

Administrative Response to the *Report of the University Ombudsperson for the Period 1 July, 2009, to 30 June, 2010*

September 2010

Overview

The Terms of Reference for the Office of the University Ombudsperson stipulate that the Ombudsperson shall “make a written annual report to the Governing Council, and through it to the University community”. In addition, the Governing Council requests an administrative response to each annual report.

The *Report of the University Ombudsperson for the Period 1 July, 2009 to 30 June, 2010* is Professor Foley’s third annual report as University Ombudsperson. The Report is characterized, once again, by Professor Foley’s deep understanding of the University of Toronto and her expertise, fairness, and sensitivity in handling complex and often difficult situations.

The Administration extends its sincere thanks to Professor Foley for her dedication to the University of Toronto and for her outstanding service in the role of University Ombudsperson.

Response

The *Report of the University Ombudsperson for the Period 1 July, 2009 to 30 June, 2010* is carefully considered, objective, and constructive. Though there are no formal recommendations in the *Report*, this *Response* makes three brief points.

First, as Professor Foley notes, a central component of the Office of the University Ombudsperson’s mandate is to identify and address systemic issues. The Administration continues to value and welcome this perspective.

The *Report* calls attention to three systemic matters: the relationship between the University Grading Practices Policy and the Graduate Grading and Evaluation Practices Policy; the practice of replacing a missed mid-term test by increasing the weight of a final exam; and procedures for providing accommodation for disabilities outside the typical framework within which the accessibility offices have operated. In each case, as the *Report* notes in detail, the administration is already in the process of addressing the concerns raised in the Report. On these matters, it should be stressed that the administration very much appreciates the advice and cooperation provided by Professor Foley and her team.

Second, the *Report* also documents progress being made on a number of matters from earlier annual reports. In particular, the *Report* notes that a number of significant renovation projects are underway to improve the accessibility of our campuses’ buildings. The administration remains committed to a fully accessible environment on our campuses and progress towards this goal is steady. The report also notes that a number of policies and guidelines have been or are being developed in line with previous recommendations.

Finally, the administration welcomes the details of the Office’s outreach efforts and reaffirms the importance of Ombudsperson’s Office as a resource in our community. Raising awareness about the Ombudsperson’s role and function is valuable in fulfilling the Office’s mandate.