



## Frequently Asked Questions

### Information for the Election of Members to the Governing Council and the Academic Board

#### What is the Governing Council?

It is the senior governing body that oversees the academic, business, and student affairs of the University. The Governing Council was established by the *University of Toronto Act, 1971*. Prior to July 1, 1971, the University had a Senate that dealt with academic affairs, and a Board of Governors that dealt with business affairs.

#### How do the decisions of the Governing Council affect me?

The Governing Council is responsible for matters such as:

- Providing guidance on the University's long term strategic direction;
- Advising on and approving financial policies, and approving the annual operating budget and audited financial statements;
- Oversight of human resources policies;
- Reviewing and approving institutional master plans and major capital projects, and monitoring project implementation;
- Academic quality; and
- Student experience.

#### How many members are there?

There are 50 members drawn from faculty, staff, and students of the University as well as members of the community at large:

- The **Chancellor** and the **President** of the University serve by virtue of their positions (*ex officio*)
- 18 **appointed** members
  - 16 individuals appointed by the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council
  - 2 senior administrators appointed by the President
- 30 **elected** members
  - 12 teaching staff
  - 8 alumni
  - 8 students:
    - 4 full-time undergraduate
    - 2 part-time undergraduate
    - 2 graduate
  - 2 administrative staff

**How long do members serve on the Governing Council?**

The members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council normally serve for three-year terms, as do elected alumni, teaching, and administrative staff. Students are elected for a one-year term; the senior administrators appointed by the President also only have one-year terms. No member may serve for more than 9 consecutive years.

**How are the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Governing Council chosen?**

*The University of Toronto Act*, 1971 requires an annual election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Governing Council by members of the Council. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman must be members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council.

**How often does the Governing Council meet?**

It meets approximately 6 times per year - once every 4 to 6 weeks.

**When does the Governing Council meet?**

Meetings are normally scheduled on Thursday at 4:30 p.m. The meetings are usually completed within 2 ½ hours of the starting time.

**Where does the Governing Council meet?**

Meetings are typically held in the Council Chamber in Simcoe Hall, 27 King's College Circle, St. George campus. Once a year, a Governing Council meeting is held at either the University of Toronto Mississauga or the University of Toronto Scarborough campus.

**Can anyone attend meetings of the Governing Council?**

Yes. Meetings are usually held in open session. Some portions of the meetings may be held *in camera*, which means that only members may attend. These sessions are those in which intimate financial or personal matters of any person may be disclosed.

**What does a member of the Governing Council do?**

Members assume a stewardship role of overseeing the business and affairs of the University. They are responsible for making sure the University is well-managed but they are not responsible for managing the University. They must also ensure that the decisions that are made by the Council are in the best long-term interests of the University.

**How does a member do this?**

An effective member of the Governing Council:

- Advances and upholds the mission of the University
- Understands and provides relevant input into the University's vision, strategies and objectives
- Exercises informed judgement while voting on matters requiring a decision

**What is it like to be a student governor?**

Please see the linked article on contributions of student governors. Click [here](#).

**What qualifications are required to become a member of the Governing Council?**

*The University of Toronto Act* requires that members of the Governing Council be Canadian citizens. The *Election Guidelines* require that a member of the Governing Council be a member of the constituency which he/she represents.

**How can I find out more information about the Governing Council and its work?**

Consult the Governing Council web-site ( <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca> ), or contact the Governing Council Office by phone at 416-978-6576 or by email at [governing.council@utoronto.ca](mailto:governing.council@utoronto.ca).

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**The Nomination and Election Process for Governing Council**

**How is someone nominated for a position on Governing Council?**

Individuals must complete a nomination form for his or her constituency and submit it to the Governing Council Office before the close of the nomination period.

**What do I need to complete a nomination form?**

You must obtain the signatures of a defined number of Nominators from the same constituency (5 for teaching staff, administrative staff, and students; 10 for alumni). A nominee must also provide proof of Canadian citizenship with the completed nomination form. Nominees may provide a candidate statement of 100 words or less which will be provided with the ballot in the election.

