

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
THE GOVERNING COUNCIL
REPORT NUMBER 133 OF
THE UNIVERSITY AFFAIRS BOARD

February 14, 2006

To the Governing Council,
University of Toronto.

Your Board reports that it met on Tuesday, February 14, 2006 at 4:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Simcoe Hall, with the following members present:

Dr. Robert M. Bennett, In the Chair
Dr. Claude S. Davis, Vice-Chair
Mr. John F. (Jack) Petch, Vice-Chair of the
Governing Council
Professor C. David Naylor, President
Professor David Farrar, Deputy Provost
and Vice-Provost, Students
Ms Anne E. Macdonald,
Director, Ancillary Services
Mr. Husain Aboghodieh
Mr. Christopher M. Collins
Miss Coralie D'Souza
Professor Ian R. McDonald
Mr. Chris McGrath
Dr. John P. Nestor
Mr. Faraz Rahim Siddiqui
Ms Rebecca Spagnolo
Mr. Mahadeo Sukhai
Professor John Wedge

Non-Voting Assessors:

Ms Susan Addario, Director, Student Affairs
Professor Tony Chambers, Associate Vice-
Provost, Students
Mr. Jim Delaney, Assistant Director, Student
Affairs
Mr. Tom Nowers, Assistant Principal, Students &
Executive Director, Student Affairs, University
of Toronto at Scarborough
Mr. Mark Overton, Dean of Student Affairs,
University of Toronto at Mississauga
Ms Elizabeth Sisam, Assistant Vice-President,
Space and Facilities Planning
Mr. Ron Swail, Assistant Vice-President,
Facilities and Services
Ms Marilyn Van Norman, Director, Student Services

Secretariat:

Mr. Neil H. Dobbs
Ms Margaret McKone, Acting Secretary

Regrets:

Ms Katherine Anne Boyd
Mr. Shaun Chen
Mr. Brian Davis
Ms Margaret Hancock

Dr. Joel A. Kirsh
Professor Larry Leith
Mr. Sam Rahimi
Ms Marvi Ricker

In Attendance:

Ms Marvi Ricker, member, the Governing Council
Mr. Geoffrey Matus, member, the Governing Council
Miss Maureen Somerville, member, the Governing Council
Ms Elizabeth Vosburgh, member, the Governing Council
Professor Susan Pfeiffer, Vice-Provost, Graduate Education and Dean, School of Graduate
Studies

In Attendance (cont'd):

Mr. Nouman Ashraf, Anti-Racism and Cultural Diversity Officer
Mr. C.J. Cromwell Simonds, Student Tutor, Centre for Community Partnerships
Dr. Chris Cunningham, Special Advisor to the President
Dr. Heather Driscoll, Director of Operations, Office of the Vice-President, Government and Institutional Relations
Mr. Davis Elisha, Office of Student Services
Ms Deanne Fisher, Program Coordinator, Student Affairs
Ms Lillia Fung, FLC Peer Mentor, Learning Communities, Faculty of Arts and Science
Ms Vinitha Gengatharan, Senior Student Affairs Officer, University of Toronto at Scarborough
Mr. Corey Goldman, Director, First-Year Learning Communities Program, Faculty of Arts and Science
Mr. Patrick Glasgow, Centre for International Health
Ms Ankita Jauhari, Dignitas International
Ms Judy Kopelow, Manager, Centre for International Health
Ms Angela Rita la Gamba, student and Extern Programme participant
Ms Melyssa Lantsman, Vice-Chair, Hillel, the Foundation for Jewish Campus Life
Mr. Ben Liu, Student Life Coordinator, Centre for Community Partnerships
Ms Amyna Mamdani, Peer Academic Leader, University of Toronto at Mississauga
Ms Aida Mamuji, Vice-President, Muslim Students' Association
Ms Laney Marshall, Hart House
Mr. Dale Mullings, Coordinator, Residential Transition Programs, University of Toronto at Mississauga
Mr. Henry Mulhall, Special Projects Officer, Office of the Governing Council
Ms Jennifer Newcombe, Programme Advisor, Social Justice Committee, Hart House
Mr. Femi Okoesusi, student and Extern Programme participant
Mr. Jeff Richardson, Programme Advisor, Social Justice Committee, Hart House
Ms Yvonne Rodney, Director, Career Centre
Mr. Ian Simmie, Student Affairs
Ms Salma Walji, Centre for International Health
Ms Mary Ward, Ombudsperson
Mr. James Wardlaw, Chair, Social Justice Committee, Hart House
Mr. Aaron Yarmoshuk, Centre for International Health

ALL ITEMS ARE REPORTED TO THE GOVERNING COUNCIL FOR INFORMATION.

