

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

**REPORT NUMBER 130 OF THE UNIVERSITY AFFAIRS BOARD**

**September 27, 2005**

To the Governing Council,  
University of Toronto.

Your Board reports that it met on Tuesday, September 27, 2005 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 Davis, Vice-Chair  
Professor David Farrar, Deputy Provost  
and Vice-Provost, Students  
Ms. Anne E. Macdonald,  
Director, Ancillary Services  
Mr. Husain Aboghodieh  
Ms. Katherine Anne Boyd  
Mr. Shaun Chen  
Mr. Christopher M. Collins  
Miss Coralie D'Souza  
Mr. Brian Davis  
Ms. Margaret Hancock  
Professor Larry Leith  
Professor Ian R. McDonald  
Mr. Chris McGrath  
Dr. John P. Nestor  
Mr. Sam Rahimi  
Ms. Marvi Ricker  
Mr. Faraz Rahim Siddiqui  
Ms. Rebecca Spagnolo  
Mr. Mahadeo Sukhai

Dr. John Wedge

Non-Voting Assessors:

Ms Susan Addario, Director, Student Affairs  
Mr. Jim Delaney, Assistant Director, Student  
Affairs  
Mr. Tom Nowers, Assistant Principal,  
Student Affairs, University of Toronto at  
Scarborough  
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. Andrew Drummond, Secretary  
Ms. Cristina Oke  
Mr. Henry Mulhall

Regrets:

Dr. Joel A. Kirsh

In Attendance:

Ms. Connie Guberman, Status of Women Officer and Special Advisor on Equity Issues  
Professor Angela Hildyard, Vice-President, Human Resources and Equity  
Professor David Naylor, President-Designate

ALL ITEMS ARE REPORTED FOR INFORMATION.

**REPORT NUMBER 130 OF THE UNIVERSITY AFFAIRS BOARD – September 27, 2005****1. Welcome and Orientation**

The Chair welcomed all members and guests to the meeting, and asked them to introduce themselves.

He then reminded members of the detailed orientation materials sent with the agenda packages, which addressed how members were expected to conduct themselves as members of the University's senior governance system. He urged members to refer to it as necessary, but if they had questions that were not addressed, they should feel free to contact the Chair, members with extensive experience, or the Secretary.

The Chair reminded members that the governance system in place at the University of Toronto was both democratic and participatory; he placed emphasis on the 'participatory' aspect of governance, noting that members' effective participation and understanding of issues would be required in order to ensure that the Board functioned as intended. If members required information on individual agenda items, they were asked to inform the Secretary well in advance in order that detailed questions could be answered.

The Chair then described the Calendar of Business for the Board, which detailed the dates and agenda items for the year's meetings. Although it was subject to change, the website on which it was posted would be updated regularly.

Types of information that would come to the Board included both items for approval and reports for information. Even though many items were for information, they were often important accountability reports and provided a level of information that would inform other discussions at the Board. In particular, the reports relating to the quality of the student experience at the University were key to the implementation of the *Stepping UP* framework for academic planning. The highest priority in *Stepping UP* was the improvement of the student experience, and the University Affairs Board, as the Board responsible for campus life, was therefore a crucial governance body for the implementation of the framework. The Board would hear from divisions whose responsibility it was to maintain and enrich an environment of excellent student experience; in particular, Student Affairs, Student Services, Athletics and Recreation, Hart House and Ancillary Services would all be presenting operating plans, and each office had the responsibility to assist students or to enrich campus life.

The Board was probably unique in post-secondary institutional governance. Most other universities were governed by a Board of Governors for financial and business matters and a Senate for academic matters. In the unicameral system in place for the University of Toronto, however, the University Affairs Board was put in place to represent and prioritize a third element – campus and student life. At the Board, students had the opportunity to speak on and be participatory in how their non-academic fees were spent, through bodies such as the Council on Student Services (COSS) and the Council on Athletics and Recreation.