**I'm not sure what constituency I belong to.**

Constituencies are defined in the *Election Guidelines 2015* which are available on the Governing Council elections website:  
<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Elections/2015+Elections/electionguide2015.pdf>  
or from the Office of the Governing Council. You may also contact the Chief Returning Officer by phone (416-978-8427) or by email ([anwar.kazimi@utoronto.ca](mailto:anwar.kazimi@utoronto.ca)) for information regarding constituencies.

**How can I find out when the nomination period opens?**

The Call for Nominations is broadly distributed within the University community, and is also noted on the Governing Council web-site (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/home.htm>).

**Where can I get a nomination form?**

During the Nomination period, nomination forms are available at the following locations:

- Governing Council web-site ([http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing\\_Council/elections.htm](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing_Council/elections.htm) )
- Office of the Governing Council (Room 106, Simcoe Hall)

**When is the nomination period for 2015?**

Nominations for administrative staff, student and teaching staff seats on the Governing Council will be accepted between 12:00 p.m., Tuesday, January 6, 2015 and 5:00 p.m., Tuesday, January 13, 2015.

Application forms for alumni positions will be available as of Thursday, November 20, 2014. The deadline to submit an application is Thursday, December 18, 2014 at 5:00 p.m. For information on the application and election process, please visit the following website: <http://uoft.me/alumgovnominfo>

**Can I nominate myself?**

No, a candidate may not nominate him/herself.

**Can I nominate someone else within my constituency?**

Yes, you may arrange a nomination for another individual, but the nominee must agree to stand for election.

**Can I nominate someone in a different constituency?**

No, you may only nominate someone within your own constituency.

**Can I nominate more than one person within my constituency?**

Yes.

**How do I vote?**

In general, students vote online. However, post-graduate medical trainees are sent paper ballots which they may use, as they do not have access to the Repository of Student Information (ROSI).

Whenever possible, elections for teaching and administrative staff are held online. However, it is necessary for some staff to be provided with paper ballots if they do not have an e-mail address recorded on the Human Resources Information System.

**When do I vote?**

Information about the 2015 voting period and procedures are provided in the *Election Guidelines 2015*.

**When are the election results announced?**

After all candidates have been informed of the results, an announcement will be made to the University community.

## **Other Ways to Become Involved in Governance at the University**

### **Are there ways *other* than membership on the Governing Council that allow me to become involved with governance at the University?**

Yes. If you are a member of the administrative or teaching staff with a primary appointment at the University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM) or the University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC), or if you registered as a student at those campuses, information on elections for seats on the UTM and UTSC Campus Councils and their Standing Committees is available at:

UTM – <http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/governance/>

UTSC – <http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/governance/elections>

You may also apply to be considered for a position as a co-opted (appointed, non-Governing Council) member of a Board or Committee. Co-opted members are not required to be Canadian citizens.

### **What is a co-opted member?**

They are individuals who are appointed to a Board to fill positions not assigned to members of the Governing Council. In the case of Committees, they are positions not filled by members of the Governing Council and/or the parent Board.

### **Which Boards and Committees have co-opted members?**

The Academic Board, Business Board, and University Affairs Board each have co-opted members. Co-opted members of the Academic Board may be members of one of its standing committees - the Committee on Academic Policy and Program or the Planning and Budget Committee. See for information about all Governing Council Boards and Committees at: [http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing\\_Council/bac/gc.htm](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing_Council/bac/gc.htm)

### **How are co-opted members chosen?**

A call for nominations for co-opted positions is distributed widely within the University each March. Each Board has a Striking Committee which considers the applications received and makes recommendations regarding membership on the Board or Committee.

Please send any questions or comments to: [governing.council@utoronto.ca](mailto:governing.council@utoronto.ca).