

Student Participation in Consultation and Formal Decision Making at The University of Toronto

Office of the Vice-Provost, Students

Governing Council

Governing Council Chamber, Simcoe Hall

Tuesday, October 30, 2012



UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO

- Identify the variety of opportunities
 - Student participation in governance through formal elected or appointed roles
 - Means by which divisions, faculty and departments consult students

“I hope that by being involved in the University of Toronto’s governance system that I can inspire my fellow students to get involved and do something about what they believe in rather than wait for someone else to act on their behalf.”

*Chirag Variawa
Graduate Student Governor
Governing Council
Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering*

Terminology

Formal Decision Making

- Identifies students who are either elected or appointed into formal roles on boards, councils and committees.
- Examples include positions on faculty or divisional councils, student membership on boards, administrative committees, advisory committees, equity committees.

Consultation

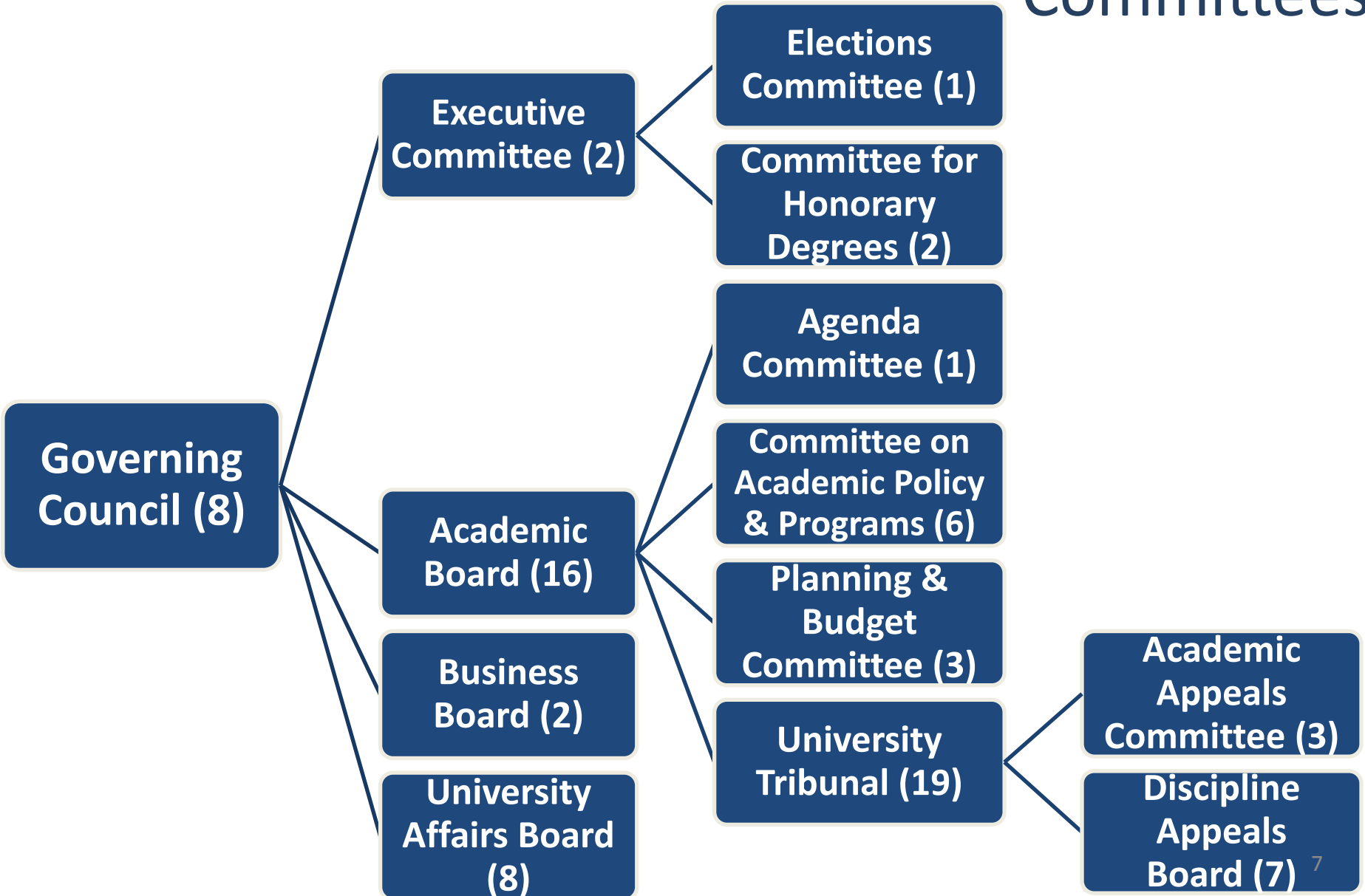
- Refers to the ways in which the University seeks input and feedback from students on a variety of issues.
- Examples include meetings with student leaders, surveys, town halls, focus groups, search committees, review committees, task forces, working groups, planning processes.

