

DIRECTORS REPORT TO SCHOOL COUNCIL
SUBMITTED BY SANDRA TOZE
May 2022

Overview

Again, this year, I would like to start with a recognition of the extensive disruption in all of our lives due to Covid. Last year we learned to adapt, change, and be flexible in terms of everything we do, from teaching, through research, service, and outreach to our communities. This year the changes and uncertainty continued, we went back to face to face classes in the fall, where possible, but had to return to virtual for the beginning of the Winter term. In the end, either through design or necessity, we learned to work in hybrid modes. Through these changes we continued with our key programming, and greatly increased our research impact, as will be highlighted below. We began “tomato” Friday’s where student and faculty took over the SIM board room to focus on writing and coding projects. We continued our popular Friday Fireside Research Chats which allowed us to talk about our research passions in a more informal way.

Some programming has in fact been enhanced through the move to virtual. Our Public Lectures, including both our Open Classroom series and our Horrocks’ Leadership Lecture had large audiences and really allowed us to connect to alumni across the country and globally.

We have much to celebrate. But we also are aware of the human costs of the last couple of years. We have cohort of graduates leaving SIM, having had very few face to face classes, and who never really had a chance to fully enjoy our community. We will continue to reach out our graduating students, and to ensure they can connect to our alumni activities over the next couple of years in particular. Within the Faculty of Management (FOM) we moved ahead with our strategic priorities, and our structure conversations, making great strides, as will be discussed below. But all of us, faculty, staff and students are tired. I hope there will be opportunities to step back over the summer, focus on individual goals, and also on your life outside of SIM. Thank you to all for your outstanding efforts.

HR Changes

This past year SIM welcomed Alison Brown and Dr. Jamila Ghaddar into limited term positions, which have been extended for a 2nd year. Both have made strong additions to our School, and have enhanced our program in many ways. SIM is in the final stages of hiring for a tenure track position centred on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility. We are very excited to be adding capacity in this key area. SIM also added a Professional In Residence to our team, bringing in Cabot Yu, Manager with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada to organize workshops, meet and greets and CV and interview supports for students.

Congratulations to Dr. Louise Spiteri who was elected as Interim Chair of Dalhousie Senate for 2021-22, and then was Appointed as Chair for a three-year term starting in July 2022. Dr. Spiteri is the first women to chair senate in over 30 years. Thank you to Dr. Vivian Howard who added Acting Chair of SIM to her many titles last year. Dr. Howard has completed her term as Associate Vice President Academic, and is currently enjoying a well-deserved leave.

Program Updates and Changes

Over the past year Covid continued to be a key focus, as we shifted from face to face, to online, and to hybrid. We prioritized ensuring students in our programs had the best possible experiences. As you have noted from the various reports however, we continued to make progress on changes within all our programs.

MI Program

This past year SIM introduced two new “special topics” elective classes, a Bibliometrics course developed by P. Mongeon in the Fall, and a course in Anti-racism and Diversity in the Information Professions in the Winter. These courses will be assessed to become continuing electives in the program.

We are currently beginning the cycle where we systematically look at all aspects of our MI program. This fall a task force created by our Curriculum Committee began this process by creating a new set of MI Competencies. These competencies emerged from an extensive examination of competencies of various professional associations and those of other accredited programs. In particular we wanted to recognize the importance of a commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and decolonization by noting that “information managers practice and critique the principles of equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and decolonization for participating in an inclusive and socially just society”. We are beginning the next phase of this process which will include an environmental scan and research into what students are looking for in Information programs. We will be collecting data and assessing how we can best support the needs of those interested in GLAM (galleries, libraries, archives museum) careers as well as those interested in information, data, and knowledge management including data science, analytics and visualization. We will be considering the number and content of our core courses, ensuring the right mix of electives, and how the thesis option is best integrated. We are also aware of the changing needs and interests of students. How to shift from a practicum to an internship in a sustainable way is also being explored. As part of the discussions within the FOM we are also exploring how we could offer more management courses to our students, and where we could provide cross program courses. We will be collecting data over the summer, and have a draft changes ready for discussion at our December school council.

MIM Program

Moving forward with changes to the MIM program was impacted by COVID, and by the leave of S. Toze. As highlighted in the MIM report we will be taking the review, and seeing what new opportunities have emerged due to the impact of Covid. As the MIM is also due for a full review, and external assessment of the program will be launched. We will also work collectively with other in the Faculty to ensure the best plan forward for the degree.

Bachelor of Management

As highlighted in January, SIM Faculty are now responsible for teaching 18% of the courses in the Bachelor of Management Program. Our major and certificates in Managing Data and Information, have grown in popularity, and are now the second most popular options. As of January, we had 32 students enrolled in the major, and two students who graduated with it. There are 17 student who are completing the certificate, and three have already graduated with it. We are also taking on responsibility for the Capstone course.

