University of Toronto

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

TO: Members of the University Affairs Board

SPONSOR: Cristina Oke, Chief Returning Officer
CONTACT INFO: 416-978-8427, c.oke@utoronto.ca

DATE: October 8, 2003 for October 28, 2003

AGENDA ITEM: **#3**

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:
Report of the Governing Council Election Process 2003

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

The University Affairs Board is responsible for policy and procedures with respect to Governing Council elections.

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

A draft version of this report was reviewed by the Elections Committee at its meeting of September 17, 2003. The Report of the Governing Council Election Process 2002 was received for information by the University Affairs Board in November 2002.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- The number of seats acclaimed declined from 9 in 2002 to 4 in 2003.
- The number of seats elected increased from 4 in 2002 to 11 in 2003.
- For the first time since 1985, an election was held in each student constituency.

FINANCIAL AND/OR PLANNING IMPLICATIONS:
N/a

RECOMMENDATION:

This item is for information only.

Room 106, Simcoe Hall, 27 King's College Circle, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1A1
Voice: (416) 978-8427; Fax: (416) 978-8182; E-mail: c.oke@utoronto.ca

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1.   Introduction

This report is the first step in the development of the *Election Guidelines* for 2004. The purpose of the report is to provide factual information about the previous election, and to indicate areas of possible revisions in the *Guidelines* for the next election year.

2.   Statistical Information about the 2003 Governing Council Election

In 2003, elections were required for 15 seats on the Governing Council, with terms beginning July 1, 2003. Included in this number were two by-elections in teaching staff constituencies, one as a result of retirement and one as a result of the member serving the maximum 9-year term.

There were elections for six teaching staff, 1 administrative staff, and eight students. Voting was necessary in two teaching staff constituencies, the administrative staff constituency, and, for the first time since 1986, in all five student constituencies.

Table 1 summarizes the details of the 2003 Governing Council Election.

Table 1

Constituency	# of positions available	# of seats acclaimed	# of seats elected	# in Constituency	# of valid votes cast	Number of voters	% voting
Teaching Staff:	6	4					
Medicine			1	4,372	548	548	13%
Other Health Faculties			1	171	64	64	37%
Administrative Staff	1		1	5,282	1,131	1,131	21%
Full-time Undergraduate Students: Arts and Science; Professional	2 2		2 2	25,489 10,999	4,900 1,891	2,954 1,132	12% 11%
Part-Time Undergraduate Students	2		2	11,461	995	640	6%
Graduate Students: Constituency I Constituency II	1 1		1 1	6,363 5,586	225 182	225 182	4% 3%
TOTAL	**15**	**4**	**11**				

3.   2003 Governing Council Election Process

I.   Request for Community Input to *Election Guidelines 2003*

In the fall of 2002, a request for comments on the election process and the *Election Guidelines* was distributed to members of the University community, and a community meeting was arranged for October 3, 2002. A total of seven submissions were received by the Committee. Eight members of the University community attended the community meeting. A number of the suggestions received were incorporated into the *Election Guidelines 2003*.

II.   Election Posters

For a second year, posters with the message '***Make a difference: Get involved with the Governing Council***' were widely distributed throughout the University community. These posters were distributed the week prior to the opening of nominations. A number of candidates commented that the posters had been a deciding factor in their decision to stand for election to the Governing Council.

III.   Nominations

Nominations opened on Tuesday January 28, 2003 and closed on Monday February 10, 2003. For the second year, nominations opened the day after the deadline to petition the instructor to be allowed to add a course in the Faculty of Arts and Science.

All nomination forms were available on the Governing Council web-site. The Call for Nominations was publicized in campus media, and nomination forms were sent to the representative campus-wide groups: the Students' Administrative Council (SAC), the Association of Part-time Undergraduate Students (APUS), the Graduate Students' Union (GSU), the United Steel Workers of America (USWA), and the University of Toronto Faculty Association (UTFA).

As noted above, the Call for Nominations resulted in acclamations in four of the six available teaching staff seats.   In one teaching staff constituency, no nominations were received, and nominations were re-opened. Voting was necessary in two teaching staff constituencies, the administrative staff constituency, and all student constituencies.

