



TO: University Affairs Board

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AGENDA ITEM: 3

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

Policy on Student Housing and Student Housing Policy Implementation Guidelines

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

The terms of reference of the University Affairs Board provide that the Board is responsible for campus and student services including student housing. The Board is also responsible for policy affecting the operation of those services.

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

The current *Policy on Student Housing* was approved by the Governing Council on March 9, 1989.

The proposed *Policy on Student Housing* (which replaces the current policy) and *Student Housing Policy Implementation Guidelines* are derived from the recommendations of the Task Force on Student Housing (March 2004) and Response of the Provost to the Task Force (April 2004). The Report of the Task Force on Student Housing was presented to the University Affairs Board on April 28, 2004.

The proposed *Policy* and the *Guidelines* have been discussed with the Student Housing Advisory Committee (December 14, 2005), with Principals and Deans (February 2, 2006), with Deans and Directors of Residences (March 20, 2006) and with the St. George Campus Principals (March 31, 2006).

HIGHLIGHTS:

The student housing situation has changed dramatically in the past 17 years, mainly as a result of implementation of the housing guarantee for first-year students and the construction and acquisition of several new residences across the University. These changes have rendered much of the current Policy obsolete.

The current Policy sets out the principles on which the policy is based and sets out criteria for accommodation of first-entry students, second-entry students, family housing, students with a disability and the organization and management of residence operations. It includes a Policy for Immediate Program of Residence Expansion as well as an Interim Policy on Student Housing to be in effect until the shortage of residence places is addressed.

The new *Policy on Student Housing* sets out five principles of student housing:

- (a) That student housing shall be regarded as tool in keeping with the mission of the University to attract and retain academically qualified students;
- (b) That student housing shall provide residents with educationally purposeful communities;
- (c) That the University has an obligation to set and maintain acceptable minimum levels of student residence experience and consistency of official response on serious issues;
- (d) That student housing shall be administered in a manner that is conscious of the varied needs of our highly diverse student population;
- (e) That responsibility for student housing policy, planning and management shall lie with the Vice-President & Provost working cooperatively with the heads of the Federated Institutions.

The *Student Housing Policy Implementation Guidelines* set out how the *Policy* will be implemented. It is recognized that the *Guidelines* are dynamic and will change over time in response to changing student housing circumstances, unlike the *Policy* itself which is expected to endure.

FINANCIAL AND/OR PLANNING IMPLICATIONS:

There are no significant implications for the University operating budget.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the University Affairs Board approve:

THAT the proposed *Policy on Student Housing* be approved, replacing the existing *Policy on Student Housing* as approved on March 9, 1989.

The *Student Housing Policy Implementation Guidelines* are presented to the Board for information only.



Policy on Student Housing

Preamble

Student housing is an important part of the University of Toronto student experience. The University's purpose in relation to student housing is to encourage the development of high-quality communities on and off-campus that support the academic and educational aims of the University community. To this end, student housing shall be administered in a manner that promotes safe, secure and stimulating environments that are conducive to students' academic success and personal growth, and foster a sense of community, civic responsibility, and an appreciation of the diversity of the University community.

Policy

a) Recruitment and Retention:

As the attraction of highly-qualified applicants is crucial to the University's academic mission, and as the availability of student housing is an important consideration to many prospective students, residences shall be regarded as one of the tools to be used in the recruitment and retention of highly-qualified students at both the undergraduate and graduate level, including international, exchange, and transfer students.

b) Student Life:

Student housing shall be administered in a manner that endeavours to provide residents with an educationally purposeful community that values learning and supports the intellectual growth of those who choose to live in residence. As the experiences and needs of those living in student housing vary widely, those charged with fostering residence life shall endeavour to provide a varied, rich environment that:

- facilitates a student's academic success;
- promotes and facilitates opportunities for students to lead a balanced lifestyle;
- allows for the expression and development of students' personal, intellectual, religious and spiritual values within a context of respect for others;
- provides for disciplined communities, where students accept their responsibility for maintaining the order and good management of the community and adhering to the University community's standards for good behaviour;
- enables students to be involved in the civic and cultural lives of their communities;
- provides inclusive, fair and equitable communities, where individual differences are acknowledged, welcomed and accepted within a context of respect for others.

c) Common Standards:

Residents in student housing expect the University to set and maintain an acceptable minimum level of student residence experience across all divisions of the University and consistency of official response on

serious issues. Common acceptable minimum standards on major issues in student housing shall be established across the University.

