



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

School of Information

Faculty of Arts

Annual Alumni Survey Results 2022

Introduction

The following online survey was distributed to graduates of the Master of Archival Studies (MAS), Master of Library & Information Studies (MLIS), and Master of Archival Studies/Master of Library & Information Studies (MASLIS) graduates whose degrees were conferred between September 2021 and May 2022.

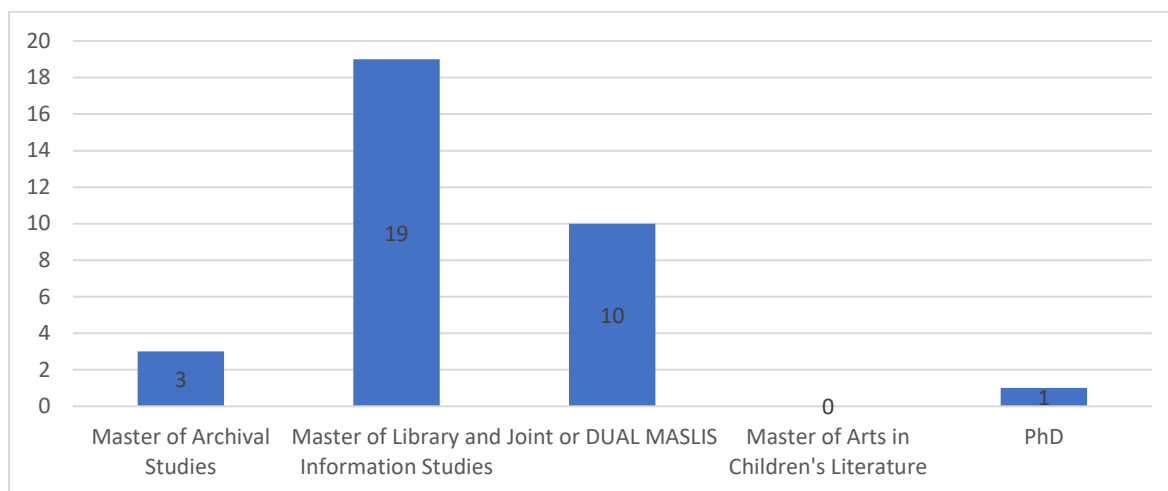
A total of 77 graduates were eligible to complete the survey: 47 MLIS, 5 MAS, 21 MASLIS, 2 MACL, and 2 PhD graduates. A total of 33 graduates completed the survey for a total response rate of 42.86%. Of the 33, 19 are MLIS graduates, 3 are MAS graduates, 10 are dual MAS/MLIS graduates, and 1 is a PhD graduate.

Questions about the survey can be directed to the Educational Services Manager at ischool.edsm@ubc.ca.

Key findings

- **93.94%** of the respondents are currently employed, which is comparable to 94.87% last year.
- Of the 31 respondents who indicated that they are employed, 28 (**90%**) reported being employed in a position related to their iSchool degree, comparable to 92% of last year.
- 82% of respondents were either employed before completing their degree or within six months of graduation, comparable to 87% of last year.
- Alumni' self-assessment of iSchool Competencies aligns with last year's trend in all areas.

What degree did you complete at the iSchool?



Did you transfer from one program to another?

DUAL to MAS	0
DUAL to MLIS	1
MAS to DUAL	0
MLIS to DUAL	1
I did not transfer programs	33

If you did change your degree program, can you please provide your rationale for the decision?

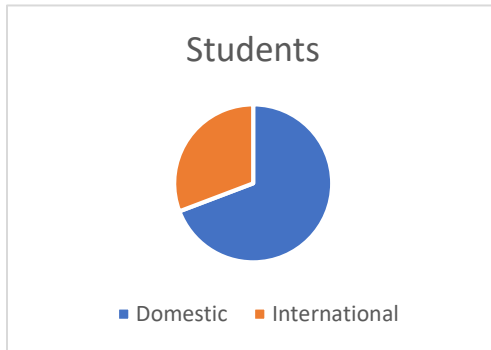
Pandemic stress, financial stress (lack of scholarship opportunities to help pay for tuition and living expenses).

