UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

REPORT NUMBER 61 OF THE ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

June 22, 2010

To the University Affairs Board,
University of Toronto

Your Committee reports that it met on Tuesday, June 22, 2010 at 9:00 a.m. in the Forster Room, Room 229, Simcoe Hall, with the following members present:

Mr. Stephen Smith (In the Chair)
Ms Diana Alli
Professor Ronald H. Kluger
Mr. Olivier Sorin

Regrets: Mr. Gary P. Mooney

Secretariat:
Mr. Anwar Kazimi, Chief Returning Officer
Ms Mae-Yu Tan, Secretary

In Attendance:
Mr. Ryan Campbell, member, Governing Council
Professor Bill Gough, member, Governing Council

In this report all items are reported to the University Affairs Board for information.

1.   Reports of the Previous Meetings

The following reports were approved.

>   Report Number 57 (October 15, 2009)
>   Report Number 58 (February 10, 2010)
>   Report Number 59 (March 8, 2010)
>   Report Number 60 (March 24, 2010)

2.   Business Arising from the Reports of the Previous Meetings

There was no business arising from the Reports of the previous meetings.

3.   Report of the Governing Council Elections Process 2010

Mr. Anwar Kazimi, the Chief Returning Officer (CRO), presented the Report of the Governing Council Elections Process 2010 to the Committee. A copy of the Report is attached hereto as Appendix "A".

The following were among the matters that arose in questions and discussion.

a)   Advertisement of the Elections Process

Mr. Kazimi drew members' attention to the many steps[1] that had been taken by the Secretariat in promoting awareness of the Governing Council and participation in elections. Focused communications directed at administrative staff had been implemented this year, and, in his view, they may have contributed to a doubling of the number of candidates (9) within that constituency over that of the previous year.

b)   Number of Nominators

Members discussed the reduction of the number of nominators for the 2010 elections. Despite the decrease from 20 to 5 nominators, there did not appear to have been a significant increase in the number of candidates. Feedback from candidates indicated that it had not been difficult to locate 5 nominators in their constituencies, and the Committee agreed to maintain a minimum requirement of 5 nominators for individuals who sought election to Governing Council.

c)   Participation Rates

Mr. Kazimi outlined the 2010 participation rates for each constituency in which a Governing Council election had been held. While the administrative staff rate had remained relatively stable (16%), as had the number of votes cast by part-time undergraduate students (391), there had been a dramatic decrease in the participation rate of physical and life sciences graduate students from 15.4% in 2009 to 7% in 2010. A member hypothesized that greater competition among the graduate student candidates in the previous year had meant greater campaigning efforts. With increased awareness, it was reasonable that there had been higher participation.

d)   Commitment Regarding Individuals with Disabilities

Members were informed that a document outlining the procedures to be followed by candidates for election who were requesting accommodation for disabilities[2] had recently been developed by the Office of the Governing Council in consultation with the Ombudsperson and the University's Employment Equity Officer. The procedures indicated the roles and responsibilities of University offices and of the person seeking accommodation. The Committee agreed that

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[1] See page 2 of the Report of the 2010 Governing Council and Academic Board Election Process.
[2] http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Boards+and+Committees/Governing+Council/2009-2010+Academic+Year/x0601.pdf

3.   Report of the Governing Council Elections Process 2010 (cont'd)

d)   Commitment Regarding Individuals with Disabilities (cont'd)

Section 6 of the *Election Guidelines 2011*, Commitment Regarding Individuals with Disabilities, should be revised to reflect the recently developed procedures. Members also agreed on the importance of collaboration among the CRO, a candidate seeking accommodation, and University officers in order to best address the needs of individuals. Members commended Mr. Kazimi for the important role he had played in facilitating the provision of accommodation to candidates with disabilities in the 2010 elections.

e)   Length of the Campaign Period

The Chair recalled that the Committee had decreased the length of the campaign period in the 2010 elections from five to three weeks. That decision had been based on feedback from student candidates who had felt that five weeks was too long to have to campaign, given their other commitments. The shortened campaign period appeared to have been viewed as a positive step by candidates in the 2010 elections. It was suggested, however, that the period not be compressed any further. The Committee agreed that a three-week campaign period should continue to be held in future elections.

f)   Teaching Staff Constituency V – Faculty of Medicine

The Chair stated that, in following up on a previous recommendation of the Committee, the CRO and the Secretary of the Committee had met in May with Ms Meg Connell, Director of the Dean's Office, Faculty of Medicine. They had discussed with her the Committee's suggestion that the Faculty of Medicine consider distributing its three teaching staff seats on Governing Council across groupings of its departments, in a manner similar to that used for the three Faculty of Arts and Science seats. Ms Connell had since indicated that she had consulted with Dean Whiteside on the matter. They were considering assigning one teaching staff seat to the Faculty's basic sciences group, and one to the clinical group, with the third seat possibly being open to any teaching staff member in the Faculty. Ms Connell would prepare a recommended definition of each of the three groupings by department during the summer. Members expressed their support of the steps that were being taken in this regard.

g)   Administrative Staff and Student Representation

Members discussed a previous recommendation of the Committee that the 2011 *Guidelines* contain a restriction preventing two administrative staff members belonging to the same unit/department/division from serving simultaneously on the Governing Council. It had been suggested that such a restriction would help to ensure broad representation across the University. Although members acknowledged that such a requirement would follow a similar principle by which broad representation among teaching staff members within divisions was encouraged, there was some reservation about applying such a rule to the administrative staff and student constituencies. A member expressed the view that a candidate's success should not be hindered

3.   Report of the Governing Council Elections Process 2010 (cont'd)

g)   Administrative Staff and Student Representation (cont'd)

because of the division to which he or she belonged; in the member's opinion, individuals who were able to obtain the greatest number of votes should be granted seats on the Governing Council.

