

Report of the 2010 Governing Council and Academic Board Election Process

1. Introduction

This report is the first step in the development of the *Election Guidelines* for 2011. The purpose of the report is to provide factual information about the 2010 Governing Council elections and to indicate areas for discussion and possible revision in the *Guidelines*.

2. Revision of the *Election Guidelines* for 2010

Revisions were made to the *Election Guidelines 2009* to create the *Election Guidelines 2010*¹. One significant change was a reduction in the number of required nominators to five for all constituencies. Historically, the requirements for nominators for Governing Council elections varied with constituency because of variations in constituency size. The 2009 requirements for the number of nominators were: 20 for administrative staff, 10 for teaching staff, 20 for full-time undergraduate students, 20 for graduate students, and 20 for part-time undergraduate students. The objective of reducing the number of required nominators was to encourage members of the University to submit nominations and stand for election.

Another substantive change was the reduction of the campaign period from five to three weeks. This change was implemented in response to suggestions received from past candidates and members of the University community who provided feedback on the elections process to the Elections Committee. Changes were also made to the *Guidelines* to address practices with respect to assisting individuals with disabilities who might wish accommodation arrangements to facilitate their participation in the elections process.

A new section outlining the procedures which apply specifically to the Academic Board elections, as opposed to those of the Governing Council elections was added for 2010. The new section adapted from that for teaching staff elections for the Governing Council, was designed to assist teaching staff and librarians who seek election to the Board.

A number of minor editorial changes were made in an effort to use more precise and consistent language and terms throughout the *Guidelines*. Where necessary, procedures were elaborated in order to provide greater direction to the reader and to reduce the likelihood of misunderstanding. As well, sections were reorganized to improve ease of reference, and some minor inconsistencies were eliminated.

¹ The *Election Guidelines 2010* is available from:
<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Elections/ABelect2010.pdf>

A complete list of changes to the *Election Guidelines* is available from:
<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=6500>

3. Promotion of Governing Council and Academic Board Elections

Elections were required in 2010 for 9 seats on the Governing Council (one administrative staff seat and eight student seats), with terms beginning in July 1, 2010. Many steps are taken each year to promote the elections, and these were continued for 2010.

The 2010 Call for Nominations was publicized as follows:

- In memoranda sent from the Deputy Returning Officer (DRO) on November 23, 2009 and January 8, 2010 to the University community. Recipients included the six representative University-wide groups – the University of Toronto Students' Union (UTSU), the Association of Part-time Undergraduate Students (APUS), the Graduate Students' Union (GSU), the Scarborough Campus Students' Union (SCSU), the United Steelworkers of America (USWA), and the University of Toronto Faculty Association (UTFA).
- In a memorandum sent to post-graduate medical trainees on December 1, 2009.
- In a memorandum dated December 9, 2009 targeting staff in Facilities and Services departments. As well, managers in those units were asked to post information regarding the nomination period and elections on departmental bulletin boards and in lunch rooms.
- In a memorandum sent on December 14, 2009 to student media and campus association leaders.
- In customized letters sent on December 15, 2009 to divisional leaders asking for assistance in promoting participation in the 2010 elections.
- By the Chairs of the Academic Board, Business Board, University Affairs Board, and Governing Council at meetings of the respective bodies in December.
- By contacting the offices of deans whose divisions had upcoming vacancies on the Academic Board for teaching staff seats.
- In ULife posters placed in Zoom frames in washrooms around campus in January.
- In a memorandum dated January 11, 2010 targeting administrative staff.
- In the January issue of the electronic newsletter to U of T staff, the *e-Bulletin*.
- In the January issue of the electronic newsletter to U of T alumni, *News@U of T*.
- In early January through an announcement on Blackboard accessed by teaching staff.
- In a public service announcement that was run on CIUT 89.5 FM campus radio station twice daily between January 8 and January 22, 2010.
- On the Governing Council Elections website (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/elections>) and homepage.
- In campus newspapers (*The Bulletin*, *The Varsity*, *The Newspaper*, *The Underground*, and *The Medium*) in January.
- In a lead story on the U of T homepage (www.utoronto.ca), this was run three times between January 11th and 19th.
- On the U of T events webpage (<http://www.events.utoronto.ca>), between March 2nd and March 10th.
- In a mass email sent at the beginning of January, 2010 to all students and post-graduate medical trainees eligible to participate in the elections.
- In a mass email sent at the beginning of January, 2010 to all administrative staff eligible to participate in the elections.
- On the U of T student portal between January 8 and 22, 2010