I initially applied to the Dual, only got into the MLIS, began the MLIS, then applied to transfer

Did you complete any sub-specializations or concentrations as part of your degree?

First Nations Curriculum Concentration	6
Designing for People	1
Blockchain@UBC	1

Were you attending as a domestic or international student?



Responses:
Domestic 18
International 15

When was your degree conferred?

Answer	Response	%
November 2021	11	34%
May 2022	21	66%
Total	32	100%

What is your age group?

Answer	Response	%
20-29	16	50%
30-39	14	43.75%
40-49	2	6.25%
50-59	0	0%
60+	0	0%
Total	32	100%

The iSchool is actively working to foster an equitable and supportive environment for students of diverse backgrounds, particularly in terms of gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, and ability. Do you feel that the iSchool provided a supportive environment for students with your background? What could the iSchool do better?

yup - perhaps too much so

iSchool is intentionally trying to provide a supportive environment for students with different backgrounds and I appreciate it. One thing that I am confused about is why programs are not in the "British Columbia Provincial Nominee Program (BC PNP) Express Entry International Post-Graduate category". I feel what we learnt definitely falls under the "Computer and Information Sciences and Support Services" category. If this applies, it definitely adds help for international students like me to find a job especially permanent job in Canada.

I felt supported.

Yes, I think the iSchool could improve its approach to UDIL with regard to students with disabilities. I was registered with the Centre for Accessibility and was not afforded a simple accommodation by one archives professor. It did affect my decision to switch from the dual program to the MLIS program. With the pivot to online learning, I don't feel students with disabilities were fully considered when it came to course design, delivery, and assessment. Requiring synchronous participation in online group discussions does not always work well for neurodiverse students.

Yes.

Yes

Yes

Not particularly

I am not of a background that needed support.

I have few if any accommodation needs.

iSchool (*thinking*) courses should be less ideological and more based on empirical reasoning.

I don't fit any of those categories other than being a woman and I didn't experience sexism at the iSchool

The iSchool did a fair job fostering equitable treatment

Many of the initiatives that did make me feel supported were student led (like IDEAS), many teachers need to be more aware of EDI issues and incorporate into instruction.

I am neurodivergent and iSchool was almost completely inaccessible to me. I had a miserable experience because of it. The emphasis on superfluous administrative details, the fact that every single class was the same format, ie: read 50 pages of text that probably doesn't have much relation to what is being taught, infantilizing little ways to "check" that we did the random readings (250 word "reflections"), multiple overlapping assignments that were barely tailored to the material, and ENDLESS group projects made it where I spent all my time on getting it done and learned nothing.

In my experience, yes but I'm not part of a visible minority

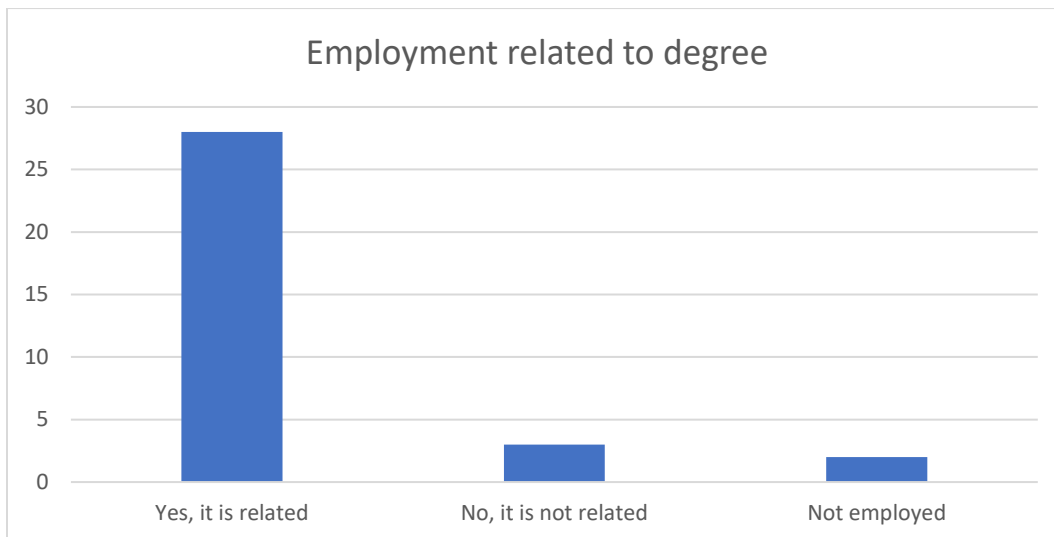
No. Greater admin-led initiatives and outreach for marginalized students. Better communication of existing initiatives.

