

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
THE GOVERNING COUNCIL
REPORT NUMBER 173 OF
THE UNIVERSITY AFFAIRS BOARD

February 5, 2013

To the Governing Council,
University of Toronto.

Your Board reports that it met on Tuesday, February 5 at 4:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Simcoe Hall, with the following members present:

Ms B. Elizabeth Vosburgh, In the Chair

Mr. Chirag Variawa, Vice-Chair

Professor Jill Matus, Vice-Provost,
Students

Ms Lucy Fromowitz, Assistant Vice-
President, Student Life

Mr. Andrew O.P. Drummond

Mr. Daniel DiCenzo

Ms Kimberly Elias

Mr. Aidan Fishman

Professor Ira Jacobs

Professor Bruce Kidd

Mr. Sammy Lau

Mr. Gary P. Mooney

Professor Elizabeth M. Smyth

Mr. Andrew Szende

Ms Gina Trubiani

Non-Voting Assessors:

Mr. David Newman, Acting Director,
Office of the Vice-Provost, Students

Dr. Mark Overton, Dean of Student Affairs,
University of Toronto Mississauga
(UTM)

Mr. Desmond Pouyat, Dean of Student
Affairs, University of Toronto
Scarborough

Secretariat:

Mr. David Walders, Acting Secretary

Regrets:

Ms Denisse Albornoz

Ms Alexis Archbold

Professor Robert L. Baker

Mrs. Renu Kanga Fonseca

Mr. Samuel Oduneye

Ms Arlen Orellana

In Attendance:

Ms. Jane Hunter, Secretary, Senior Alumni Association

Erin Oldynski, Graduate Students' Union

Professor Suzanne Stevenson, Vice-Dean, Teaching and Learning

Ms Wendy Talfourd-Jones, President, Senior Alumni Association

Ms Mae-Yu Tan, Assistant Secretary of the Governing Council

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ALL ITEMS ARE REPORTED FOR INFORMATION

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and introduced and welcomed Acting Secretary, David Walders and Acting Director, Vice Provost Students, David Newman.

1. Next Generation Student Information Services (NGSIS) (*presentation*)

Professor Matus introduced Professor Suzanne Stevenson, Vice-Dean, Teaching and Learning and invited her to give the presentation on the NGSIS project.¹

Professor Stevenson stated that her presentation would focus on the Accessible Campus Online Resource Network (ACORN), the student-facing services portion of the NGSIS. She noted that while it would be several years before ACORN was fully implemented, 20 projects had been identified that would deliver significant service improvements for students in the first 12 months of the launch (from April 2012 to April/May 2013). These projects would include:

- “One Stop” Registration Status Page;
- Electronic University Health Insurance Plan (UHIP) Cards;
- “MyRes” Residence choice gateway;
- Online course finder and degree explorer;
- Registration management system for the Varsity Blues; and
- Personalized textbook search linked to the Bookstore.

Professor Stevenson noted that that all applications shared a common interface allowing for ease of use and navigability. She concluded by outlining some future applications for ACORN, including having all student-facing features available on mobile devices (including implementation of a “Mega App”), and providing critical support for the Co-Curricular Record, set to launch in September, 2013.

The Chair invited questions for Professor Stevenson.

Several members asked questions about the future capabilities of the NGSIS platforms. In particular, whether the online course and degree applications would be expanded to function as a course/degree planner, whether the applications would be increasingly mobile, and whether the networks would be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Professor Stevenson replied that it was the goal to expand the course/degree finder applications to function as planning tools once the appropriate software was identified to perform this function. Similarly, she confirmed that increased mobile access was a priority, including features that would “push” information from ACORN to students’ mobile devices. With respect to system downtime, Professor Stevenson noted that while 24/7 access was technically possible, in her view, it was neither practical nor necessary.

The Chair thanked Professor Stevenson for her presentation

¹ To view presentation, please see <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=9436>

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2. Annual Report – Compulsory Non-Academic Incidental Fees – 2012-2013 (*for information*).

The Chair invited Professor Matus to introduce the Report.

Professor Matus noted that compulsory non-academic incidental fees were approved by the University Affairs Board, and that a report of compulsory non-academic incidental fees was presented annually to the Board for information. She explained that the Report was an inventory of all compulsory non-academic incidental fees (and designated portions thereof) approved by the University Affairs Board and collected by the University. In addition, similar fees charged by the federated universities were included for reference.

The Chair invited questions about the Report.

CONSENT AGENDA

3. Report of the Previous Meeting: Report Number 172 – November 20, 2012

Report Number 172 from November 20, 2012, was approved.