3. Promotion of Governing Council and Academic Board Elections (cont'd)

- In a follow-up email from the DRO to five students who had expressed interest in serving on the Council.

Most of the methods listed above were also used to publicize the voting period in March, 2010.

4. Nominations

The two week nomination period for seats on the Governing Council and the Academic Board opened on Friday January 8, 2010 at 12:00 noon and closed on Friday, January 22nd at 12:00 noon. Nomination forms each constituency were available electronically from the Governing Council website and in paper form from the Office of the Governing Council. The vast majority of candidates obtained the nomination forms from the internet, with only one or two individuals requesting a hard copy.

Upon the close of the nomination period, it was determined that Governing Council elections were required for eight student seats and one administrative staff seat. Four teaching staff governors were acclaimed, including incumbent Professor Sarita Verma (Constituency V – Faculty of Medicine). The other acclaimed teaching staff governors were Professor Robert Baker (Constituency IC – Faculty of Arts and Science), Professor Phil Byer (Constituency IV – Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering) and Professor Andrea Sass-Kortsak (Constituency V – Faculty of Medicine).

As in previous years, there has been a significant interest on the part of students in participating in University governance. Perhaps this is partly due to the increased efforts of the DRO to publicize the elections process. Of the thirty-six students who submitted nomination forms for the 2010 Governing Council elections, thirty-two were eligible to participate, a decrease of 6% over the number of eligible candidates in the 2009 elections (34). Of the four students who were disqualified, three were ineligible due to their registration status and one did not meet the citizenship requirement. Six current student governors sought re-election.

There were nine candidates for one administrative seat: P.C. Choo (the incumbent – Admissions & Awards), Paul Handley (UTM Library); Duncan Hill (UTM Office of the Registrar), Cathy Hughes (Physical Education and Health), Thomas MacKay (Innis College), Liam Mitchell (Applied Science & Engineering (Chemical)), Kelly Rankin (University Relations) and Ihor Tropak (Faculty and Services). One candidate withdrew his application. The total number of candidates reflects a 100% increase over the number of candidates nominated in the 2009 elections (4).

Seventeen teaching staff seats on the Academic Board were open for election, each for a three year term from July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2013. Upon the close of the nomination period, twelve of the seats were filled by acclamation, and nominations were re-opened by the CRO for the remaining five seats. All seventeen seats were subsequently acclaimed.

4. Nominations (cont'd)

Constituency	# of seats available	# of nominations received	# of times nominations were re-opened
Administrative Staff	1	9 (one withdrew)	0
Teaching Staff			
Constituency IC (Faculty of Arts and Science ²)	1	1	0
Constituency IV (Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering)	1	1	0
Constituency V (Faculty of Medicine ³)	2	2	0
Full-time Undergraduate Students			
Constituency I (Arts and Science, UTM, UTSC)	2	16 (three withdrew)	0
Constituency II (Professional Faculties)	2	10 (one withdrew; three were disqualified)	0
Part-time Undergraduate Students	2	4 (one was disqualified)	0
Graduate Students			
Constituency I	1	4	0
Constituency II	1	2	0
TOTAL	13	49	0

Table 1: Summary of Nominations for the Governing Council Elections 2010

² Departments of Astronomy and Astrophysics, Cell and Systems Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Geology, Mathematics, Physics and Statistics and Actuarial Science (excluding those who are members of Constituency II or III).

³ Members elected from the Faculty of Medicine may not be from the same Department within the Faculty.