Are you currently employed?



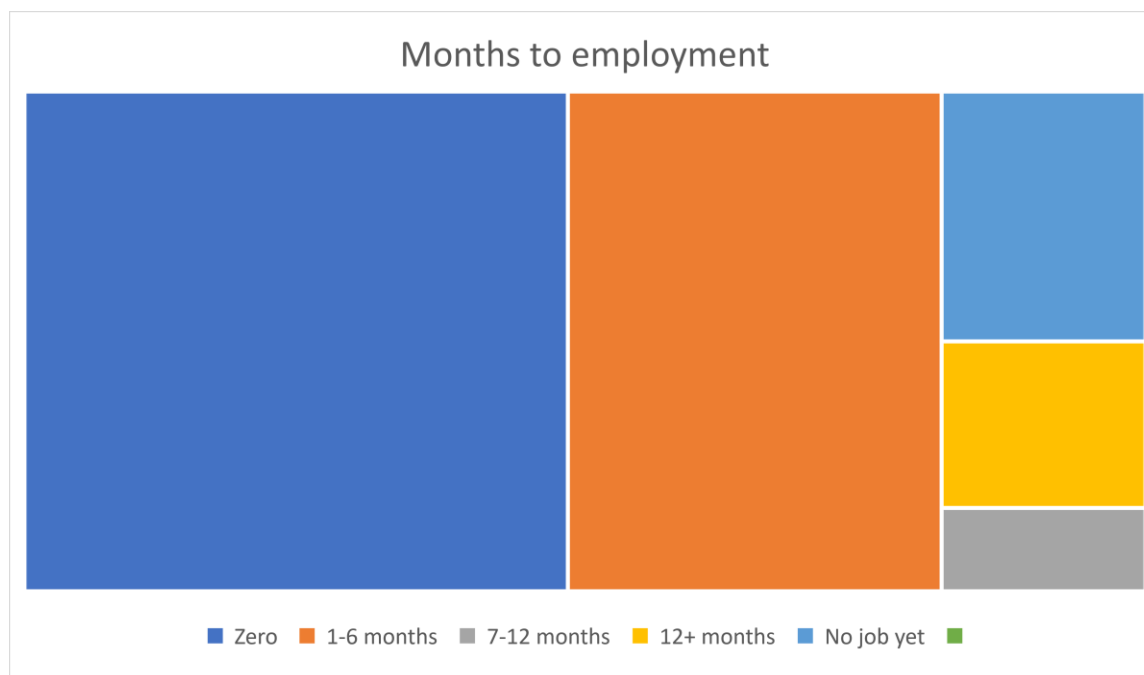
Yes	31 (94%)
No	2 (6%)

If you are currently employed, is your employment related to your iSchool degree?



Yes, it is related	28 (85%)
No, it is not related	3 (9%)
Not employed	2 (6%)

How many months elapsed between the completion of your degree and your first job placement?