Chair's Remarks

The Chair thanked Board members as well as members of the University's community for their attendance at this meeting. The co-curricular student experience was a very important initiative of the University's academic plan - Stepping Up – A framework for academic planning at the University of Toronto: 2004-2010 (hereafter referred to as Stepping UP).

The Chair continued that simplistically, education could be defined as the "sharing of knowledge". Providing an-out-of-classroom atmosphere that engaged students with each other, with faculty and with the community, was and should be, an important part of the educational experience of any post-secondary educational institution.

Chair's Remarks (cont'd)

The Chair noted that the evening's update would serve as a valuable tool to Board members in assessing the effectiveness of financial and human resource support that the administration was making to improve the "out of classroom" education for the University's students.

1. Honours

The Chair congratulated Dr. John Wedge on his recent appointment as an Officer of the Order of Canada.

2. Report of the Previous Meeting

Report Number 132 (January 17, 2006) was approved.

3. Business Arising from the Report of the Previous Meeting

There was no business arising from the previous meeting.

4. Report on the Student Experience: From Words to Action

Professor Farrar recalled that one year ago he had reported to the University Affairs Board on the University's results in the 2004 National Survey on Student Engagement. These survey results had provided a detailed description of the University's undergraduate first-entry students, their experiences both inside and outside of the classroom, and clear indications of where institutional change was most needed.

Professor Farrar was now pleased to report that the University's understanding of the student experience had grown both deeper and broader and had led to a number of exciting initiatives that showed great promise in meeting the goals of the University's planning document, *Stepping Up*.

Professor Farrar continued that the University had come to understand the student experience as a confluence of conditions that existed in and around campus environments that impacted the degree to which students engaged with others and their environments and developed knowledge and skills within institutions rather than between them. It was for this reason that the University continued to discuss its progress in as many different venues and contexts as possible.

The University's research on the student experience had now been broadened as a result of a the Graduate and Professional Student Survey (GPSS), conducted in the spring of 2005. The relevant results would be presented later in the meeting by Professor Susan Pfeiffer.

Professor Farrar said that these and other surveys would continue to play an important role as the University assessed its progress in meeting institutional goals of improving the experience of commuter students, enhancing student services, increasing student involvement and sense of community, creating opportunities for participation in community service and increasing student-faculty interaction.

In conclusion, Professor Farrar said that the University was continuing to move forward on interventions, programs and projects that showed great potential in meeting these goals. He was pleased to be able to present to the Board the most promising practices in the enhancement of the student experience.

4. Report on the Student Experience: From Words to Action (cont'd)

(a) Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey (GPSS) Report on the Responses of Graduate Students, 2005 (cont'd)

By means of a PowerPoint presentation, Professor Susan Pfeiffer, Vice-Provost, Graduate Education and Dean, School of Graduate Studies outlined the highlights of the survey, conducted at the University in March and April, 2005.

- Responses to the survey, which had been distributed by email, had been received from 4,833 registered students at the University, amounting to over 40% of the graduate student population - doctoral students (2,053), professional master's students (1,484), research master's students (1,296).
- The key questions had been compared to GPSS results from other Canadian universities and to undergraduate responses from the 2004 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE).
- Among the thirteen questions about various dimensions of program delivery, many showed high levels of satisfaction. High ratings ("Excellent", "Very good" or "Good") from at least 90% of respondents included:
 - the intellectual quality of the faculty;
 - the intellectual quality of fellow students;
 - academic standards in the program; and
 - overall program quality.
- Four questions had yielded ratings of "Poor" from more than 10% of the respondents:
 - program space and facilities;
 - amount of financial support;
 - assistance in finding employment; and
 - the opportunity to interact across disciplines.
- Graduate students reported participating in social activities within their departments and advisory research groups, but less commonly in university-wide residence social activities.
- Many University resources had been used frequently and had been ranked highly by graduate students (e.g. library, computer resources). Others had been ranked highly by a small proportion of students who used them (e.g. International Officer, athletic facilities). Facilities and services that ranked lowest were dining services and parking.

