

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO  
THE GOVERNING COUNCIL  
**REPORT NUMBER 203 OF**  
**THE UNIVERSITY AFFAIRS BOARD**

**November 20, 2017**

To the Governing Council,  
University of Toronto

Your Board reports that it met on Monday, November 20, 2017, at 4:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Simcoe Hall, with the following members present:

Andrew Szende, Chair  
Catherine Riddell, Vice-Chair  
Sandy Welsh, Vice-Provost, Students  
Steven R. Bailey  
Vikram Chadalawada  
Jiayi Chen  
Aidan Fishman  
Avrum Gotlieb  
Amanda Harvey-Sanchez  
Ira Jacobs  
Norman Labrie  
Mark Lautens  
Zhenglin Liu  
John F. Monahan  
David Newman  
Mr. Julian Oliveira  
Ms Cristina Peter

Larry Whatmore  
Robert Zhi Cheng Xu

**Non-Voting Assessors:**

Mark Overton, Dean of Student Affairs,  
University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM)  
Desmond Pouyat, Dean of Student Affairs,  
University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC)  
Meredith Strong, Director, Office of the Vice-  
Provost, Students

**Regrets:**

Pingki Mazumder  
Mama Adobea Nii Owoo  
Mark Henry Rowswell  
Samra Zafar

**Secretariat:**

David Walders, Secretary

**In Attendance:**

Archana Sridhar, Assistant Provost

Cathy Eberts, Director, Enterprise Applications and Solutions Integration and HR Technology  
Mike Lesage, Coordinator, Student Policy Initiatives  
Basit Tayyab, Office of the Vice-Provost, Students  
Trevor Young, Dean, Faculty of Medicine

Nadia Kanani, Students for Barrier Free Access  
Mathias Memmel, President, University of Toronto Students' Union  
Fady Shanouda, PhD Candidate  
Siva Sivarajah, Students for Barrier Free Access  
Samantha Stead, University of Toronto Graduate Students Union.  
Rebecca Weekes, Students for Barrier Free Access

ITEMS 4 AND 9 ARE REPORTED FOR APPROVAL AND ALL OTHER ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

### **Welcome and Orientation**

The Chair welcomed members and guests to the meeting. He noted that several speaking requests had been received by the Secretary, all of which related to Item 3 on the agenda, the Update on the Draft of the *University Mandated Leave of Absence Policy*. Due to the large number of speaking requests that had been received, not all could be granted. Those whose requests were not granted had been invited to submit written comments for distribution at the meeting and had also been invited to contact the Office of the Vice-Provost, Students, to arrange to speak with her office directly.

#### **1. Presentation: Next Generation Student Information Services (NGSIS)**

Ms Eberts offered a presentation, appended [here](#), which highlighted the following topics:

- The approach of NGSIS was to create and deploy technical solutions to help student achieve academic and personal success, and to assist faculty and staff in providing a rich supportive educational environment. This was accomplished through various vendor packages, such as the Co-Curricular Record, Quali Community Source Development, home grown applications such as Degree Explorer and ACORN, and technical infrastructure.
- Several program milestones had been achieved, including the Co-Curricular Record, the MyRes on campus housing application tool, the Degree Explorer tool, which has had over 3.3 million views this year to date, and ACORN, in which 45,000 students logged in daily during peak periods.
- There were many projects currently underway, including ROSI core module improvements, which, among other things, would provide net-tuition billing, NGSIS platform modernization as well as the Course Information System and the Curriculum Management tool.
- The monetary savings were significant, with over \$2.5M saved in the last 5 years. This was due largely to a 76% increase in productivity. In addition, 9 tonnes of paper had been eliminated over the same period.

In reply to a member's question regarding the linkages between NGSIS and the Blackboard Learning Portal, Ms Eberts noted that there were several linkages between NGSIS and Blackboard, and that this nexus would allow NGSIS to draw on the functions that had already been created for

Blackboard. In reply to a question relating to system maintenance, Ms Eberts replied that while maintenance requirements had increased using NGSIS (due to the “technical debt” that built up in order to meet system needs), other requirements, such as mainframe support, had decreased.