The mechanism for establishing these common standards shall be by means of template codes, response protocols and communications on core residence issues that are consistent with the *Student Housing Policy Implementation Guidelines*. These templates shall be generated through broad discussion, shall incorporate best practices and may be adapted and implemented locally to particular circumstances. Developing these templates shall be the responsibility of the Student Housing Advisory Committee.

d) Student Housing Advisory Committee:

A Student Housing Advisory Committee, as established by the Vice-President and Provost, shall be struck each year with representation from all three campuses and from all colleges and divisions, including the Federated Universities, to monitor housing practices and policy issues across the University, to develop common standards and to advise the Provost on critical issues.

e) Accessibility:

Student housing at the University shall be administered in a manner that is conscious of the varied needs of our highly diverse student population, including single students, students with families, students with disabilities, students with differing sexual orientations and students from a variety of ethno-heritage and religious backgrounds.

The University of Toronto, together with the Federated Universities and other housing partners, are committed to offering housing for all students with disabilities who desire on-campus accommodation and who have registered with the Accessibility Service on their campus, where it is appropriate and reasonable to do so.

Responsibility

As the purpose of student housing relates directly to the University's academic mission, responsibility for student housing policy, planning and management in respect of the residences of the University of Toronto (but not in respect of the residences of the Federated Universities) shall lie with the Vice-President and Provost. In recognition of the University's unique relationship with the Federated Universities, the Vice-President and Provost and the heads of the Federated Institutions (as specified in the *Memorandum of Agreement between the University of Toronto and the Federated Universities [July 1, 1998]*) shall cooperate on matters of student housing.

Guidelines for the administration of University student housing will be set by the Vice-President and Provost, in cooperation with the heads of the Federated Institutions as specified above, in the *Student Housing Policy Implementation Guidelines* and will be reported for information to Governing Council. The *Implementation Guidelines* will direct the Student Housing Advisory Committee in development of mechanisms for implementing student housing policy.

Authority for periodically revising and ensuring implementation of the *Guidelines* is delegated to the Vice-President and Provost, in cooperation with the heads of the Federated Institutions as specified above. Any changes to the *Guidelines* will be presented to Governing Council for information.



Student Housing Policy Implementation Guidelines

1. Purpose and Scope

These Implementation Guidelines are derived from the recommendations in the *Report of the Task Force on Student Housing* (March 2004) and the *Provost's Response to the Report* (April 2004) and are meant to guide the Student Housing Advisory Committee in development of mechanisms for implementing the *Policy on Student Housing* [date approved]. It is recognized that the *Implementation Guidelines* are dynamic and will change in response to changing student housing circumstances.

2. Application

2.1 Admission to Residence

- As the attraction of highly-qualified applicants is crucial to the University's academic mission, and as the availability of student housing is an important element to many prospective students, residences shall be regarded as one of the tools to be used in the recruitment and retention of academically qualified students at both the undergraduate and graduate level, and including international, exchange, and transfer students.
- To this end, the University's Residence Guarantee for first-year students shall be continued in its current form for the existing categories of students: "All full-time students entering their first-year of university in an undergraduate program who are offered admission by July 1 and have indicated their interest in residence on the application form are guaranteed residence by the University."
- This Guarantee shall be extended immediately to CEGEP II students. Other relevant groups shall be considered for the Guarantee as the University's housing capacity grows.
- Among first-year undergraduate applicants, the primary criteria for admission to residence shall be the same criteria used for admission to the applicant's division or program, including academic performance and other elements deemed relevant by the division.
- Information about the availability and character of student housing, and the terms of the University's Residence Guarantee, shall be communicated to prospective students in a consistent, clear form and a timely manner.
- The processes that admit students to residence shall be coordinated with the academic admission process so as to maximize the recruitment advantage of the residence offer.

As far as possible, the offer of residence shall accompany the admission offer, and shall at least be communicated to as many students as possible before the deadline for their response to the offer of admission.

- All full-time first-entry undergraduate students from all faculties shall have equitable access to student housing in first and upper years.

2.2 Re-admission to Residence

- Policies and practices for re-admission to residence shall be broadly consistent across the University and reflect the role and purpose of student housing. Different emphases or ordering of priorities may be appropriate in different locales; however, the factors relevant for re-admission may include:
 - academic performance
 - geographic origin
 - contribution to community life
 - extraordinary need
 - exceptional circumstances
 - residence code of behaviour history
- Each residence or divisional group of residences shall have a clearly-formulated, widely-publicized policy for residence re-admission, which has been approved by the relevant divisional governance body.

