



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

University of Toronto
Governing Council

Mandate of Governance

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Mandate of Governance

A. Preamble

The “Principles of Good Governance”¹ form the basis on which the mandate of governance is based. The three primary functions of governance are:

- approval – governance *approves* specific policies, plans or projects according to established procedures.
- oversight –governance receives a wide variety of reports and information through which it *monitors the quality and substance of institutional leadership and decision-making*.
- advice – governance is consulted and *provides input*, sometimes in confidence, on proposed initiatives at various stages of development.

B. Governance versus Administration

In discussing the functions of governance, it is also important to clarify what governance is **not** – that is, to define the legitimate boundary or “hand-off” between governance and administration. In general, the President, as chief executive officer, and the administration have the responsibility for articulating the University’s mission and strategic directions on the advice of and for ultimate approval by governance.

The President and the administration also have responsibility for outlining problems, explaining issues, identifying the need for changes in policy, and formulating new policy for governance consideration.

C. Functions

The functions of governance encompass the following ten aspects of advancing and sustaining the University’s purpose, strength and well-being:

- strategy
 - provides advice on the development and expression of the University’s specific mission;
 - approves the University’s specific mission;
 - provides advice on strategy as the administration is developing it (but does not develop institutional strategy itself);
 - satisfies itself that the proposed strategy is appropriate, and
 - approves the strategy.

¹ The *Principles of Good Governance* were approved by the Governing Council on October 28, 2010.

- image and reputation
 - provides advice on the institution's local, national and international standing, and
 - ensures that this standing is protected.
- recruiting, hiring, supporting and evaluating the chief executive officer.
- finance
 - advises on and approves financial policies developed by the administration,
 - reviews and approves the institution's annual budget, and
 - reviews and approves the institution's audited financial statements.
- human resources
 - advises on and approves human resources policies,
 - advises on and approves compensation policies and proposals,
 - monitors the implementation of policies to ensure overall employee well-being and satisfaction,
 - receives reports on specific matters,
 - confirms the appointment of senior officers on the recommendation of the chief executive officer,
 - approves and provides oversight on the implementation of compensation frameworks for senior officers; and
 - appoints senior officers with particular reporting relationships to governance – for example, the Secretary and the Ombudsperson.
- capital expenditures and infrastructure
 - reviews and approves institutional master plans,
 - reviews and approves major capital projects, and
 - monitors project implementation.
- risk management
 - ensures compliance with applicable legislation, and
 - reviews and approves risk management framework, ensuring that mechanisms are in place to identify, assess, manage and provide accountability for relevant areas of institutional risk.
- governance effectiveness
 - agenda management,
 - selection process for governors,
 - evaluation process,
 - committee mandates,
 - interpretation / delineation of responsibilities, and
 - clearly defines and respects its role relative to that delegated to the administration.
- academic quality
 - ensures that clear processes for assurance of academic quality are in place and implemented for
 - Ø academic divisions,
 - Ø academic programs
 - Ø academic appointments,

- Øacademic policy,
- Øacademic regulations,
- Øadmissions standards, and
- Øawards and honours.

- student experience
 - ensures that policies and practices are in place and implemented for assurance of quality across all dimensions of the student experience.

D. Responsibility for Functions: Boards and Committees

Responsibility for particular functions is distributed among the Boards and Committees of the Governing Council. In many instances, the Governing Council reserves final decision-making authority; in others the Council has delegated initial review and final decision-making to various governance bodies.

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