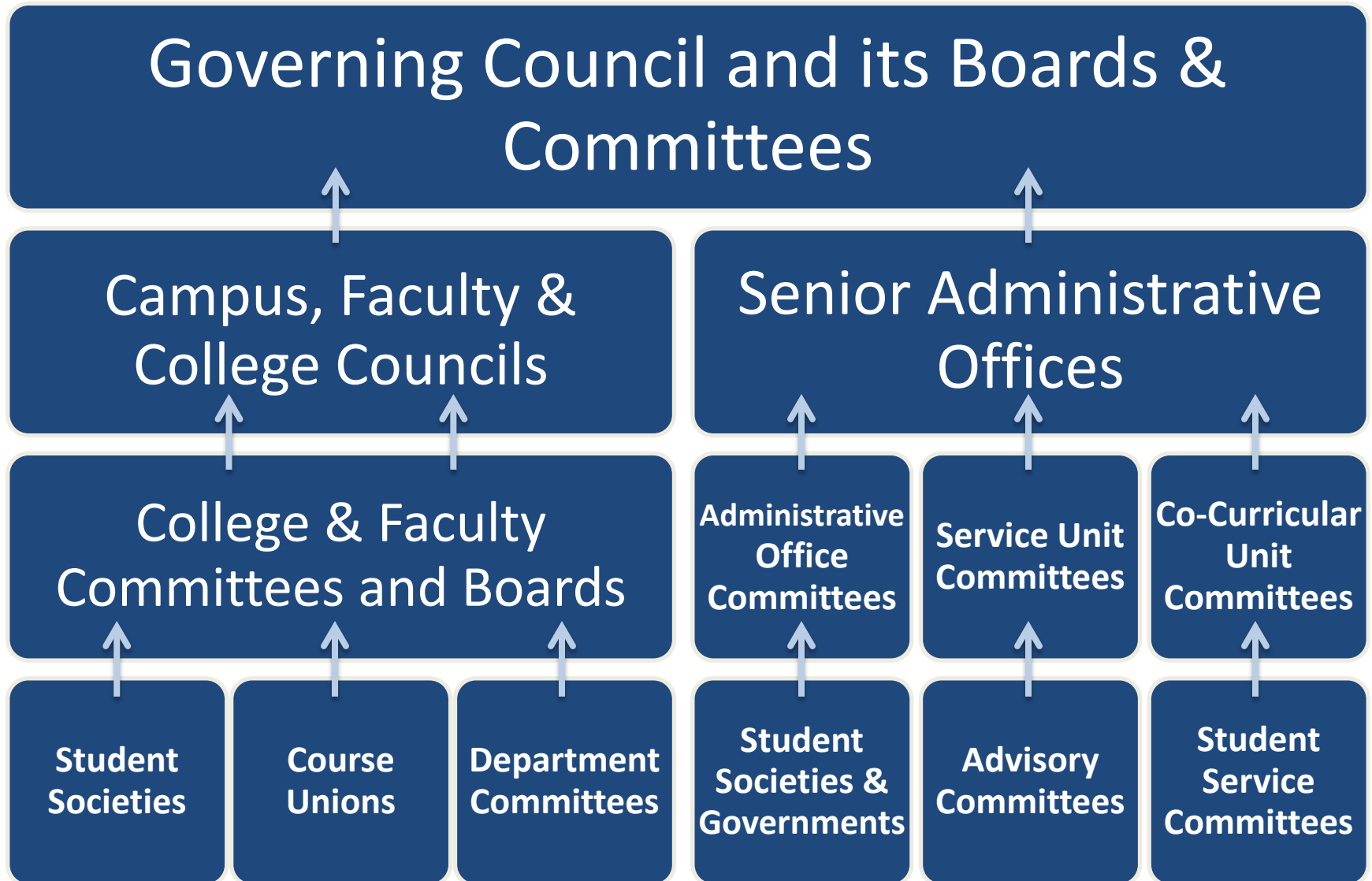
Data Collection

- In the course of 2011 -12, we surveyed all graduate and undergraduate faculties, divisions, colleges and administrative units across the University's three campuses.
- Divisions were asked to report:
 - Formal decision making opportunities within their unit
 - The means by which opportunities for input are provided to students through consultation

- To date we have identified close to 2,000 formal positions for students on more than 350 councils, boards and committees. We have also identified a vast assortment of consultation mechanisms used to engage students on university issues.
- The data collected indicates that across the University, at all levels, substantial consultation with students is built into our decision making processes.