In conclusion, Professor Pfeiffer noted that while graduate students had reported considerable satisfaction and there were indications of strong scholarship and mentoring, there had also been indications of where the University could focus its energies to make improvements. There was agreement between the survey results and *Stepping Up* regarding areas in need of attention. These included financial support, support for interdisciplinarity, and the broad domain of "student experience." Students seeking professional degrees had expressed stronger concerns about funding and about conflicting responsibilities, but were satisfied in large part with their programs. While 90% of doctoral students had reported satisfaction with their academic experience, the survey provided background for future initiatives that could further strengthen the delivery of the University's programs. As in 2002, approximately one quarter of responding graduate students had reported dissatisfaction with their student life. Detailed analysis of these responses would form the basis for discussion and planning. Improvement of the graduate student experience could constructively focus on the strengthening of the University's graduate students' sense of community.

4. Report on the Student Experience: From Words to Action (cont'd)**(a) Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey (GPSS) Report on the Responses of Graduate Students, 2005 (cont'd)**

A copy of the Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey (GPSS) Report on the Responses of Graduate Students, 2005 is available at the following URL:
<http://www.utoronto.ca/govcncl/bac/details/ua/2005-06/uaa20060214-03ii.pdf>

(b) First-Year Learning Communities, Faculty of Arts and Science

Mr. Corey Goldman, Director, First-Year Learning Communities (FLC) Program, and Ms Lillia Fung, FLC Peer Mentor, introduced the program and its highlights.

The FLC, introduced in 2005-06 as a pilot program, had been designed to improve the transitional experience for first-year Life Science students by providing them with the opportunity to meet classmates, develop friendships, form study groups and develop academic and personal skills, as well as introduce students to the resources, opportunities, culture and treasures of the campus and its surrounding community.

Each community comprised 24 students who belonged to the same College and were enrolled in the same sections of Biology, Math, and Chemistry. The groups met bi-weekly outside of the classroom and were facilitated by an upper-year student Peer Mentor under the guidance of a Staff and a Faculty Advisor. Meeting topics addressed three broad transition areas: academic, developmental and social. There was no cost to participants, however, this non-credit activity appeared on their academic transcripts.

Additional information about this program is available at the following URL:
<http://biome.utoronto.ca/flc/>

(c) Spirituality and the Student Experience

This initiative was introduced by: Mr. Nouman Ashraf, Anti-Racism and Cultural Diversity Officer; Ms Melyssa Lantsman, Vice-Chair, Hillel, the Foundation for Jewish Campus Life; and Ms Aida Mamuji, Vice-President, Muslim Students' Association.

Over the past few months, students from very different groups had been working together through the Anti-Racism and Cultural Diversity Office on a new series that explored intersections between faith and various aspects of the student experience. The goal was not agreement with or endorsement of others' ideas, but rather the creation of safe spaces where various campus communities could come together to articulate their views without fear of censorship or retribution.

Upcoming events included:

- *The Feminine and the Divine* - a lively discussion on the intersection of one's spirituality and gender identities;
- *Pilgrimage: A Unique Journey* - a series of presentations on the significance of pilgrimage in various spirituality traditions and its impact on the individual and the communal; and
- *Soul Food: Spirituality, Diet and the Student Experience* - a discussion of how students' sense of self affected the choices they made on a daily basis.

4. Report on the Student Experience: From Words to Action (cont'd)**(c) Spirituality and the Student Experience (cont'd)**

Additional information about this program is available at the following URL:
<http://www.racerelations.utoronto.ca/events.html#Anchor-Spirituality-14210>

(d) rezONE Program, University of Toronto at Mississauga (UTM)

This program was introduced by: Mr. Chris McGrath, Director of Residence; Mr. Dale Mullings, Coordinator, Residential Transition Programs; and Ms Amyna Mamdani, Peer Academic Leader, UTM Residence.

The RezONE program, in collaboration with the Peer Academic Leaders (rezPALs) and Residence Programming Assistants, was an academic and life-based transition program for first-year students living in residence at UTM. RezONE provided a series of programs aimed to assist first-year students with the various challenges that arose in the first year of living away from home, and from studying at university. Although content varied from year to year due to the changing needs of the University's students, participants could expect to develop writing and reading skills, master research techniques for specific academic disciplines, understand their individual learning style to better prepare for tests and exams, and learn some valuable skills for living away from home for the first time. Students attending eight or more rezONE programs would be awarded with a University certificate recognizing them for their participation and completion of the transition program.

Additional information about this program is available at the following URL:
http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/residence/RLIFE_rezPALs.html#rezone

(e) The Extern Program: Career Exploration Through Job Shadowing, Career Centre, St. George Campus

This program was introduced by Ms Yvonne Rodney, Director, Career Centre; and program participants: Ms Angela Rita la Gamba and Mr. Femi Okoesusi.

