



Board Special Resolution III.8:

Appointment of Members of the Board of Governors – Board Diversity Policy

Category: Board of Governors

Approval: Board of Governors

Responsibility: University Secretary

Date: June 22, 2012, Revised January 29, 2016, Revised March 23, 2018

Policy Statement:

As an organization in a diverse and multi-cultural country, Trent University embraces diversity and seeks to reduce traditional or systemic barriers to the appointment of individuals to serve on the Board of Governors. Among those who may face such barriers to serving as governors of major public institutions are members of ethnic, racial, linguistic and religious minorities, indigenous persons, persons with disabilities, women, members of the lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgendered and queer communities and youth.

The Board is of the view that diversity of membership enhances the ability of a governing body to be responsive to the communities it serves, and to make balanced, creative decisions. As Trent University strives for excellence as an organization, it will promote diversity to fully utilize differences in backgrounds and perspectives in its governance structures.

While maintaining the primary objective of ensuring that members of the Board of Governors, on the whole, represent the necessary range of skills and experience required to lead a significant public sector institution, the Board is committed to working towards more diversity within its membership. Trent University aims to maintain gender balance on the Board and to promote the participation of groups who are underrepresented on the Board. In this way, the Board will be more reflective of the membership of Canadian society. Trent University will work towards the removal or reduction of systemic barriers that have prevented the full participation of minority groups in university governance.

1.0 Member Appointments:

Pursuant to Special Resolution II.1, the Nominating and Governance Committee directly oversees the nominations process for the at-large seats on the Board. Nominations for the balance of the Board seats, save for the seats held by the

President and the Chancellor, are generated by democratic elections processes within the University Community.

2.0 Diversity Goals

The Board sets for itself the goal of bringing a wider range of backgrounds, perspectives and information to the Board table by increasing opportunities for women, youth, indigenous persons, persons with a disability, visible and non-visible minorities and members of the lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgendered and queer communities to be represented on the Board. This will be achieved through the removal of traditional barriers to participation in university governance and finding ways to encourage participation from within these underrepresented groups.

3.0 Diversity Objectives

With respect to those seats for which nominations are directly managed by the Nominating and Governance Committee, the Nominating and Governance Committee will have, as its foremost aim, the nomination of persons who meet the skills requirements of the Board in a given year based on the Vacancy Profiles and Skills Matrix but, where attainable within the Matrix, the Committee will strive to achieve the following objectives:

- i. The Board will maintain gender diversity with the goal of ensuring that representation of either gender does not fall below 40% of the total external seats;
- ii. As the governing body of an institution that is a leader in the area of Indigenous Studies in Canada, and in recognition of the surrounding Indigenous peoples, , the Board will have as its objective the appointment and maintenance of more than one governor of Indigenous descent on the Board continuously. For the sake of clarity, Indigenous descent shall be determined, in part, by a demonstrated affiliation with either a known First Nation, Métis or Inuit community or a recognized First Nation, Métis or Inuit organization;
- iii. As a university with a diverse student population and a thriving international student program, the Board will have as its objective the appointment and maintenance of more than one governor who is a member of a visible minority;
- iv. The proportion of students at Trent University who have a disability exceeds the national average within the 15-24 age group. To properly understand the needs of these students and enhance the educational opportunities for disabled persons, the Board will make an active effort to recruit persons with disabilities with the goal of the appointment and maintenance of more than one governor who has a disability;
- v. Founded on the ideals of equality and respect for the individual person, Trent University is a University that welcomes and supports members of the lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgendered and queer communities (LGBTQ). The Board will take positive steps to review the manner in which it seeks Board members to

ensure that opportunities to serve on the Board of Governors come to the attention of members of the LGBTQ communities;

- vi. Created by and for the communities in central Ontario, Trent University has long maintained a strong place economically, culturally and socially within this region. To ensure these strong linkages remain and to drive success for the University and the communities it supports, the Board will have as its goal to ensure, by 2015, that representation of members from Central Ontario does not fall below 30% of the total external seats. For the purposes of this section, Central Ontario includes the Counties of Northumberland, Quinte, Hastings, Peterborough and Haliburton, the Regional Municipality of Durham, and the Cities of Peterborough, Kawartha Lakes and Prince Edward County;
- vii. The Board will welcome nominations of candidates from “non-visible” underrepresented groups including ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious minorities.

4.0 Diversity Strategies

The Board will take the following steps toward achieving its diversity objectives:

- i. The Nominating and Governance Committee will undertake an annual review of the composition of the entire Board, including designated internal and ex officio seats, to achieve an annual ‘diversity snapshot’ of the Board and to measure progress toward achieving the diversity goals established within this policy;
- ii. The Nominating and Governance Committee will review the existing and traditional strategies utilized by the Committee for Board recruitment to identify systemic barriers to the participation of underrepresented groups;
- iii. The Committee will actively seek nominations from within the communities that are under-represented on the Board. In doing so, the Committee will consider advertising Board vacancies to organizations who represent or advocate for these groups. The Committee may also consider inviting members of underrepresented groups to help the University identify strategies to bring about increased participation in governance;
- iv. The Secretariat will conduct a review of the election processes for internal appointments to identify systemic and other barriers to participation by under-represented groups and, where necessary, revise these processes to encourage candidacies from members of these groups.

5.0 Board and Vacancy Profiles

Selection criteria for board positions should be clear and publicly available through board and vacancy profiles. Board profiles identify the competencies needed by the board as a whole to achieve its mandate and strategies. Vacancy profiles set out the specific skills and qualifications needed by candidates to be considered and selected for an available position.

Profiles increase transparency by demonstrating that all candidates will be evaluated against the same criteria. The primary criterion is skill; the selection of board members

is first and foremost based on merit. Diversity is taken into consideration through its inclusion as a required element in the board profiles.

These profiles must be communicated to all applicants, and to staff, volunteers and board members involved in recruitment, screening, and selection of candidates. To reduce barriers to participation, board and vacancy profiles should be assessed in a way that is flexible enough to allow applicants to demonstrate the required skills through a range of experience and formal qualifications.

The Nominating and Governance Committee will identify the number of vacancies available in any given year in or about January and will be responsible for generating Vacancy Profiles based on the skills required by the Board and the diversity goals set within this policy.

Vacancy Profiles will, at a minimum, be announced and promulgated on the University's website and formal dates will be established for the receipt of nominations by the Committee for current vacancies.

Contact Officer:
University Secretary

Date for Next Review:
March 1, 2021