



# COLLEGE OF INFORMATION

**Date:** Friday, April 4,, 2025 – 9:30 am to 11:30 am

**Location:** JMZ 0220

## AGENDA

### Preliminaries

- Call to order

Quorum recognized

- Review and approval of minutes from March

Minutes approved without correction

- Review and approval of this agenda

Agenda approved with correction - DEIA update has been moved to May; Jessica Grimmer is going to introduce the joint MLIS/Musicology program today as well

### Assembly Items

- Dean's Update [Keith Marzullo]

This time next year will be an exciting time for the college as there will be a national search for a new Dean. A new Dean brings in new energy, and I am excited to see what the new Dean is going to do, but I'm going to be doing it from a distance because on July 1, I will be stepping down. I've loved being your dean, and the interim Dean will be Doug Oard.

My career has been rewarding, and I am impressed by you all every day. If I could've re-upped for a 5-year renewal of the dean position I would've done it in an instant, but that's not how the University of Maryland works, so it's time to get new blood in. It sounds like I'm going to retire, but I'm not - I'm going to be the Dean of the Manning College of Information and Computer Sciences at The University of Massachusetts Amherst. UMass Amherst and UMD are facing similar crises, and we have a long road ahead of us but I am optimistic about both institutions.

Between now and June 30 I will be working to give Doug the best runway possible. I'm very thankful to have been the Dean of this amazing college. Of all the offers I had when I came here, I chose the Univ. of Maryland because it had the best people and the best culture. Thank you very much for giving me the privilege of leading this college.

Back to the here and now, you still have 3 months of me. There has been something going on with MLIS - I want to thank Wayne and Polly for doing much of the work to gather information on MLIS grants, and for working with the Office of General Counsel, who are working with the State of Maryland to push back on this. That's where we are now, we are using legal processes to make sure federal law is followed. The other thing that came out is that we have some issues with the budget - nothing new here but given the changing funding of

the state and of the federal institutions, the University is working on getting its hands around what money it's spending. We have a process where we have to ask permission to hire people - we are still continuing interviews, continuing to move on this, we just need to ask permission to hire them. But, given what we're trying to do in those areas, I'm quite optimistic. There have been some issues trying to use MLIS money in a fruitful way and I think have some solutions but there's been some confusion there. In terms of our hiring, we're moving forward, we just have to ask permission. Luckily, we don't have to ask permission to hire adjuncts, that lives with my office, and we'll continue to do that.

**Comment:** One point of clarification on MLIS stuff, also giving a shoutout to Kyran and Myriam - and to MLIS PIs - we are trying to find ways to make sure that we're spending within our authority and being in compliance with the award. Myriam will continue to be the point person on that.

- Maryland Day & Commencement Announcements [Sarah Grun]

This year, I will not be here for either event due to medical leave - I will leave on April 21 and be out until July. Connie Siebold will serve as point person for Maryland Day activities after 4/18, and Mia Hinckle will serve as the main lead for Commencement. We are not hiring a new event person at this time. Staff will learn more about this at our staff meeting - we are breaking out into teams and each team will have a team lead. Each team will have assigned roles. For Maryland Day, we still need a handful of volunteers to make it a successful event. MD Day runs 10am-4pm. The volunteer shifts we have starting the 14th to start doing prep - so if you aren't able to come on actual MD Day, you can help with prep. This year we have 4 returning activities and 2 new activities.

Commencement is Friday May 23rd. Faculty arrival is 7am, Staff arrival is 6am. We will be ordering coffee and breakfast for everybody that day. We will be doing a luncheon with our Commencement speaker the day before commencement. This is an opportunity for our student speakers and student leaders to get to know our keynote speaker. All staff are expected to be at Commencement to help - if you are not able to attend, please let Sarah and your supervisor know. This year we have preassigned roles for staff so we'll need to shuffle folks around if anyone cannot attend. Faculty are expected to attend INFO commencement in their regalia and be part of the faculty processional. If you are unable to make the ceremony, you must let Keith & Sarah know. We will have a pre-event walkthrough of Xfinity, date & time TBD.