The Chair thanks Ms Eberts for her presentation.

## **2. Annual Report on Cases of Non-Academic Discipline: 2016-17**

Professor Welsh began by providing some information about the Report and noted that no hearings took place under the Code of Student Conduct (the “Code”) cases for the 2016-17 academic year. The Code, which addressed non-academic discipline at the University, was administered by the Dean of the Faculty or the Principal of the College in which the student was registered. It worked in conjunction with other applicable codes of conduct at the University. She advised that The Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment had been effective since January 2017. Cases involving sexual violence or sexual harassment allegations, for which the Code was initiated and concluded prior to January 2017, are captured in this document. There were a range of mechanisms within the Code that allowed for the University to appropriately address concerns, type of allegations or offences laid, and options for resolution, including interim measures and conditions.

In reply to a member’s query regarding the length of cases, Professor Welsh advised that many cases which also involve criminal charges may take longer to be resolved under the Code because the criminal process often took place before hearings under the Code.

The Chair thanked Professor Welsh for her Report.

## **3. Update on the Draft *University-Mandated Leave of Absence Policy***

Professor Welsh began by explaining that the draft *Policy* was intended for a very small number of students who met the high threshold for intervention as described in the draft *Policy*, and where the presence of serious mental health or other similar concerns provided a context for University action that was not disciplinary in nature. It was intended as a very last resort, to be used when alternative options had not worked or were not feasible as well as in those rare cases when a student could be a harm to themselves or to others. Professor Welsh also explained that, at present, no specific policy at the University addressed similar issues without being disciplinary. The draft *Policy* would apply in the very rare case where a student needed to take a break from their studies to concentrate on their health and to protect their academic record, as well as to protect the safety of others, their own safety, and/or to avoid materially and negatively affecting the educational experience of others.

Professor Welsh stressed the importance of providing students with the support they required to succeed and thrive, and noted that there were a wide range of support systems within the University to allow students to develop agency about their health and wellness, as well as a large variety of services and programs to support their needs when necessary. In the rare case that the process under the draft *Policy* was initiated, there were ample opportunities for students to be a part of the process and contribute additional information. As an initial step in the process, a Student Support Team (SST) would be created and a Student Case Manager (SCM) assigned to the student. Typically, these individuals would be drawn from those people well aware of the student’s situation and,

where applicable, may be been involved in supporting the student. Should the student object to the SCM, the Vice-Provost Students would take this under advisement. Part of the role of the SCM would firstly be to advise of accommodations and other resources that could assist the Student to continue in the academic program without a Leave of Absence. In addition, at any time during the process, the student would have the option to take a voluntary leave of absence. Finally, regarding the student's academic record, it would be within the sole discretion of the student as to whether a note was added to their transcript indicating "Leave of Absence". Not adding a note to the transcript was an option for the student should they so choose.

Professor Welsh noted that her office had been conducting ongoing consultations with various stakeholders. As a result of these consultations, refinements to the draft *Policy* had been made, including clarification that at any time during the process, the student was "entitled" to seek the support of a health professional of their choice, a legal advocate and/or a family member or other support person. Whether the student was receiving financial aid and the unique considerations for international students were also factors that related to the terms and conditions of the leave. Further refinements to the policy were being examined. These included changes to the timelines regarding the review process, as well as provisions in which a student may ask for an extension to the review. Additionally, consideration of a student's immigration status has been added to the possible terms and conditions. Finally, the Office was committed to the development of a companion guide to the draft *Policy*.

During the discussion, members inquired as to how students affected by the draft *Policy*, particularly those suffering from serious mental health concerns, were made aware of the range of support systems available to them. Professor Welsh replied that the draft *Policy* had been refined to make clear the range of supports that the student was entitled to receive throughout the process. In addition, a large part of the role of the SCM would be as the contact person for the student and would advise the student of the supports available to them and assist them in obtaining assistance. Finally, the option of providing the student with a handout outlining possible support systems was being considered.