5. Election Process 2010

Information Meeting for Candidates

The CRO held two information meetings for candidates on Thursday, February 11, 2010 – one for the student candidates and one for the administrative staff candidates for the Governing Council elections. The purpose of the meetings was to provide candidates with information regarding their respective constituencies, the voting process, and the campaign rules as outlined in the *Election Guidelines 2010*. It was made clear that each candidate's signature on the nomination form indicated his/her agreement to be bound by the rules of the *Guidelines*. Candidates were also asked to review their statements, which would be published in campus newspapers and would accompany all election ballots. Some candidates who were unable to attend the meeting met separately with the CRO to review the campaign rules.

As in the previous year, administrative staff candidates were provided with an electronic list of the names and e-mail addresses of their constituents so that they could easily contact them for campaign purposes. Some chose to send mass emails as part of their campaign strategy, while others did not. Candidates were also provided with campus addresses of constituents for whom a University email address was not available.

Student Voting

The three-week campaign period for students, which overlapped with the voting period, was held from Friday, February 19, 2010 to Friday, March 12, 2010. All students, except post-graduate medical trainees, voted online through the University's Repository of Student Information (ROSI) system. Post-graduate medical trainees voted by mail ballot, as they do not have access to ROSI. This was the third year that the student online voting period was two weeks, rather than one week (Monday, March 1st to Friday March 12th). The voting period for post-graduate medical trainees was three and a half weeks long (February 22nd to March 12th) to allow time for the ballots to be delivered.

The size of each student constituency and the number of valid votes cast over the past five years is shown in Table 2. The absolute number of valid votes cast within the full-time undergraduate Constituency I decreased significantly over 2009 (a decrease of 29% or 1,778 votes). However, it is not possible to determine the change in voter participation, as each student within that constituency could vote for two representatives. The number of candidates within the full-time undergraduate student Constituency II (7) increased in 2010. The number of votes cast in the constituency for part-time undergraduate students was nearly the same as in 2009. While the participation rate only slightly decreased for the graduate Constituency I (5.6% in 2009 to 6.5% in 2010) there was a more dramatic decrease in Constituency II from 15.4% in 2009 to 7% in 2010.

6. Election Process 2010 (cont'd)

Early in the voting period, an error was noticed on the paper ballot sent out to post-graduate medical trainees. The instructions had incorrectly indicated that only one candidate could be selected. An email was sent to the post-graduate medical trainees and a notice was posted on the elections website advising them that they could, in fact, vote for two candidates.

Staff Voting

Online voting for teaching staff and administrative staff Governing Council elections was introduced in 2009. Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) Education Commons staff agreed to continue to host the online elections and help the CRO and DRO to update the online ballot and database. No technical problems were encountered. Lists of eligible voters were obtained from the central and federated universities' human resources offices, together with electors' email addresses, date of birth, and personnel numbers. The date of birth (month and day only) and personnel number were used in a secure electronic environment for voter identification purposes. Emails outlining the online election process were sent to all staff eligible to vote, and ballots were mailed to the departmental address of those who had no email address listed in the Human Resources Information System (H.R.I.S.). Voting instructions were also posted on the elections website.

As in the previous year, anecdotal reports indicated that many staff found the online voting process simple to use and preferred that method over the use of a paper ballot. A small number of voters encountered difficulty voting online and contacted the CRO for assistance. In two instances, the date of birth or personnel number had been entered incorrectly. In another three instances, the voter had been "logged out" and he/she had not completed the voting process within a reasonable time. When informed, the CRO had the OISE staff reset the online ballots for those individuals. A slight increase in voter participation (16.1% versus 14.6% in 2009) suggests that perhaps there is growing awareness of the Governing Council election process among administrative staff.