- Provost addresses UMD approach to the changing federal landscape [Dr. Jennifer King Rice, Senior Vice President and Provost; joined by Gregory Ball, Vice President for Research, Jay Rosselló, Vice President for Legal Affairs & General Counsel, and Ross Lewin, Assoc. VP for International Affairs]

**Gregory Ball** [Vice President for Research] I lead the division of research, my main job is to support research and various facets. We support all kinds of research - grant funded, non-grant funded, foundations, etc. Since the change in administration, our whole attention has been pulled to these new policies that have been set forth in a series of EOs - what's appropriate research, what's appropriate topics, etc. These EOs have resulted in highly unusual procedures and even evaluating ongoing research, stopping and terminating research. I've never seen these sorts of decisions or procedures that have been pursued by the current administration to guide and influence the research portfolio. I think that one of our main jobs is to work with our partners through the American Association of Universities, etc. to collect information and be up-to-date on issues that we are facing. We have a website in the division of research that I recommend you consult with regularly. All the EOs are there. This website complements the website on Gov't Affairs which looks broadly at policies, this one is focused on research. One of the main tools we've had to push back is filing lawsuits, which turn into temporary

restraining orders, which turn into more permanent decisions, etc. The Chief Counsel for the University is here, I want to thank him personally. We're lucky to have an Attorney General's office which is very sympathetic to us and supportive of our concerns, and has worked with us in filing temporary restraining orders to combat the most draconian problems.

**Provost Jennifer King Rice [Provost and Senior Vice President]** This is a critical part of our communication strategy on campus - meet with colleges like this and share with you how we're approaching some of these issues, and also recognizing that this is a quickly evolving situation. Thank you for the invitation and for making time during your agenda today.

It's an understatement that we're facing some headwinds these days. Not just from the federal government, our state funding is facing some challenges as well. We'll know the final budget next week - that's likely to be exacerbated by federal workforce reductions. The changing federal landscape is directly affecting work we do - DEIA challenges, principles of academic freedom, our international students and scholars are feeling threatened, our LGBTQ+ community, there are issues around funding for research and uncertainties there, I could go on. I know people in the iSchool have been directly affected by decisions. There's a lot happening and it's coming at us very quickly. I know there's a lot of uncertainty and I want you to know we're feeling that uncertainty too - we recognize that EOs and "dear colleague" letters, and other directives that we're seeing come out of the federal government - they are not lost on us. The people you are seeing on the screen are working very hard to make sense out of everything - it takes a lot of time, things are coming at us very quickly. It's very difficult. Some of those directives are counter to the law, they are not consistent. We need to take time to let these things play out.

Communication has been tricky. People have a need for information, for clarity, but circumstances are changing rapidly, and it's hard for us to put information out before we have clarity. We have sent a few emails out to the campus community. We've sent some targeted emails - for example, to international students and researchers. While we can't always provide specific answers to questions, I can share with you our general dispositions - we are trying to make decisions that are in line with our missions and values at the University. We're in close collaboration with other presidents and deans across the country. We are participating in legal action when and where that makes sense. I just want to recognize how difficult this is for our community, and for you all. And I want you to know that our administration is working together as a team to respond to this evolving situation in a way that supports the values and mission of the University.

**Gregory Ball:** The fate of the IMLS is uncertain. With the help of several faculty within the INFO college, we have completed a Declaration of Harm that was done with the Office of the General Counsel. 11 states are joining us in trying to stop the closure of IMLS, and they have put together statements and Maryland is one of the lead states along with a few others to make this happen, so let's hope we can do some good.

**Question:** Is the University planning on doing a Bond offering like Princeton is doing to recover some of the lost funding?

**Answer:** No. We are looking into a few different scenarios. We are developing plans that would carry us through. All things are on the table but that's not one of our final plans at this time.

**Question:** Recently, Rutgers senate passed a resolution urging the Big10 to collectively collaborate on a defense strategy. Can you speak to the lack of a coherent response among the Big10 institutions? What is the University's response to that lack of coordination?

**Answer:** Well, the important point is that we are all living & working in different contexts - so, there are 18 different institutions in a variety of different states which have very different political landscapes. We are in conversation a lot - 1-2 times per week with the Provosts from Big10 schools. Some of our Big10 partners have really retreated from DEI work, last year or the year before, because their state governments have required they get rid of DEI, so they've already done it. The united front is hard when you have these very different contexts. There are 3 buckets - there are states that have legally made those decisions, there are institutions that have been identified on some of the government lists - Northwestern, UMichigan, where they are getting pressure from their board and their state governments to make changes and they're responding accordingly. And there are some institutions (probably a majority), we are one of them, who are trying to "stay the course" - moving forward in ways that continue to reflect a commitment to DEI. That's why it's difficult to come out with a single, unified statement, because these institutions are in different places, different contexts. Regarding Rutgers, this is something we're working on, our senate is also going to have that conversation on what our response should be. When I say "stay the course" I don't mean that this is easy, or that we aren't worried, everyone is worried. Thank you again.

