

PEP Report 2004

Summary of findings

General

- Students prefer classroom or mixed format courses over online courses.
- Many respondents commented that student isolation and lack of a cohesive student body are problems resulting from the physical location of SLAIS classes away from the school's offices during the construction of the Barber Learning Centre.
- The major complaint about classrooms in general is that they are too spread out on campus. The complaints about the three major classrooms included TEF 320 being too small, the chairs being uncomfortable in FNS 40, and the environmental conditions (light and temperature) in Koerner 216.
- The lack of a student-accessible photocopier at SLAIS and a print card machine near SLAIS was noted.
- Students are meeting for group work at multiple locations across campus, but the most used locations for group meetings are in SLAIS, namely the lounge and the two computer labs, though other locations (hallways, chairs in front of the office) at SLAIS are also used.
- Space for quiet study and group work is lacking.
- The majority of MLIS, MACL, CAS, FNC, and PhD respondents "don't know" if they agree with the SLAIS external review panel's suggestion that there is an "artificial divide" between the MLIS and MAS programs, while the majority of MAS and Joint respondents agree with the statement.
- 71.1% of respondents reported that they are in debt due to the cost of post-secondary education and incurred living expenses.
- The majority of respondents did not know if the tuition consultation process was satisfactory.
- Many respondents found that workload decreased their total learning or quality of work.
- The need for more instructors, both tenured faculty and adjunct instructors, was noted.
- Many respondents did not know whether LASSA adequately represented their interests as SLAIS students.
- The best and worst experiences at SLAIS involved people and courses.

MLIS

- MLIS respondents indicated in their answers to various questions that they would like their SLAIS education to include a strong practical component

- Several MLIS respondents reported that they would like to have the option to take a 3-credit course on web design
- Many MLIS respondents were dissatisfied with both the content and delivery of LIBR 540
- Many MLIS respondents were dissatisfied with the delivery of LIBR 510
- Many MLIS and Joint respondents were dissatisfied with the web-based format of so many Core LIBR courses
- MLIS respondents recommended that LIBR 520 be made a required course and that 590 be made an optional course
- A few MLIS respondents suggested that the relationship between SLAIS and the UBC library system should be strengthened; these respondents noted that students could greatly benefit from increased opportunities to gain practical skills at the UBC libraries (e.g. through practica and Co-op)
- Many MLIS and MACL respondents noted that the scheduling and availability of courses plays a major role in their choice of courses at SLAIS

MAS

- ARST 515 and 540 were most cited for needing improvement
- Required courses that were thought should be optional included ARST 510, 530 and 540. Optional courses that were thought should be required included ARST 570, 573, 591 and 593E.
- Some respondents thought that the current program focuses too much on theory, records management and textual records of business and government. Respondents thought that more practical application (vs. theory) would be beneficial.
- The majority of complaints about scheduling were about last minute schedule changes for classes and concentrated classes (multiple classes for one course in one day) being very draining.
- The lack of course web pages for archival courses was noted.

MACL

- One MACL respondent recommended that more MACL courses be offered at the 500 level
- One MACL respondent noted that there are sometimes scheduling conflicts between the MACL courses offered at SLAIS and those offered through other departments

Recommendations:

General:

- Provide a student-accessible photocopier at SLAIS.

- Provide more quiet study space and group study space at SLAIS.
- Provide a closer print card machine to TEF III.
- Provide more classroom space in TEF.
- Have faculty members post their office hours outside their offices.
- Hire more instructors for both the MAS and MLIS faculties. Tenured faculty members are preferred, though the experience of adjunct instructors in the professional field is valued as well.
- Obtain more computers for the SLAIS IT labs, especially ones that are accessible during classes in Lab I.
- Keep the MLIS-only and MAS-only e-mail on the separate listservs.
- Keep last-minute schedule changes to a minimum and avoid having multiple classes for one course in a day.
- Inform students about the different course concentrations at SLAIS and the role of student organizations, such as LASSA.
- Have the temperature in Koerner 216 be less extreme.
- Hold a forum for the SLAIS community to discuss the perceived divide between the MAS and MLIS programs.
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MLIS

- Offer a 3-credit web design course
- Consider offering LIBR 590 as an optional course in the MLIS curriculum.
- Consider making LIBR 520 a required course in the MLIS curriculum.
- Investigate means to strengthen the relationship between SLAIS and the UBC library system (for example, by increasing the number of practicum and Co-op positions at UBC libraries).
- Offer popular courses more frequently.
- If courses within the MLIS Core will continue to be offered online, hold introductory Web-CT classroom sessions for new MLIS students (in a lab setting).

MAS:

- Add more practical application to MAS courses.
- Offer more summer MAS courses.
- Add MAS course web pages and keep online information current.

MACL:

- Investigate the feasibility of offering more MACL courses at the 500 level at SLAIS