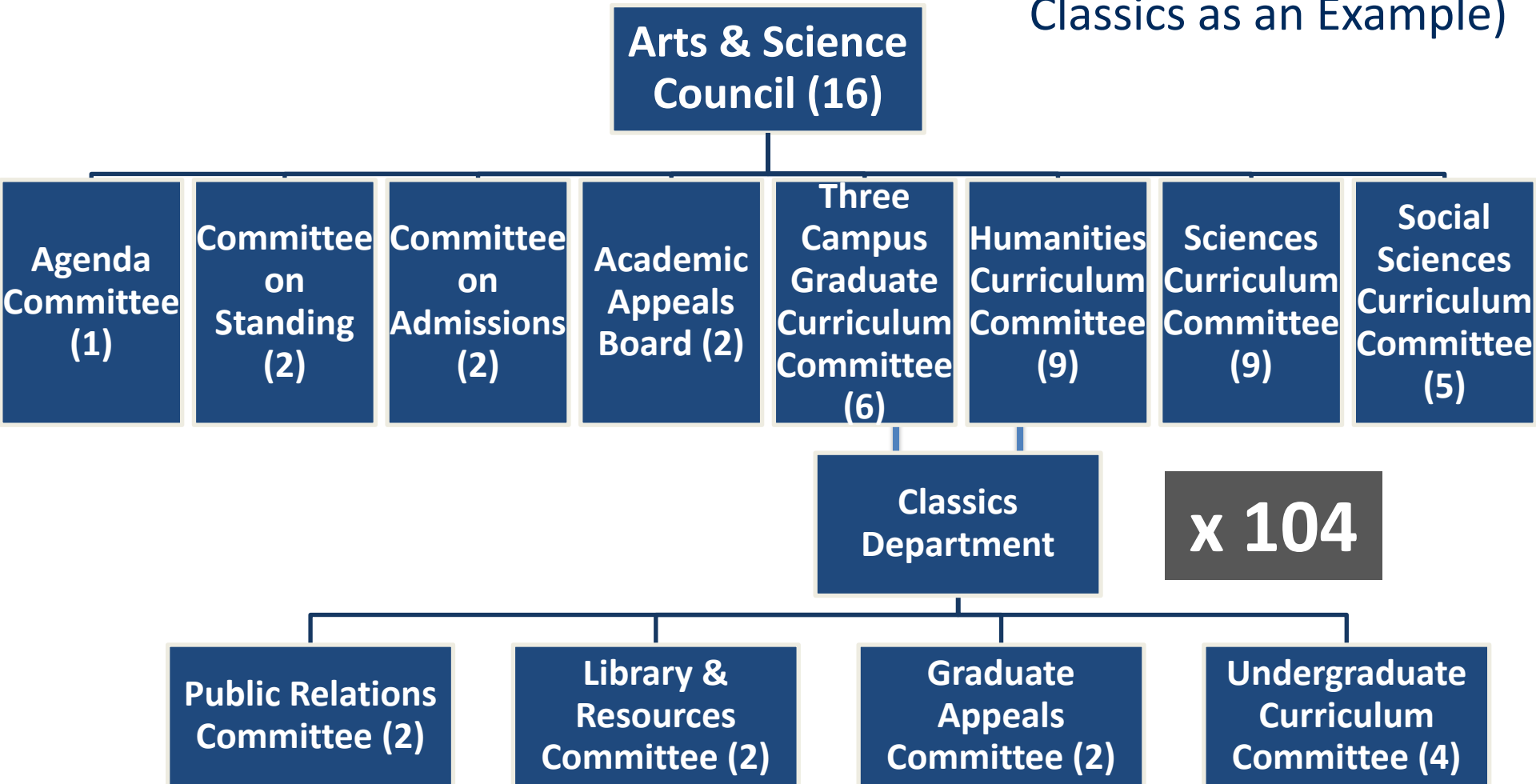
Governing Council Boards and Committees



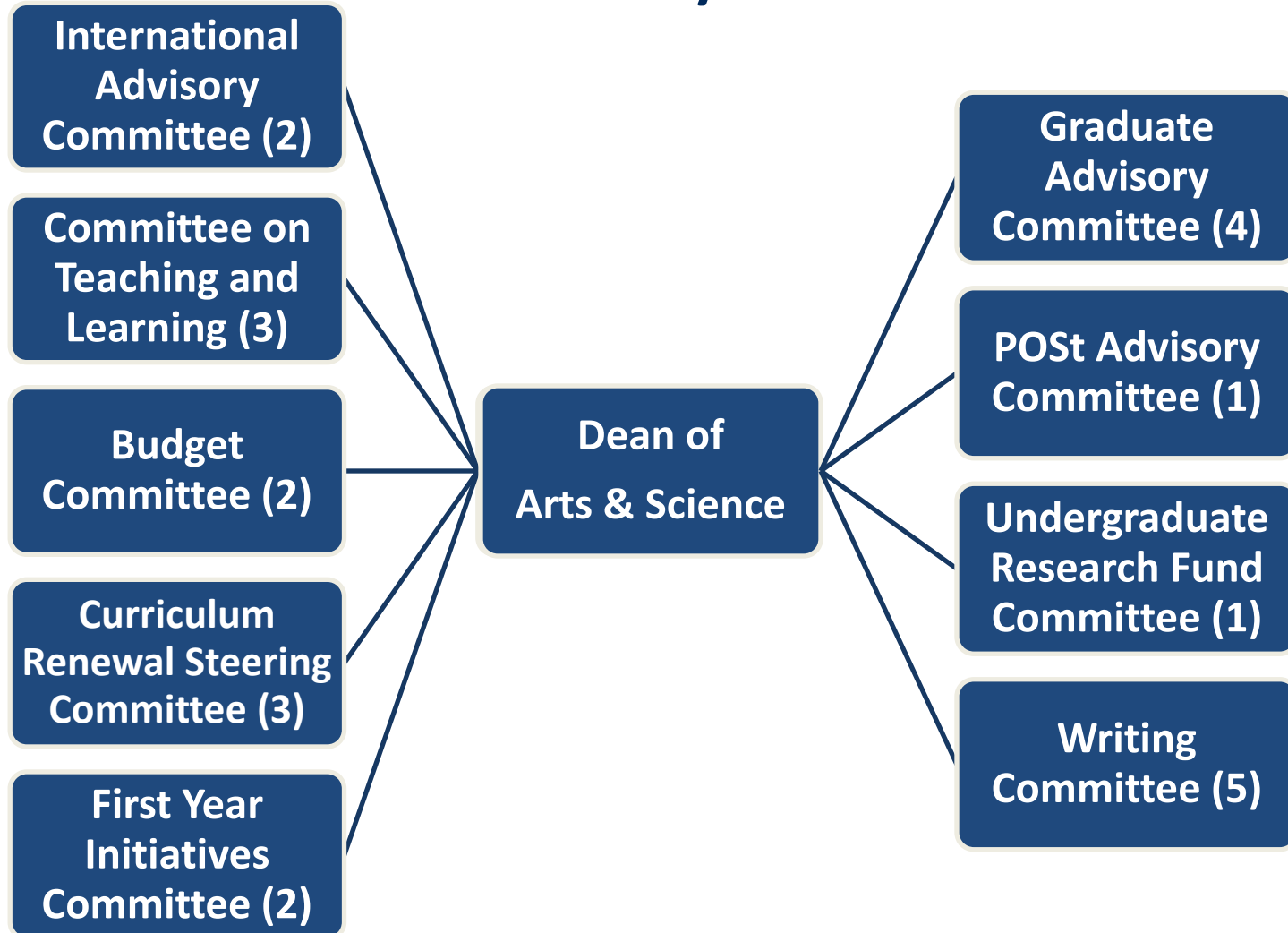


A Multi-Department Faculty: Faculty of Arts & Science

(using the Department of
Classics as an Example)



The Faculty Advisory Structure: Faculty of Arts & Science



“[Students] engage fully in committee discussions and activities, and work on committee projects between formal committee meetings. It is critical to have this engagement as we develop policies, best practices, and pedagogical and curricular initiatives whose aim is to improve the undergraduate student academic and co-curricular experience.”

*Suzanne Stevenson
Vice-Dean, Teaching & Learning
Faculty of Arts & Science*

A Single Department Professional Faculty: Faculty of Nursing

**Faculty Council –
Nursing (7)**

**Admissions
committee
(4)**

**Appeals
Committee
(2)**

**Awards
Committee
(2)**

**Curriculum
Committee
(5)**

**Committee
on