The Extern Program was a unique career-exploration opportunity designed to help students learn more about a career by taking part in job-shadowing placement. It provided students with an opportunity to explore a career field over a one- to five-day placement with an industry professional.

Participants were afforded the opportunity to discover the positive and negative aspects of a career choice and determine the skills, education requirements, and lifestyle associated with that career. In 2005, the program had industry sponsors for over 550 students in a wide variety of disciplines. Potential Extern activities included:

- shadowing the sponsor and other staff members in their daily work activities;
- touring the sponsor's establishment, departments, and facilities;
- conducting informational interviews with staff;
- observing the work environment and attending meetings; and
- becoming involved in a small project.

Additional information about this program is available at the following URL:
<http://www.careers.utoronto.ca/services/extern/extern4.asp?tr=>

4. Report on the Student Experience: From Words to Action (cont'd)**(f) The Unza Workshop, Faculty of Physical Education and Health (FPEH)**

This initiative was introduced by Professor Bruce Kidd¹, Dean, Faculty of Physical Education and Health (FPEH).

The Unza workshop was a unique collaboration, between FPEH students and the University of Zambia, which focused on the use of physical education, sport and traditional games to address HIV/AIDS through the education sector in Africa. It brought together physical educators and development through sport practitioners from Canada, the United Kingdom, Namibia, Tanzania and Zambia. The workshop would contribute to the Zambian government's stated goals of reintroducing and revitalizing physical education in Zambian state schools as had been announced by His Excellency President Levy Patrick Mwanawasa in June 2005.

The workshop would be the first step in a major collaboration between the Universities of Zambia and Toronto and other partners to revitalize physical education in Zambian schools. A primary focus of the universities' collaboration was to strengthen the capacity of the University of Zambia to deliver exemplary, evidence-based teacher training in physical education for Zambia's fifteen teacher-training colleges. This strategy was intended to contribute significantly to the realization of broad social development and the UN's Millennium Goals (MDGs).

(g) Hart House**(i) Social Justice Committee**

This initiative was introduced by Mr. James Wardlaw, Chair Social Justice Committee; and Mr. Jeff Richardson, Programme Advisor, Social Justice Committee.

Dedicated to raising awareness about various social and environmental issues, the Social Justice Committee hosted events that supported its mandate and provided an open forum for members of various on- and off-campus social justice groups to meet and collaborate.

Its areas of responsibilities included:

- Social Justice Network, which connected groups within and external to the University;
- Food Security, defined as a condition in which all people at all times could acquire safe, nutritionally adequate and personally acceptable foods that were accessible in a manner that maintained human dignity;
- Environment, working in collaboration with the Students' Administrative Council (SAC), the Committee held an Environmental Week each year, featuring the Creative Sustainability Fair; and
- Social Development, the Committee organized educational events such as workshops, conferences and panel discussions to raise awareness about important social justice issues affecting students on campus as well as people across the world. Issues of interest included International Women's Day, Buy Nothing Day, education and citizenship.

Additional information about this program is available at the following URL:
<http://socialjustice.sa.utoronto.ca/what.html>

¹ Professor Kidd is on administrative leave for the period September 1 to March 31, 2006.

4. Report on the Student Experience: From Words to Action (cont'd)

(ii) Creativity Conceived Program

One of Hart House's recent initiatives, Creativity Conceived was its first House-wide theme, presenting unusual ways to contemplate the creativity which underlay everything they did. Launched as part of the City of Toronto's celebration of T.O. Live with Culture, from September 2005 to April 2006, Hart House had linked with campus and community partners to offer vibrant, multidisciplinary programming. The focus was wide-ranging and sought to recognize and appreciate the diverse forms that creativity played in individual's lives.

Additional information about this program is available at the following URL:
http://www.harthouse.utoronto.ca/userfiles/page_attachments/Library/3/hartbeat2_2987656.pdf

(h) Tutors in the Classroom, Centre for Community Partnerships, Office of Student Affairs

This initiative was introduced by Mr. Ben Liu, Student Life Coordinator, Centre for Community Partnership and Mr. C. J. Cromwell Simonds, Student Tutor.

Working through the Centre for Community Partnerships, the University of Toronto had built an exciting partnership with the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) to support the TDSB Tutors in the Classroom Programme. Through this programme, University of Toronto students were afforded the opportunity to provide tutoring to Grade 9 students in need of academic support. Grade 9 was a critical year in the life of a high school student, and TDSB research showed that those who did not achieve at least eight credits by the end of Grade 9 were at risk of not graduating from high school, let alone attending university.

