

## Memorandum

**To:** Members of the Governing Council  
**From:** Carolyn Tuohy  
**Re:** Performance Indicators for Governance, Annual Report 2003  
**Date:** September 10, 2003

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I am pleased to attach for your information the sixth annual report on Performance Indicators for Governance. As an overview of this quite comprehensive document, I would highlight the following points:

### INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS:

Consistent with the University's mission to rank with the best public research and teaching universities in the world, we are continuing to develop indicators which allow us to our performance with peer institutions internationally. This requires that we continue to seek out and develop sources of credible and comparable data. This year we have added several internationally bench-marked indicators which will be highlighted below. Currently, available data allow us to compare ourselves with other major public research universities in North America on the following measures:

- **Retention rates** in first-entry undergraduate programs:
  - The University of Toronto's six-year graduation and first-year retention rates compare favorably to those of other public institutions, and exceed even the average for those in the highly selective category, according to data from the Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange (CSRDE). However, we know that several other public research universities reported six-year graduation rates equal to or better than the University of Toronto. Graduation rates for the 1995 entering cohort showed a decline from the previous two cohorts, and this will require monitoring to determine whether this marks a trend or constitutes an anomaly.
- **Student satisfaction:**
  - This year we are very pleased to be able to compare the opinions and reported experience of our **graduate students** with those in peer groups of public and private research universities in the United States, through our participation in a survey sponsored by the Higher Education Data Sharing (HEDS) Consortium. On balance, the great majority of respondents at UofT and in the peer groups felt that their experiences in their graduate programs were positive, with over 90% of students rating the overall academic quality of the program and the intellectual quality of faculty and fellow graduate students as "Excellent", "Very good", or "Good."

- An interesting pattern emerges when overall quality assessments are compared to reported experiences of particular aspects or components of the program. UofT students are less likely to assign an “excellent” rating, or to “agree strongly” that certain positive qualities exist, than are students in the US public university group, who are in turn less likely to assign that rating than are students in US private universities. However, with regard to reported experience of specific dimensions of their programs, such as feedback from faculty advisors, and engagement in various activities related to independent research, UofT students are more likely to report engagement and/or satisfaction than are their US counterparts.
  - It therefore appears that overall satisfaction with graduate programs goes beyond experience of and satisfaction with particular components such as those related to faculty advising and research experience. While some of this difference may be related to amenities associated with greater resources per student (which also increase dramatically as one moves from UofT to US public universities and then to US private universities), the overall climate of graduate student life deserves on-going attention, as the Provost’s *Green Papers* have emphasized.
  - Next year, the University will participate in the National Survey of Student Engagement to gather data on the **undergraduate student** experience, together with over 400 colleges and universities from the U.S. will participate in the survey, as well as eight of the G10 universities in Canada.
- **Library resources:**
    - The University of Toronto Library ranked fourth among research libraries in North America on the composite index of the Association of Research Libraries in 2001-02, and second among public research universities.
  - **Research and technology transfer:**
    - Although unfortunately we do not have comparable international data for levels of funding in the form of research grants, which comprise the core of the research enterprise at the University, we do have some comparative data on funding from industrial sources, new licences, and spin-off companies, through the Association of University Technology Managers (AUTM). These data show the University of Toronto to be in the upper range among North American peers, and particularly active in the formation of spin-off companies. In terms of gross revenues from commercialization (which show great year-over-year volatility), however, UofT compares less favourably to US and Canadian peers.
  - **Scholarly Awards:**
    - This year for the first time we report the University’s representation among recipients of a number of prestigious international and national awards in discrete categories. What is particularly striking is the extent to which UofT faculty are recognized by prestigious international agencies, acknowledging and securing the University’s presence in the international academic community.

- **Resources:**

- As in past years, it continues to be apparent that the resources available to the University of Toronto lag well behind those of North American peer institutions. The **FTE student: faculty ratio** at the University of Toronto continued to be higher than at any of our Association of American University (AAU) peers in 2000-01, and increased while the mean for our peers decreased.
- After a period of substantial increase from 1997 to 2000, our **endowment per FTE student** declined with the increase in enrolment and the decline in the equity markets from 2001 to 2002. It remained well below that of a substantial number of peer institutions – the University of Toronto ranked 20<sup>th</sup> on this measure among North American public universities reporting to the National Association of College and University Business Officers in 2002.
- This year we have also added measures of the University’s **financial health**, using the methodology employed by Moody’s Investors Service, to compare ourselves to the North American mean for public colleges and universities. Having taken on considerable up-front debt in a period of expansion, before the revenues from expansion are fully realized, the University has seen a decline in its debt:resource ratios. These liquidity ratios are coming into line with the means for public universities, although we still remain above the means.

- A high priority for future reports is to continue to increase the number of dimensions on which we can make international comparisons.