Discussion focused on the distribution of the 4 seats for full-time undergraduate students. The Chair noted that the *University of Toronto Act, 1971* only contained the requirement for 4 seats to be held by full-time undergraduate students; the division of those seats between Faculty of Arts and Science/University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM)/University of Toronto at Scarborough (UTSC) and professional faculty students was not specified in the *Act*. Members considered the advantages and disadvantages of various ways of distributing the 4 seats within the full-time undergraduate student constituency. These included assigning 3 seats to St. George campus Faculty of Arts and Science, UTM, and UTSC students and 1 seat to professional faculty students; assigning 2 seats to St. George campus Arts and Science students and 2 seats to professional faculty, UTM, and UTSC students; assigning 1 seat to St. George campus Faculty of Arts and Science students, 1 seat to UTM and UTSC students, and 2 seats to professional faculty students; or assigning the 4 seats to all full-time undergraduate students, without restriction.

Members agreed that the discussion of the distribution of the 4 seats for full-time undergraduate students should be continued in the fall. However, the Committee was of the view that the requirement on page 59 of the *Election Guidelines 2010* (that candidates in the full-time undergraduate student Constituency I not be registered in the same college on the St. George campus or both registered at UTM or both registered at UTSC) should be removed. Similarly, the Committee felt that the requirement on page 60 of the *Guidelines 2010* (that both members elected in the full-time undergraduate student Constituency II not be registered in the same faculty or school) should also be removed. The Committee suggested that steps be taken to increase prospective candidates' understanding of the division of seats within the full-time undergraduate student constituency.

The Committee decided not to add any restrictions to the *Guidelines* regarding the home unit of the two administrative staff members of Governing Council.

h)   Postering Rules

Mr. Kazimi reported that he had had to investigate a number of complaints about postering violations during the 2010 elections. Members considered possible solutions to the problem of postering violations that occurred each year. A member suggested that designated sites for Governing Council election posters be created. However, the difficulty in selecting a limited number of sites that would be widely viewed by members on each of the three campuses was noted. The Committee recognized that the use of campaign posters was a traditional method that candidates would not likely want to relinquish. It was suggested that candidates be encouraged to distribute flyers and reduce their use of posters. The removal of a "postering violation" was considered; however, some members were of the view that suggested practices regarding the use of posters on campus should be strengthened and clear rules were necessary.

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3.   Report of the Governing Council Elections Process 2010 (cont'd)

<u>h)</u>   <u>Postering Rules</u> (cont'd)

The Committee agreed that links to candidates' campaign websites should be provided from the Governing Council elections website in order to provide increased exposure to all candidates. Members also agreed that the discussion regarding general campaign practices and the use of posters should be continued in the fall.

4.   Community Input on the 2010 Elections Process

The Chair said that the call for written comments on the 2010 elections process had been sent in the spring, immediately following the elections, and the online response form had again been used to gather feedback from members of the University community. There had been an increase in the number of responses received this year (73) in comparison with 2009 (51), and the majority of respondents had been students. The Chair then provided a summary of the comments.

The Chair stated that a member of the Governing Council had requested permission to address the Committee on the matter of the voting system. The member distributed a proposal for a "single transferable vote" system that could replace the current system. In response to questions from members of the Committee, the member said that, in the past, election candidates had campaigned in teams. In his view, such a strategy increased the likelihood that votes would be cast for a team of candidates who shared similar ideologies. The member suggested that, by using a more preferential proportional system, it would be less likely that a small number of candidates could sway the outcome of an election. As well, because all candidates would be ranked in order of preference by voters, and any "excess" votes would be redistributed in proportion to a candidate's supporters' next highest ranked preferences, candidates would be discouraged from discrediting each other during the campaign period.

Members were of the view that the Committee should await the report and recommendations of the Task Force on Governance before determining whether or not a study of the existing election process was required. The Committee thanked the member for preparing the proposal and attending the meeting.

5.   Date of Next Meeting

The Chair noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Wednesday, September 29, 2010, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. in Room 107C, Simcoe Hall.

6.   Other Business

The Chair thanked members for their contributions over the past year. He stated that their guidance and willingness to set aside time to attend the hearings and appeals during the election period was greatly appreciated. The Chair expressed special thanks to Professor Kluger, who was completing his term on the Committee and on the Governing Council. Members noted that the Chair was also completing his term both on the Committee and on the Governing Council, and they thanked him for his leadership over the past four years.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

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Secretary   Chair
July 23, 2010