



Turning Policy into Practice: Name and Legal Status at the University of Toronto

Joseph Minichini

Business Analyst, Registrarial Policy

Enrolment Services

j.minichini@utoronto.ca

416-946-4009

Neil Neebar

Associate Registrar, Student Records,
Registration and Graduation

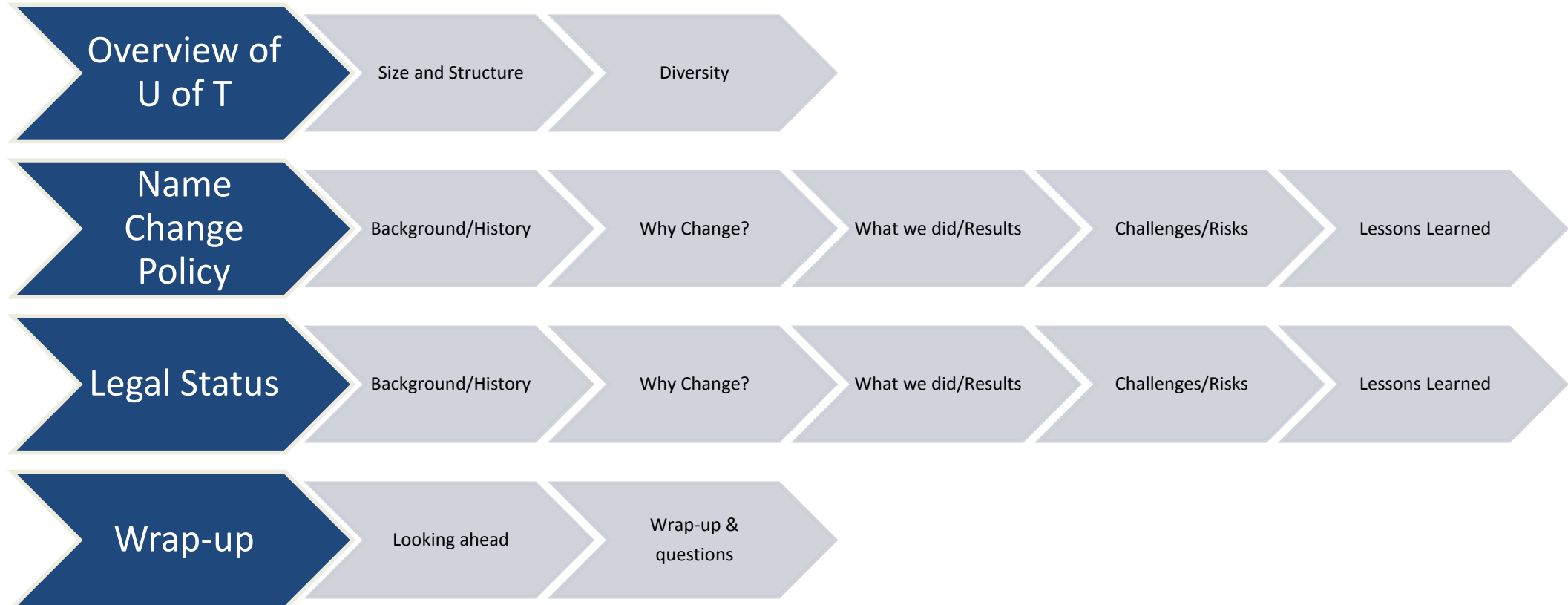
U of T Mississauga

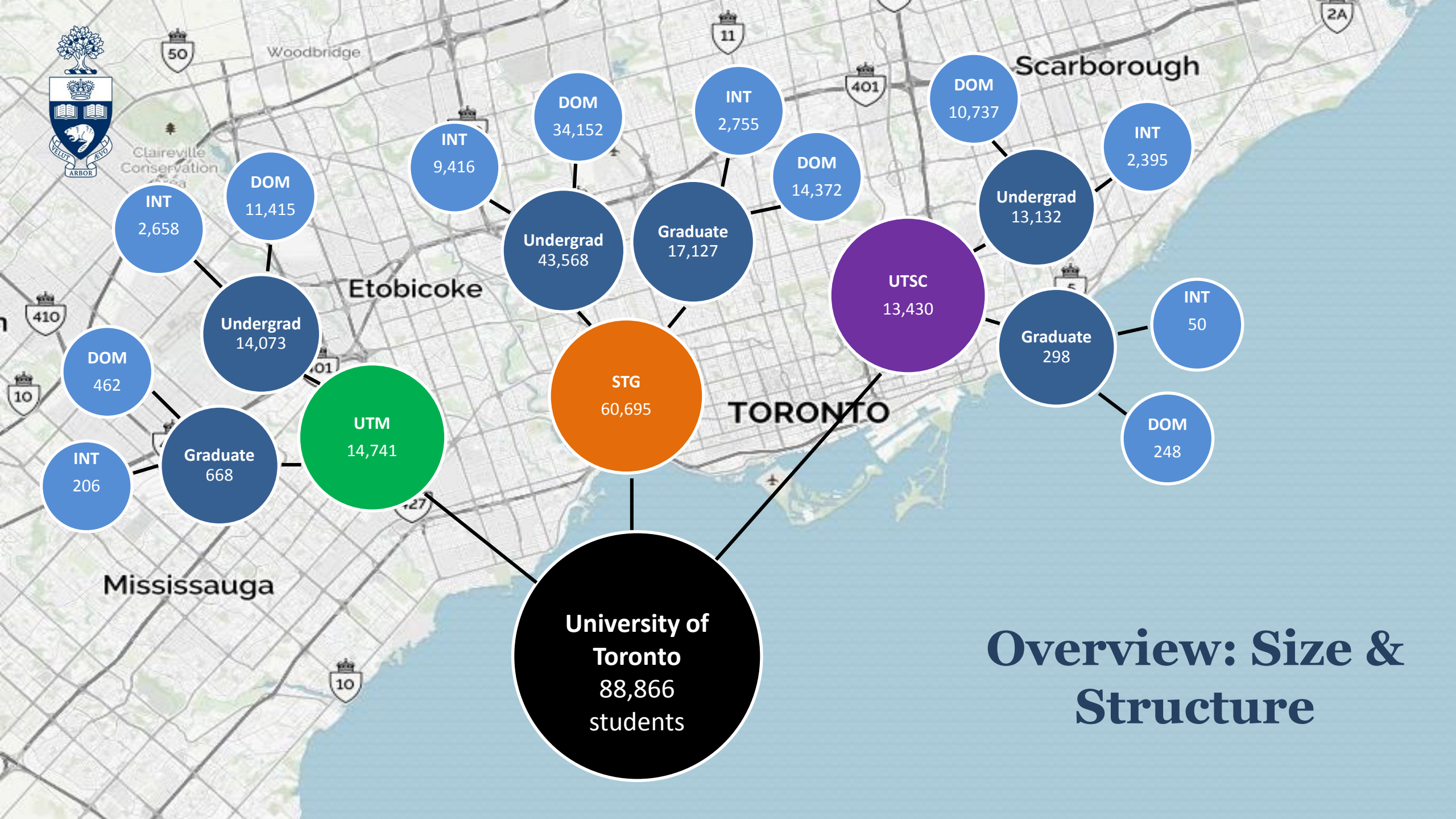
neil.neebar@utoronto.ca

905-828-5388



Presentation Overview



