Advisory Committee on the Temporary Use of Space

Discussion and Recommendations

DRAFT – November 2, 2011

On October 28, 2010, the Governing Council approved a new *Policy on the Temporary Use of Space* at the University of Toronto. This new *Policy* replaced the previous *Policy for the Allocation of Rooms – Extracurricular Bookings* (June 1988) and outlines the overarching principles by which space is to be used and assigned for temporary use. Unlike the previous *Policy* that applied only to a limited amount of space on the St. George Campus, the new *Policy* is more comprehensive as it applies a consistency of approach to the temporary use of all space on all three campuses. This new *Policy* articulates relevant and important principles which reflect important University values and commitments highly relevant to the use of its space in a more complete and transparent way. The new *Policy* is available on the web site for the Office of the Governing Council.[1]

Under the *Policy*, the Provost may establish procedures which provide guidance to room booking offices in handling various matters related to the temporary use of space. The initial set of Procedures is available on the web site for the Office of the Vice-President & Provost.[2] The Procedures will evolve over time to reflect changing needs. The new *Policy* along with the new Procedures modernize the approach to the temporary use of space and clarify our policy framework and its implementation.

During the meeting of the Governing Council on October 28, 2010, the Provost committed to the establishment of an advisory committee to review and make recommendations with respect to the Procedures established under the new Policy. The announcement about the Advisory Committee, and the call for nominations was sent to students in leadership positions on all three campuses (including representatives of the student governments, student societies, recognized campus groups and student members of the Governing Council on January 5, 2011).

The terms of reference of the advisory committee and a list of its members are attached hereto.

The committee met four times through the spring of 2011 and discussed a number student concerns and complaints with the temporary use of space. The committee also examined and

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[1] http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/tempspace.htm

[2] http://www.provost.utoronto.ca/Assets/Provost+Digital+Assets/Provost/policy/Temporary+Use+of+Space.pdf

considered previous student activity space reviews; and discussed the newly established Procedures for the use of temporary space at the University of Toronto. Based on these discussions a number of recommendations were proposed, the two overarching recommendations being: a) the creation of an online database to review and book available space; and, b) the clarification of some aspects of the current procedures.

Creation of an Online Database of Temporary Space

The committee recommends that a comprehensive online database of all available bookable space on the St. George Campus campus be created. The database would provide information about temporary space available, and would be developed from a comprehensive inventory of space. The database would also allow students to search rooms by characteristic and availability, and to see similar spaces that may be available if their first choice is not. The database should also be integrated as a layer on the new St. George campus map (including room data, accessibility information, and booking procedures). The committee believes that such a database would be of great value to internal groups.

Information in the database should include:

- The nature of the room (i.e., boardroom, classroom, lounge, theatre, etc.)
- Room capacity
- Time availability
- Accessibility (i.e., elevators, accessible washrooms, type of lighting, etc.)
- Available equipment
- Food and beverage restrictions
- Whether contact information for access or key pick-up is necessary
- Available furniture
- Miscellaneous charges associated with the room (including costs such as those associated with opening a building or room)
- General comments section (including advice from previous users; e.g., "The teaching station in room 100 is not standard," or, "The lighting in space B is dim.")

Recommendation:

1) That the Office of Student Life, in collaboration with the Office of Space Management, create a database of St. George campus temporary space available to internal groups; and that this database information be included as a layer in the next development phase of the campus map project.

Clarity of Current Procedural Points

The second major recommendation of the committee is that certain points in the current procedures receive further explanation and clarification. It was also suggested that the wording of the procedures indicate areas where the University may be flexible, especially in regard to internal groups. This would make space booking more congenial and less intimidating to student

groups and help to indicate where the University's general working practice (as opposed to strict policy) may differentiate between internal groups and external groups.