Because the Board addressed the non-academic needs of the University community, the Chair asked individual members of the Board to discuss how the Board addressed issues pertinent to their estates. Mr. Collins informed members, especially student members, of the privilege of serving on the Board, especially given the impact of the Board's decisions on students and student life. He reminded members that the first priority of *Stepping UP* was the enhancement of the student experience, and, therefore, it was an excellent time not only to be a student at the University of Toronto, but also to be a member of the University Affairs Board. He then discussed the value that student members could add before and during discussions of the various operating plans presented to the Board for approval in the spring, noting that it was incumbent upon Board members to ensure that the fees collected were put to the best possible use and to become familiar with the services themselves. Lastly, he noted that the best interests of the University, which all Board members were expected to promote, were invariably in the best interests of

**1. Welcome and Orientation (cont'd.)**

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students also. To that end, student members should become informed and participate vigorously at the Board.

Professor Ian McDonald informed members that, although he was newly appointed to the Board for 2005-06, his first governance assignment had been as a faculty member to the Board. He stated that the Board was unlike any other governance body at the University because of the very small number of faculty members and the emphasis on the student viewpoint. The element of collegiality among members was very strong, and he noted with gratitude that that element was reflected in the source of members, with all three campuses, with their different approaches to common goals, well-represented. He urged members to consider carefully any statements made by the highly competent and effective student service professionals who attended the Board as assessors.

Mr. Brian Davis, speaking as a staff member of the Board, echoed the comments made by Mr. Collins and Professor Ian McDonald, informing members that it was important for them to consider the implications of decisions taken by the Board, especially their impact upon students and staff. All members should consider the potential for decisions to enhance the University. He urged members to ask difficult, yet respectful, questions of assessors and to insist upon accountability. Given the range of issues dealt with by governance, members should expect to focus their detailed attention on a small number of issues in which they might be interested, while maintaining a level of more general awareness of other issues.

Dr. Nestor then spoke of the Board from the perspective of an alumnus. Alumni, having been students of the University, did not represent any particular political or parochial point of view, but maintained their interest in the University because of their previous experiences. The Board, in his view, represented the community interest of the University outside the classroom; as a result, the Board was a valuable and important element of the University's governance structure, especially given the importance of the student experience for the academic planning process.

Professor Farrar thanked the four members who had provided their comments, noting that he was impressed by the depth of knowledge at the Board. He felt well-supported in his role as a result. He reiterated that it was a great time to be a student at the University of Toronto, and noted his commitment, and that of the entire administration, to ensure a high-quality student experience.

The Chair thanked all those who had spoken. He then noted that all members of the Board volunteered their time as trustees to assess policies and initiatives. He urged all members to respect the duty of the administration to manage the institution, while maintaining and strengthening the Board's responsibility to assess how the institution was managed.

**2. Report of the Previous Meeting**

Report Number 129 (May 31, 2005) was approved.

**3. Business Arising from the Report**

There was no business arising from the Report of the previous meeting.

**4. Calendar of Business for 2005-06**

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The Chair reminded members that the Calendar of Business laid out the basic plans for the Board and when individual items would be appearing before it. He urged members to examine the Calendar throughout the year.

**5. Report on Approvals under Summer Executive Authority**

The Chair reported that no approvals had been requested or made in 2005 for items under the Board's authority.

**6. Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA) University of Toronto Accessibility Plan, 2005-2006**

The Chair welcomed Professor Angela Hildyard, Vice-President, Human Resources and Equity, and Ms. Connie Guberman, Status of Women Officer and Special Advisor on Equity Issues, to the meeting. The Chair informed the Board that the Plan before them was being presented to all three Boards of the Governing Council, with the Academic Board as the lead. The University Affairs Board received the Plan for information because of its responsibility for equity issues and initiatives.

Ms. Guberman made a presentation to the Board detailing the accomplishments of the previous year's Plan, as well as the priorities for the upcoming year's Plan. She noted that 2005 marked the third year that the University was required to submit a plan, and that the proposed initiatives outlined what was possible to achieve over a one-year time frame. The goals of the ODA Plan were built upon the goals of *Stepping UP*, the current academic planning framework. The Plan upheld the *Statement of Commitment for Persons with Disabilities*, which had received approval by Governing Council in 2004, and reaffirmed the University's commitment to reduce barriers to participation. The process used to arrive at the plan was highly collaborative and consultative, with numerous persons with disabilities serving on the main Committee and its eight subcommittees. The process of developing the plan had in itself pointed out elements that could be incorporated within it.