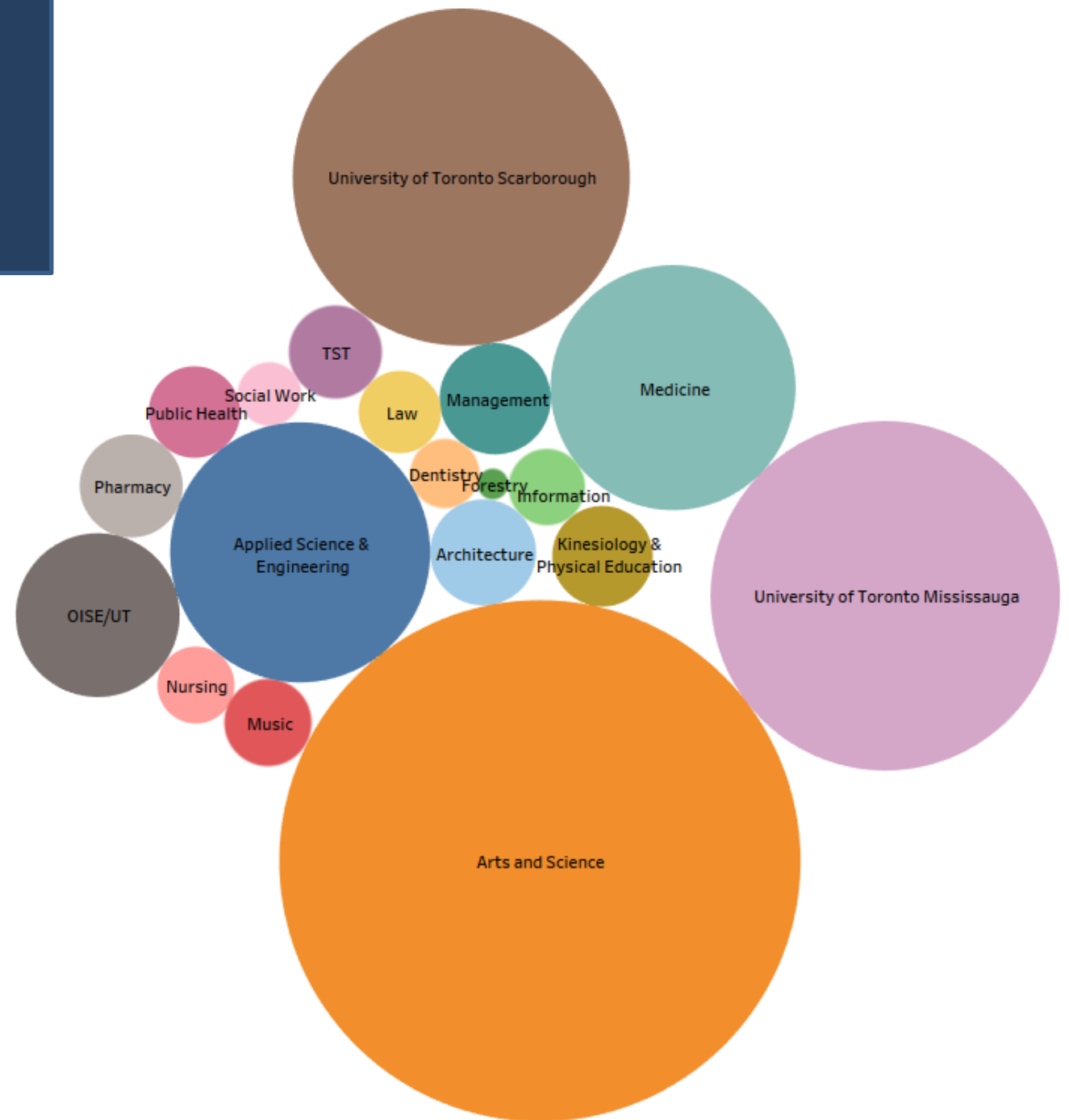


Overview: Size & Structure



Overview: Size & Structure

- 19 Autonomous academic divisions offering a mix of undergrad and grad programs
- Bubble size represents number of registered students





