



University of Toronto

OFFICE OF THE VICE-PROVOST, STUDENTS

TO: Committee on Academic Policies and Programs

SPONSOR: Professor David Farrar, Deputy Provost and Vice-Provost,
Students

CONTACT INFO: 416 978-3870
david.farrar@utoronto.ca

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AGENDA ITEM: 5

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

Vice-Provost, Students: Annual Report on Student Financial Support

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

The Policy on Student Financial Support calls for an annual report to be submitted for information to the Committee.

HIGHLIGHTS:

As specified in the Policy on Student Financial Support, the report provides a summary, by academic division, of: the levels of student financial need assessed through the University's common needs assessment program; the student financial assistance provided; the value of funding provided to graduate students; the debt levels of students graduating from first-entry programs; and, the results of the 2006 survey of students with respect to accessibility.

The report notes that need-based financial support to students has increased from about \$1.5 million in 1992-93 to about \$40.3 million in 2005-06. The survey results provide evidence that accessibility with respect to the ethnocultural and socioeconomic backgrounds of students in first-entry undergraduate, professional deregulated-fee and doctoral-stream graduate programs have remained relatively stable. We believe that the data on the student aid provided by the University, and the survey results, demonstrate

that the University continues to be accessible to students from minority and less-advantaged socioeconomic backgrounds, as measured by parents' level of education and income, and that the University continues to meet its obligations under the Policy on Student Financial Support.

In 2005-06, both the federal and the Ontario governments made significant improvements to OSAP (which integrates assistance from both sources.) The most notable enhancement was the introduction of non-repayable grants. Students from low-income backgrounds may now qualify for grants up to \$6,000 in their first year of undergraduate study, and up to \$3,000 in their second year. The result was that meeting student need fully in accordance with the Policy cost the University less in 2005-06, but overall, our students received greater aid in total than in preceding years. We very much appreciate the improvements both governments have made to student aid.

The report includes a new section on student employment, relying on our own data from OSAP and on the National Survey of Student Engagement results. It concludes that, while part-time student work should continue to be monitored, it is not currently a major problem.

In addition, the report describes the provincial government's new Student Access Guarantee introduced for the 2006-07 academic year, and notes that the University of Toronto expects to be in full compliance. Our expenditure on student aid in 2005-06, \$40 million, exceeded the government's requirement for the tuition set-aside (\$33 million) by 21 per cent.

The 2005-06 report will be the last in its current form. For the future, we are reviewing the format and content of the report and the methods used to measure accessibility indicators, especially parental income.

RECOMMENDATION:

For information