



# University of Toronto TORONTO ONTARIO M5S 1A1

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OFFICE OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

TO: University Affairs Board

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DATE: November 11, 2002 for November 19, 2002

AGENDA ITEM: **Item #7**

## **ITEM IDENTIFICATION:**

Report on Elections 2002

## **JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:**

The terms of reference of the University Affairs Board state that the Board is responsible for policy and procedures related to Governing Council elections. The annual report on the elections during the previous year is for the Board's information in that regard.

## **PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:**

The Report on Elections 2001 was received by the Board in November 2001.

## **HIGHLIGHTS:**

This report is part of the process to inform development of annual *Election Guidelines*. The report provides factual information about the elections during the previous year and flags areas of possible revision in the *Guidelines* for the next election year.

## **FINANCIAL AND/OR PLANNING IMPLICATIONS:**

None.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

This item is for the Board's information. No action is required.

## Report of Elections Process 2002

### 1. Introduction

This report is the first step in the development of the *Election Guidelines* for 2003. The purpose of the report is to provide factual information about the previous election, and to indicate areas of possible revisions in the Guidelines for the next election year.

### 2. Statistical Information about the 2002 Election

Elections were required for thirteen seats on the Governing Council – five teaching staff and eight students. The Call for Nominations resulted in five teaching staff, one full-time student and two part-time undergraduate students being acclaimed. Elections were necessary in one of the full-time undergraduate and both graduate student constituencies. Table 1 summarizes the details of the 2002 Election.

**Table 1**

Constituency	# of positions available	# of seats acclaimed	# of seats elected	# in Constituency	# voting	% voting
Teaching Staff	5	5	0			
Admin Staff	0					
Full-time Undergraduate:						
Arts and Science	2		2	23,093	1,462	6%
Professional	2	2				
Part-Time Undergraduate	2	2				
Graduate:						
Constituency I	1		1	6,055	373	6%
Constituency II	1		1	5,132	222	4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>			

### 3. 2002 Election Process

#### I. Increased profile of the Governing Council prior to the election period

In response to recommendations contained in the Report on the 2001 Elections, steps were taken to increase the profile of the Governing Council prior to the opening of nominations. An elections web-site was created at <http://www.utoronto.ca/govcncl/elections/index.htm>. The site included a section with Frequently Asked Questions about the Governing Council and a description of the elections process.

Posters with the message '*Make a difference: Get involved with the Governing Council*' were widely distributed throughout the University community. Five individuals who had been actively involved in governance - a member of the administrative staff, an alumni governor, a government appointee, a full-time undergraduate student and a member of the teaching staff - were pictured, accompanied by a statement about their accomplishments as a member of the Council and its Boards and Committees.

### 3. 2002 Election Process (cont'd)

#### II. Nominations

Nominations opened on Tuesday January 29, 2002 and closed on Monday February 11, 2002. This nomination period was two weeks later than in previous years. Nominations opened the day after the deadline to petition the instructor to be allowed to add a course in the Faculty of Arts and Science.

For the first time, all nomination forms were available on the Governing Council web-site. The Call for Nominations was publicized in a variety of other ways. Advertisements appeared in *The Bulletin* in December and January and in *The Varsity* in three issues in January. Posters were distributed to Principals, Deans, Academic Directors and Chairs, with a cover memo describing the election process. The Registrars at the University of Toronto at Mississauga (UTM) and the University of Toronto at Scarborough (UTSC) were contacted and provided with a poster and a supply of nomination forms. Various campus groups, including the Students' Administrative Council (SAC), the Association of Part-time Undergraduate Students (APUS), the Graduate Students' Union (GSU), and the University of Toronto Faculty Association (UTFA), were sent a number of nomination forms for the appropriate constituency.

As noted above, the Call for Nominations resulted in acclamations in nine of the thirteen available seats. Elections were necessary in one of the full-time undergraduate and both graduate student constituencies.

#### III. Election

All candidates were required to attend a meeting with the Chief Returning Officer on February 25, 2002, at which time the campaign rules were explained, and information concerning web-based voting was distributed. Each candidate was required to sign a declaration stating that they and all their campaign workers would abide by the election guidelines.

The campaign period began at 12:01 a.m. on Tuesday February 26, 2002 and ended at 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, March 17. Voting began at 6:30 a.m. on Monday March 18 and ended at 5 p.m. on Friday March 22. Due to a miscommunication, the results were not available until 9 am on Monday March 25. It is expected that the results would normally be available within one hour of the end of the voting period.

#### IV. Demerit point system for campaign violations

A demerit point system for campaign violations was introduced for the first time in the Governing Council Elections in 2002. A number of questions were raised by candidates during the Campaign period. The Chief Returning Officer answered each question via email and sent the reply to all the candidates.

Two campaign violations were alleged – improper postering and the removal of a candidate's poster by another candidate. Both allegations were made by candidates in the Graduate Student Constituency I. The allegation of improper postering was dismissed by the Chief Returning Officer. The allegation of the removal of a poster was the subject of a hearing of the Elections Committee acting as Election Overseers.

### 3. 2002 Election Process (cont'd)

#### IV. Demerit point system for campaign violations

After hearing from both candidates, the Election Overseers ruled that, although a violation had occurred, no demerit points should be assigned in the case, and that the section on campaign violations in the Election Guidelines be reviewed and amended as necessary to clarify the investigation, evidentiary requirements and process for verifying allegations.

#### V. Use of staffed computer terminals in Election

Computer terminals for web-based voting, with staff available to answer questions, have been set up in each of the past two years that web-based voting has been used for Governing Council elections. In 2002, a computer terminal was set up in the Sidney Smith Building, and staffed from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. using two shifts of two people each. A total of 33 votes were cast at this polling station.

#### VI. Voter Participation in Election

##### (a) Full-time Undergraduate Students

Seven students were nominated for the two available seats in the Arts and Science constituency of full-time undergraduates. Three candidates were nominated for the 2 seats in the Professional Faculties constituency – 1 from Pharmacy and 2 from Medicine. One of the students from Medicine withdrew, therefore the two candidates were acclaimed.

##### (i) Arts & Science:

Of the 23,093 eligible voters, 1,462, or 6 %, voted – an increase of 454 over the previous year.

##### (b) Graduate Students

Two students were nominated for each of graduate student seats. These elections were also conducted on ROSI.

Of the 6,055 eligible voters in Constituency I, 373 or 6 %, voted. The number of voters was exactly the same as the number who had voted by mail ballot in 2001.

Of the 5,132 eligible voters in Constituency II, 222, or 4%, voted. The number of voters was 46 fewer than in 2001.

For the first time in the thirty year history of elections for the Governing Council, there was an equality of votes in a constituency. The winner of the Graduate Student Constituency II was chosen by lot by the Chief Returning Officer, in accordance with Chapter VI, (d) (iii) (7) (ii) of the *Election Guidelines 2002*.

**4. Draft recommendations for discussion by the Committee regarding the Elections Process 2003**

- (a) Continue to raise the profile of the Governing Council within the University prior to the Nomination and Election Period.
- (b) Continue web-based voting for all student constituencies.
- (c) Revise the *Election Guidelines* to reflect the participation of students registered in the Academic Bridging Program and the Transitional Year Program.
- (d) Retain the demerit point system, and clarify the campaign violation section as appropriate within the *Election Guidelines*.