

Report for the 2025 Elections

for the Governing Council, the Academic Board, University of Toronto Mississauga and University of Toronto Scarborough Campus Councils and their Standing Committees

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1.0 Introduction

The purpose of the Report is to provide information about the 2025 Governing Council elections and to indicate areas for discussion and revisions to the *Guidelines* for future elections.

2.0 Revision of the *Election Guidelines 2024* for 2025

Several revisions to the *Election Guidelines 2024* were made to create the *Election Guidelines 2025*, as noted in the table below. The process involved an in-depth review by all Deputy Returning Officers (DROs).

Other editorial changes were made to use more precise and consistent language and terms throughout the *Guidelines.* Where necessary, text was revised to provide greater direction to the reader and to improve clarity.

CATEGORY	ORIGINAL	REVISED	NOTES
DOCUMENT YEAR	2024	2025	Throughout document, year updated from 2024 to 2025
KEY DATES	2024 Election Schedule	2025 Election Schedule	All election-related dates updated to reflect the 2025 schedule (nominations, campaigning, voting periods)
LOCATION CHANGES	UTSC Access <i>Ability</i> Services in Room AA142, Arts and Administration Building	(p.25) Room IA5105, Sam Ibrahim Building 12651050 Military Trail, Scarborough, Ontario, M1C 1A4	Updated location and building name for Student Services at UTSC
MEMBERSHIP UPDATES	Multiple member changes across various councils	Various new appointments	Numerous updates reflecting results of previous election
CONSTITUENCY DEFINITIONS	Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures	(p.41) Department of Slavic and East European Languages and Cultures	Constituency definition for GC Teaching Staff IA. Name change approved in June 2024
	N/A	(p.41) Centre for Indigenous Studies	Constituency definition for GC Teaching Staff IB. Centre for Indigenous Studies has been added as they now have major appointments and are an EDU:A
SPENDING LIMITS	Specific amounts listed (e.g., UTM Undergraduate Students: \$734)	Listed as "TBC" (To Be Confirmed)	Spending limits for 2025 to be determined upon receipt of final enrolment report
LINKS	Updated link	Many URLs replaced with descriptive text	Links that were broken have also been updated

The Elections Committee approved the *Election Guidelines 2025* at its meeting on November 28, 2024. The revised *Guidelines* were effective January 1, 2025, and were publicly posted on the Office of the Governing Council's *Elections* webpage.

3.0 Use of the Nomination Management System

The Nomination Management System (NMS), introduced in 2024, continued to demonstrate its value during the 2025 election cycle. Designed to streamline the nomination process for candidates and reduce manual workload for staff, the system has quickly become a central feature of election administration for the Office of the Governing Council.

In 2025, the system saw growth in engagement in terms of the number of individuals who accessed the system, explored its features, and initiated nomination forms. While not all of these users submitted nominations, their interaction with the platform reflects increased awareness and early interest in governance participation. These exploratory interactions are now being tracked as part of broader engagement metrics, and they indicate the system's effectiveness in generating interest.

On the administrative side, substantial enhancements were made to the system's backend functionality, providing the Chief Returning Officer (CRO) and Deputy Returning Officers (DROs) with new tools to track submissions, manage status updates, and allocate their time more effectively. These improvements have greatly enhanced the team's ability to respond to candidate inquiries, monitor progress across constituencies, and ensure accurate reporting.

As a result of these developments, the NMS is no longer just a submission tool, it is now a key driver of both candidate engagement and administrative efficiency. Continued refinements will support future elections and help advance the University's commitment to accessible and transparent governance.

4.0 Outreach to Promote Opportunities in Governance and Elections

As in previous years, many steps were taken to promote the elections for seats on the Governing Council, Academic Board, and the UTM and UTSC Campus Councils and their Standing Committees.

Proactive approaches by the CRO and DROs on all three campuses to engage students, administrative staff, and teaching staff included a series of educational forums (including use of governance orientation videos) and other outreach initiatives delivered both in-person and virtually using the Zoom videoconferencing platform. These initiatives were undertaken prior to the nomination period and included focused communications and advertising, as well as election information sessions.