Standing
(2)**

**Executive
Committee
(2)**

“I choose to be involved because I think students (and people generally) should create value in their communities. Universities improve because of the collective effort of individuals.”

Jessica Gallagher
President
Master of Information Student Council

Co-Curricular Decision Making: UTSC

Governance

Student Life

Council on
Student
Services
(UTSC) (12)

Academic
Travel Fund
Board (1)

Food
Advisory
Committee
(5)

Study Space
Working
Group (1)

Risk
Assessment
Committee
(1)

Departmental
Student
Association
Council (7)

Principal's
Advisory
Group on
Positive
Space (9)

Athletics

Athletics
Advisory
Committee (6)

Council on
Athletics and
Recreation
(12)

Intramural
Sports
Committee
(29)

Examples of Committees with Formal Decision Making Roles for Students

Academic Advisory Committees	Community Affairs Committees	Gender and Equity Committees
Academic Appeals Boards	Computing and Technology Committees	Graduate Education Committees
Accessibility and Diversity Committees	Concerts and Events Committees	International Advisory Committees
Assessment Committees	Council of Athletics and Recreation	Professional Skills Curriculum Committees
Campus Life Committees	Curriculum Committees	Program Evaluation and Accreditation Committees
College Affairs Boards	Sustainability Working Groups	Research Committees
Committees for Don Selection	Examinations Committees	Scholarships and Awards Committees
Committees on Admissions and Recruitment	Financial Aid Committees	Teaching Methods and Resources Committees

“Being active in the decision-making process has allowed me to learn new skills, meet interesting people, and burnish my post-university resume. Most importantly, it has given me a chance to change my university for the better.”

*Aidan Fishman
Undergraduate Student Governor
International Relations & Near and
Middle Eastern Studies*