**Jay Rosselló [Vice President for Legal Affairs & General Counsel]** EOs are essentially written directives issued by the president - their vision of policy, they are asking organizations to flush themselves to enact that vision. EOs cannot override laws and regulations, but it's important to be mindful since they generate a lot of publicity and may be harbingers of things to come.

**Ross Lewin [Assoc. VP for International Affairs]** Our approach in the Office of International Affairs - there has been extraordinary anxiety among the international community. As Provost Rice suggested - these are tricky waters to navigate, because on the one hand, you want to address things explicitly, but you also want to make sure you aren't causing any additional harm to the student body. Do you drive a stake in the ground and be resistant, or do you try to figure out how to work through this to protect our international students? The University has been trying to navigate through it, trying to adapt. As Provost Rice suggested, we have decided not to have big town-hall meetings - for example, for Chinese students - but instead we've been trying to work on a more personal level, to provide some sort of human connection with these international students.

I would like to extend an offer to meet specifically with any international students or faculty in the iSchool to chat. I'm doing that today with the College of Education - going to their First Fridays. I'm bringing someone from the International Student Services to answer any questions. Doing the same thing next Tuesday with BSOS. This week, we've also done a few things - announced in the ISSS newsletter - I am going to hold office hours so that members of the international community can have their concerns heard.

**Question:** A lot of people have been scared seeing our international colleagues at Tufts and elsewhere being grabbed by ICE. Our Chinese colleagues are deeply concerned, and this is of particular concern because in 2023 the University turned over a bunch of Chinese-origin names to the Department of Justice, folks in Computer Science and elsewhere were in detention for a rather long time so there's a real, serious fear among our Chinese-origin colleagues. Will you commit to not turning over any names of our international colleagues to ICE, to the Dept. of Homeland Security, who might cause them harm?

**Answer:** Specifically related to the house committee on CCP letter we received a few weeks ago - it is our understanding that the committee is not interested in PII. We intend to respond but will not include PII, we plan to turn the data over in aggregate form. It's important to note that this is a house committee directive, and they have subpoena power, so it's not an option not to respond. *The college overwhelmingly agrees by a show of hands that we want to keep our Chinese colleagues safe.*

**Question:** We have had some programs, partnerships, specifically focused on librarians of color - sent back, rejected by the University, the office of the general counsel. My lived experience as a director is different from what I'm hearing. Can you speak to how we should continue to make decisions about our programming? We have a program named "Diversity". Our field has a very clear set of disparities, and we deal with all kinds of communities, and our work is focused on serving broad groups of people because we work with the public. It has been frustrating to put effort into building our work and then to have it stopped, and then to hear that we're not complying with things. Can you speak to that?

**Answer** [Jay Rosselló] I don't know what specific instance you're talking about, but not all diversity is illegal. Obviously it's very fundamental to our mission and values. That said, there are some things that may be happening on our campus that may be contrary not to EOs or to subregulatory agencies, but to existing civil rights and anti-discrimination laws. To the extent that we have any of those things on campus, it behooves us to review those and take appropriate action to correct them. We encourage you to work with our office and if we feel the need that changes are warranted in light of the existing laws, we'll work with your department and program to make sure you are in compliance.

**Question:** What does that mean for people who do work in increasing diversity in fields that have drastic underrepresentation or disparities in care, for example? I do a lot of work on health information, on black maternal health - is that also going to be sent back?

**Answer:** We as an institution believe in diversity. We think our programs are in compliance with existing law.

**Gregory Ball:** In biomedicine, programs that are trying to recruit talent in areas that often don't - they are continuing. But they are focusing on broader mandates, not singling out a group which can then be a target, saying "you're excluding some people". We're getting pushback on programs that are perceived to be "excluding." If you have an inclusive program, if you are trying to bring in people to your field that aren't normally there, that could be very defensible.

**Question:** You as administrators are constrained in particular ways about what you can and can't do, you can do things we can't do. What are some legal resistance things that we as staff and faculty can do that will dovetail nicely with your efforts to maintain our values as a community?

**Answer:** We as an institution are involved in an unprecedented amount of litigation at the federal level. We are challenging every set up taking place on the research side. Faculty & staff can provide the best quality materials to help in the legal sphere - identifying impacts to your programs, etc.