The 2025 Call for Nominations and Voting Period was publicized as follows:

- In-person information sessions were held on Monday, November 18 and Tuesday, November 19, 2024, for students; and on Friday, November 22, 2024, for teaching staff constituencies; invites to all students, administrative staff and teaching staff were sent the week of November 11, 2024; these also promoted on the Governing Council website;
- Additional *one-on-one* in-person and virtual information sessions were offered to those eligible to seek election but who were unable to attend one of the scheduled information sessions;
- Virtual information sessions for prospective nominees and candidates at UTM were held on Tuesday, November 19, 2024;
- Virtual information sessions for prospective nominees and candidates at UTSC were held on Tuesday, November 19, 2024.
- In a memorandum to all registered students sent on December 16, 2024;

- In weekly Vice-Provost Students' e-newsletters "9 *New Things*" in January 2025 (nomination period) and February 2024 (voting period);
- In a digital promotions strategy using electronic screens throughout UTM and UTSC;
- In December 2024, targeted memoranda were sent to administrative staff, students, teaching staff, and librarians at UTM and UTSC to promote the election;
- In updated announcements on the Office of the Governing Council website, which included information on the UTM and UTSC Campus Council (and their bodies) elections;
- In a memorandum sent to post-graduate medical trainees in December 2024 and January 2025;
- In customized e-mail messages sent to divisional leaders at all three campuses asking for assistance in promoting participation in the 2025 elections;
- By the Chairs of the Academic Board and University Affairs Board, and Governing Council at meetings of the respective bodies in December and by the Chairs of the UTM and UTSC Campus Council, Campus Affairs and Academic Affairs Committees at their meetings in January and early February 2025;
- By contacting the offices of Deans whose divisions had upcoming vacancies on the Academic Board and the Academic Affairs Committees at UTM and UTSC for teaching staff seats;
- On the Governing Council Elections website (homepage);
- Listing in the *Provost's Weekly Digest* (January and March 2024);
- Announcement seeking candidates in the UTM Express (December 2024 and January 2025)
- On the <u>U of T events webpage</u> during the campaign period;
- In a mass email sent on January 7, 2025, to all students and post-graduate medical trainees eligible to participate in the elections. Similar targeted emails to members of the various estates were sent by UTM and UTSC;
- On the U of T student portal (*Accessible Campus Online Resource Network* ACORN) between January 7 and 17, 2025;
- In a follow-up email to students who had expressed interest in serving on the Council (i.e. attended earlier information sessions and/or sent emails requesting information about the election process); and
- On social media platforms administered by University of Toronto, Communications.

The methods listed above were also used to publicize the Voting Period in February 2025, including the listing of all candidate statements for Governing Council on the Elections website; additionally, the listing of all students, teaching staff and administrative staff candidate statements for UTSC and UTM Campus Council and Standing Committees seats were also published online.

5.0 Nominations & Elections

5.1 Governing Council

The nomination period for seats on the Governing Council, Academic Board and UTM and UTSC Campus Councils and their Standing Committees opened on Tuesday, January 7, 2025, at 12:00 noon and closed on Thursday, January 16, 2025, at 5:00 p.m.

The nomination period was re-opened for two (2) Part-time Undergraduate Student seats, held between Tuesday, January 21, 2025, at 12:00 noon and Monday, January 27, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. Five (5) nominations were received, and an election was held during the regular campaign and voting period.

The NMS was used to receive submissions for each constituency and access was made available both through the Governing Council website and e-mail notifications.

Upon the close of the nomination period(s), elections were required for:

- Eight (8) student seats
- Three (3) teaching staff seats in Constituencies IC, IV, and V
- One (1) administrative staff seat

The elected candidates were:

Administrative Staff

• Sarosh Jamal (Office of the CIO), re-elected.