The Centre for Community Partnerships offered this initiative, in partnership with the TDSB as an opportunity for University students to use their knowledge and skills to benefit students in the secondary system. Participants were provided with training and preparation to help build capacity in their local community and to contribute to the City of Toronto's efforts to revitalize its neighbourhoods.

Additional information about this program is available at the following URL:
<http://www.sa.utoronto.ca/details.php?wscid=291>

(i) Departmental Student Associations (DSAs), University of Toronto at Scarborough

This initiative was introduced by Mr. Tom Nowers, Assistant Principal, Students & Executive Director, Student Affairs, University of Toronto at Scarborough.

These new Departmental Student Associations sought to enhance faculty-student interaction through the creation of new department level opportunities – one per each of the six broad academic departments. They were academically aligned student associations, elected by the students and with strong ties to their departments' Chair, program supervisors and other faculty. The Associations were provided with their own space, telephone, voice mail, computer and other office fittings as well as an email alias and the right to post to the UTSC Intranet. Their constitutions were recognized and signed by their departmental Chair, the Vice-Principal Academic and Dean and the DSA president.

4. Report on the Student Experience: From Words to Action (cont'd)

(i) Departmental Student Associations (DSAs), University of Toronto at Scarborough (cont'd)

The purpose of the DSAs was to:

- provide a focused empowerment of the faculty-student relationship;
- enhance peer-to-peer relationships within a common academic interest context;
- promote academic engagement, motivation and a higher level of departmental accountability to students; and
- help make a growing campus re-capture some of its intimacy.

Broadly, defined, the mandate of the DSAs included:

- formal advisory committees, which engaged the faculty by discussing academic issues, new student annual orientation, hosted social events and organized periodic speakers;
- participatory input with the departmental academic planning exercises;
- consultation regarding new faculty hiring, and a possible role on search committees; and
- encouraging relationships with industry to improve access to cooperative job placements and other opportunities for all students during and after university.

(j) Discussion

A student member cited the results of the 2004 National Survey on Student Engagement, indicating that there were many opportunities for the University's students to become involved in activities outside of the classroom at the University. He encouraged the administration to explore any reasons that students might have for not availing themselves of the many opportunities available to them and to address these accordingly. Professor Farrar added that many of the programs described in the meeting were scalable and could be enhanced to accommodate more students if the demand grew.

A student member commended the programs described, indicating that she had not been aware of their existence. She suggested that there be greater publicity of these programs, which in many cases provided opportunities for the University's students to become leaders.

A student member echoed the comments of his colleagues, adding that there could be greater involvement in these out-of-the-classroom initiatives by the University's graduate student cohort. He hoped that this would be considered as the programs were further developed.

The Chair thanked the many participants for their informative and engaging presentations.

5. Other Business

(a) The University of Toronto Centre for International Health (CIH)

The Chair drew members' attention to the University's Center for International Health, which partnered many estates to model programs for developing countries, establish local community health-care facilities, foster the principles of scholarship, education, and care delivery, all of which were at the very core of the University's mission of its Health Science Partnerships.

The CIH was recognized as an important model which aided developing countries in becoming self-sufficient in community health care provision. On April 11, 2007, the Community-Campus

5. Other Business (cont'd)**(a) The University of Toronto Centre for International Health (CIH) (cont'd)**

Partnerships for Health (CCPH) would hold its 10th anniversary conference in Toronto. CCPH was a non-profit organization that promoted health between communities and higher educational institutions. It was a growing network of over a 1000 international communities and campuses. Much of the success of the CIH was attributable to its Director, Dr. David Zacus.

The Chair recognized the guests that were in attendance from these organizations:

Ms Judy Kopelow, Manager, Strategic Initiatives CIH;
Mr. Patrick Glasgow, Chair of the student committee, CIH;
Ms Salma Walji, a fourth-year nursing student who had a placement with CIH; and
Mr. Aaron Yarmoshuk, Director, CIH HIV/AIDS Initiative –Africa.

The Chair continued that one of the very important partners in CIH was Dignitas International, whose director Dr. James Orbinski, had developed and was engaged in a very successful community health-care provision / research / education model in Malawi.

Also in attendance was Ms Ankita Jauhari, a fourth- year student at UTSC, who in the past six months had established the very effective “Student Initiative program” at Dignitas.

In conclusion, the Chair noted that in coming years members would hear a great deal more about CIH’s role in international health-care provision.

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Secretary

Chair

March 17, 2006