Full Proposal for a PhD in Information

SIM faculty are collaboratively working on our full proposal for a PhD program, which is in the final stages of development. Please stay tuned for updates on this over the summer. We expect to have this to School Council for a vote before September.

Undergraduate Major

As highlighted in our Undergraduate Report, SIM is moving forward with plans for an Undergraduate Minor in Digital Humanities. The first course was launched this winter Digital Society, and over 100 students enrolled. This fall Digital Citizenship will be offered, with Digital Society reoffered for the Winter term. We are working on a third course – Digital Capabilities. Thanks to Janet Music for her leadership and development of these courses.

Awards and Highlights since the Directors Report last May include:

- Dr. Mike Smit (SIM Professor) was awarded an NSERC research grant for his project “Assessing the quality of research data infrastructure software”.
- SIM graduate Justin Fox (MLIS '95) was appointed Director, Student Success at the Dalhousie University Faculty of Agriculture.
- Razia Choudhury was awarded the 2021 Stephanie Downs Memorial Award
- The first cohort of graduates from the Master of Information (MIM) program virtually celebrated their 10-year reunion in August 2021, organized by alumni Sarah Horrocks.
- Cabot Yu joined SIM as our first Professional in Residence. He was supported by a professional advisory board consisting of alumni from our MI/MLIS and MIM programs.
- Dr. Colin Conrad received a SSHRC Insight Development Grant for “*What is the role of mind wandering in work productivity when using remote workplace platforms?*”
- Dr. Joyline Makani (SIM Assistant Professor and Killam Librarian) was awarded a SSHRC Partnership Engage Grant.
- Dr. Philippe Mongeon received a FOM Award for Supporting Students in Challenging Times in the Fall.
- SIM launched our 50th Anniversary Commemorative Booklet
- Tanya Harrison, University Librarian at MSVU was awarded the 2021 Outstanding Alumni Award
- B. MacDonald was awarded the FOM Research Impact Award
- Dr. Mike Smit (SIM Professor) and Lachlan MacLeod (Dalhousie Libraries, MI student) were awarded an Open Educational Resource Grant for their project “Research Data Management in the Canadian Context: A Guide for Practitioners and Learners”.
- MI Students Vinson Li & McKenzie Young were honoured as the recipients of the Dalhousie-Horrocks National Leadership Fund
- Dr Carla Hayden, Librarian of Congress gave the Dalhousie-Horrocks Leadership Lecture
- SIM was a co-sponsor of Provenance in Place: A Symposium with The Archival Technologies Lab at the City University of New York.
- Dr. Mike Smit, with Dr. Ryan Deschamps were awarded a SSHRC Connection Grant for their project “*The people, skills, and governance required to enable data sharing through data trusts*”
- MIM student Jason Swinamer has won a national competition sponsored by the Canadian Evaluation Society Education Fund (part of the Canadian Evaluation Society). He is the first Dalhousie student to win this competition. Jason won for his paper entitled “Inclusion and Diversity in Evaluation Design” (MGMT 5006: Program Evaluation).

IM Public Lecture Series - 2021-2022 Lectures

FALL 2021

- Traditional Sacred Texts and the Art That Makes Them Accessible (Ann Shaftel)
- Creating a Decolonizing Archives (Raymond Frogner)
- Adopting Responsible AI in Practice (Ashley Casovan)

WINTER 2022

- Dalhousie-Horrocks National Leadership Lecture: Library Engagement in a Pandemic & Post Pandemic Virtual World (Dr. Carla Hayden)
- Copyright Law and Text and Data Mining: Does the Canadian Copyright Act Need to be Amended? (Dr. Lucie Guibault)
- Linked Data, Ethics, and Expressions of Indigenous Identity (Dr. Stacy Allison-Cassin)
- Information Literacy, Diversity, Indigenization: Current and Future Research Directions (Dr. Karen Nicholson)
- Provenance in Place: Truth, Reconciliation and Archival Decolonization (Dr. Jamila Ghaddar)

LECTURE SERIES: ANTIRACISM IN THE INFORMATION PROFESSIONS

FALL 2021

- Raising Our Hands: Indigenous Data Sovereignty and Relationality in LIS (Kayla Lar-Son)