Students

- Full-time Undergraduate Constituency I: Albert (Zhongheng) Pan, Rishi Shah
- Full-time Undergraduate Constituency II: Jay-Daniel Baghbanan, Kevin Li
- Part-time Undergraduate: Susan Froom, Martina Gouda
- Graduate Constituency I: Evan Kai Pang Chan
- Graduate Constituency II: David Gren

Teaching Staff

- Constituency IC: Adam Stinchcombe (Department of Mathematics)
- Constituency IV: Giovanni Grasselli (Civil and Mineral Engineering)
- Constituency V: Dina Reiss (Medicine), Paul Tenenbein (Anesthesiology and Pain Medicine)

A by-election was held to fill the remaining one-year term for the Governing Council Teaching Staff seat in Constituency VIII (Ontario Institute for Studies in Education), following the retirement of Douglas McDougall. The nomination period ran from Tuesday, April 22 to Tuesday, April 29, 2025, and Angela Pyle (Applied Psychology & Human Development) was declared elected on May 9, 2025.

5.2 Academic Board

Sixteen (16) teaching staff and librarian seats on the Academic Board were open for election in 2025. The majority of seats were filled by acclamation, with an election required for five (5) seats in the Faculty of Arts and Science.

The elected and acclaimed candidates were:

Acclaimed (No election held)

- Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering: Charles Q. Jia (Chemical Engineering and Applied Chemistry)
- Faculty of Music: Aiyun Huang (Music)
- Faculty of Kinesiology and Physical Education: Luc Tremblay (Kinesiology and Physical Education)
- Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work: Ramona Alaggia (Social Work)
- Joseph L. Rotman School of Management: John Oesch (Rotman School of Management)
- Ontario Institute for Studies in Education: Henrjeta Mece (Social Justice Education)
- University of Toronto Mississauga: Alison Syme (Visual Studies)
- University of Toronto Scarborough: Natalia Breuss (Computer and Mathematical Sciences) and Elaine Khoo (Centre for Teaching and Learning).

Election Held

- Faculty of Arts and Science (5 seats):
 - Paul Downes (English)
 - Ania Harlick (Physics)
 - Nazanin Khazra (Economics)
 - Hang-Sun Kim (Germanic Languages and Literatures)
 - o Rosa Saverino (French)

Vacancies

- Temerty Faculty of Medicine: Three (3) seats remained unfilled.
- John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design: One (1) seat remained unfilled.

All elected and acclaimed candidates will serve from July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2028, unless otherwise noted.

A full list of acclaimed and elected candidates can be viewed on the <u>Elections website</u>.

5.3 UTM and UTSC Campus Councils and their Standing Committees

This was the 13th year elections were held for the UTM and UTSC Campus Council's and their Standing Committees. The virtual information sessions held at UTM and UTSC generated interest among all the estates and constituencies.

5.3.1 University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM)

UTM Campus Council

- Undergraduate Students (3 seats, 7 candidates):
 - Charleson Cao, Aryaman Chopra, and Jack Zhang were elected.

Note: Albert (Zhongheng) Pan, who received the most votes, was elected to Governing Council and therefore did not assume the Campus Council seat.

- Graduate Students (1 seat):
 - Farhan Karim Majumder was acclaimed.
- Teaching Staff (1 seat):
 - Sheliza Ibrahim (Institute for the Study of University Pedagogy) was acclaimed.

UTM Campus Affairs Committee

- Undergraduate Students (5 seats, 5 candidates):
 - Shakhriyor Bakhtiyorov, Alice Chan, Samuel Kamalendran, Aaisha T. Mirzada, and Ottavia Paluch were all acclaimed.
- Graduate Students (1 seat, 2 candidates, election held):
 - Harleen Kaur was elected.
- Teaching Staff (1 seat, 3 candidates, election held):
 - Rosalind Murray (Biology) was elected.
- Administrative Staff (2 seats):
 - Laura Ferlito and Adriana Grimaldi were acclaimed.
- By-Election Administrative Staff:
 - A by-election was held to fill a vacated seat. Carolyn Loos (Department of Anthropology) was acclaimed on May 9, 2025.

UTM Academic Affairs Committee

- Undergraduate Students (5 seats, 9 candidates, election held):
 - Shakhriyor Bakhtiyorov, Kiara Blaic, Hamza Faiyaz-Ul-Haque, Saad Hussain, and Ananth B. Prasad were elected.

