



TO: Members of the College of Electors

SPONSOR: Dr. Mahadeo Sukhai, Vice-Chair

DATE: April 28, 2011 for May 4, 2011

TITLE: **Report of the Working Group for the Evaluation of Advertising and Recruitment**

ACTION: For discussion

BACKGROUND:

The Working Group for the Evaluation of Advertising and Recruitment was constituted by the College of Electors on February 23, 2011, with a membership of Ms. Sadia Butt, Ms. Sue Graham-Nutter, Dr. Sema Kenan, Mr. Scott Mackendrick and Dr. Mahadeo Sukhai (Convenor). The Working Group met twice, on March 16 and April 18, and undertook an informal review and discussion of the College of Elector's current strategies on advertisement and recruitment in the context of its overall role to elect Alumni Governors to Governing Council. Arising from its deliberations, the Working Group developed and implemented an online survey, responded to by 16 of 42 members of the College (38.1% response rate), which then further informed the Working Group's discussion and development of recommendations.

HIGHLIGHTS:

The results from the Advertising and Recruitment survey were felt to reflect the discussions held by the Working Group. Key findings from the survey included:

- Members of the College were aware of the distinction between advertising for the Alumni Governor positions and recruiting for those positions;
- Feedback suggested that there did not appear to be a reluctance on the part of members of the College to undertake advertising and alumni governor recruitment activities;
- College of Electors members reported a range of advertising techniques in play across their Alumni Associations; however, the advertising techniques used were, for the most part, not considered to be effective;
- Articles about and interviews with current and former Alumni Governors were felt to be the most effective form of advertisement/public awareness;
- College of Electors members reported the existence of several ad hoc personal recruitment strategies; while such strategies were considered to be effective, they did not appear to be an avenue that was consistently explored;
- College of Electors members also reported undertaking recruitment efforts on their own, independent of their Alumni Associations; and,
- There are Alumni Associations who do not consistently engage in advertising or recruitment strategies in concert with the College of Electors' mission.

The members of the Working Group agreed that several key principles ought to be brought forward to the College for further discussion, and in the spirit of enabling that discussion, prepared several

HIGHLIGHTS (cont'd)

recommendations focusing on the separation between advertising and recruitment functions; the need for education of new and returning College of Electors members about the importance of the recruitment role; and, a “recruitment toolkit” and timeline. The members of the Working Group also developed a discussion framework around privacy and managing expectations in the context of an expanded recruitment role, and brainstormed ways in which a centralized list of potential candidates could be developed in short order by the College and its members. Several of these ideas, not codified as formal recommendations, are outlined below:

Succession Planning

The Working Group recognizes that Governing Council seeks Alumni Governors who can not only participate in meetings of Governing Council but also provide leadership to the standing committees, and encourages the College to endeavour to select candidates who meet not only the stated area of interest and reflect the diversity of the University, but who also have board/leadership experience and potential.

Recruitment

The Working Group recognizes that there are potentially untapped “pools” of alumni who might make good contributors to, and be familiar with, governance. In an effort to attract new potential candidates for Governing Council, Working Group members noted that Alumni Associations should be encouraged to reach out to past Student Council members, as an example of these pools. These individuals have already shown a strong leadership role in University affairs, and possess board experience.

Managing expectations of candidates

The Working Group recognizes well the challenge of managing expectations of potential candidates in the context of an expanded recruitment role for the College of Electors. The Working Group stressed the importance of managing the expectations of the alumni governor applicants well in advance of their application process. This practice is essential for ensuring a steady stream of applicants every year, while protecting the integrity of the candidates and encouraging them to try again in the future. The Working Group encourages the College of Electors to clearly enunciate the message that candidates who are not selected at this time may be qualified for other positions elsewhere and in the future. Moreover, not being appointed as an alumni governor is never a reflection on them personally, but simply an issue of skills set requirements for that particular year (more detail is contained within Appendix 1).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The following recommendations are presented for discussion; it should be noted that approval and implementation of these recommendations needs to be managed in the context of the work of the Task Force on Governance Implementation Committee. While the members of the Working Group have envisioned several options for implementation of the recommendations below, we recognize that the deliberations of the Implementation Committee will impact the final form of these recommendations. We therefore encourage the Executive, and the College as a whole, to take these recommendations in the spirit of potential “process improvements” designed to enhance the recruitment function of the College in years to come.

RECOMMENDATIONS (cont'd)

We therefore recommend:

1. The College of Electors, working through the Chair and the Secretariat, should continue to identify suitable advertising and public awareness opportunities in order to educate the alumni constituency about the importance of Governing Council and the role of the Alumni Governors. These opportunities, where possible, should allow for the communication of personal stories and experiences of current and past Alumni Governors, and should be used to inform, but not supplant, a coordinated recruitment strategy (see recommendation 2).
2. The College of Electors should develop and implement a **coordinated** and **long-term** recruitment strategy for candidates to serve as Alumni Members of Governing Council. This strategy should include elements of recruitment for the immediate needs of Governing Council, as well as recruitment with a view toward longer-term succession planning for Alumni Governors.

