



**FOR ENDORSEMENT
AND FORWARDING**

PUBLIC

CLOSED SESSION

TO: Executive Committee

SPONSOR: Professor Meric Gertler, President

CONTACT INFO: president@utoronto.ca

PRESENTER: See above

CONTACT INFO:

DATE: October 15, 2014 for October 22, 2014

AGENDA ITEM: 3 (c.)

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

Establishment of the position of Vice-President, Communications

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

Under the *Policy on Appointments and Remuneration*, the Governing Council reserves to itself the creation and appointment of certain University Officials on the recommendation of the President.

GOVERNANCE PATH:

1. Executive Committee (October 22, 2014)
2. Governing Council (October 30, 2014)

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

n/a

HIGHLIGHTS:

Earlier this year, it was announced that the University had begun the process of developing an evidence-based, highly focused communications strategy in an effort to tell the University's story much more effectively. Complementary to this process, there was a need to confirm that the institution's existing communications structures and processes were effectively leveraged and were appropriate to ensure success.

To this end, a review of institutional communications at the University of Toronto was initiated, including the striking of an Advisory Committee to evaluate proposals from several

consultancies with expertise in the field. The review was not only focused on helping the University tell its story better, but was also to ensure that the University had a cohesive communications structure in place so that it could continue to project its voice as strongly as possible in today's challenging environment. The goal of the review was to clarify how the University could realize these objectives by delivering recommendations for implementation, focusing specifically on the organizational structures (including technology, resources, and competencies) and practices of the University's institutional communications units.

At the conclusion of the evaluation process, the Advisory Committee decided unanimously to engage the consulting services of *Level5 Strategy Group* in partnership with *National Public Relations*. The review process began in mid-April of this year and its extensive consultations with over 400 key University stakeholders included interviews, workshops and surveys. Participants comprised faculty, staff, students, alumni, senior University leadership and Governors.

The consultants delivered their final report in June, synthesizing the input and advice they received from their consultations and providing recommendations to address strategic, structural and implementation issues. Chief among the recommendations was the appointment of a Vice-President, Communications. In brief, the mandate of the Vice-President would be to transform the University's communications function, including both centralized and decentralized elements, into a strategic asset that supports the University's goals related to funding, reputation, and ranking. The Vice-President will achieve this by instilling a culture of client service, by leading an institution-wide integrated communication planning process, by leading the centralized communications team, and by providing visibility to progress on both communications-specific and institution-wide objectives to relevant internal stakeholders.

The Vice-President, Communications will be directly responsible for the centralized communications team. Beyond this centralized team, the Vice-President will provide communications leadership across the University. In particular, he/she will work with other members of the University's senior leadership in management of the University's reputation.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

n/a

RECOMMENDATION:

Be It Resolved

THAT the following recommendation be endorsed and forwarded to the Governing Council:

THAT the position of the Vice-President, Communications be established effective immediately.