



University of Toronto

OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT AND PROVOST

TO: Planning and Budget Committee

SPONSOR: Vivek Goel, Vice-President and Provost

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DATE: October 5, 2006

AGENDA ITEM: 9

ITEM IDENTIFICATION: Student Experience Fund – 2006-07 Initiatives

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

The Planning and Budget Committee is, according to section 3 of its terms of reference, responsible for monitoring the use of University resources, including funds. The Budget Report for 2006-07 included amongst its allocations "\$3.3M in 2006-07 in support of enhancing the student experience." This amount was not established as one of the Operating Budget Special Funds that require approval of the allocations by the Governing Council on the recommendation of the Planning and Budget Committee and the Academic Board. Rather, each sector conducted, in engagement with the Provost's Office, a priority setting exercise. Therefore, the allocations are presented for information.

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

May 1, 2006 - Governing Council approved the *Budget Report 2006-07*, consistent with the *Long Range Budget Framework*, that allocated funding to support new initiatives that would enhance the undergraduate student experience over three years. The Student Experience Fund allocation was identified as part of the Expenditures in the 2006-07 Budget.

HIGHLIGHTS:

The Student Experience Fund (SEF) has been created to support projects that enhance undergraduate student experience. Enhancing the student experience has been identified institutionally as our top priority in *Stepping UP* and reaffirmed by the university community. Information from multiple internal and external surveys and reports, focus groups and direct feedback from students, staff, and faculty highlight the importance of investments in this area.

The fund supports a broad range of initiatives, with the key objective being that successful projects have an immediate and positive impact on the student experience for as many students as possible. The methodology for determining allocations from the Fund was developed in consultation with Principals and Deans. It is intended that this fund support initiatives for students in first-entry programs – where our challenges are the greatest – and projects that are not normally funded by other sources. The following principles were identified as criteria for the initiatives:

- 1) High potential for immediate impact on student experience (i.e., within an academic year)
- 2) Link with either key learning objectives for our academic programs and/or co-curricular opportunities that enhance student experience
- 3) Ability to reach and benefit as large a number of students as possible.
- 4) Ability to leverage funds from other sources (where possible), and the sustainability of the initiative.

HIGHLIGHTS (cont'd)

The process for allocation of funds is strategic and, for planning purposes, funding envelopes were distributed across key sectors for University-wide initiatives (including library, computer network services, student services, athletics, etc.), the University of Toronto at Mississauga, the University of Toronto at Scarborough, the Faculty of Arts and Science and St. George Colleges and first entry programs in the Faculties of Applied Science and Engineering, Music and Physical Education and Health.

Each sector conducted a priority-setting exercise that included engagement with the Office of the Vice-President and Provost. The SEF was allocated as part of the Budget Report 2006-07. The initiatives for 2006-07 are presented for information.

Funded initiatives for 2006-07 are listed in Appendix 1. Several broad themes have emerged and the list is organized accordingly: Study space enhancements, Student services and co-curricular support, Academic program- and research, Student community engagement / outreach and research.

FINANCIAL AND/OR PLANNING IMPLICATIONS:

The funding and initiatives are consistent with the approved budget for 2006-07 of both the *Long Range Budget Framework* and the *Budget Report 2006-07*. The total approved allocation is \$20 million over the three years, 2006-2009 (OTO allocations of \$3.3M in 2006-07, \$6.6M in 2007-08 and \$9.9M in 2008-09).

RECOMMENDATION:

For Information