Answer	Response	%
Zero – I obtained the position before completing my degree	16	49
1-6 months	11	33
7-12 months	1	3
More than 12 months	2	6
I have not received my first job placement	3	9
Total	33	100%

What best describes your work status?

Answer	Response	%
Employed full-time in a single position	11	33
Employed full-time in multiple positions	1	3
Employed part-time in a single position	0	0
Employed part-time in multiple positions	3	9
Not employed	2	6
Employed full-time in a single contract position	13	39

Employed part-time in a single contract position	3	9
Total	33	100%

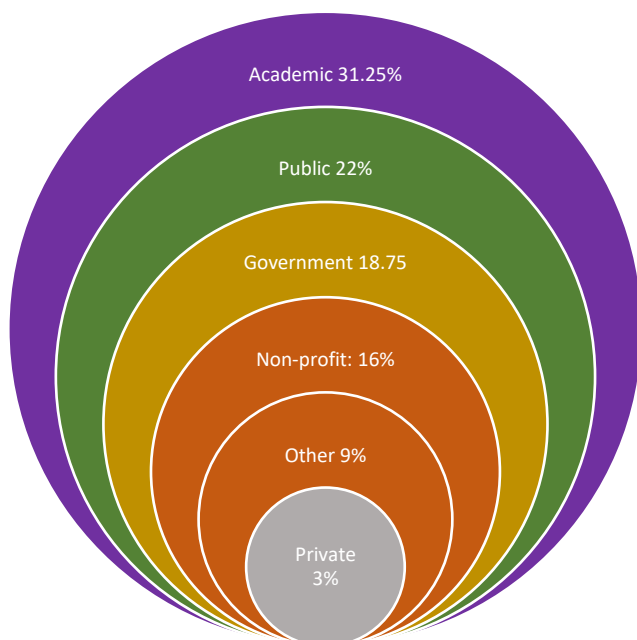
Did you obtain your full-time position as your first job placement?

Answer	Response	%
Yes	16	70
No, I worked multiple contract positions prior to obtaining full-time employment	7	30
No	0	0
Total	23	100%

What is your current salary range?

Answer	Response	%
Less than \$25,000	3	9
\$25,000-49,999	7	22
\$50,000-74,999	16	50
\$75,000-99,999	5	16
\$100,000 or more	1	3
Total	32	100%

In what type of organization is this position?



Answer	Response	%
Academic	10	31.25
Public	7	22
Private	1	3
Government	6	18.75
Non-profit	5	16
Other	3	9
Total	32	100%

Where is this position located?

Answer	Response	%
Metro Vancouver	12	38
Lower Mainland (Whistler to Hope)	3	9
Other part of BC	3	9
Other Canadian province/territory	5	16
Outside Canada	9	28
Total	32	100%