WINTER 2022

- Hidden Voices - The Plurality of Provenance & the Deconstruction of Colonial 'Truth' (Jesse Boiteau)
- Identity Captured in the Archives (Elder Harry Bone, Elder Florence Paynter & Raymond Frogner)
- Trans-feminist/Queer Praxis in the Information Fields (Rebecca Noone, Mariam Karim, Danielle Allard, & Carina Guzmán)
- Confronting Historical Metadata Debt (Itza A. Carbajal)
- Provenance as Whiteness? Colonialism and the 'Migrated Archives' Problem (Riley Linebaugh)

SIM RESEARCH DAY 2022

1. Claire Dionne and Katherine van der Linden (MLIS alumni/professional): Library Lexique and barriers to providing French-language library services
2. Jordan Audas (MI): The price of glass slippers: Folklore, intellectual property, and neoliberalism
3. Juan Chaves Baquero, Sandra Cascadden, Vinson Li, Lachlan MacLeod, and Evan Thomas (MI/MDI): Housing affordability and availability in NS
4. Pallavi Gone (MI alumni/PhD student): Natural Language Processing to Understand Human Activities and Perceptions on Hydro Energy Projects
5. Maddie Hare (MI): The Impact of Mentorship on the Research Performance of LIS PhDs
6. Charlie Hook (MI): Repatriation of Indigenous Human Remains in Canada: An Analysis of the Issue and Relevant Policies
7. Kydra Mayhew (MI): Getting the whole story: On the coverage of historical journals in Web of Science and Scopus
8. Steven Matthews (MIM): Can a gamified knowledge management process improve software engineering documentation?
9. Poppy Riddle (MI): Comparing search terms for overlap and exclusions: a visual analysis
10. Vizareth Syed (MI): User experience for augmented/mixed reality

11. Stacey Taylor (PhD Computer Science): Don't blindly use data - why a deep understanding of your data is important for AI applications in FinTech research
12. Francis Toole (MI): Beyond the Barriers: Health Information Seeking Behavior of Transgender Identifying People and the Resources and Care that is Available in Nova Scotia, Canada
13. Siobhan Wiggins (MI): Canadian libraries and the opioid crisis: Before and during COVID-19

Below is a snapshot of 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 remained steady for the 21/22 academic year.
- Early statistics for the MI program 2021/22 are down slightly, recruiting continues
- MIM numbers remain under expectations. Consideration of the program review and recruitment and marketing will be a priority for next year.
- SIM continues to exceed its target of having of 3-4 Interdisciplinary PhD students supervised through SIM Faculty.
- We are excited by the BMgmt students enrolling in our Major and Certificate.
- Over 100 students in our first INFO undergraduate course

1.2 Explore Options for new IM credit offerings

- SIM continues to work with Computer Science, and the Rowe School of Business to examine a Digital Foundation Year, and other combined options.
- SIM is exploring a university-wide Minor in Digital Humanities at the undergraduate level.

1.3 Create and Deliver Non-Credit Revenue Generating Programs

- Given the shift to online teaching, SIM is working with others in FOM to investigate options to offer modules from courses for professional development, and to consider how we can bridge non-traditional students into our degree
- SIM along with FoM is exploring options for Micro-credentialing.

1.4 Advance Information Management Education

- SIM is moving forward our full proposal for a PhD Program in Information
- SIM working with FOM is exploring how we can use our online course material to offer professional development courses and/or certificates
- SIM as noted, has had good uptake to our Major and Certificate in the Bachelor of Management Program.
- SIM has co-responsibility for two objectives in Pillar One (Teaching and Learning) in the Dalhousie Digital Strategy

1.5 Increase Scholarship Funding

- SIM is working with the Advancement team to increase our scholarship funding
 - Significant gift related to SIM 50, campaign is being finalized to raise more funds
- New Gary Gibson Excellence in Librarianship Prize will be launched soon
- New Bursary will be available for student starting in 2024

2. Strengthen Research Impact

2.1 Increase Research Capacity

- Increase in numbers of SIM Faculty supervising PhD students
- Increased numbers of MI students choosing the Thesis option
- Recent MI graduates applying to the IDPhD program at Dal

2.2 Increase Scholarly Output and Impact

- SIM Faculty are continuing to publish their research across a broad range of scholarly journals to ensure our research is broadly disseminated
- SIM Faculty continue 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
- There has been an increase in the number of MI students choosing the Thesis Option, and who presented their work-in-progress at our SIM Research Day
- This year SIM's Research Day also included a MIM student, as well as SIM Alumni presentations. We plan to continue this trend.