2.3 Accessibility

- The University of Toronto, together with the Federated Universities and other housing partners, are committed to offering housing for all students with disabilities who desire on-campus accommodation and who have registered with the Accessibility Service on their campus, where it is appropriate and reasonable to do so.
- While not all college and divisional residences are equally barrier free, all residences shall identify both what they do offer and what they do not offer in the way of barrier-free accommodation. This information shall be presented fully and clearly in a manner that assists students with special needs in the selection of housing that best meets their needs.
- Those across the University who control access to residence places shall work cooperatively with Accessibility Services on each campus as appropriate and, on the St George campus, the Student Housing Service to place students with disabilities in appropriate housing without regard to the student's divisional or college membership.
- Once a student with a disability is admitted to a particular residence, that student shall be considered on the same basis for readmission as other members of that residence regardless of divisional or college membership.

- The Student Housing Service shall continue to develop listings for off-campus housing which meets the needs of students on the St George campus with a range of disabilities or direct inquiries to UTM and UTSC residence offices as appropriate.
- The University together with the Federated Universities and other housing partners shall work together to develop strategies to address inadequacies in barrier-free access across the University, within the framework of the University's ODA compliance plan.

2.4 Residence Life

- Colleges, Deans and Directors of Residence, and others responsible for residence life shall cooperate and work with Students Affairs and Student Services, both centrally and on their campuses, to offer staff development, training and co-ordination that fosters best practices for residences and promotes the highest ideals for residence life.

2.5 Student Housing Advisory Committee

- While the membership of the Student Housing Advisory Committee may evolve to ensure broad representation in changing circumstances, and may address different issues in any given year, the initial membership and terms of reference shall be as described in the attached Appendices.

2.6 Residence Expansion & Renovation

- Future housing and residence expansion shall be conscious of the varied needs of our highly diverse student population, including single students, students with families, students with disabilities, students with differing sexual orientations and students from a variety of ethno-heritage and religious backgrounds.
- The Student Housing Advisory Committee shall review on an annual basis the need for new residence spaces and the criteria for expansion and renovations, with appropriate input from the Assistant Vice-President, Space and Facilities.

Appendix 1

Student Housing Advisory Committee: Membership

Chair: Provost or Provost's designate

Graduate:

President of the Residence Council, Graduate House, or Don of Hall, Massey College, or
President of the Student Family Housing Tenants' Association

Undergraduate:

- (a) Representative from the Residence Council of a Constituent College
- (b) Representative from the Residence Council of a Federated College
- (c) Representative from the Residence Council of UTM
- (d) Representative from the Residence Council of UTSC

Residence Dean, Constituent College

Residence Dean, Federated College

Residence Dean/Director, UTM

Residence Dean/Director, UTSC

Residence Dean, 89 Chestnut

Director of Student Housing

Director of Student Services

Director of Student Affairs

Dean of SGS or designate

Principal of Principals or designate

Federated College Head or designate

Vice-President and Principal, UTM or designate

Vice-President and Principal, UTSC or designate

Professional Faculty Dean or designate

Community Safety Officer

One representative of the affiliated colleges, to be invited on a rotating basis by the Chair

One representative of a campus-wide student association to be invited on a rotating basis by the Chair

One person to be nominated by Provost in cooperation with the heads of the Federated Institutions

One person to be nominated by Provost

Appendix 2

Student Housing Advisory Committee: Terms of Reference

The Student Housing Advisory Committee shall monitor housing practices and policy issues across the University, develop common standards and advise the Vice-President & Provost on critical issues. The terms of reference are as follows:

- (a) Development or review of overall principles for student housing and residence contracts;
- (b) Development or review of university-wide training programs (annual and on-going) for all student housing and residence staff;
- (c) Development of university-wide protocols and procedures for critical residence and housing issues, including:
 - response to alcohol use and abuse;
 - response to the use of illegal drugs;
 - response to student crises, including mental health crises;
 - response to students in threatening and violent relationships;
 - student housing discipline codes and procedures.
- (d) Compilation and publication of annual reports on the student housing experience, including reports on students housed, current issues, training and support;
- (e) Development and review of annual safety audits for each housing community or residence;
- (f) Review of new and planned residence construction, for adherence to university policy and guidelines;
- (g) Periodic review of research or literature findings on issues of student life in housing or residence communities;
- (h) Periodic review of current residence processes and practices, e.g., admission, re-admission, to ensure they are transparent and clearly communicated
- (i) Annual monitoring of the mix of Arts and Science and Professional Faculty students in undergraduate residences and advice concerning same;
- (j) Annual monitoring of progress on accommodation of students with disabilities and advice on next steps;
- (k) Annual monitoring of the effectiveness of residences for recruiting purposes and advice on next steps;
- (l) Review and publication of best practices as submitted by Resnet and the Student Housing Network or other working groups formed for the purpose.