**Question:** So, documenting the harm that's being done?

**Answer:** Yes. In many of these actions we're required to provide declarations which are statements from administrators and officials at the University - they need to lay out a case for why these actions are illegal or harmful to the University. So, being receptive to being cooperative when we call upon you would be very helpful.

- DEIA Updates [Ron Padron] - will be postponed to May's assembly
- Post-Doc Introduction [Lucy Havens]

**Research Question:** How can ML/AI contribute to the diversification of cultural and historical records, and the narratives those records help create?

My research bridges multiple disciplines: Human-Computer Interaction, Libraries, Archives, and Museums, and Machine Learning & Artificial Intelligence.

**Thesis:** *Recalibrating Machine Learning for Social Biases: Demonstrating a New Methodology through a Case Study Classifying Gender Biases in Archival Documentation*

**Aims:** support critical cataloging workflows, reframe the problem of bias in ML/AI

#### Findings:

- Relationship between gendered and gender biased language
- Uncertain, contextual, inevitable nature of bias
- Value in **process** of creating ML models for understanding bias

#### My ongoing work:

##### **Project:** Linking Anthropology's Data and Archives

- **PIs:** Diana Marsh, Katrina Fenlon
- **Funder:** NSF
- **RQs:**
  - What barriers prevent primary source data from being reusable over time?
  - How can anthropology and related fields sustainably adapt emergent linked data infrastructures in support of broad access to cultural research data?

#### **Proposed Joint Degree - MLIS & Musicology [Jessica Grimmer]**

Dual masters program I've been developing with our friends at the school of music between musicology and the MLIS, modeled after the HiLS program. Because I know we're jam packed today, I put together a Google site with a full slide deck of rationale, a course checklist, 3-year modeled guidance, and our proposal in progress. My goal is to get your feedback as we move forward to make this program a reality.

<https://sites.google.com/umd.edu/mulsprogram/home>

The big reason why we're pursuing this is that our students are doing it anyway. UMD students are going straight from a musicology degree and coming across campus to us for an MLIS. The other reason is that Catholic University used to have this degree program, but because their entire student body is shrinking, it's gone and there's a vacuum in the region.

This takes advantage of our existing faculty—Fabian has proposed a fantastic music librarianship course that can be a cross listed elective between INFO and MUSIC, and is likely draw from outside UMD, I'd be thrilled to run my music encoding for access and research elective again, and of course Eric has been doing community archiving of musical groups really successfully. We've also got the resources of the Michelle Smith Performing Arts Library, Special Collections in Performing Arts, and the International Piano Archives at Maryland right on campus.

This will strengthen our relationships with our colleagues in ARHU: the musicology division, school of music, and ARHU Dean Stephanie Shonekan are all in favor. PLUS, while the MLIS is not typically funded, the musicology masters are, and they are willing to fund 2-3 students accepted to the program annually. It will also let us cultivate and strengthen ties to performing arts institutions of all stripes in the D.C.-Baltimore region: we can think about everyone from The Kennedy Center to the 9:30 Club.

Please spend a few minutes perusing the materials on this site and fill out the feedback form:

<https://sites.google.com/umd.edu/mulsprogram/home>

- Spring Nominating Committee Selection
  - Explanation
- We need to select a new Nominative Committee. Between now & May, you will be receiving the slate of candidates, and presenting that at the next Assembly. Last year's committee was: Renee Hill, Kevin Nesline, Kari Kraus, and Angela Rodgers-Koukoui. We do need at least (1) staff person for the committee.
  - Call for Volunteers

- Kevin Nesline (staff) & we need (3) FT faculty: Polly O'Rourke, Pam Duffy, Jessica Grimmer.
  - Confirmation
- By a show of hands, these individuals have been confirmed to the Nominating Committee.

### **Announcements**

- We are approaching the end of the year. If you have students who are struggling, please tell us. It's easier to intervene on April 4 rather than May 18. If you have someone, please let us (Jeff Waters for grad and Tetyana Bezbana for undergrad) & your advising team know.
- **Question:** Regarding students in distress - do you want direct emails or to go through iCare?  
**Answer:** Both
- IT announcement for faculty - new initiative on protecting the network. If anyone is operating a router or top-of-rack-switches, we'll need to make sure these are managed by DiT. We will need to request a waiver for any those that can't be moved over to be managed by DiT - please get in touch with Chris Hawley if you are impacted.

### **Adjournment**

- Motion to adjourn. Accepted.