FACULTY OF
INFORMATION
UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO

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Academic Plan
2025-2029

Nurturing, Transforming, and Impacting our World with Information

Outline

Javed Mostafa
Professor and Dean
Faculty of Information
University of Toronto

I. What is the Faculty of Information

The Faculty of Information advances understanding of how humans engage with the world through information, how that relationship has changed through history, and how it can evolve in the future.

We are deeply interdisciplinary. Our scholars come from backgrounds in Anthropology, Computer Science, Engineering, Library and Information Science, Literary Studies, Archives, Museum Studies, Communication, Public Health, Experience Design, AI, and many others. With a built-in human-centred lens, we leverage similarities and differences across our fields to equip emerging and current leaders to ethically understand and harness the power of information for meaningful social impact.

II. Why Information Matters Now

Information is power. It can either help address humanity's greatest challenges or exacerbate them.

Humanity is confronting several tectonic shifts at once. How we navigate these shifts depends on our approach to collecting, preserving, organizing, using, and sharing information.

Ensuring information is used for good, rather than harm, will require different levels of creativity in the field of information studies, practices, and design. This in turn will fuel the celebration, nurturing, and advancement of human creativity and collective engagement that is so critical to a flourishing planet.

Climate change

Pervasive technology

Mass migration

Systemic inequity

III. Why We Exist

Our appreciation of the depth of the challenges facing humanity shapes both our vision for the future and the work we are called to do each day.

Vision

An informed world for a flourishing planet

Mission

To creatively address humanity's greatest challenges by unlocking the power of information

IV. Our Plan for the Future

To advance our Mission, in the next five years the Faculty of Information will focus on Building Bridges, Practising Impact, and Fostering Leadership.

Building Bridges

Collaboration across disciplines, domains, and borders

Practising Impact

Applied expertise to meet real-world challenges

Fostering Leadership

Support for students, faculty, staff, alumni, and our institution to engender leadership

IV. Our Plan for the Future

Launching the Direct-Entry Bachelor of Information Program

Practising Impact

Reconstituting the iSchool Institute

Fostering Leadership

Creativity to unlock the power of information

Building Bridges

Revitalizing the Bissell Building

Building Bridges

Information is a bridge. It allows knowledge from one domain to enrich another.

Tackling complex challenges requires the coordination of many fields and disciplines. The study of information represents a meeting place, translating diverse perspectives into common ground. In this way, information enables outcomes that are greater than the sum of their parts.

To grow our scholars' impact and catalyze solutions to complex global challenges, the Faculty of Information will lead collaborations across disciplines, institutions, diverse communities, and borders.

- **Across U of T**
- **With Industry & Community**
- **Across Borders**

At the Intersection of Building Bridges and Practising Impact

Reconstituting the iSchool Institute

To translate between academic research and applied practice, a newly reconstituted iSchool Institute will deliver leading continuing professional development programs, engage industry partnerships, and mount projects that apply Faculty of Information research to relevant private and public sector contexts.

- Launch and fund innovative translational research projects that engage students and faculty in applied work with real-world impact

- Promote and facilitate partnerships between academia and industry

- Design and deliver new continuing professional development programs and flexible pathways, such as online options offering micro-credentials or certifications

- Launch a high school bootcamp in information studies to raise early awareness of the field and attract students from diverse backgrounds

IV. Our Plan for the Future

Practising Impact

Information is a discipline. It combines theory with practical expertise.

The mechanisms by which humans and technology collect, preserve, organize, and disseminate information are central to how we interact with the world. These mechanisms are changing more quickly than at any point in human history.

To ensure our graduates have the professional skills they need and enhance our ability to make an impact, the Faculty of Information will guarantee its programs include applied skills and advance research and scholarship that equitably address real-world challenges.

- **Focus on Impact**
- **Advance the Practice**

At the Intersection of Practising Impact and Fostering Leadership

Launching the Direct-Entry Bachelor of Information Degree

With a uniquely human-centred and cross-disciplinary approach to information's role in how people interact with one another and with machines, a new four-year, direct-entry Bachelor of Information Degree will combine a strong academic foundation with applied practice. The program is designed to meet increasing demand for graduates who possess both technical expertise and a deep understanding of the social, ethical, and cultural implications of data and information systems..

- Provide a strong academic foundation that combines computer and information science, social sciences, and humanities approaches

- Teach essential skills to foster technical proficiency across areas such as information technologies, data analysis, cybersecurity, and system design

- Cultivate ethical decision-making and inclusive approaches to societal and organizational challenges.

- Emphasize experiential learning and opportunities to engage with real-world projects, industry collaborations, and community-based initiatives

IV. Our Plan for the Future

Fostering Leadership

Information is changing. It requires leadership, grounded in humanistic values, to flourish.

As the volume of information grows exponentially and AI-driven information technologies advance, the next generation of information scholarship and information professionals will help ensure healthier communities and a healthier planet.

To increase opportunities for our faculty and students to make an impact around the world, the Faculty of Information will support our faculty, students, staff, and alumni to engender leadership.

At the Intersection of Fostering Leadership and Building Bridges

Revitalizing the Bissell Building

To support the growth in both the faculty and student body and create a more open, accessible, flexible hub for leadership, the Bissell Building, a protected classic of Brutalist architecture which opened in 1971, will be renovated.

- Create a welcoming hub for students, faculty, and the community that can accommodate future research and educational needs

- Create public-facing areas, social spaces, and classrooms that encourage interaction and collaboration, including exhibition and gallery spaces, experimentation labs, and maker spaces

- Enhance accessibility and inclusivity while designing the building with a focus on environmental sustainability

- Upgrade classroom technologies and the technical infrastructure of the building

V. Milestones

Reconstituting the iSchool Institute

Winter 2025
Launch series of educational and research translation events and evaluate

Spring 2025
Develop staffing and resourcing plan

Winter 2026
Build educational offerings and expand applied research partnerships

Fall 2027
Launch catalogue and partnership model

Launching the Direct-Entry Bachelor of Information Program

Winter 2025
Proposal draft submission and consultations

Spring 2025
Provost Advisory Group meeting, Decanal and Provostial sign-off

Fall 2025
External reviewers visit

Winter 2026
Faculty Governance, Academic Policy & Programs, and Academic Board approvals

Spring 2026
Quality Council decision and MCU funding approval (if applicable)

Fall 2027
Program launch

Revitalizing the Bissell Building

Summer/Fall 2025
Faculty moves to staging site

Fall 2025/Winter 2026
Site preparation and building abatement

Winter/Spring 2026
Construction begins

Winter/Spring 2028
Building commissioning

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