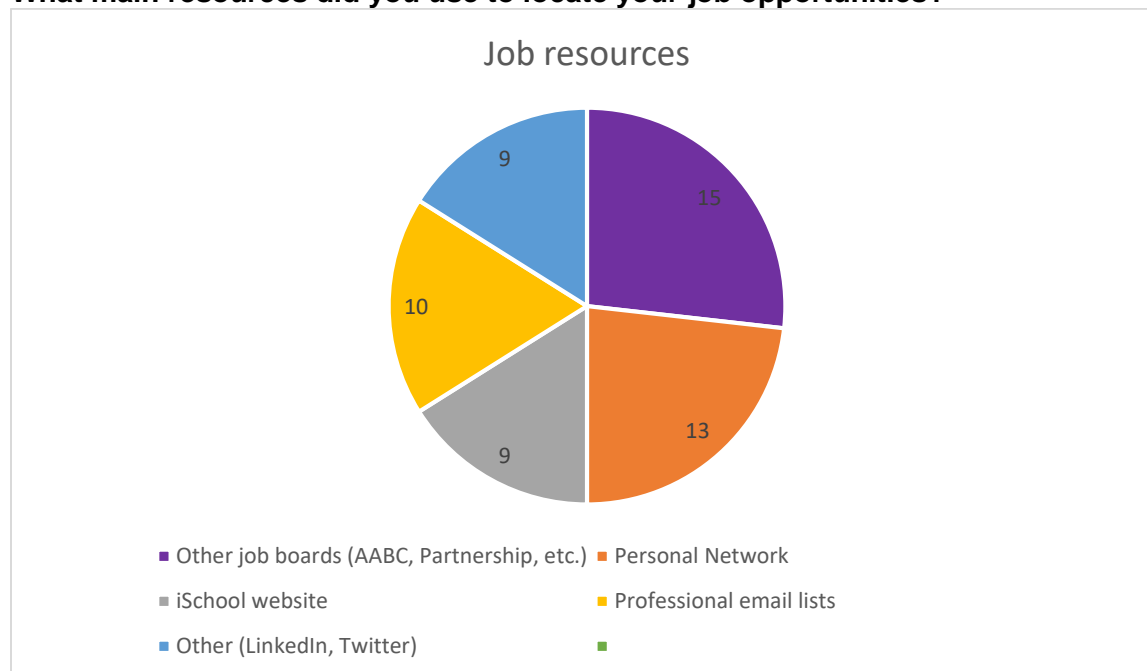
Job titles

digital transformation analyst
Information Analyst
Branch Head Librarian
Library Assistant (Recreation Leader)
Reference and Backlog Archivist
Public Safety Records Specialist
Auxiliary archivist
Assistant Professor & Reference/Instruction Librarian
Archivist
Records management specialist
Teaching and Learning Librarian
Student Success Librarian
Librarian
Records Management Researcher
Special Collections Librarian
Senior Library Public Service Associate
Learning & Instruction Support Librarian
Librarian for Research & Learning, STEM
Economic Policy Analyst
Archivist
Campus Librarian
Digital Repository Librarian (term)
Temporary Archives Librarian
Health sciences librarian
Senior Media Librarian, Music Library, CBC/Radio-Canada
Director of Development

How would you rate your job satisfaction in your current role? (10 being a perfect job, and 1 being the worst job possible)

Answer	Response	%
10	2	6
9	5	16
8	8	25
7	7	22
6	5	16
5	2	6
4	0	0
3	1	3
2	0	0
1	2	6
Total	32	100%

What main resources did you use to locate your job opportunities?



Are you a member of a professional organization?

Yes 19 (58%)
No 14 (42%)

Upon graduation, please rate the level to which you felt prepared for the job market in the following areas:

Ability to assess the needs of diverse groups of people and respond to those needs through the design and provision of information resources, services and systems							
Scale (5 fully prepared, 1 unprepared)	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Average
	1	3	8	18	3	33	3.58
Ability to organize and manage information for effective preservation, discovery, access and use							
Scale (5 fully prepared, 1 unprepared)	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Average
	1	6	8	12	6	33	3.48
Ability to apply knowledge of information technology and resources to real world situations							
Scale (5 fully prepared, 1 unprepared)	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Average
	1	5	8	14	5	33	3.52
Ability to reflect in a critical and informed manner on the role of information professions in society							
Scale (5 fully prepared, 1 unprepared)	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Average
	1	2	5	15	10	33	3.94
Ability to communicate effectively							
Scale (5 fully prepared, 1 unprepared)	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Average
	1	0	5	12	15	33	4.21
Ability to be an effective manager							
Scale (5 fully prepared, 1 unprepared)	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Average
	3	6	11	11	2	33	3.09
Ability to conduct research and assess information resources							
Scale (5 fully prepared, 1 unprepared)	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Average
	1	0	6	13	13	33	4.12
Ability to represent your chosen profession through advocacy initiatives, professional development, teaching, research, etc.							
Scale (5 fully prepared, 1 unprepared)	1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Average
	2	2	13	10	6	33	3.48

What continuing education or professional development activities have you participated in since graduation? (check all that apply)

Answer	Response	%
Participated in a course or workshop	16	39
Delivered a course or workshop	4	10
Attended work-related conference	13	32
Other continuing education activities	8	19

What, if any, of the following activities during your iSchool degree contributed to your career success to date?