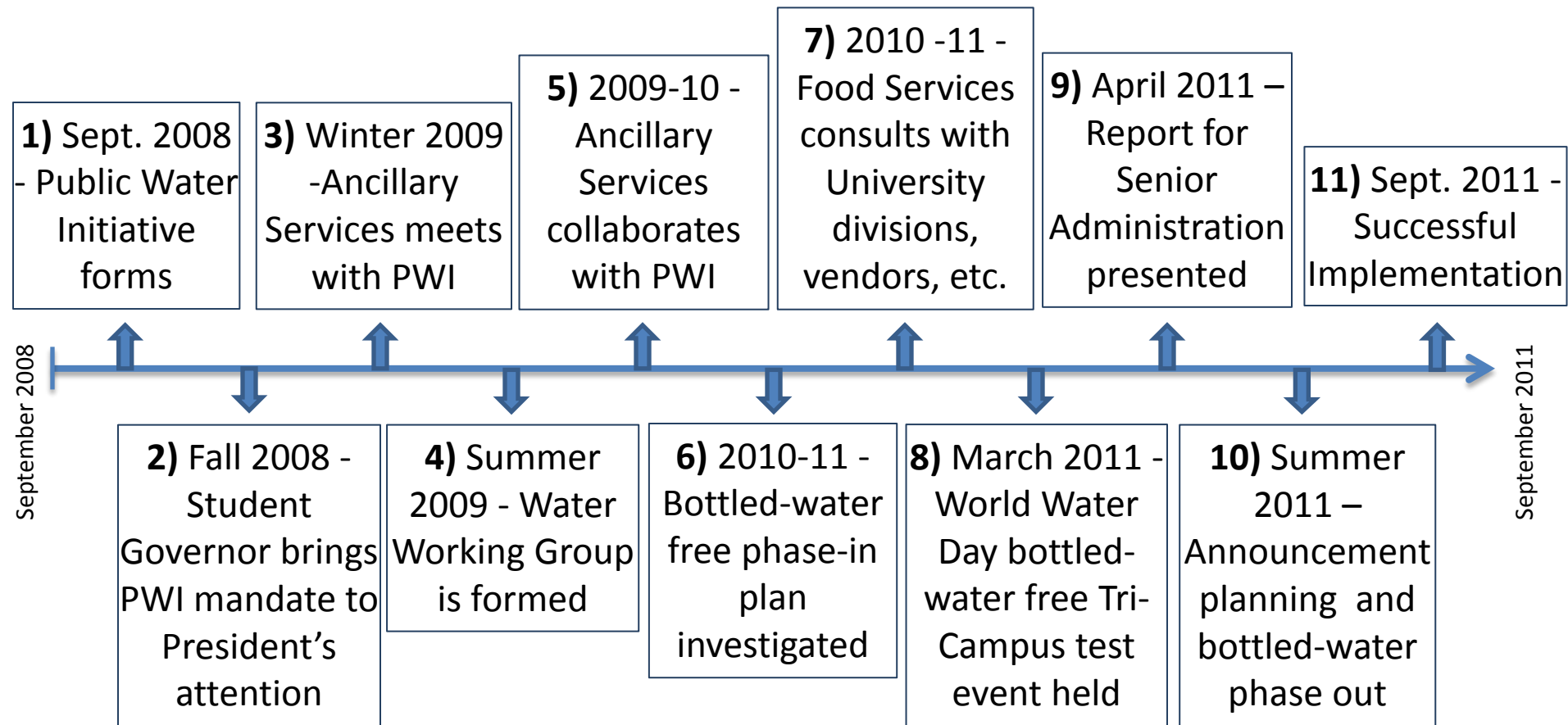
Examples of Consultation Methods

Academic Planning	Meetings with Academic Societies	Provostial Advisory Groups
Constitutional Review Groups	Meetings with the Dean	Scheduled Meetings
Curriculum Development Processes	Meetings with Senior Administrators	Search Committees
Dean's Forum	Meetings with Student Life Officers	Social Media
Drop-in Meetings	Meetings with Student Societies	Student Surveys
Email	Meetings with Student Organizations	Taskforces
External Review Committees	Mentorship Programs	Faculty Review Processes
Exit Surveys	Open-Door Policy	Town Halls
House Meetings	President's Lunches	Working Groups

“I think it's important for students to be involved in these types of consultations/committees because they remind us of the student perspective and the nuances that we may not be familiar with or have forgotten. Including students also ensures that there is a larger variety of perspectives as the circumstances of our student body are so diverse.”