4. Business Arising from the Report of the Previous Meeting

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

5. Date of the Next Meeting – Tuesday, March 19, 2013 at 4:30 p.m.

6. Report of the Senior Assessor

Professor Matus' report addressed the following matters:

- a) Three University of Toronto students were named Rhodes Scholars for 2013. Two of these students would be available to answer real-time questions from prospective U of T students on the University's "Join U of T" Portal. Available to secondary school students and other applicants with offers of acceptance, the Livestream video sessions would offer information and, in this case, would provide inspiration from exceptional current students.
- b) In a new initiative for the 2012-2013 year, supported by the Vice Provost, Students, Student Leader's Receptions were held at each of the three University campuses. Formerly, this annual event was held only at the St. George campus, which had resulted in low student participation from UTM and UTSC. The implementation of dedicated receptions at each campus on separate evenings had resulted in very high participation and very positive feedback from all campuses. Professor Matus thanked the staff involved on the three campuses who had done so much to make these events successful.

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- c) The University had undertaken a vast array of initiatives to address wellness, mental health and stress management of students on all three campuses. These initiatives provided comprehensive assistance to students, beginning with the transition from secondary school, and continuing throughout their academic careers at the University. These programs are both preventative and curative in nature, with a special focus on providing assistance during times of heightened stress and anxiety, notably during exam times.

In an effort to gather, advertise and promote these initiatives, the forthcoming Tri-Campus Report, prepared by the Vice Provost, Students, would outline numerous programs, strategies, workshops, seminars and counseling services that would be offered by the University to promote student mental health and stress reduction. In addition, the University would be utilizing social media outlets to a greater extent to increase awareness and understanding of these important initiatives.

d) Ancillary Fee Review

An administrative review was launched in late June 2012 and written feedback was solicited from academic divisions and student governments. Discussions were conducted in various student fora, such as the Provost's Undergraduate Student Advisory Committee and the Vice Provost Students lunches with student governments and student societies. In addition, in-depth assessment and analysis of the submissions were completed and follow-up discussions held between the central administration, divisions and students. The results of the review would be fully discussed in the Administrative Review report, which would shortly appear on the Planning and Budget Website. The Report would include the following points:

- The objective of the review would not only be to ensure compliance with MTCU Guidelines, as interpreted through University policy, and fairness to students, but would also provide a forum for education and discussion on ancillary fees - from Deans' offices to department chairs to course instructors.
- The vast majority of compulsory ancillary fees charged at the University of Toronto were found to be in compliance with University policy.
- A few instances of fees that may be interpreted as non-compliant were uncovered during the review; these fees would be discontinued effective 2013-14. Fees for access to buildings, labs or studios for the Winter 2013 term would be converted from a compulsory fee to a refundable-deposit fee.
- Students had emphasized the need for improved clarity with respect to ancillary fees, and expressed concern about vague fee descriptions, lack of timely notification of fees, poor understanding of what costs or services are being charged for or whether a fee is compulsory or optional. The administration had agreed that there is a need for clearer information and had begun to put procedures in place to improve transparency and to ensure students have better information.
- Better education of divisions regarding ancillary fees University policy is needed. While all fees, with only a few exceptions, were identified as clearly compliant with University

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policy, the University would ensure that it remains compliant, particularly in the arena of rapidly changing online and classroom technologies and experiential learning. While sorely outdated in this regard, MTCU Guidelines, as interpreted by University policy, must be adhered to. A website would be created to provide divisions with “best practices” and FAQs to ensure compliance and consistency across units.

Professor Matus thanked the students who participated in the submissions and subsequent discussions as well as Sally Garner and Shannon Howes who had done a great deal of work on the review process.²

e) Automated Response Project

The Office of Student Life at the St. George campus would be piloting an Automated Response Project to provide students and the public with consistent and instant answers to routine, frequently asked questions. This will be part of the Constituent Relationship Management (CRM) process, and would expand upon the “Ask GradSchool” project implemented by the School of Graduate Studies. The launch is anticipated for May 2013.

f) Just in Time Slides

Launched in late 2012, the project, entitled “Just in Time Slides”, provides weekly, automated updates regarding important aspects of student life and information about upcoming events. In a recent survey, 75% of polled students reported that the information provided in the slides was useful. Moreover, nearly 40% stated that the information prompted them to participate in student events they otherwise would not have. In light of this success, the Office of the Vice-Provost, Students, in collaboration with the Council on Student Experience, would continue the initiative until Spring, 2013 when it would be reviewed again.

7. Other Business

No other items of business were raised.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

 Acting Secretary

 Chair

February 15, 2013

² The report was made publicly available on February 6, 2013.

[http://www.planningandbudget.utoronto.ca/Assets/Academic+Operations+Digital+Assets/Planning+26+Budget/ancillary review.pdf](http://www.planningandbudget.utoronto.ca/Assets/Academic+Operations+Digital+Assets/Planning+26+Budget/ancillary%20review.pdf)