Answer	Response	%
Co-op	11	17
Professional Experience (for credit)	14	21
Internship or Practicum (for credit)	1	1
Employment at iSchool (such as STA or research assistant-ship)	4	6
Employment at UBC (such as GAA or student librarian)	15	23
Student Leadership (such as LASSA, ACA Student Chapter, ASIS&T Student Chapter)	9	14
Networking with graduates and other professionals during your time as a student	12	18

Thinking of your education at the iSchool, what areas or topics best prepared you for the positions you have been in since graduation?

<p>Work Experience: 22 Group Work: 11 Children's Service: 7 Management: 4 Cataloging: 3 Research: 9 Arrangement and Description: 7 Communication: 10 Reference Services: 12 Public Librarianship: 8 Info Design: 4 Programming: 5 Database Design: 6 Collection Management: 9 Legal Courses: 4 Information Technology: 7 Records Management: 10</p>	<p>Archival Theory: 6 Project Management: 9 Preservation / Digital Preservation: 8 Aboriginal Literature / Material: 5 Marketing: 2 Info Visualization: 5 None: 2</p>
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Please indicate below any additional feedback you have about the UBC iSchool degree programs.

I feel like there was a lack of courses in, say, free-speech, misinformation, conflicting information, political directed information, anti-science. When I think of Information in today's world, the ischool skirted most relevant issues. The social component of information science was severely lacking, which I find concerning because the information crisis we find ourselves in today cannot be more relevant.

Altough I chose iSchool because of its diverse specialization (now called area of focus) and options for future paths, I don't think the course options can support a student, to become a graduate-level employee after graduation other than a "librarian". At least when I was there, the curriculum was very library-centric. There isn't enough extracurricular education about work in other specializations. The courses themselves are too entry-level to support students to become an employee with sufficient experience. However, I have to say that co-op is very helpful in finding a job. It provides an excellent option for students to learn things outside of school.

My professional experience position was cancelled due to the pandemic. I was not able to obtain another position before graduation. I feel professional placement should be mandatory in order to graduate. Also, I would like to see more hands-on involvement from graduate advisors. Mine did not contact me throughout my entire program. She only replied to me when I had an issue that needed her input.

I would have preferred to see co-ops or professional experiences as a mandatory part of the program. I think I would have felt more adequately prepared to enter the work force if I had had more short-term work experience while completing the program. I believe that after the core courses are complete students should be required to do several placements alongside any desired electives.

One area that would have been helpful in my current job is more preparation in collection management and development. I wasn't able to take the Collection Management course, but there was a little bit on collection development in a few courses. I would have loved more.

I found it hard to take courses I was interested in as they were requested so infrequently, sometimes not even the two years I was enrolled.

I wish more emphasis was placed on the value of a cataloging class - I was told I probably didn't need to take it, and am I think it's a necessity.

Additional resources and support or facilitation of the job search process would be helpful, beyond the job board.

I would have liked more hands on experience with the software used in librarianship. It would have helped me immensely if the iSchool had purchased a subscription to services like GOBI or SpringShare LibApps/LibGuides and included access either to all iSchool students or for use in a specific course (maybe Academic Libraries). I understand that the hope may be that a student gets experience with this kind of software in more practical situations through professional experience/work placement/co-op. However, I feel like offering this through a course or simply making access open to all iSchool students would give everyone the opportunity to familiarize themselves before going into the job market.