6. Election Process 2010 (cont'd)

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Full-Time Undergraduate Students					
<u>Constituency I</u>					
Constituency Size	40,460	40,808	40,914	40,815	42,122
# of Valid Votes Cast (% Voters)	3,399 (7%)	5,083 (7.5%)	4,538	6,154	4,376
<u>Constituency II</u>					
Constituency Size	11,700	N/A	12,160	12,357	12,856
# of Valid Votes Cast (% Voters)	940 (6%)	Both seats acclaimed	1 st seat acclaimed 2 nd seat: 716 (5.9%)	1 st seat acclaimed 2 nd seat: 373 (3.0%)	2,111
Part-Time Undergraduate Students					
Constituency Size	N/A	N/A	6,399	5,256	5,306
# of Valid Votes Cast	Both seats acclaimed	Both seats acclaimed	Both seats acclaimed	393	391
Graduate Students					
<u>Constituency I</u>					
Constituency Size	N/A	6,271	7,058	7,298	7,636
# of Valid Votes Cast (% Voters)	Seat acclaimed	317 (5.1%)	484 (6.9%)	472 (6.5%)	424 (5.6%)
<u>Constituency II</u>					
Constituency Size	N/A	5,984	6,442	6,622	6,719
# of Valid Votes Cast (% Voters)	Seat acclaimed	144 (2.4%)	521 (8.1%)	1,020 (15.4%)	467 (7%)
Administrative Staff					
Constituency Size	5,663	6,063	N/A	6,396	6,711
# of Valid Votes Cast(% Voters)	1,316 (23%)	1,051 (17.3%)		933 (14.6%)	1,079 (16.1%)

Table 2: Voting Results 2006-2010

Constituency	Mail Ballots	Email Ballots	Total Ballots
GC Full-time Undergraduate Students Constituency II (post-graduate medical residents)	2037	0	2037
GC Administrative Staff	748	5963	6711
Number of Votes Cast	51	1028	1079
% Voters	0.08	15.3	16.1
Total	2378	6057	8435

Table 3: Data on 2010 Mail and Online Ballots

6. Appeals and Campaign Violations

The CRO investigated twelve allegations of campaign violations within the student constituency and one allegation within the administrative staff constituency. These dealt with matters such as campaigning prior to the start of the permitted period, poster violations, and interference with a voters' privacy when casting a ballot. Six of the thirteen cases were referred to the Election Overseers. The Election Overseers convened on February 8th, March 8th and March 24th to discuss the charges of violations to the campaign rules and to decide on the appropriate action to be taken. The details of the rulings are available in Report Number 58 (February 8, 2010), Report Number 59 (March 8, 2010) and Report Number 60 (March 24, 2010) of the Elections Committee.⁴ All candidates were also sent an email reminder about the poster guidelines

The Election Overseers also heard and ruled on two appeals with regard to the accommodation for candidates. In addition to this, the Election Overseers also considered one appeal electronically and decided that it did not merit any further action.

All allegations of campaign violations were thoroughly investigated by the CRO. Candidates against whom allegations were made were contacted almost immediately and requested to take appropriate corrective action. The CRO spent considerable time investigating the allegations, gathering evidence in the form of photographs and communicating with candidates about the allegations.

The number of allegations of campaign violations and appeals that have been made since 2006 are summarized in Table 4. The number of campaign allegations referred to the Election Overseers increased significantly in 2010 when compared to the previous years.

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Number of allegations of campaign violations	10	6	0	4	13
Number of appeals of election process/results	0	0	1	0	2
Number of appeals of technical invalidation	0	0	0	1	0
Number of allegations and appeals referred to Election Overseers	6	5	1	2	8
Number of <i>serious/severe</i> violations found	3	3	0	2	6

Table 4: Summary of Campaign Violation Allegations and Appeals, 2006-2010

⁴ Reports 58, 59, and 60 of the Elections Committee are available online at: <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/bac/ec/2009.htm>

7. Community and Candidate Feedback for the Governing Council Election Process for 2011

A memorandum from the Chair of the Elections Committee requesting ideas and comments on the 2010 elections process was sent to the University community via email in early April. Individuals were invited to complete an online form, which contained open ended questions and space for additional comments. The number of responses received from the community was greater than those received in previous years.

An additional step of obtaining feedback from the candidates was also initiated this year. Nearly half of the candidates provided input on the elections process.

	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-11
Number of written submissions received	3	12	69	51	73

Table 5: Community Submissions on 2010 Governing Council Elections Process

Anwar Kazimi
Chief Returning Officer
June 15, 2010