covid. But look for our SIM 50 booklet to be released soon. Thanks to our SIM Associated Alumni led by Marie DeYoung, David MacDonald, Sarah Jane Dooley, Mark Harper, as well as our Student Assistants, Robyn Nicholson, Lianda Nand, and Kathleen Pond.

Highlights since my last report in May include the following (in chronological order):

- Janet Music joined SIM as our MI Program Coordinator.
- Jill Liu Awarded the 2019 Stephanie Downs Memorial Award
- Jennifer Grek-Martin passed her Comprehensive exams
- Launch of the new name for our program – [Master of Information](#).
- Completion of our Self-Study for Accreditation
- 38 new students into our MLIS/MI program and 10 new MIM students (Fall & Winter terms).
- Lindsay McNiff was awarded the inaugural part-time teaching award

- ERP Visit and Final report
- M .J. Delia was awarded the 2019 SIMAA Outstanding Alumni Award
- Launch of our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with a reception at the Halifax Central Library
- Dr. Colin Conrad joined SIM in a tenure stream position, and received his PhD
- Dr. Cheryl Stenstrom joined SIM in a limited term position
- Dr. Paulette Skerrett was awarded her PhD.
- Lindsay McNiff welcomed her son Felix Mac Bridgett
- Laurel Sampson completed her term as our Administrative Assistant – many thanks for her continual support
- Welcome back to Kim Humes, and happy 1<sup>st</sup> birthday to Ellie
- Dr. Mike Smit was presented With Lloyd Fraser Award for Outstanding Senate Leadership
- Dr. Louise Spiteri had a productive sabbatical and has been appointed to Senate as Interim Vice-Chair of Senate (Academic Programs)
- Dr. Vivian Howard extended her stay as Interim Dean, and has been appointed - Associate Vice-Presidents Academic
- SIM was granted Continued ALA Accreditation Status
- Students led a very successful IWB
- Pallavi Gone places in two “hackathons”, including our Open Data
- Student awards
- Open Data
- IM Public Lecture Series...

#### **FALL 2019**

- Problematic Publishing: The predatory, the deceptive, and the just plain bad (Melissa Rothfus)
- Academic Libraries and the Digital Culture: How should we be preparing for the future? (Guylaine Beaudry)

#### **WINTER 2020**

- Dalhousie-Horrocks National Leadership Lecture: After 50 years of Information Management @Dal – what’s to come in the next 50? (Leslie Weir)
- Value and California's Public Libraries (Cheryl Stenström)
- i-Crimes and Misdemeanours: [Prest]Digit[iz]ation, Analogue Photographs, and their Digital Surrogates (Joan M. Schwartz)

Below is a snapshot regarding our progress toward our Strategic Goals.

## **1. Grow Programs and Advance Information Management**

### **1.1 Achieve Enrolment Targets in All programs**

- Enrolment in our MLIS/MI program is up by 14.9% compared to last December. Enrollment in our MIM program is up 26.1% over last year.
- Early statistics for 2020/21 are looking strong, despite Covid.
- Our revised Major – Management of Data and Information was approved. This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> year with the revised 1301/1302, and the first year for our new Working with Data course. We will be leading the development of Research Methods and Applied Data Analytics (MGMT 3001) for next year.

- SIM continues to exceed its target have of 3-4 PhD students supervised through SIM Faculty. We now have 2 IDPhD students who are MLIS alumni.

### 1.2 Explore Options for new IM credit offerings

- SIM is currently working with SPA and SRES for a Certificate related to Public Management for Environmental Readiness – the certificate will be presented to APCC in June
- SIM is continuing to work with the Master of Digital Innovation (MDI) to offer courses within this program, and to create a major around data. As well we are working with CS and SPA for a certificate related to digital transformation in Government
- SIM is launching two new Online Undergraduate course – open to all undergraduates

### 1.3 Create and Deliver Non-Credit Revenue Generating Programs

- SIM is exploring the development of a Certificate in Public Librarianship – which could integrate courses within Dal including urban planning, health management and promotion, sociology.
- Given the shift to Online teaching, SIM is working to investigate options to offer modules from courses for professional development, and to consider how we can bridge non-traditional students into our degree

### 1.4 Advance Information Management Education

- SIM Faculty are participating in the Future of Teaching and Learning project team

### 1.5 Increase Scholarship Funding

- SIM was able to award a second AMSI Bursary available for students.
- SIM are working with Development to launch a 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary Scholarship campaign

## 2. Strengthen Research Impact

### 2.1 Increase Research Capacity

- SIM recently welcomed Colin Conrad, and in the final stages of a search for a tenure track position to replace Bertrum MacDonald's position
- Increase in PhD students
- Strong numbers of MI students choosing the Thesis option

### 2.2 Increase Scholarly Output and Impact

- As highlighted in our Self-Study SIM's grant and contract funding has increased over the past five years
- SIM Faculty are continuing to publish their research across a broad range of scholarly journals to ensure our research is broadly disseminated
- SIM Faculty continues to work with a range of information and data management associations Reading Course descriptions have been changed to highlight this as a channel for publications
- MI students, organized by J. Music are working on Research Projects this summer, with a view to publication

### 3. Engage with Community

#### 3.1 Broaden Work Experience Opportunities for Students

- J. Music worked to expand our practicum placement options – including Internationally. Unfortunately, the practicums had to be cancelled for this year, due to Covid 19

#### 3.2 Increase our Community Engagement

- S. Toze met with the Council of Regional Librarians to gain insight into their educational needs and perspective on competencies.
- SIM continues to work with our library, archives and museum communities locally and nationally
- SIM is working with ARMA to connect with regional branches
- SIM hosted with the Province on the 4<sup>th</sup> Open Data Competition – March 7<sup>th</sup>
- SIM, Dal Libraries and LAC met to discuss the impact of our MOU, and to suggest new initiatives – our Symposium planned for April has been postponed to the Fall.
- SIM is part of the developing Smart Cities initiative at Dal.
- S. Toze is in meeting with Social Work to discuss ways our programs can work together.

### 4. Increase Diversity and Inclusion

#### 4.1 Increase the Diversity of Prospective Students

- SIM now has benchmark statistics regarding student diversity, and will be using these to help us plan.
- SIM is working with Dalhousie Libraries to fund an Indigenous Student Internship.

#### 4.2 Increase Diversity of Faculty and Staff

- EDI is embedded in all our hiring processes.

#### 4.3 Embed Diversity and Inclusion Across the Curricula

- SIM's Curriculum Committee has proposed that all Required courses have content clearly related to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), and in particular Indigenous knowledge starting in September 2020, with all courses having content by September 2021.
- Course Evaluations will be modified to ask specifically about how all courses engage with EDI topics
- SIM is working with Library and Information Programs across Canada to create competencies related to Traditional Knowledge