



# University of Toronto

OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT AND PROVOST

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TO: Governing Council

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AGENDA ITEM: 6

## **ITEM IDENTIFICATION:**

*Performance Indicators for Governance: Measuring UP (2007)*

## **JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:**

The Terms of Reference for the Executive Committee state that the Committee reviews and reports to the Governing Council on the discharge of the Council's accountability requirements, including but not limited to the annual Performance Indicators report.

The Governing Council receives the annual Performance Indicators Report for information.

In 1994, the Governing Council approved in principle a recommendation of the Broadhurst Task Force on Ontario University Accountability that standard institutional performance measures should be approved by governing boards and reported on in a consistent manner.

## **PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:**

In 1997, the Governing Council formally approved a list of institutional performance indicators relating to central dimensions of the University's mission and which, to the extent possible, allow for a comparison of performance against that of other universities. Annual reports are required, and this is the eleventh annual report.

## **HIGHLIGHTS:**

The University of Toronto has been a leader in the post-secondary sector in Ontario in providing a performance indicator report as part of our accountability to governance. An annual Performance Indicators Report has been presented to Governing Council since 1998. The indicators in these reports have changed over the years as we have expanded the scope of areas that we have sought to measure, have enhanced our data collection and created partnerships with other institutions and agencies that allow for external benchmarking. In 2007, our work in ongoing performance measurement informed the development of our Multi-Year Accountability agreement with the Government of

Ontario and the Common University Data initiative in Ontario, which is now being adopted nationally.

The report was significantly reorganized (in 2005) in a further effort to build upon the strength of previous reports by aligning performance measures with the priority objectives and enabling actions in *Stepping UP*. The reorganization of this annual report provides a comprehensive analysis of our progress towards achieving the goals we have set for ourselves in *Stepping UP*.

Part A of the *Performance Indicators Report 2007* highlights several indicators from the *Report* that enable us to measure our progress towards our vision to be a leader among the world's best public universities. These institutional measures are ones that reflect the quality of our students and faculty, as well as our international standing. Parts B and C of the *Report* present indicators grouped around the *Stepping UP* priorities and enabling actions.

The 2007 *Report* reflects efforts to improve upon our measures in a number of areas. First, we have continued our efforts to find metrics that measure the quality of our performance rather than simply measure our activity. In some cases, this has involved exploring new data sources, such as student and teaching awards. In other cases, this has resulted in the inclusion of a broader array of responses from the University of Toronto Faculty and Staff Experience Survey (Speaking UP) as well as the inclusion of new survey data from the library quality survey, LibQUAL.

Second, as a result of the recommendations made by the University's Humanities on Performance Indicators Working Group (HOPI), the Vice-President and Provost's office has been involved in a pilot project with some departments to test the feasibility of a selection of performance measures. The measures presented in this report include: research output, faculty honours and doctoral student placement. At this stage of the pilot we are able to present a selection of results for two departments, English and Philosophy. We will continue to work closely with the participating departments on data issues and to expand the project in future years. Also, over the next year we plan to work both with some of our Canadian peers on the collection of data to enhance synchronic comparisons and with the Social Science and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) to better interpret some of our results.

It should be noted that there are a few measures involving survey data (NSSE, Faculty and Staff Experience Survey, and COU Space Standards) that have not been updated in this year's report as the underlying surveys are not conducted on an annual basis. Where we are working with older data, we have presented more in-depth analyses using a broader range of question responses than previously presented.

While we believe our measures have been improved upon this year, there continue to be areas where measures could be expanded and refined. Data collection remains an issue in some areas while data quality continues to be an issue in others. We continue to identify specific areas in this report where we hope to improve our measures in the coming years and we will focus on developing more meaningful measures for every priority objective and enabling action in our academic plan. In addition, we will continue to work to

improve the quality of our data and expand the appropriate comparative data sources through our existing exchange arrangements, such as the Association of American

Universities Data Exchange (AAUDE), G13 Data Exchange and the Common University Data Ontario (CUDO). As the *Towards 2030* exercise refines the University's vision and mission and we commence a new planning cycle, the format of next year's Performance Indicators report will be revised accordingly.

One area in which work remains to be done is that of the presentation of student-faculty ratios. These ratios represent a critical measure of the resources available to our students and closely relate to a variety of aspects of a quality student experience. Comparisons of student faculty ratios across institutions are problematic given the different definitions that can be applied for both the numerator and denominator. In order to facilitate discussion on this topic we have presented a range of measures that are obtained for the University, using different definitions for faculty counts.

This year, we are also pleased to provide a summary report, prepared with the assistance of the Division of Strategic Communications. This report highlights key elements of the *2007 Report*. I also hope that these indicators, along with the many other accountability reports presented by the Administration to governance, will continue to stimulate discussion about the critical issues facing the University of Toronto.

Finally, we believe some comment is warranted with respect to how these results relate to our standing on two international rankings, *Academic Rankings of World Universities – 2007* by the Institute of Higher Education Shanghai Jiao Tong University and the *World University Rankings* in the Times Higher Education Supplement. The Shanghai Academic Rankings put the University of Toronto 23<sup>rd</sup> (up from 24<sup>th</sup>) on the list of the top 500 universities in the world and the Times Higher Education *University Rankings* placed the University of Toronto 45<sup>th</sup> (down from 27<sup>th</sup>) on the list of the world's top 200 universities.

The Shanghai *Academic Rankings* uses several indicators of academic or research performance, including alumni and staff winning Nobel Prizes and Fields Medals, highly cited researchers, articles published in *Nature* and *Science*, articles indexed in major citation indices, and the per capita academic performance of an institution. On this ranking our standing has been very stable, fluctuating between 24<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> for the past five years, and consistently places the University in the top position for any Canadian university. The Times Higher Education *University Rankings* uses peer review data [40 per cent of score], employer review data [10 per cent of score], international faculty and international student scores [10 percent of score], citations of academic papers by each faculty member [20 per cent of score] and faculty-student ratio [20 per cent of score]. In contrast to the Shanghai *Academic Rankings* results, our standing has fluctuated dramatically from 37<sup>th</sup> in 2004 to 29<sup>th</sup> in 2005, 27<sup>th</sup> in 2006 and most recently 45<sup>th</sup>. Changes in data collection and methods of analysis explain some of the movement from year to year. However, variation among institutions in the interpretation of data definitions, specifically the calculation of student-faculty ratio, has had a major impact on the results. We are encouraged that our peer-review scores for academic reputation remain consistently strong; indeed, we were the only Canadian university to be rated along with eight other world-leading institutions in the very top group of universities. As well, our standing with respect to the five discipline rankings (based on the peer review

data) also remains consistently strong. In fact, in all areas our position improved from previous year [Natural Sciences 16<sup>th</sup> (from 20<sup>th</sup>); Life Science and Biomedicine 14<sup>th</sup> (from 18<sup>th</sup>); Technology 11<sup>th</sup> (from 27<sup>th</sup>); Social Sciences 13<sup>th</sup> (from 17<sup>th</sup>); Arts &

Humanities 8<sup>th</sup> (from 11<sup>th</sup>)]. Within these discipline based rankings we are consistently 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> among Canadian universities and have the highest-standing overall. We will therefore review the other data components in the THES over the coming months to ensure that our data definitions are comparable to those of peer institutions.

**FINANCIAL AND/OR PLANNING IMPLICATIONS: N/A**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

For information.