My review is skewed by the pandemic. So many things would have been different/more intensive if we were able to be in person. As it stands, I received an excellent education. I would advise that there be more work around STEM librarianship-STEM programs are the fastest growing in Academic settings, therefore it is likely that librarian positions will follow. Offer the Science Librarian and Health Librarian course on a predictable rotation. Another thing-Release a tentative schedule for the two years, or list when a course was last offered. I came in planning to take courses that, while on the list, were never offered! It was incredibly frustrating. You must give students the opportunity to plan. I understand that there are often courses taught for the first time, and that is great, but a general idea of what will be offered in which term would allow us the ability to make good choices each term. Note that I converted my US salary (\$65,000 USD) to CAD on 2022-10-18.

Happy with technical skills.

Studying at the iSchool was a valuable experience. I would encourage more legal, management, and computer science courses, but every course I took in my time at the iSchool has become useful in my everyday work.

The iSchool needs to address the lack of concrete guidance for dual program students. It was extremely difficult to navigate the correct stream of courses and scheduling to provide effective training in a reasonable amount of time and the grad supervisors were unfortunately not much help. Additionally, the iSchool should consider fostering an active recruitment system to get students into practicums, experiences, and work learns.

Aptitude-like tests would be a good way to guide students into suitable roles and a better professional relationship would lead to more direct entry into the workforce.

The classes I felt that I "got the most out of" were the ones that included practical projects (i.e., things I would have to do in an actual job)

Telling students that there are many employment opportunities for them upon graduation is reckless and misleading.

As part of its curriculum development, the School is increasing the amount of online courses that it offers. Considering your experience with online education during our transition to online courses due to COVID in 2020 and 2021, do you have any recommendations that will help the School's ongoing efforts to design and deliver high quality online education?

Get rid of mandatory courses. Online courses are great but students want to be there in person - incentivize being in class.

I understand it might be harder and more time-consuming to provide asynchronous course materials than providing in-person courses. I also understand it was a hard time for all of us to have a balance between protection and education. However, I want to acknowledge that the education I received during the campus shutdown was heavily affected. The courses I took became shorter and less informative, and the instructors changed a lot. I hope the school can further improve the curriculum and make it more suitable for online education.

Consult with Centre for Accessibility staff regarding course design (or disability experts). Stop increasing the amount of work to compensate for the switch to online from in-person. Require one or two in-person classes, such as a weekend workshop, to create that sense of community. I took History of the Book online and, while I learned a lot, I've still never touched a manuscript or seen one in person. That's a huge problem.

Personally I would recommend not pivoting to increased numbers of online courses - I had an extremely difficult time with online learning and ultimately felt that I learned less from online courses than I did from in-person lectures. I intentionally did not attend universities who specialized in distance/online learning, and if the iSchool shifted towards an increased number of online courses when I was applying for grad school I would not have considered UBC as a viable option for me. That being said, if the iSchool does add more online courses, I would recommend that the professors who will be teaching these courses take training on how to effectively design and implement online courses. Professional development and education training would be vital, as online learning is very different from in-person learning, and it is unreasonable to expect professors to be able to teach online courses to the same efficacy that they are able to teach in-person lectures without providing the appropriate training. Online course and in-person courses are very different, and this needs to be acknowledged by the iSchool. Some students may benefit from this shift and others may suffer, and this dichotomy needs to be recognized. In 2020 and 2021 the constant rhetoric was that online learning was just as good if not better than in-person learning, and this is demonstrably untrue for all learners. This should be acknowledged and steps should be taken to make the learning experience as good as possible for all involved.

I think the courses that incorporated activities during the actual class were altogether more helpful and enjoyable, and likewise those that tried to compensate for the lack of in-person interaction by doubling down on other kinds of work (e.g., readings or discussions) were especially difficult to manage and maintain an interest in. Balance and flexibility were key, as well as consistent check-ins from professors to see what was or was not working in the course.

No

I much preferred synchronous online courses. While sometimes asynchronous courses with prerecorded materials were nice for the summer months I found that I retained more from synchronous classes that involved live discussions and break out groups.

