



TO: Members of the Executive Committee

SPONSOR: President David Naylor, on behalf of the Ceremonials Committee comprising, Chancellor David Peterson, Professor Michael Marrus, Chair, Academic Board, and Mr. Louis Charpentier, Secretary of the Governing Council.

DATE: March 16, 2009 for April 6, 2009

AGENDA ITEM: 8

ITEM IDENTIFICATION: Policy Revision - *Policy on Presiding Officers for Convocation*

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

The *University of Toronto Act, 1971*, section 5(3) provides for delegation in the absence of the Chancellor from a convocation ceremony, stating that in such instances, “the President shall confer degrees but if he is absent or unable to act, degrees shall be conferred by such person as the Governing Council may designate.”

BACKGROUND:

The *Policy on Presiding Officers for Convocation*, which was revised by Governing Council on May 30, 2007, now allows for Principals and Deans to serve as presiding officers in specific circumstances. When the President is absent or acting for the Chancellor, the President’s place is to be taken by the Vice-President and Provost. In the event that the Vice-President and Provost is also absent, the *Policy* identifies the individuals (such as the Deputy Provost or appropriate Vice-Provost) who may serve in his/her absence.

A natural extension of this most recent revision would be to permit Vice-Presidents who are members of the University’s faculty to serve as presiding officers of Convocation. If more than one Vice-President would be appropriate to take the President’s place, the President shall designate one to serve. This proposed *Policy* change will allow even greater flexibility in sharing ceremonial responsibilities among senior officials of the University.

The proposed revised *Policy* is attached.

RECOMMENDATION:

Be It Resolved:

THAT the revised *Policy on Presiding Officers for Convocation* be recommended to the Governing Council for approval, effective immediately, replacing the existing *Policy* approved by the Governing Council on May 30, 2007.



POLICY ON PRESIDING OFFICERS FOR CONVOCATION

Preamble

The University of Toronto Act, 1971, section 4(4) states that the Chancellor is chairman of Convocation. It also provides [section 5(3)] for delegation in the absence of the Chancellor, stating that in such instances, “the President shall confer degrees but if he is absent or unable to act, degrees shall be conferred by such person as the Governing Council may designate.” Consistent with these provisions, the Governing Council in 1987 approved a resolution, *Convocation Substitutes for the Chancellor and President*, that defined a protocol for selecting appropriate presiding officers. The resolution was further revised in 2005 to permit the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the Governing Council to serve in the role of presiding officer. This *Policy*, which replaces the 2005 resolution and which reflects the directions arising from a comprehensive review of convocation (2006-07)¹, provides for Principals and Deans to serve as presiding officers in specific circumstances.

Policy

Chancellor and President Absent

- (1) Where both the Chancellor and the President are absent from a University convocation, the Chancellor’s place shall be taken by the head of the academic unit whose students are graduating.

In the case of Arts and Science students, the “head of the academic unit” will be the principal of the constituent college or the executive head of the federated university. In the event of the students of two colleges graduating at the same time, the head of the earlier established college will act for the Chancellor.

In the event of students of an Arts and Science college and a professional faculty or school graduating at the same convocation, the Chancellor will designate the head of one of the academic units to act for the Chancellor.

In the event of the students of two or more professional faculties or schools graduating at the same time, the head of the earlier established faculty or school will act for the Chancellor.

If the head of the academic unit is absent or unable to act, the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Governing Council may take the Chancellor’s place.

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¹ *Report of the Committee to Review Convocation* (December 16, 2006) and *Administrative Response* (March 16, 2007)

President Absent or Acting for Chancellor

(2) Where the President is absent from the University convocation, or acting for the Chancellor, the President's place shall be taken by the Vice-President and Provost.

In the event that the Vice-President and Provost is also absent, the President's place shall be taken by:

- the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science, where students in that Faculty are graduating, or, in his/her absence or at the request of the Chancellor in consultation with the relevant heads of the constituent and federated colleges, the relevant head from among the Principals of the relevant Constituent or Federated Colleges, or
- the Vice-President, and Principal, University of Toronto at Mississauga, or the Vice-President, and Principal, University of Toronto at Scarborough where students in those divisions are graduating, or
- the Chancellor will designate the head of one of the academic units to act for the President where students of an Arts and Science college and a professional faculty or school are graduating at the same convocation, or
- the head of the academic unit whose students are graduating, where students from professional faculties are graduating, or
- the head of the earlier established faculty or school will act for the President, where students of two or more professional faculties or schools are graduating at the same time, or
- the Deputy Provost or appropriate Vice-Provost in the case of all other convocations. Should more than one Vice-Provost be appropriate, the President will designate one to serve.
- [an appropriate Vice-President who is also a member of the teaching staff of the University. Should more than one Vice-President be appropriate, the President will designate one to serve.](#)

Original resolution approved by Governing Council 1987.

Revised by Governing Council April 28, 2005.

Revised by Governing Council, May 30, 2007.

[Draft revision March, 2009](#)