The Chair then invited Mr. Mathias Memmel, President, University of Toronto Students' Union, to offer comments on the draft *Policy*.

Mr. Memmel expressed overall support for the draft *Policy* but raised the following concerns:

- Scenario 2 under the draft *Policy*, involving students who were "unable to engage in the essential activities required to pursue an education where serious mental health or similar issues are present, notwithstanding accommodations or supportive resources, may experience detrimental effects on their record" was too broad in scope.
- For students who chose to appeal a decision made under the draft *Policy*, they should not be placed on leave until the appeals process has concluded and a final determination was made.
- Immigration status and access to University support resources should remain in place after the student was placed on a University-mandated leave.

The Chair then invited Ms Samantha Stead from the University of Toronto Graduate Students Union to offer comments on the draft *Policy*. She raised concerns about the possible loss of autonomy of students affected by the draft *Policy*. This included a lack of input at to their SST and SCM.

The Chair then invited Ms Siva Sivarajah and Ms Rebecca Weekes from Students for Barrier Free Access to offer comments on the draft *Policy*. They raised the following concerns:

- The draft *Policy* did not meet the University's obligation to accommodate students with disabilities nor its human rights obligations more generally.
- The draft *Policy* was punitive and greater resources should be allocated to accommodating student with needs.

The Chair then invited Mr. Fady Shanouda, a PhD candidate, to offer comments on the draft *Policy*. He questioned whether faculty were equipped to assess a student's mental well-being and whether it would create a greater stigma around mental illness overall.

Professor Welsh thanked the speakers and noted that consultation with respect to the draft *Policy* would be ongoing and that concerns would be addressed. She did however clarify that, under the draft *Policy*, faculty were not involved whatsoever in the determination of a student's mental well-being. She also noted that, especially in light of extensive legal consultation, that University was meeting its human rights obligations under the draft *Policy*.

#### **4. Report of the Previous Meeting: Report 202 – October 2, 2017**

Report Number 202, from the meeting held on October 2, 2017, was approved

#### **5. Business Arising from the Report of the Previous Meeting**

There was no business arising from the Report of the Previous Meeting.

#### **6. Date of Next Meeting – January 30, 2018 at 4:30 p.m.**

The Chair confirmed the date of the next meeting would be January 30, 2018 at 4:30 p.m.

#### **7. Reports of the Administrative Assessors**

Professor Welsh provided a brief update on the Sexual Violence Climate survey, and indicated that U of T would be contributing three questions to the survey.

#### **8. Other Business**

There were no items of other business.

THE COMMITTEE MOVED IN CAMERA

**9. Appointments**

**a) Chair: Council on Student Services, 2017-18**

On motion duly made, seconded and carried

It was Resolved

THAT Mr. Richie Pyne be appointed chair of the Council on Student Services, effective immediately until April 30, 2018.

**b) University Affairs Board Members to the Service Ancillaries Review Group, 2017-18**

On motion duly made, seconded and carried

It was Resolved

THAT the following be appointed to the Service Ancillaries Review Group for 2017-18:

Mr. Larry Whatmore (ex officio)

Mr. Zhenglin Liu (student)

Mr. Vikram Sainadh Chadalawada (administrative staff)

**c) Membership of the University Affairs Board Striking Committee, 2017-18**

On motion duly made, seconded and carried

It was Resolved

THAT the following be appointed to the University Affairs Board Striking Committee for 2017-18:

Mr. Mark Rowswell (Lieutenant Governor in Council appointee)

Ms Samra Zafar (alumni)

Professor Mark Lautens (teaching staff)

Ms Catherine Riddell (administrative staff)

Ms Mama Adobea Nii Owoo (student)

The meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

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Secretary

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Chair

November 24, 2017