

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
THE GOVERNING COUNCIL
REPORT NUMBER 179 OF
THE UNIVERSITY AFFAIRS BOARD

February 4, 2014

To the Governing Council,
University of Toronto.

Your Board reports that it met on Tuesday, February 4, 2014 at 4:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Simcoe Hall, with the following members present:

Ms B. Elizabeth Vosburgh, In the Chair
Mr. Andrew Szende, Vice-Chair
Professor Jill Matus, Vice-Provost,
Students & First-Entry Divisions
Ms Lucy Fromowitz, Assistant Vice-
President, Student Life
Mr. Marc Arnold
Mr. Eric Carvalho
Mr. Yuan Chung
Mr. Rastko Cvekic
Mr. Aidan Fishman
Ms Sue Graham-Nutter
Professor Ira Jacobs
Mr. Asad (A.J) Jamal
Professor Bruce Kidd
Professor Joseph Leydon
Dr. Gary P. Mooney
Ms Rita O'Brien
Professor Elizabeth M. Smyth
Professor Salvatore Spadafora
Mr. Chirag Variawa

Non-Voting Assessors:

Ms Meredith Strong, Director, Office of the
Vice-Provost, Students and Student
Policy Advisor
Dr. Mark Overton, Dean of Student Affairs,
University of Toronto Mississauga
(UTM)
Mr. Desmond Pouyat, Dean of Student
Affairs, University of Toronto
Scarborough (UTSC)

Secretariat:

Mr. Henry Mulhall, Secretary
Mr. David Walders, Acting Assistant
Secretary of the Governing Council

Regrets:

Ms Rida Ali
Ms Alexis Archbold
Ms Aislin Flynn
Ms Eleni Patsokas
Professor Janice Stein
Ms Roxanne Wright

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In Attendance:

Ms Sarah Burley, Acting Manager, Student Policy Initiatives and High Risk
Ms Anita Comella, Assistant Dean, Co-curricular Physical Activity & Sport, Faculty of Kinesiology and Physical Education
Ms Susan Froom, President, Association of Part-time Undergraduate Students, APUS
Dr. Anthony Gray, Director, Strategic Initiatives and Research, Office of the President
Ms Joan Griffin, Assistant-Director, Office of the Vice-Provost, Students and First-Entry Programs
Mr. David Newman, Director, Office of Student Life
Ms Janine Robb, Executive Director, Health and Wellness
Ms Donna Wall, Director, Financial Aid and Awards, Office of Enrolment Services

ALL ITEMS ARE REPORTED FOR INFORMATION

The Chair welcomed Ms Sue Graham-Nutter, the Chair of the Campus Affairs Committee at UTSC, and a new member of the Board. She also welcomed back Mr. Henry Mulhall as Secretary of the Board, and thanked Mr. David Walders for his service in that role for the previous year. Professor Matus welcomed Ms Meredith Strong as a non-voting assessor to the Board in her new role as Director of the Office of the Vice-Provost, Students and Student Policy Advisor, and thanked Mr. David Newman who had served in both roles in an acting capacity in recent months.

1. Annual Report: Compulsory Non-Academic Incidental Fees

The Chair noted that the annual report was an inventory of all compulsory non-academic incidental fees, as well as designated portions of those fees, that were approved by governance and collected by the University. Similar fees approved and charged by the federated universities were also included for reference. Professor Matus noted that this was an annual report provided to the Board for information in advance of its consideration for approval of the 2014-15 fees at its subsequent meeting. The Campus Affairs Committees at both UTM and UTSC would also receive the report for information at their upcoming meetings. In response to a question, Professor Matus clarified that the Board would proceed with its consideration of the 2014-15 fees in the normal fashion while the Student Societies Summit continued its deliberations and developed recommendations.

2. Report: Student Experiences, Vice-Provost Students and First Entry Divisions

Professor Matus noted that as part of the ongoing effort to provide information sessions to the Board, three aspects of the student experience would be presented for members: student financial support, health and wellness, and arts activities.

Among the key points of Professor Matus' presentation¹ on student financial support were the following:

- The *Policy on Student Financial Support* (the financial guarantee), stated that “no student offered admission to a program ... should be unable to enter or complete the program due to lack of financial means”;

¹ The presentation is available online at: <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=10305>

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- The University met this commitment by providing the most generous student support programs of any Ontario university or college, totaling \$164 M in 2012-13;
- Net tuition (after grants and scholarships) of undergraduate OSAP (Ontario Student Assistance Program) students was on average only 48% of the published cost;
- The University's core financial support programs comprised need-based and merit-based aid, divisional grants, and graduate funding packages;
- Need-based aid consisted of government-funded OSAP loans and grants, as well as University-funded UTAPS (University of Toronto Advanced Planning for Students) grants that covered financial needs not met by OSAP;
- Further sources of financial support were the Ontario Tuition Grant for students in direct-entry programs; the Meltz and Special Bursaries for part-time students; and Work Study, a program which provided paid work experience for students and was funded by the University;
- Average OSAP debt levels for students graduating from direct-entry programs at the University were decreasing, including for those with the highest debt levels.

During the discussion, a member stated that the University's financial support programs had made it possible for him to be a student, and he was very appreciative of this assistance. In response to questions and comments from members, Ms Donna Wall, Director of Financial Aid and Awards made a number of points. The UTAPS program was designed to take into consideration, on a case by case basis, factors contributing to student financial need that were beyond those considered by the OSAP assessment process. She noted that the OSAP Repayment Assistance Plan was very effective for those who had difficulty repaying their OSAP loans after graduation. The University of Toronto annually provided to its students approximately three times the financial support that it was required by the provincial government to provide. It was the only Ontario university or college to fund all costs not recognized by OSAP, including the relatively high costs of living in Toronto. In response to a comment that merit-based aid was not equally distributed across the University's academic divisions, Professor Matus noted that a scholarship review had recently been undertaken by the Office of Enrolment Services which would examine both the University's centrally-based and divisional scholarships.