I think options are key. As someone who started online and then was forced to come in person for less than a full year, I would have appreciated being put in the driver's seat. Give students options that are flexible and meet their needs.

Don't try to overdo the participation aspect of an online class by having discussion boards or small assignments due every week, instead just treat it like a regular class.

Limit discussion board posts - I found them to be time consuming even though they were worth so little.

No, but giving people the option to do courses online is really important.

When discussion boards are part of the course, word limits need to have more enforcement. Often instructors would ask for posts to be brief (200-300 words) and students would post essay length responses. In classes of 20-30 it becomes impossible to meaningfully respond in these situations. And from an educational standpoint it doesn't teach students to express their thoughts in a concise manner. Of course discussion boards are necessary for students who need to interact with the course asynchronously. However, I always preferred synchronous discussions over zoom as they allow for a more fluid conversation.

Requiring infinite discussion posts, etc is not a replacement for discussion and learning. In fact, for those of us with ADHD or other processing disorders it is completely overwhelming to keep up with the conversation-for others it works wonderfully. I would recommend designing alternatives such as a discussion group meeting over Zoom and the notes being recorded for credit. I would also advise that part of distance learning include partnerships (that the student could possibly set up) with local librarians to shadow them for a day in their role, etc.

This is great for experienced students, and bad for younger/less experienced students.

In an online space, it's particularly important to have opportunities to bond with peers and have meaningful discussions about materials, as it is challenging to do efficient group work of good quality without the in-person interactions required to learn each other's strengths and weaknesses.

Be careful not to weight too far to the online side because in-person instruction is invaluable for many for learning, socializing, and networking.

I enjoyed courses taken online for the most part and think this is important to keep offering.

- I found online synchronous classes to be more engaging when smaller breakout rooms/discussion were incorporated into whole class lectures. -

Asynchronous online discussion boards were not helpful and/or were very frustrating unless clear guidelines were provided (e.g., set an expected word count; set an expected amount of time people should spend on their responses; should students reply to each other; etc.). Online discussion boards are usually meant to mirror in person discussions, but because responses remain posted for the duration of the course, students tend to treat these threads like graded papers (and spend excessive amounts of time writing posts). It might be helpful to let students know that halfformulated/incomplete ideas are ok

- otherwise students will post long essay-like responses rather than offering a few thoughts that other students can expand on. - people will generally not engage with others' online discussion posts unless it is required or will be counted as a response

Online classes were so, so, so bad.

I was not positively impacted by online learning.

The following questions are UBC Faculty of Arts Co-op Education related questions.

Did you apply to and were you accepted into the Arts Co-op program during your time at the iSchool?

Yes 58% (29)
No 42% (14)

If no, why didn't you apply to co-op?

Answer	Response	%
I already have relevant work experience.	2	14
I am not interested in work experience.	1	7
I am an international student.	5	36
I don't have time to do Co-op work.	1	7
I prefer short-term work placements or unpaid work.	0	0
Other (please specify)	5	36
Total	14	100%

*

- I didn't want to extend the length of my program.
- COVID 19 lockdowns
- Prefer to receive credits to graduate in a reasonable time
- I got the student job I wanted at UBC.

For those accepted in the Co-op program, how many Co-op terms did you complete?

Answer	Response	%
Zero	7	39
1 term	4	22
2 terms	6	33
3 terms	1	6
Total	18	100%

If you didn't complete any work terms, what was the reason?

Answer	Response	%
Applied for jobs but didn't get hired	3	30
I did not see any jobs that interested me	0	0

My personal or academic plans changed	1	10
Found a job outside of Co-op	2	20
Others	4	40
Total	10	100%

Did you feel the Co-op Program (training, advising, and work experience) gave you a competitive edge when searching for a full-time work?

Yes 44% (8)
 Maybe 17% (3)
 No 39% (7)

After your experience in our Co-op Program, would you recommend other students to participate in the Co-op Program?

Yes 55% (10)
 Maybe 28% (5)
 No 17% (3)