Ms. Guberman informed the Board that, even though the preparation of the report was mandated by the Government of Ontario, no additional resources had been provided in order to meet institutional requirements. However, the University had been imaginative in its application of accessibility enhancements, with costs of accommodation built into capital projects and facilities renewal initiatives. As a result, the University was pursuing a holistic approach to accommodation, with a much greater cross-institutional understanding than would be possible with other approaches.

The Plan for 2004-05 had 43 initiatives, and the University had been successfully meeting its policy and legislative requirements. The University understood that to take a proactive approach was more beneficial to the institution than the alternatives, which were usually more expensive and less effective. The Vice-President, Human Resources and Equity had stated that the University had a mandate to be an employer of choice, and that commitment extended to equity.

Among the previous year's Plan's accomplishments were the 'Face of a Great Community' campaign, the development at the University of Toronto at Scarborough (UTSC) of a university instructional design booklet, which would be distributed to the Principals, Deans, Academic Directors and Chairs (PDAD&C), the student-run Access Centre, which helped coordinate many services, establishing of purchasing guidelines for accessible technology, better and more

**6. Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA) University of Toronto Accessibility Plan, 2005-2006**

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appropriate online maps of the institution, and a focus on mental health issues. Plans for future years would include a focus on identification of and response to student stressors.

There were 48 goals listed in the 2005-06 Plan, which included the exploration of the intersection of disability with other services, the development of an inventory of mental health issues facing the University, and a review of institutional dispute resolution mechanisms. The University was exploring the implications of the new Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), which received royal assent in June, 2005. Lastly, Ms. Guberman thanked the many people who had assisted with the development of the Plan, some of whom were members of and assessors to the Board: Mr. Jim Delaney, Ms. Margaret Hancock, Ms. Anne Macdonald, Ms. Elizabeth Sisam, Mr. Mahadeo Sukhai and Ms. Marilyn Van Norman.

A member asked about the impact of the AODA upon the University. Ms. Guberman replied that she did not know, given the timelines to comply by 2020. Informally, however, the University was on track to compliance; furthermore, the AODA appeared to respect the implications arising from the age and heritage status of significant elements of the physical plant.

A member asked what measures could be put in place to ensure that feedback from the community at large was incorporated into the report. Ms. Guberman responded that it would be difficult to track reliable data of anecdotal reports; by comparison, physical improvements, especially those related to capital projects, were more 'trackable'. The Office of the Vice-President, Human Resources and Equity, had, however, discussed the possibility of a survey of 'climate' at the University.

A member asked that the Instructional Design resource cited in the Report be more broadly distributed to include administrative managers and department heads. Given the significant amount of workplace instruction that occurred at the University, in addition to the managers' and department heads' responsibility to accommodate the specific needs of staff members with disabilities, the resource would be a definite asset in the design and implementation of workplace training programs and other initiatives.

A member asked why the Plan did not set goals for the redevelopment of specific capital projects. He also asked whether there was any obligation to keep elements of the University developed by previous plans, such as the Student Access Centre. Ms. Guberman responded that the Plan required the University to submit its plan on an annual basis, and, given the construction cycle and the nature of capital funding, to plan the redevelopment of specific sites would not be appropriate. On the issue of providing funding to maintain gains made under plans, Ms. Guberman responded that the University was bound to meet its existing commitments, but the legislation did not require it to do so indefinitely. Ms. Sisam added that all capital projects that were considered were designed to enhance accessibility. A member cited the example of the Trudeau Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies as a prime example of the enhancement of accessibility with a major renovation.

Another member applauded the ODA Plan's authors, noting that when he began his career as a faculty member, it would not have occurred to him to consider instructional design in preparing a lesson plan, but he was pleased that the University of Toronto at Scarborough had taken a lead in doing so. He then stated that an inventory of accessible meeting rooms would be desirable because of student needs. Lastly, he noted that an emphasis of the Plan was on mental health

**6. Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA) University of Toronto Accessibility Plan, 2005-2006**  
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issues, and though he acknowledged the need, he noted that it would be difficult to identify when those issues might come into play.