For example, the procedures currently state that groups hosting events must specify, prior to booking space, whether it is a private event (open only to their members or to those on a guest list) or a public event open to all. The *Policy* itself is explicit about this matter:

> Users who book space or advertise events as being open to the public cannot exclude any persons or groups from the activities unless the exclusion is required by health and safety regulations, University policy, or otherwise by law. Users who book space for private gatherings in accordance with this policy and procedures cannot advertise or promote that event in a manner which suggests that non-invitees may attend.[3]

However, there may be times when it is desirable to allow some level of discretion which would not violate the principles articulated in the University's policies related to freedom of speech and at the same time be consistent with the Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC). This would be limited to certain types of programs where attendance might be limited to individuals from a specific group (defined by race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, record of offences, marital status, family status, or disability) if there is historically demonstrated systemic discrimination against members of that group. The purpose of this may be relieve hardship, to help disadvantaged people achieve equal opportunity, or to help eliminate discrimination. Precedent within an institutional context is also relevant (e.g., women only weightlifting hours). However, such a restriction would not be acceptable for political advocacy events because neither a systemic historic exclusion, nor a specific remedial purpose, can be demonstrated in a definitive manner. Further discussion and legal advice is suggested for this issue.

Another area of concern regarding the current procedures includes the restrictive use of the name "University of Toronto" even in designating the location of an event. This is problematic not just in referencing the address, but also because many recognized groups have "University of Toronto" as part of their title. The restriction conveys the message that the University is not the sponsor or supporter of events which take place on campus, but it does infringe on clarity in that "University of Toronto" is an essential part of some campus addresses. It would be more useful to require that recognized student groups need to state clearly that the University of Toronto has no association with their event.

The advisory committee also felt that clarity should be provided around instances in which internal groups need to provide security (security, in this instance, referring to personnel required to operate the building, including unlocking doors and maintaining a presence in the building after hours), when campus police are required, and the current procedures surrounding cancellation of events.

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[3] Section 5, Policy on the Temporary Use of Space at the University of Toronto.

Recommendation:

2) That wording in the procedures be amended:

- To provide further clarity around the complete current restriction that publicly advertised events always be completely open to the public within the parameters of the University's policies and the law.

- To permit internal groups to use "University of Toronto" in promotional information about own their events, but that recognized campus also be required to indicate that the University is not associated with an event when this is true.

- To provide further clarity in language regarding security and maintenance requirements (for example, when using a room that must be made available after normal operating hours) versus campus police needs (when campus police officers would be required to be present for events).

- To revise the section on cancellations to reflect that the University will make every effort to accommodate student groups should the need for relocation arise.

Other recommendations of the Committee

The Advisory Committee acknowledged that the needs and expectations of student groups have changed over the past twelve years since the removal of rental fees associated with classroom bookings. For example, it is now commonplace to expect audio/visual equipment and this is not generally seen as something that should have an extra charge associated with it while also noting that real costs exist in the provision of such equipment. The Advisory Committee suggests that students would greatly appreciate support in this regard and that perhaps funding to cover the costs of audio/visual equipment might be covered by the revenue generated from external groups. If this is not viable, the University should explore some alternative means of covering these costs.

Recommendation:

3) That the University minimize or eliminate the charges associated with student use of audio/visual equipment.

Students reported that an increase in the number of signing officers in recognized student groups would be of great value and make booking space much easier. As it currently stands, if the single signing officer is unavailable to coordinate with the Office of Space Management, the student group cannot book space. Additionally, for those groups with frequent meetings, the demands on a single person can be burdensome.

At present, while the *Policy on the Recognition of Campus Groups* does not prevent the identification of two contact persons, it requires that only one be identified. Because of this, procedures in some offices, which originated many years ago, were developed with the understanding that only one contact person would exist. This implicit understanding existed

before computer systems were being developed both to deal with recognition and booking procedures. Since this time, however, the Ulife system was developed and it does have the capacity for additional contact persons.

Recommendation:

4) That the *Policy on the Recognition of Campus Groups* be revised to require two contact persons to be identified and that there be an increase in the number of contact people who may reserve space on behalf of campus groups

5) That the Ulife system begin accepting two contact persons for each group.[4]

The Advisory Committee also heard that student groups have a smaller window of time to book space on campus through the Office of Space Management (OSM) than do external groups. Student Groups could greatly benefit from having more time to book space and OSM has confirmed that this recommendation can be implemented.

Recommendation:

6) That a larger window of time be allowed for campus groups to book space through the Office of Space Management.