David Kim
Dean of Students
Woodsworth College

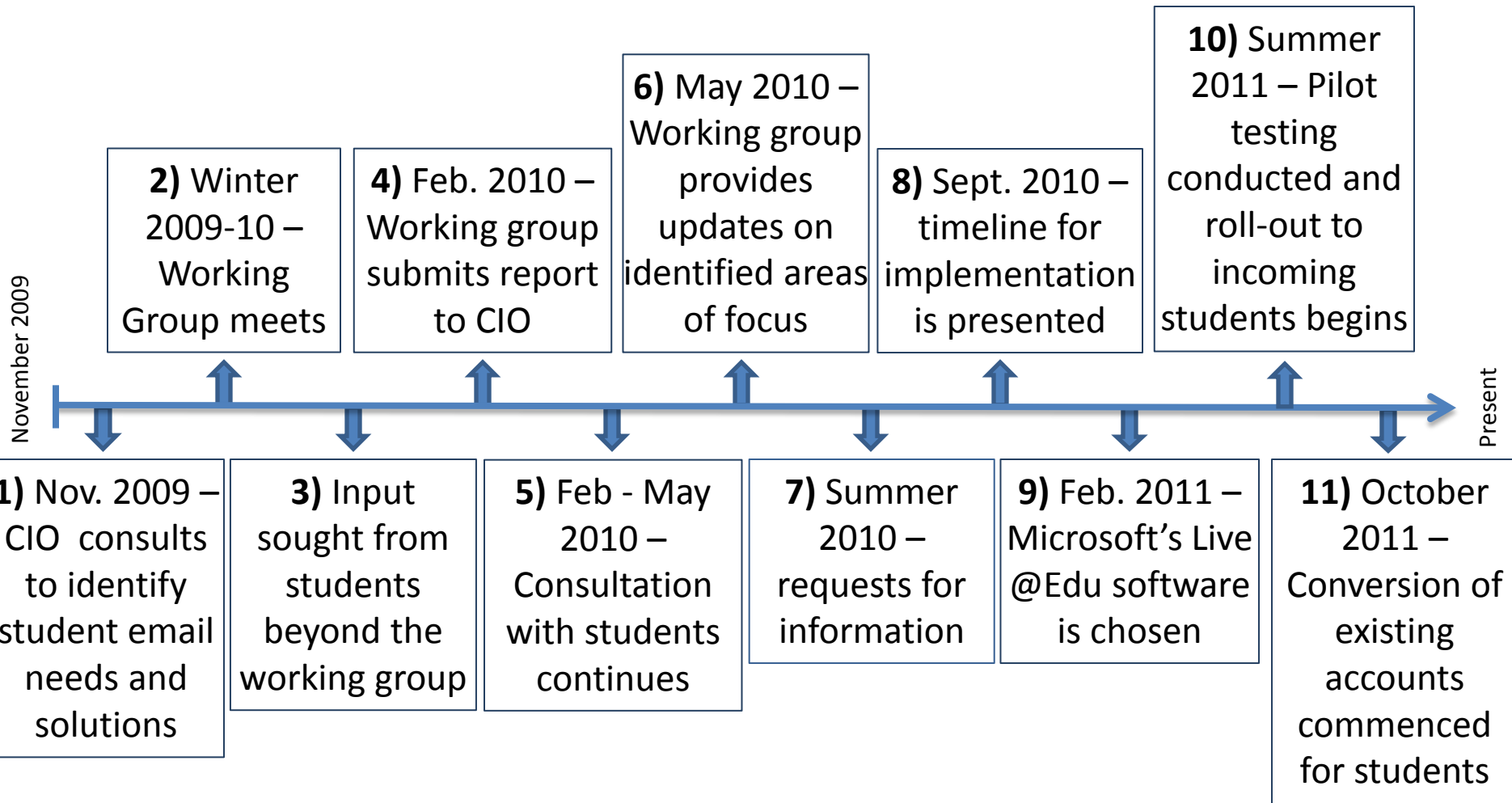
Consultation on Specific Projects: The On-Tap Initiative