3. Engage with Community

3.1 Broaden Work Experience Opportunities for Students

- As per the Practicum report, SIM is working to expand opportunities for students
- We have been actively promoting our students' skills within Dalhousie, which has resulted in a number of new research assistantships

3.2 Increase our Community Engagement

- SIM continues to work with our library, archives, and museum communities locally and nationally
- SIM is working with ARMA to connect with regional branches

4. Increase Diversity and Inclusion

4.1 Increase the Diversity of Prospective Students

- New Scholarships announced above
- Hiring for a faculty in the EDIA area – in increase our teaching and research in this area

4.2 Increase Diversity of Faculty and Staff

- EDI is embedded in all our hiring processes and is a hiring priority
- Hiring for a tenure track faculty member whose research and teaching relates to EDIA

4.3 Embed Diversity and Inclusion Across the Curricula

- Update of all course content to better integrate EDIA
- SIM continues to work with Library and Information Programs across Canada to create competencies related to Traditional Knowledge
- New Anti-racism and Diversity course
- Anti-racism Lecture Series

FOM Structure Proposal

For the past two year, colleagues in SIM have been very involved in the Structure Committee and the many discussions, town halls, and facilitated charettes to examine the best ways we can work together as a faculty to achieve our Strategic Plan and live our strategic pillars which are to:

1. Provide our community with a positive, life-changing educational experience that sets the standard nationally and globally.
2. Grow, nurture and support a diverse and inclusive community.
3. Inspire social and economic innovation and action.

This work has culminated in a Concept Paper which was approved by School Council, and Faculty Council in April. The full proposal will be coming forward this month, for a vote in Faculty Council in June. I would like to thank everyone in the SIM community for engaging in this process. The proposal will have SIM shift from a School to a Department, and our programs shift to the Faculty.

Below is a key section from the proposal that outlines advantages and disadvantages making the proposed change compared to the advantages and disadvantages of the current structure.

Decisional Balance

The advantages of making the proposed change include:

- Ability to open new and fascinating doors for students across our programs;
- Support all the programs with appropriate resources to strengthen the brand, increase enrollment, improve retention of students, and create more opportunities for students to succeed in the programs and beyond;
- Opportunities for students to build communities of interest across the Faculty as a whole;
- May enable greater (new and current) program innovation;
- Opportunity to consider how to ensure effective use of staff talents;
- Potential to free up time for faculty members to engage in more meaningful and outward facing activities (e.g., research, civic engagement activities);
- Ability to preserve collegial faculty relationships in departments of common interest;
- Ability to better mentor and develop faculty members through mentorship by department Chairs;
- Greater parity in the size of structural forms (e.g., department size);
- Responds to recommendations made by the Senate review committee;
- Improved scheduling;
- Ability to build the Faculty “identity” and to choose to be “a Faculty”; and
- Ability to strengthen the Faculty’s financial foundation.

The disadvantages of making the proposed change include:

- Loss on one of our Faculty’s identity “layers” (the Schools); and
- Substantial implementation work (both internally and with external stakeholders, including to ensure accreditation requirements continue to be met)

The advantages of the current structure include:

- Familiar and historic – easy to keep doing what we’ve been doing;
- Has been accepted (although with some articulated concerns) by accreditation bodies;

- No implementation costs;
- Allows for alignment with the high-level identities of “business school”, “public administration school” and “information management school”; and
- No structural change required

The disadvantages of the current structure include:

- Substantially differently sized Schools (and programs) results in uneven workload between individuals and Schools;
- At least three layers of structure/governance (i.e., in Rowe, where there are area groups, the School, and then the Faculty), which results in unclear and sometimes duplicate responsibilities;
- Difficulty sharing resources across Schools, which can result in duplication of skills and inefficient use of talent;
- Hinders support for students who wish to take advantage of courses or faculty talents across Schools;
- Lack of clarity about the focus/direction of the Faculty;
- Could lead to continuous and demoralizing leadership changes that also impacts morale of faculty and staff;
- May result in increased fragmentation among faculty members and more difficulty effecting positive change;
- Inadequate focus on how to elevate the profile of the Faculty/School/program; and
- Frictions on budget management

In addition to SIM faculty and staff being involved in multiple levels of discussion, our students, through School Council, SIMSA, and discussions with other student leaders and the Dean, have also been involved. The Dean created a SIM alumni focus group, and held meetings with them over the past year to solicit their advice and input in the process. Our ALA accreditation processes, and standards have been considered extensively throughout this process, and we have been communicating with the ALA executive. We do not anticipate any challenges with the new structure in terms of the accreditation of our MI degree. There is no change to the commitment to offer an ALA accredited degree.

If the proposal passes through the necessary committees and stages outlined in the AUCRETT process, we will begin the Implementation process, which in a best-case scenario would have the new structure be operational as of July 2023. During the implementation phase there would be consistent communication and input from all stakeholders.

I encourage everyone to fully and carefully read the full Proposal and the appendices, as well as the implementation and governance documents that will be shared this week. Please let me know if you would like additional meetings, or forums to discuss.