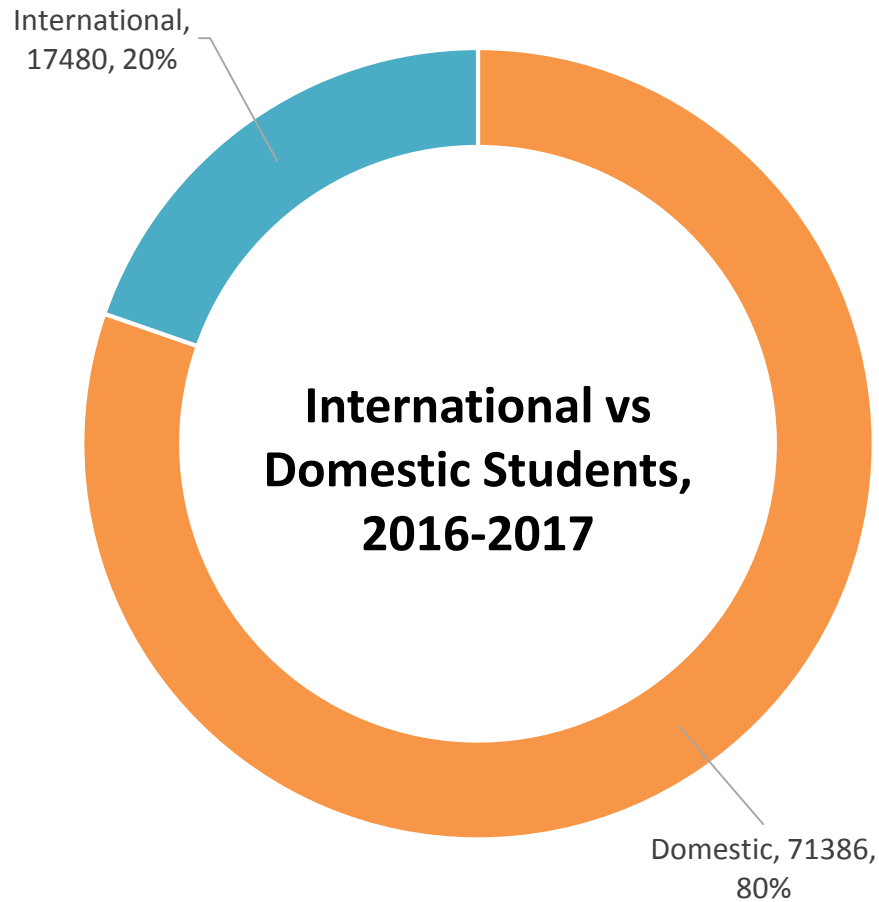
Overview: Size & Structure

- Operationalizing name and legal status policy requires us to work laterally across a myriad registrar offices
- 28 registrar offices across 3 campuses
- Registrar offices manage name and legal status process