As part of the implementation process for this overall recommendation, the Working Group on Advertising and Recruitment further recommends the following:

3. The creation of a centralized confidential list of potential candidates for Alumni Governor, subject to annual review. We envision that this list would be kept by the Secretariat to the College, that approaches to individuals on the list by members of the College be dependent upon professional or community association, and be coordinated by the Executive Committee of the College.
4. The creation of a “recruitment package” (for an example of the package’s contents, please see Appendix 2), to be distributed to all members of the College, which would be used to provide a framework for recruitment approaches.
5. That mentoring include as one of its components the importance of the COE’s recruitment role. What we propose is that mentors be provided with an outline of issues which they are to cover with mentees, which is to expressly include the importance of the recruitment role. Specifically, the mentor should cover with his or her mentee the materials in the recruitment package being proposed, and this should be done before the first COE meeting in the fall.
6. That the College review its calendar of business in the framework of these recommendations, as well as the implementation of the Task Force on Governance recommendations, in order to ensure that the College’s renewed focus on recruitment aligns effectively with the election timetable of Governing Council (a proposed annual timeline for the College’s activities is outlined in Appendix 2).

Appendix 1: Managing Expectations

It is recommended that the expectations of the alumni governor applicants are managed well in advance of their application process. This practice is essential for ensuring a steady stream of applicants every year, while protecting the integrity of the candidates and encouraging them to try again in the future. The College of Electors (COE) must enunciate the message that candidates who are not selected at this time may be qualified for other positions elsewhere and in the future. Moreover, not being appointed as an alumni governor is never a reflection on them personally, but simply an issue of skills set requirements for that particular year.

The members of the COE and its secretariat may want to take into account that “expectation is a perception” and how it is managed is very important, therefore the following principles are recommended for consideration:

1. **Clarify Perception** – Check with the candidate about their expectations by having a frank conversation with them.
2. **Communicate Early and Often** – Repeat the message verbally and in writing.
3. **Full Disclosure** - By providing a realistic picture of possible outcomes and by indicating that failure to be selected is never a reflection on them personally, but a natural outcome of limited space available as well as the specific skills required for that year. The possibility of not being selected has to be mentioned up front and in addition to the skills and knowledge required for that year. In order to understand their role, the candidates have to be given detailed information about the Governing Council appointments. This ultimately requires a full and open disclosure regarding:
 - the nature and requirements of the position, and
 - pertinent information regarding required skills for that year.
4. **Provide Bonuses** - Mention the availability of other positions, equally prestigious, up front and also after the interview process; and, offer them a list of such positions. If the candidacy does not result in an appointment, provide feedback as to why and follow up with building a trusting relationship with them. It is essential to indicate that they may choose to have their names placed on a roster of candidates to be called upon as resources in assisting with other projects and also for future reference.
5. **Conduct Evaluations** – Ask candidates whether the message was conveyed to them clearly.

Appendix 2: Draft Recruitment Package (BRIEF OUTLINE OF CONTENTS)

1. Pre-Amble

This package is designed to facilitate identifying and recruiting potential Alumni for Governing Council positions by providing timelines/milestones, talking points and templates for letter writing, advertising in newsletters etc. The expectation is that it will provide briefing for new College of Elector members, as well as, provide existing members with updated information regarding recruitment needs and timelines, encouraging an early start to recruitment efforts. We hope to have feedback for this document to ensure it contains best practices and useful information to improve recruitment.

2. Timeline

The purpose of the timeline will be to guide the College of Electors to keep abreast of contacting potential Alumni members through their activities, newsletters, meeting updates, Alumni directories and feedback from development officers.

3. Talking Points

- a. Synopsis of Governing Council Role.
- b. Successful and encouraging language for recruitment, i.e. giving back, sharing expertise and time, making a difference to the University community, etc.
- c. Information useful for potential candidates regarding Governing Council meeting dates, hours required, etc...Q&A section on website highlighted.

4. Characteristics Required From Potential Candidates

This information will be shared with the College of Electors as early as possible in order to allow members to target potential candidates who possess the needed qualifications for serving the Governing Council. It would be contingent on the Chair of the Governing Council to inform the College of the future skills gaps required by potential candidates for the coming year/s as early as possible.

5. Template Letters

- a. Calling for Alumni
- b. Letter to Development Officer
- c. Letter Inviting potential candidate
- d. Follow-up Letter (Successful and unsuccessful candidates)
- e. Elevator speech for potential candidates at functions

6. Public Awareness Strategies

These would be devised from the College's collective experiences and ongoing strategies for improving public awareness with regards to the availability and roles played in Governing Council positions.

7. Testimonials

Input and shared experiences relevant to recruitment can go here.

Table 1: Example of Schedule for the 2011-2012 election cycle (To be refined and made more detailed through discussion)

Date	Task	Comments/Suggestions
July –August 2011	Compile List of Potential “Known” Candidates	At alumni events and via networking
September	Contact Development Officer for potential Alumni	
October 2011	Research	
November – December 2011	Public Awareness: Publish Call in Newsletters	Publish it in as many as possible locations
December 15, 2011	Call Officially Declared	
December 2011	Public Awareness: Redistribute to Alumni via list-serve, facebook, newsletters, etc.	Personalize by highlighting certain needs of the Council.