Professor Matus introduced Ms Janine Robb, Executive Director, Health and Wellness. Her presentation² on student health and wellness considered the following topics:

- Data from both the National College Health Assessment (NCHA) and the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) informed the ongoing development and operation of the University's student health and wellness programs;
- The NCHA also provided Canadian reference data regarding factors that affected student academic performance such as stress, anxiety, sleep difficulties, internet and computer game use, and colds and flus;
- Five broad themes characterized student health and wellness programs:
 - Building Wellness: making healthy life choices, normalizing stress and anxiety, and supporting student needs;
 - Peer-to-Peer: building support through communities and connectedness, and providing leadership and experiential learning opportunities;

² The presentation is available online at: <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=10304>

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- Building Support Networks: community and social networks where students can connect with others in similar circumstances;
- Building on Strengths: developing resiliency through programs on topics such as coping skills and cognitive behavioral therapy;
- Shifting Perspectives: such as programming to de-stigmatize mental health, raise awareness and address misconceptions;
- Capacity building around health and wellness programs included initiatives to allow students to access services within their learning, living, or social communities, such as through the use of embedded counselors.

During the discussion a member expressed satisfaction with the University's integrative approach that combined both treatment and prevention programs, and Ms Robb commented that there remained an ongoing need to increase provision of the latter. Members made a number of operational suggestions regarding health and wellness programming: to provide incentives to encourage greater numbers of student note takers; to utilize teaching assistants as front line contacts with students regarding health and wellness issues; and, to make announcements at large lectures regarding available programs. Professor Matus noted that the Provostial Working Group on Mental Health was actively considering the issue of effective dissemination strategies.

Professor Matus introduced Ms Joan Griffin, Assistant Director, Office of the Vice-Provost, Students. Ms Griffin's presentation provided an overview of the wealth of arts activities which were available for students on the St. George Campus, noting that extensive opportunities were also available on the UTM and UTSC campuses.³ The University's outstanding academic programs were well known, but it required ongoing efforts to raise awareness of its excellent co-curricular opportunities such as arts programming. To that end Ms Griffin's presentation highlighted a selection of the more than 120 arts-related campus groups and clubs, four galleries, and fifteen theatre spaces that found a home on the St. George campus. She also provided information on professional arts opportunities and creative classes available to students, collaborative arts initiatives involving the University with the broader community of the City of Toronto, communication strategies used to promote arts activities, and awards that recognized student engagement in the arts.

The Chair thanked the speakers for their informative presentations.

CONSENT AGENDA

On motion duly moved, seconded, and carried

YOUR BOARD APPROVED

THAT the consent agenda be adopted.

3. Report of the Previous Meeting: Report Number 178, November 19, 2013

The report of the previous meeting was approved

4. Business Arising from the Report of the Previous Meeting

³ The presentation is available online at: <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=10303>

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There was no business arising from the Report of the Previous Meeting

5. Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 18, 2014 at 4:30 p.m.**6. Report of the Senior Assessor**

Professor Matus reported that the Student Societies Summit had continued to meet, and progress had been made towards the goal of bringing forward its report to Governing Council in the early part of 2014. With the encouragement of the faculty Summit members, the discussion had been closely following the Provost's initial request to the Summit participants to consider the following complex issue: "in a policy environment where there are currently four representative student governments recognized by Governing Council (UTSU, SCSU, GSU and APUS) and supported by mandatory fee deductions from students in the relevant constituencies, how can the sometimes distinct interests of divisional societies be supported and respected in a democratic manner? What are the implications of these answers on the evolution of the democratic structures of the student governments or on fee support for the activities of the divisional societies? The Provost had noted further that 'although the Summit cannot effect policy changes, if it is of the opinion that further analysis should be undertaken it may suggest issues that would be helpful to consider as part of a policy review.'" Professor Matus noted that while some students were impatient for a resolution to the fee diversion issue, and there was a desire among Summit participants to see the Student Commons agreement proceed to governance, time for thorough discussion and exchange was necessary. The faculty experts leading the Summit had been raising important questions and asking the student participants to think about equitable principles in democracy and in democratic student government. They had attempted to facilitate both discussion between the student groups and a satisfactory outcome on which to proceed. Two or three further meetings were scheduled, and it was anticipated that written recommendations to the Provost would be submitted in the next few months.

7. Other Business

A member reported that the Council on Student Services (COSS), at its meeting the previous day, had passed a motion concerning the relocation of the Transitional Year Program (TYP) from its current location at 49 St. George Street to 123 St. George Street as a result of the proposed construction of the Centre for Engineering and Innovation. Some TYP students were concerned that relocation to a smaller space, to be shared with Woodsworth College, would have a negative impact on the student services provided by the Program. COSS had recommended that space, solely for TYP, be provided in one or two of the 87 houses owned by the University in the Huron-Sussex precinct. Professor Matus noted that the project planning report for the Centre for Engineering Innovation and Entrepreneurship, the capital project that would necessitate the relocation of the TYP program, had already been considered by the Planning and Budget Committee, the Academic Board, and the Business Board, and would proceed to the Governing Council for approval on February 27, 2014. The Provost had addressed these bodies regarding the project, and would do so at the Governing Council meeting as well. The Vice-President, University Operations was working closely with TYP faculty regarding the relocation of the program, and students had also been invited to participate in these consultations.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

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Secretary

Chair