- Graduate Students (2 seats):
 - Yeshoda Harry-Paul and Nasha Sethna were acclaimed.
- Teaching Staff (5 seats):
 - Barend Beekhuizen, Randy Besco, Sarah Hillewaert, Andrew Sepielli, and Meghan Sutherland were acclaimed.
- Librarian (1 seat):
 - Catherine MacGregor was acclaimed.

5.3.2 University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC)

UTSC Campus Council

- Undergraduate Students (3 seats, 11 candidates, election held):
 - o Anisa Persaud, Faith Opoku Agyemang, and Shennel Simpson were elected.

Note: Rishi Shah, though receiving the highest vote count, was elected to Governing Council and did not assume a Campus Council seat.

- Graduate Students (1 seat):
 - No nominations were received; the seat remains vacant, and a by-election will be held in Fall 2025.
- Teaching Staff (2 seats):
 - Elaine Khoo and Rachel Sturge were acclaimed.

UTSC Academic Affairs Committee

- Undergraduate Students (5 seats):
 - Ace Tabisaura, Christine Lorence, Folakunmi Awofisayo, Inaaya Imran, and Sukaina Abbas were acclaimed.
- Graduate Students (2 seats):
 - No nominations were received; both seats remain vacant, and a by-election will be held in Fall 2025.
- Teaching Staff (8 seats):
 - Antonio Sorge, Jessica Dere, Sarah D. King, Emily Bell, Rajyashree N Reddy, and Jessica Wilson were acclaimed.
 - Two seats remain vacant, and a by-election will be held in Fall 2025.
- Librarian (1 seat):
 - Elizabeth O'Brien was acclaimed.

UTSC Campus Affairs Committee

- Undergraduate Students (5 seats, 4 candidates):
 - Folakunmi Awofisayo, laroslav Abramov, Inaaya Imran, and Sukaina Abbas were acclaimed.

Note: Rishi Shah was elected to Governing Council and did not assume the Campus Affairs Committee seat. As a result, one seat remains vacant.

- Graduate Students (1 seat):
 - No nominations were received; the seat remains vacant.
- Teaching Staff (4 seats):
 - Tanzina Mohsin and Kyle Danielson were acclaimed; two seats remain vacant.
- Administrative Staff (2 seats):
 - Annie Kostadinova and Maria De Chavez were acclaimed.

Table 1: Summar	y of Nominations fo	or the Governing	g Council Elections 2025
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Constituency	# of seats available	# of nominations received	# of times nominations were re-opened
Teaching Staff - Constituency IC	1	2	0
Teaching Staff - Constituency IV	1	3	0
Teaching Staff - Constituency V	2	5	0
Teaching Staff - Constituency VIII (By-election)	1	2	0
Administrative Staff	1	14	0
Full-time Undergraduate Students - Constituency I	2	40	0
Full-time Undergraduate Students - Constituency II	2	8	0
Part-time Undergraduate Students	2	5	1
Graduate Students - Constituency I	1	4	0
Graduate Students - Constituency II	1	7	0

Table 2: Summary of Nominations for the Academic Board Elections 2025

Academic Unit	# of seats available	# of nominations received	# of times nominations were re-opened
Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering	1	1	0
Faculty of Arts and Science	5	7	0
Faculty of Kinesiology and Physical Education	1	1	0
Faculty of Music	1	1	0
Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work	1	1	0
John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design	1	0	1
Joseph L. Rotman School of Management	1	1	0
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education	1	1	0
Temerty Faculty of Medicine	3	0	1
University of Toronto Mississauga	1	1	0
University of Toronto Scarborough	2	2	0
Librarians	1	1	0

Table 3: Summary of Nominations for the UTM Campus Council Election 2025

Constituency	# of seats available	# of nominations received	# of times nominations were re-opened
Teaching Staff	1	1	0
Undergraduate Students	3	7	0
Graduate Students	1	1	0

Table 4: Summary of Nominations for the UTM Academic Affairs Committee Election 2025

Constituency	# of seats available	# of nominations received	# of times nominations were re-opened
Librarians	1	1	0
Teaching Staff	5	5	0
Undergraduate Students	5	9	0
Graduate Students	2	2	0