#### **NATIONAL COMPARISONS:**

Through the G10 Data Exchange, we have data allowing for comparisons with the ten largest research-intensive universities in Canada on the following dimensions, as well as a number listed above:

- **Research:**

- The research performance of the University of Toronto continued on a strong upward trajectory. The University’s share of **total federal granting council funding**, the largest in Canada, increased in each year from 1999-2000 to 2001-02.
- With respect to “**research yield**” (the ratio of University’s share of research funding to its share of national eligible faculty), the University of Toronto ranks first in Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) funding, and second, behind Queen’s, for Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) funding. Next year, we anticipate that the G10 Data Exchange will have resolved data problems as necessary to calculate a research yield measure for funding from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) as well.
- The University of Toronto with its affiliated teaching hospitals ranks first in terms of funded awards by **government research infrastructure programs** at both federal and provincial levels as well as the **Canada Research Chair** program. The University's level of success in the Ontario research programs even outstrips its proportional share of the federal granting council funding within Ontario.

- **Time to completion of doctoral programs:** Data from the G10 universities show that, for the 1993 entering cohort of PhD students, UofT continued to rank close to the mean in terms of graduation rates and time-to-degree. Overall, however, we see that only about 65 percent of the 1993 doctoral cohort had graduated by 2002, and that the typical graduate took 15 terms - equivalent to 5 full years - to complete. Although the results vary considerably by disciplinary grouping, there is room for improvement in each area. Since these data refer to the 1993 entering cohort, admitted well before recent improvements to financial support programs and supervisory practices, we would expect to see considerable improvement for later cohorts; and we will be monitoring this area

### TRENDS OVER TIME:

For a number of measures, we do not have comparative data for other institutions, but it is nonetheless important that we report on and track our own performance over time:

- Trends in **student demand** for our programs, as measured by dramatically increasing numbers of applications, and steady or improving entering averages, continue to be strong. Yield rates in second-entry programs have held steady or improved even in those programs that have experienced sharp increases in tuition.
- The number and proportion of **international students** continued to increase after a steady decline in the first half of the 1990s.
- Median **class sizes** in arts and science at St George and Scarborough were relatively stable between 1998-99 and 2001-02 despite enrolment increases, reflecting the recent large-scale recruitment of new faculty following a protracted period of fiscal restraint. At UTM, however, median class sizes in first year increased in 2001-02, reflecting the increased size of a number of sections in multiple-section courses as a result of enrolment increases. It should be noted that these changes do not reflect the impact of enrolment increases attributable to the Ontario “double cohort” of graduating high school students, which we can anticipate seeing in the data for 2002/03 in next year’s report.
- **Employment equity:**
  - The proportion of women tenure/tenure-stream faculty hired in the three-year period from 1999-2000 to 2001-02 met or exceeded the estimated proportion in the available pool in two of five disciplinary groupings, and overall the proportion of women appointed was reflective of the pool. As in previous three-year cycles, we continue to recruit at least proportionate to the pool in the discipline grouping in which women are least numerous, and in which the greatest efforts therefore have to be made to identify and recruit outstanding women candidates, and in the grouping in which women are most numerous. Experience in other disciplinary groupings has been less consistent. As the University moves into a period of very substantial numbers of new faculty appointments, every effort must be made to ensure that we are fully tapping the pool of available talent in all disciplinary areas.
  - The proportion of members of visible minorities among tenure/tenure-stream appointments in the same three-year cycle (1999-2000 to 2001-02) was 17 percent according to incomplete data based on self-reporting and 25 percent according to more comprehensive reporting by department chairs.

- **Financial accessibility:**
  - According to student surveys, the proportion of students in first-entry programs reporting parental income less than \$50,000 remained steady from 2000 to 2002, and shows a significant increase between 1999 and 2002. In second-entry professional programs which experienced large tuition increases, the proportion of students reporting parental income below \$50,000 has been somewhat volatile between 1999 and 2002; but the small numbers of responding students, exacerbated by a very low response rate in 2001, mean that there are large margins of error around the results. Survey improvements resulted in a much improved response rate for 2002; and we can have more confidence in those results. We still cannot draw conclusions about the identification of a trend, however, since all differences observed between 1999 and 2002 are within the margin of error for the surveys.
  - More than one-half of students in the cohorts graduating from first-entry programs from 1997-2002 graduated with no **student loan debt**, and this proportion increased over the period. The proportion graduating with debts of more than \$15,000 decreased over this period as well.
  - The **student loan default rate** of graduates of the University of Toronto (at 6.2%) was well below the mean for Ontario universities (7.5%).
- The **employment rate** of 1999 graduates of undergraduate programs at the University of Toronto was over 96 percent two years later, according to the 2002 annual survey conducted under the auspices of the Council of Ontario Universities.