IV.   Election

The Chief Returning Officer met with candidates in each constituency. The purpose of this meeting was to provide candidates with information about their constituency and about the voting process, and to explain the campaign rules. Each candidate was required to sign a declaration stating that they, and all their campaign workers, would abide by the election guidelines.

Voting for teaching staff and for administrative staff was conducted by mail ballot. Post-graduate medical students were sent mail ballots for the election in the Full-time Undergraduate Constituency II. Voting for all student constituencies was conducted by on the web. In response to a suggestion from a candidate in the previous election, the campaign period for web-based elections was reduced to two weeks from three weeks, and the timelines for mail ballot elections were adjusted accordingly.

3.   2002 Election Process (cont'd)

IV.   Election (cont'd)

The Guidelines for Campaigning in the *Election Guidelines 2003* state 'there are no restrictions on the period of campaigning for elections held by mail ballot in teaching staff and administrative staff constituencies".   However, the regulations regarding posters did not permit candidates in those constituencies to place any posters before Friday February 14, following the announcement of verified candidates.

For web-based voting, the campaign period began at 12:01 a.m. on Tuesday February 25, 2003 and ended at 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, March 9. Voting began at 6:30 a.m. on Monday March 10 and ended at 5 p.m. on Friday March 14. For the first time, there was an overlap between the Governing Council and Students' Administrative Council (SAC) web-based elections. There was a significant increase in voter participation in all undergraduate student constituencies for the Governing Council elections.

Results were announced to candidates at 5:30 p.m. on March 14.

V.   Demerit point system for campaign violations

For the second year, a demerit point system for campaign violations was used in the Governing Council Elections.

Eight allegations of campaign violations were received in the period February 27 through March 18. All of the allegations involved candidates in the Full-time Undergraduate Constituency I (Faculty of Arts and Science on the St. George campus, the University of Toronto at Mississauga (UTM), the University of Toronto at Scarborough (UTSC) and the Transitional Year Program). Two candidates and their workers were responsible for all of the campaign violation allegations. Both of the candidates were from University College and were endorsed by competing presidential candidates in the Students' Administrative Council (SAC) elections.

All alleged campaign violations were investigated by Paul Holmes, Judicial Affairs Officer, Office of the Governing Council. He recommended that charges be laid in two of the campaign violation allegations. The Elections Committee met as Election Overseers, considered the evidence presented, and ruled that, although a violation had occurred, no demerit points should be assigned. The Committee also recommended that feedback about the elections process and the *Election Guidelines* be solicited from all candidates, and that the section of the *Election Guidelines* dealing with demerit points be reviewed and amended, if necessary, for 2004, based on the issues raised.

VI.   Voter Participation

(a) Administrative Staff

Seven administrative staff members were nominated for the one available seat. There was one female candidate. The total number of eligible voters was 5,282. The number of valid votes cast was 1,131.

3.   2002 Election Process (cont'd)

VI.   Voter Participation (cont'd)

(b) Full-time Undergraduate Students

(ii)   Arts & Science

Seven students were nominated for the two seats in the Arts and Science constituency of full-time undergraduates: 2 from Trinity, 2 from University College, 1 from Victoria College, 1 from the Transitional Year Program, and 1 from the University of Toronto at Scarborough. There were no female candidates. The total number of eligible voters was 25,489. The total number of valid votes cast was 4,900 – an increase of 3,438 over the 1,462 valid votes cast in the 2002 election. Each voter could vote for two candidates.

(ii)   Professional Faculties:

Five candidates were nominated for the two seats in the Professional Faculties constituency – 1 from Pharmacy, 2 from Engineering and 2 from Law. There were no female candidates. The total number of eligible voters was 10,999. The total number of valid votes cast was 1,899. Each voter could vote for two candidates. In the by-election in this constituency held in November 2002, 743 valid votes were cast for the one seat available.