### 7. Report of the Senior Assessor

In addition to his written report, Professor Farrar informed the Board that residence occupancy, which had been an issue of concern to the Board, was at a healthy level. The residences, which were fully occupied, had regained a healthy mix of first-year *versus* senior-year students from previous years. First-year occupancy stood at 40% at the St. George campus, 45% at the Scarborough Campus, and 55% at the Mississauga Campus. Demand for residence space continued to be strong on all three campuses.

In response to the effects of Hurricane Katrina in Louisiana and other Gulf States, the University of Toronto had opened up spaces and waived tuition for students who were unable to attend their Universities as a result of hurricane damage. The Chair added that the students were still paying their tuition, but to their 'home' institutions, which were felt to require the funds to recover from the disaster.

Professor Farrar then announced that he anticipated the appointment of an Associate Vice-Provost, Students, who would be responsible for assisting him in the administration's plans to enhance the student experience. Although it was not the Board's responsibility to approve such an appointment (it was under the authority of the Governing Council), he felt it important to acknowledge the Board's general responsibility for the area.

Lastly, Professor Farrar reported that the Lash Miller/McLennan Garden was almost complete, and would be opening in October, 2005. He invited members to observe the garden in its incomplete form during a reception for Board members to be held immediately following the meeting in the Davenport Atrium. He summarized improvements to accessibility to both the Physics and Chemistry buildings as a result of the garden construction, as well as improvements to physical accessibility within the Chemistry Building teaching laboratories.

A member asked if there was a written policy on response to disasters, or whether a particular process was used to determine the institutional response. Professor Farrar indicated that there was not one, but was developed on an *ad hoc* basis to determine the most appropriate response given the circumstances.

A member asked if the guarantee provided to first-year students that residence space would be available was being met. Professor Farrar responded in the affirmative. Mr. Nowers noted that although it had occasionally been difficult to meet the first-year guarantee at the University of Toronto at Scarborough, it had done so, despite enormous demand for space by returning students.

Another member asked if the 89 Chestnut residence was full, given significant vacancies in the first years of operation. Professor Farrar responded that, as members of the community had realized that the distance to Chestnut Street was not as great as imagined, and that the service provided was excellent, word of mouth had spread that the residence was a desirable place to live. In addition, two of the floors had been designated as graduate student residences, and many international students were assigned space at Chestnut. Ms. Macdonald added that the time between purchase and occupancy by the University was very brief, and that implementing new residences took time and effort. A member of the Board noted that the 89 Chestnut Residence, where she had lived, was an excellent place to live with a vibrant community.

### 8. Other Business

#### (a) Capital Projects - Update

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Ms. Sisam updated the Board on the status of three projects, all of which the Board had considered at its meeting of May 31, 2005. On the Multi-Faith Centre, students were very involved in the planning, and architects had been selected. Because of unanticipated delays in the move of the current occupant of the facility, the projected opening of the Centre was planned for December, 2006. In future meetings, Ms. Sisam would be able to update the Board on some of the planned design for the Centre.

On the Varsity development, weekly meetings had been occurring to review aspects of the design of the facility, most recently over a discussion over the relative merits of concrete and steel bleachers and on the different types of all-weather fields that might be used. In addition, the ‘bubble’ technology had several variations. The City of Toronto had been apprised of all plans relating to the site, and phase I of the project was underway. One variance from approved zoning was anticipated, namely, that the height of the ‘bubble’ would be higher than zoning allowed. The University would apply for a variance at a later date.

The Lash Miller/McLennan Courtyard was scheduled to open on October 15, 2005. Ms. Sisam applauded the creative efforts of numerous members of the university community to arrange for the garden to go ahead, and a workplan was underway to assist in the planting of additional trees and shrubs to improve the environment further.

The Chair thanked Ms. Sisam for her report.

**9. Date of the Next Meeting**

The Chair informed members that the next meeting would take place at 4:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber of Simcoe Hall on October 25, 2005.

On a motion duly moved and seconded,

The meeting continued *in camera*.

**10. Council on Student Services – Chair – Appointment**

On a motion duly moved and seconded,

YOUR BOARD APPROVED

THAT Mr. Jeff Peters be appointed Chair of the Council on Students Services, effective immediately and continuing until June 30, 2006.

The meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

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Secretary

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Chair

September 30, 2005

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