



# UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

THE INFORMATION SCHOOL

February 12, 2016

UW Graduate School Review Committee  
Re: Information School Ten Year Review

To whom it may concern:

The Information School is pleased to accept the report of the Information School Program Review committee. We offer thanks to the members of the committee for listening thoughtfully to all our stakeholder representatives, asking critical questions, and providing an external lens for interpreting our efforts and the choices that lay before us. The report speaks directly to the issues and challenges that the Information School is addressing at this time as we plan and prepare for the next decade. The insights and observations reported will be immediately useful and applicable to decisions we are taking now about near- and long-term objectives pertaining to the size and nature of our academic programs, and more importantly to the character of our inclusive community.

We intend to act on all the recommendations identified in Section 3. We will determine to the optimal means for implementation. As noted, some efforts are already in progress, and others are identified in our current strategic plan, *iSchool 2018*. Of particular interest are the cautionary notes within the report that focus our attention on the quality of the student experience and avoiding commitments to growth that could place undue strains or negatively impact the current learning environment.

The following two comments are intended merely for clarification of observations raised in the report:

In Section 2.1, the report raises questions about the presence of senior faculty in leadership roles. While most of the statements throughout are factually accurate, the report does not convey the complete image of our faculty leadership. The report notes that there is only one professor (i.e. “full professor”) on the Elected Faculty Council (EFC). This is in line with our policy of having three tenured faculty serving on the EFC. Eligible faculty at all ranks are identified and an election of a faculty representative come each rank takes place. The composition of the EFC thus includes a member of faculty from each rank. On the subject of “full professors” in leadership roles, the Associate Dean for Research is specifically listed, but we also have “full professors” in leadership positions such as the Personnel Committee (that handles promotion cases), Diversity Committee (a key focus for the school), Facilities Committee (managing a scarce and valuable

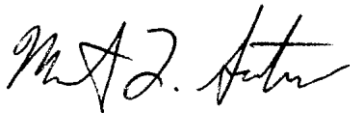
resource for the school, as noted in the Report), PhD Admissions Committee, all four Search Committees for this year, and the Social Committee (whose charge is to maintain the ethos of a school of one). We would not characterize this as a lack of “full professors” in leadership and shared governance of the school. And this does not account for those professors engaged in university service or service to the profession above and beyond their teaching and research portfolios.

The report further discusses the need for communication regarding faculty development. The Dean of the iSchool in anticipation of the recent hiring of so many new Assistant Professors and lecturing faculty, created the position of Director of Faculty Affairs to build new and manage existing faculty development programs. These include the iSchool mentoring program, policies regarding promotion (vetted with and approved by the full faculty), and communication about faculty benefits and support. New initiatives include working lunches to share information related to faculty life in the iSchool and to identify and address concerns.

In Section 2.6, the report identifies student concerns about the timing of course offerings. The Information School offers classes across all periods of the day, and we will comply fully with the best practices established by TSO as part of a campus-wide effort to optimize use of UW learning spaces.

With these very few points of clarification, the Information School is pleased to accept the committee’s report as a valuable source of evidence informing our strategic planning and as a guide to improving the student learning experience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. L. Saxton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Matthew" and last name "Saxton" clearly distinguishable.

Dr. Matthew L. Saxton  
Associate Dean for Academics