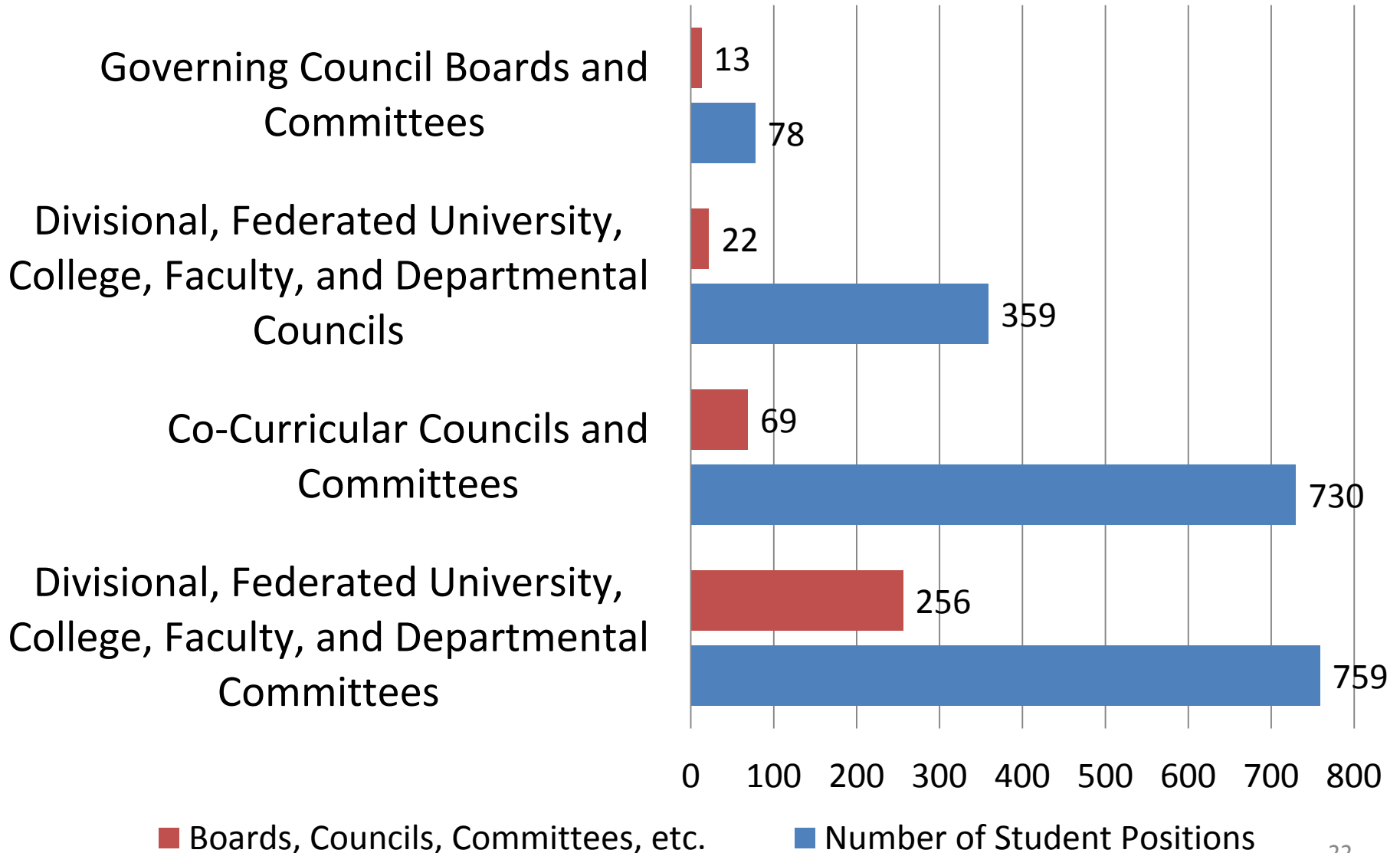
“Working with the students from the Public Water Initiative was a very positive experience. They were passionate, well informed and diligent in their research, but at the same time also fully appreciative of the complexity of the environment.”

*Anne Macdonald
Director
Ancillary Services*

Consultation on Specific Projects: The Email Project



Snap Shot of Formal Decision Making Positions for Students





Next Steps

- Optimize Student Participation
- Communication
 - Determine most effective way to communicate opportunities to students
- Student position inventory
 - Assist students and administrators in identifying opportunities for students to become engaged in decision making on campus