(c) Part-time Undergraduate Students

Five students were nominated for the two seats in the part-time undergraduate student constituency: 1 from St. Michael's, 1 from the Transitional Year Program, 1 from the University of Toronto at Mississauga and 2 from Woodsworth College. There was one female candidate. The number of eligible voters in this constituency was 11,461. The number of valid votes cast was 995. Each voter could vote for two candidates.

(d) Graduate Students

Two students were nominated for each of the two graduate student seats. In Constituency II, both candidates were female. There were no female candidates in Constituency I.

There were 6,363 eligible voters in Constituency I. The number of valid votes cast was 225. This was a decrease of 148 from the 2002 election.

There were 5,586 eligible voters in Constituency II. The number of valid votes cast was 182. This was a decrease of 40 from the 2002 election.

(e) Teaching Staff

(i)   Health Faculties other than Medicine

Two teaching staff members were nominated in this constituency – one from the Faculty of Nursing and one from the Leslie Dan Faculty of Pharmacy. There was one female candidate. The number of eligible voters in this constituency was 171. The number of valid votes cast was 64.

3. 2002 Election Process (cont'd)

VI. Voter Participation (cont'd)

(ii) Faculty of Medicine

No nominations were received in the initial Call for Nominations. Nominations were re-opened and three female candidates were nominated. The number of eligible voters in this constituency was 4,372. The number of valid votes cast was 548.

VII. Feedback from Candidates

All candidates in the 2003 elections were invited to submit their comments on the process for the elections, and their suggestions for ways in which the *Election Guidelines* could be improved, especially with respect to postering and campaigning guidelines. Chairs or Presidents of faculty, staff and student associations were also invited to submit their comments/suggestions.

A total of four replies were received – three from student candidates and one from an administrative staff candidate. Among the suggestions were:
- Increase the spending limit for the administrative staff constituency.
- Reduce the amount of expenses reimbursed to discourage candidates from using passive methods of campaigning, eg. postering.
- Prohibit Governing Council candidates from running on the same poster or within a poster scheme with candidates for other elections.
- Identify a central authority figure for the approval of posters.
- Eliminate conventional forms of campaigning, such as postering, speaking to classes, creating web-sites.
- Remove college affiliations from candidate information.
- Eliminate reimbursements as a result of the elimination of conventional forms of campaigning.
- Eliminate the offer of the distribution of electorate addresses and labels to candidates.
- Increase the role of the Governing Council Office in elections by:
  - Mailing an election notice and candidate information to all voters.
  - Sponsoring an all-candidates' panel/debate/question period and broadcast it on the Governing Council web-site.
  - Sponsoring a forum at which student leaders can interact with candidates for Governing Council
- Encourage female candidates to stand for election.

5. Draft recommendations for discussion by the Committee regarding the Governing Council Election Process for 2004

(a) Continue to raise the profile of the Governing Council within the University to encourage greater participation in the Governing Council election process.

(b) Identify strategies for encouraging female candidates in all constituencies to stand for election.

(c) Revise the definition of full-time and part-time student in the *Election Guidelines* to be consistent with the definition used within the academic division in which a candidate, nominator or voter is registered.

5. Draft recommendations for discussion by the Committee regarding the Governing Council Election Process for 2004 (cont'd)

(d) Revise the definitions and eligibility requirements for students at the University of Toronto at Scarborough (UTSC) to reflect the trimester system.

(e) Add a qualifier to the definition of the Faculty of Medicine teaching staff constituency to indicate that those elected to the Governing Council must be from different departments within the Faculty.

(f) Stipulate in the *Election Guidelines* that the Chief Returning Officer may not vote in his/her constituency.

(g) Increase the limit for reimbursable expenses for administrative staff candidates.

(h) Clarify allowable reimbursable expenses for candidates in Governing Council elections.

(i) Identify areas of conflict between regulations for the Students' Administrative Council (SAC) elections and those for Governing Council elections to eliminate ways in which candidates might derive an unfair advantage through joint campaigning.

(j) In order to avoid an unfair advantage to a candidate during the campaign period, consider restricting full-time undergraduate student candidates to one election – either SAC or Governing Council - but not both.