Table 5: Summary of Nominations for the UTM Campus Affairs Committee Election 2025

Constituency	# of seats available	# of nominations received	# of times nominations were re-opened
Administrative Staff	2	2	1
Teaching Staff	1	3	0
Undergraduate Students	5	5	0
Graduate Students	1	2	0

Table 6: Summary of Nominations for the UTSC Campus Council Election 2025

Constituency	# of seats available	# of nominations received	# of times nominations were re-opened
Administrative Staff	1	1	0
Teaching Staff	2	2	0
Undergraduate Students	3	1	0
Graduate Students	1	0	1

Table 7: Summary of Nominations for the UTSC Academic Affairs Committee Election 2025

Constituency	# of seats available	# of nominations received	# of times nominations were re-opened
Administrative Staff	2	2	0
Teaching Staff	8	6	0
Undergraduate Students	5	5	0
Graduate Students	2	0	1
Librarian	1	1	0

Table 8: Summary of Nominations for the UTSC Campus Affairs Committee Election 2025

Constituency	# of seats available	# of nominations received	# of times nominations were re-opened
Administrative Staff	2	2	0
Teaching Staff	4	2	0
Undergraduate Students	5	4	0
Graduate Students	1	0	1

6.0 Election Process 2025

The administration of the 2025 elections for the Governing Council, Academic Board, and the UTM and UTSC Campus Councils and their Standing Committees followed established procedures, with refinements to support accessibility, engagement, and transparency. The process was coordinated through the Office of the Governing Council and delivered in collaboration with Deputy Returning Officers across the three campuses. As in previous years, the election cycle included structured candidate orientation, active promotion of voting opportunities, and secure online voting using the Simply Voting platform.

6.1 Information Sessions for Candidates

The Chief Returning Officer held in-person information meetings for student candidates of the Governing Council elections on Thursday, January 23, 2025, and for administrative staff and teaching staff candidates on Friday, January 24, 2025. The Deputy Returning Officers held information sessions at UTM and UTSC on Wednesday, January 22, 2025, for candidates participating in elections for the Campus Councils and their Standing Committees. Additional information meetings were provided in both small group and individual sessions at the request of candidates.

The purpose of the meetings was to provide candidates with information regarding their respective constituencies, the voting process, and the campaign rules as outlined in the Election Guidelines 2025. It was made clear to each candidate that by submitting their nomination, they agreed to be bound by the rules of the Guidelines. Candidates were also asked to review their candidate statements, which would be published online on the Elections website and included with all electronic ballots.

At the information meetings, the CRO and DROs advised all candidates that the Office of the Governing Council and the respective Campus Councils would send reminders to all eligible voters encouraging them to participate in the election.

6.2 Student Voting

The campaign period for student candidates, which overlapped with the voting period, ran from Monday, January 27, 2025, to Friday, February 14, 2025. All eligible students were able to vote online from Tuesday, February 4 to Friday, February 14, 2025, using the web-based voting platform, <u>Simply Voting</u>.

Voting was conducted securely and anonymously. Each student accessed their ballot using their UTORid and received customized access links via email. As in previous years, candidate statements were published on the Elections website for Governing Council and for UTM and UTSC Campus Councils and their Standing Committees.

The size of each student constituency and the number of valid votes cast in the Governing Council and Campus Council elections are summarized in Figures 1 - 4.

6.3 Administrative Staff and Teaching Staff Voting

Online voting for administrative and teaching staff was conducted using <u>Simply Voting</u> from Tuesday, February 4 to Friday, February 14, 2025.

Lists of eligible voters were compiled from the Human Resources Information System (HRIS) and included each elector's name, email address, and UTORid. Voting instructions and reminders were sent via email, and comprehensive details were posted on the Governing Council Elections website.

Eligible staff were able to vote in their respective constituencies, and as in previous years, all candidate statements were published online and accessible through the electronic ballot interface.

6.4 Simply Voting

The 2025 elections continued to use the Simply Voting platform, which was first introduced for University governance elections in 2023. Designed to support secure, accessible, and efficient online voting, the platform has proven to be a reliable tool for both student and staff elections.