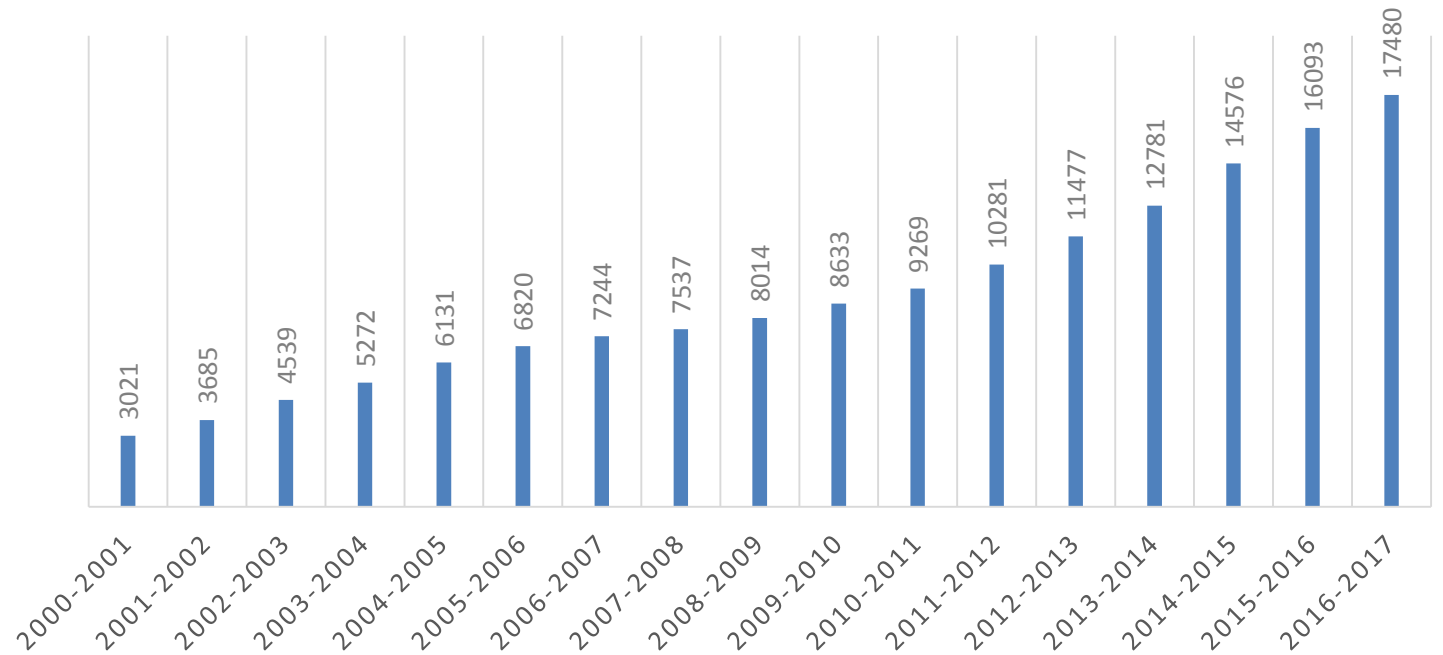




Overview: Diversity



INTERNATIONAL STUDENT POPULATION, LAST 16 YEARS



579% increase of international students in the past 16 years!



Name Change Policy: Background/History

- 2009 - Governing Council replaces 1986 policy on how students change their name on the official academic record
- Students may change their name and gender to something consistent with their identity
- Legal supporting documentation and a reason for a name change no longer necessary

Available Online:

<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/ppapr162009.pdf>

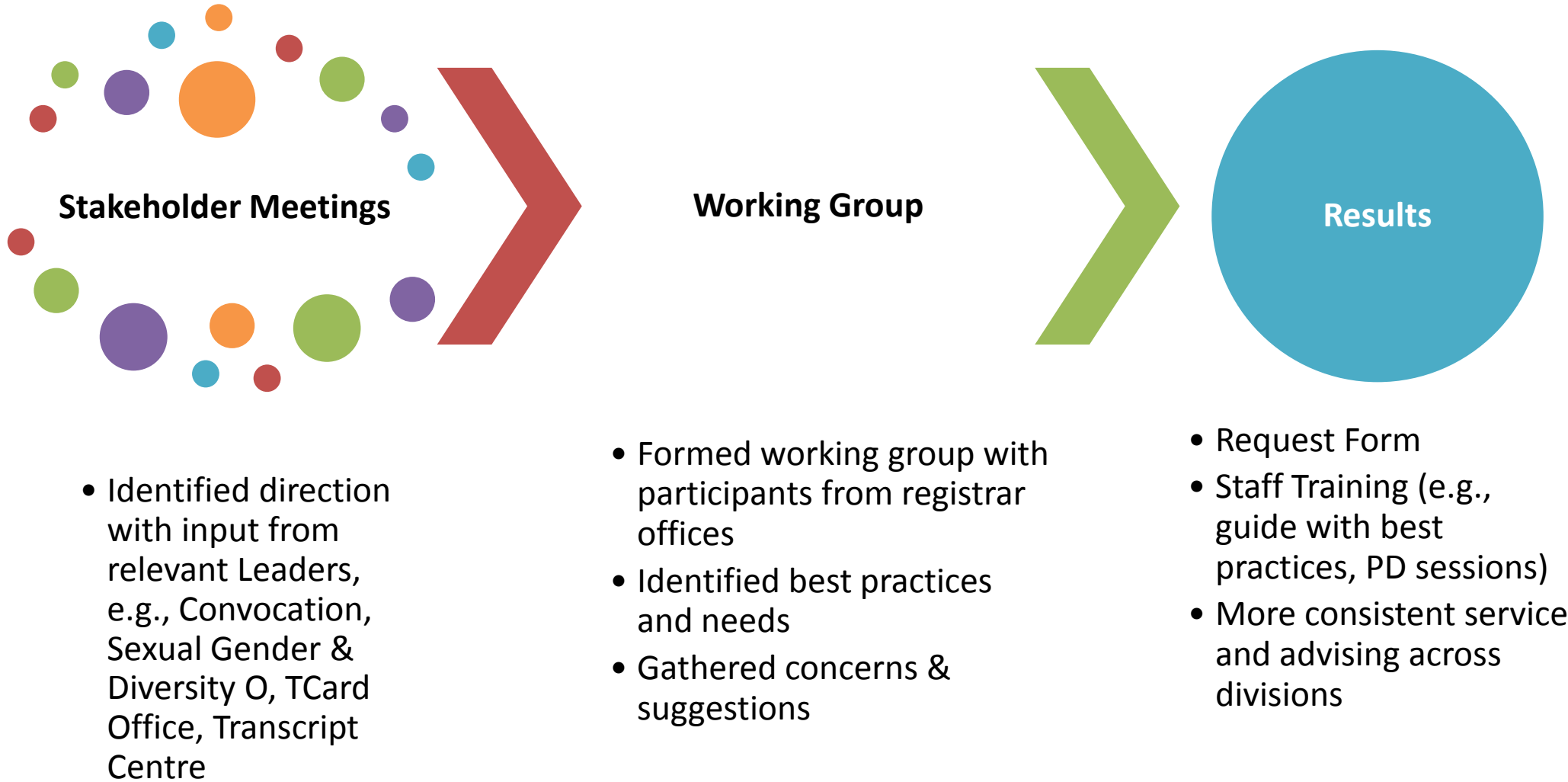


Name Change Policy: Why Change?

- Supports the University's mandate for equity, inclusiveness, and human rights
- Addresses a growing community of transgender students, and a rising number of international students seeking to anglicize their name
- Allows students to choose a name consistent with their identity, e.g., trans students, anglicizing names or other family circumstances (e.g., divorce, blended family)



Name Change Policy: What We Did/Results





Name Change Policy: Risks/Challenges

- Non-legal names on the official academic record create complications with the verification of credentials and transcripts
- There is a potential for fraud and reputational damage when students use a preferred name on the official academic record





Name Change Policy: Lessons Learned

- Process is not enough – need to remain flexible
- In a complex, multi-divisional environment, the policy will always be applied with some variation between registrar offices
- Diversity between registrar offices will naturally mean that the policy will be applied differently e.g., Faculty of Medicine warning system
- Needs of the student vs needs of the Faculty/Division



Legal Status Verification

Background/History

Summer 2004

UTM begins formal checking and verifying legal status

Summer 2013

UTSC begins checking and verifying legal status

Summer 2015

UTM/UTSC legal process adapted at STG

Summer 2016

STG TCard office enhances services and begins making minor changes to the student record

“Proof of citizenship is required in order to begin your studies at the University of Toronto”