The Office of the Vice-Provost, Students is currently developing procedures related to the recordings of non-academic events. This procedure will outline the expectations of those speaking at or attending an event, as well as the expectations of the event organizers. At present, the issue is handled as being similar to expectations concerning recordings of classroom activities as discussed in the Provost's guidelines on Appropriate Use of Information and Communication Technology:[5]

> The unauthorised use of any form of device to audiotape, photograph, video-record or otherwise reproduce lectures, course notes or teaching materials provided by instructors is covered by the *Canadian Copyright Act* and is prohibited. Students must obtain prior written consent to such recording. In the case of private use by students with disabilities, the instructor's consent must not be unreasonably withheld.
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> In other situations where an individual photographs, audiotapes or otherwise records activities in which she or he is taking part, without the permission of other participants, the nature of the activities must be examined. Where participants have a reasonable expectation of privacy, unauthorised recording of their activities may be unlawful.

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[4] This was implemented in the summer of 2011 when the Ulife system was being updated.

[5] http://www.provost.utoronto.ca/policy/use.htm

When event organizers inquire about this issue, the Office of the Vice-Provost, Students indicates that event organizers may choose to allow or disallow audio or video recordings of events, or record the event themselves, but that clear information and instructions must be posted both within the event and at the entrance in order to allow participants to make informed decisions before entering.

Recommendation:

7) That the expectations and obligations regarding the recording events in University space be articulated and included in the procedures on the use of space.

It was felt by the Committee that consistency in the use and the booking of space across the University's different units is important. A set of guidelines developed centrally should, ideally, be applicable across all three campuses, in all faculties and colleges, and cover all space bookable through the University. Thus, the Committee felt that the different administrative units – regardless of their different procedural nuances – should follow the new procedures faithfully.

Recommendation:

8) That changes to procedures arising from the recommendations of this Committee be applicable across the University. The federated colleges should also be encouraged to adopt any similar procedures.

Advisory Committee on the Temporary Use of Space

Terms of Reference & Membership

An Advisory Committee on the Temporary Use of Space is being established by the Vice-President & Provost in order to provide a forum for students and others to raise issues concerning the temporary use of space and to advise on the on-going development of procedures under the Policy.

Specifically, the terms of reference for the committee include the following:

1. To review and make recommendations with respect to Procedures established under the Policy on the Temporary Use of Space at the University of Toronto.

2. To provide a forum for discussion of issues related to the temporary use of space and to advise the administration on these matters.

3. To assess the current use and allocation of student activity space.

The membership of the committee is as follows:

Jill Matus, Vice-Provost, Students (chair)
Three representatives of Recognized Campus Groups (St. George Campus)
     Ishraq Alim, President, Muslim Students' Association
     Aakaash Madhavan, United Nations Society
     Michael Scott, Vice-President, Recruitment, International Relations Society
One representative of a Recognized Campus Group (UTM)
     Gael Jacquin, Etudiants Francophones de l'Universite de Toronto Mississauga
One representative of a Recognized Campus Group (UTSC)
     Lauren Chan, L'Association Francaise, UTSC
One representative of the University of Toronto Students' Union
     Danielle Sandhu, Vice-President, Equity
One representative of the University of Toronto Mississauga Students' Union
     Grayce Yuen, Vice-President of University Affairs and Academics
One representative of the Scarborough Campus Students' Union
     John Aruldason, President
One representative of the Association of Part-time Undergraduate Students
     Katie Wolk, Outreach Organizer
One representative of the Graduate Students' Union
     Lindsey Fiddes, Internal Commissioner
Four representatives of St. George based faculty or college student societies
     Akash Goel, President, Victoria University Students' Administrative Council
     Gavin Nowlan, Arts and Science Student Union
     Jack Phelan, President, Innis College Students' Society
     Annum Bokhari, President, Woodsworth College Students' Association
One student member of the Governing Council
     Olivier Sorin

One designate of the Vice-President & Principal, UTM
      Mark Overton, Dean of Student Affairs
One designate of the Vice-President & Principal, UTSC
      Frances Wdowczyk, Special Advisor to the CAO
One designate of the Assistant-Vice-President, Student Life (St. George)
      Ian Simmie, Student Life Coordinator
Lucy Fromowitz, Assistant Vice-President, Student Life
Louise Cowin, Warden, Hart House
Jim Delaney, Director, Office of the Vice-Provost, Students
Steve Bailey, Director, Office of Space Management
Mark Sedore, Special Projects Officer, Office of the Vice-Provost, Students (secretary)