As in previous years, no issues were identified during the 2025 election period. The transition from the previous U-Elect platform to Simply Voting has enabled a seamless voter experience, improved ballot presentation, and ensured compliance with the University's privacy and security standards.

Given its continued effectiveness, Simply Voting will remain the platform of choice for future elections conducted by the Office of the Governing Council.









*Note: No election data between 2019 – 2024 for part-time undergraduate elections (seats were either acclaimed or remained vacant).







Note: No available administrative staff seat in 2020 & 2023









Note: No elections for graduate students, teaching staff, or administrative staff held for UTM Campus Council in 2025.



Note: No elections for graduate students, teaching staff, or librarians held for UTM Academic Affairs Committee in 2025.



Note: No elections for librarians or administrative staff held for UTM Campus Affairs Committee in 2025



Figure 4: Voting Results of the UTSC Campus Council & its Standing Committees, 2025

Note: No elections for graduate students, teaching staff, or administrative staff held for UTSC Campus Council in 2025

Note: No elections held for UTSC Academic Affairs Committee or Campus Affairs Committee in 2025.

7.0 Campaign Violations and Appeals

There was no requirement for the Elections Committee of the Governing Council, in accordance with Section 7.8(b) of the *Election Guidelines 2025*, to meet as Election Overseers in 2025.

All candidates were sent an email during the campaign reminding them of the relevant sections of the *Election Guidelines 2025*, in particular Appendix A (*Guidelines for Campaigning and Enforcement of the Elections Guidelines 2025*).

The number of allegations of campaign violations and appeals that have been made since 2019 are summarized in Figure 5.



Figure 5: Summary of Campaign Violation Allegations and Appeals, 2019-2025

8.0 Preparations for 2026 Elections

As preparations begin for the 2026 election cycle, staffing changes across both the Operations and Returning Officer teams present an opportunity to renew capacity and strengthen support for key election processes. Following the 2025 elections, several operations staff transitioned to new roles within central IT services, reflecting continued professional growth within the University. Similarly, transitions within the Returning Officer group are prompting a refreshed focus on team development and continuity planning.

To support the ongoing evolution of the Nomination Management System (NMS) and broader election infrastructure, the Secretariat is working closely with the Director of Operations, who is overseeing recruitment and training within the operations team. In parallel, the Chief Returning Officer will focus on

onboarding new Deputy Returning Officers and reinforcing the operational knowledge required for upcoming elections.

Targeted efforts will support knowledge transfer, strengthen team balance, and ensure that new colleagues across both groups are well-prepared to manage responsibilities such as technical system oversight and candidate engagement. While the departure of experienced colleagues represents a significant transition, it also brings the opportunity to introduce fresh perspectives and build renewed momentum in support of strong and effective governance.

9.0 Summary & Recommendations

The 2025 elections represented a year of continued innovation, growing engagement, and operational evolution. The Nomination Management System (NMS) remains a cornerstone of election administration, with expanded use by both candidates and staff. Increased early interaction with the system, particularly from those considering candidacy, reflects rising awareness and interest in university governance.

Looking ahead, attention will turn to supporting recent team transitions through focused onboarding and knowledge sharing. These efforts will help ensure continuity and readiness in the lead-up to the fall byelections and the 2026 general elections.

While nomination activity and system engagement have been encouraging, voter turnout continues to lag. Enhancing participation remains a key priority, as the University's governance is strongest when it reflects broad and active engagement from across the community.

As part of an ongoing commitment to broadening community engagement, it is recommended that there be:

- i. a focus on building institutional memory to maintain continuity during periods of staff transition;
- ii. an increased emphasis on constituency outreach and education on the importance of governance at the University;
- iii. continued enhancements to the Nomination Management System, with a focus on administrative efficiency for staff and clarity for users, while monitoring engagement data for outreach opportunities; and
- iv. a review and revision of the *Election Guidelines 2025* to create the *Election Guidelines 2026* be undertaken by the Office of the Governing Council and discussed by the Elections Committee at its October 20th, 2025, meeting.

Timothy Harlick Chief Returning Officer May 21, 2025