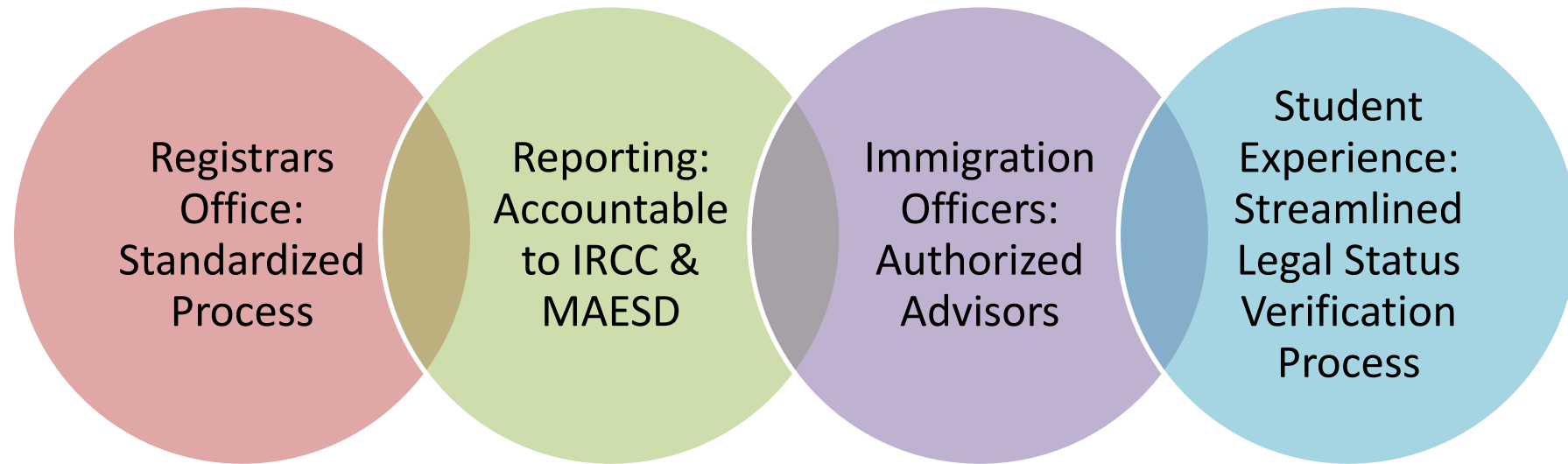
Legal Status

Why change?

- Growing international population
- Addresses issues with self-reported admissions data; e.g., OUAC
- Due diligence for reporting; e.g., DLI compliance, MAESD count reporting
 - Legal status and international fee exemption information is reported to the Ontario Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (MAESD)
 - Legal status information is reported to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (i.e., DLI Compliance reporting)
- Accuracy important for Fee verification - Used to determine a student's tuition rate (e.g., domestic fees vs international fees) and funding



Legal Status: What we did





Legal Status: What we did

Service Hub

- TCard office selected the Service Hub.
- Improve the onboarding experience for students

Name Changes

- Minor Changes based on Docs given
- Name Changes - correct spelling, change to match legal docs

Legal Status

- Domestic to Domestic Legal Status Changes
- International to International Legal Status



Legal Status Results



- Simplified onboarding process for students (vast majority of students are verified by TCard offices across 3 campuses)
- Decreased volume for registrar offices who would otherwise be seeing students in a decentralized environment
- More consistent practices across divisions and campuses

8448 students verified between May 1, 2016 and Feb. 7, 2017



Legal Status: Risks/Challenges

- Immigration matters are complex and laws change frequently
- Must refer to an Immigration Advisor to discuss issues
- Difficult to train staff on the multitude of legal status scenarios
- Pushback from students who are turned away at TCard office (e.g., domestic students without id)



Lessons Learned

- There isn't always a black and white answer; i.e., some things have to be dealt with on a case-by-case basis
- More upkeep than originally thought; e.g., training documents need to be updated annually due to changing laws
- Federal and Provincial legal definitions differ which creates confusion e.g., common law and age of dependency



Looking Ahead

Name Changes

- Preferred first name system
- Students would be able to change their first name (with limitations) on the student information system
- Legal name and preferred first name would be maintained and used separately

Legal Status

- Streamline services (e.g., TCard improvements, work with immigration officers)



Questions

THANK YOU!!!

Joseph Minichini

Business Analyst, Registrarial Policy

Enrolment Services

j.minichini@utoronto.ca

416-946-4009

Neil Neebar

Associate Registrar, Student Records,
Registration and Graduation

U of T Mississauga

neil.neebar@utoronto.ca

905-828-5388