



Young Alumni Trustee Handbook

Spring 2025

Each spring, one member of the senior class is elected to serve a four-year term on the Board of Trustees of Princeton University as a Young Alumni Trustee (YAT). This is an opportunity for a recently graduated Princetonian to serve the long-term interests of the University as a member of the board, bringing to the role an important perspective informed by their recent experience as an undergraduate student.

History of Young Alumni Trustees

The Board of Trustees of Princeton University created the position of Young Alumni Trustee in April 1969. In that year, two Young Alumni Trustees were elected: Richard Cass '68 to a three-year term and Brent Henry '69 to the first four-year term. By 1972, the board had four Young Alumni Trustees serving four-year terms and that has been true ever since.

The Young Alumni Trustee position was created to ensure that the Board would always include four members with recent experience as undergraduates. As explicitly stated at the time and reaffirmed ever since, Young Alumni Trustees have the same rights, powers and duties as all other trustees and take the same oath to “faithfully, impartially and justly” perform the duties of the office of trustee.

Role and Responsibilities

Young Alumni Trustees play two essential roles on the Board:

- While Young Alumni Trustees are elected by a subset of the alumni body (the junior and senior classes and the two youngest alumni classes), their electorate should not be considered their “constituency” on the board. Like all other trustees, the Young Alumni Trustees’ first obligation is to best serve the long-term interests of the University as they understand them after weighing all the evidence available to them.
- Having graduated recently, the Young Alumni Trustees provide a perspective on the issues before the board informed by their experience as students and their knowledge of the needs, concerns, and interests of the current generation of Princeton undergraduates.

The Board of Trustees consists of no fewer than 23 and no more than 40 members. In any given year, there are a total of 13 alumni trustees, of whom four are Young Alumni Trustees. All alumni trustees serve four-year terms. Young Alumni Trustees have the same obligations as all other trustees.

- The University expects its trustees to make Princeton their primary extracurricular activity and expects 100% attendance at all meetings. The Board traditionally meets in person five

times each academic year, with special meetings called as needed. A trustee can therefore expect to make at least five trips to campus each year. Meetings begin on a Thursday afternoon and run through Saturday.

- The Board carries out its responsibilities and discharges its duties in part through standing committees. Every trustee is expected to participate actively in the work of the Board and is assigned to at least two committees.
- Between attending and preparing for meetings, a trustee will spend an estimated 200 hours per year on Princeton Board commitments, with additional time commitments for those serving in leadership roles.

More information on the Board of Trustees can be found at <https://president.princeton.edu/vice-president-and-secretary/board-trustees>.

Qualifications & Eligibility

Princeton's Board of Trustees has a long history of benefiting greatly from trustees who bring intelligence, curiosity, integrity and a deep commitment to Princeton to their service on the Board, and from the candor, trust and mutual respect that characterize trustee discussions.

Princeton's most effective trustees are open-minded, have the ability to consider all evidence that comes before them and then arrive at the best decision for the University as a whole, without being beholden to a position or a particular constituency that could undermine the workings of the Board or their own effectiveness on the Board.

All members of the senior class who successfully complete the requirements for graduation from Princeton University are eligible for election as Young Alumni Trustee. No individual who continues as a student at Princeton University or returns as a student to Princeton University after graduation of his or her class, or who becomes a member of the faculty or staff or receives a salary or funding under any University program, such as a fellowship, is eligible to serve as a Young Alumni Trustee.

Election Process

The Board of Trustees has delegated responsibility for administering the alumni trustee elections to the Office of Alumni Engagement. The election process has been designed to identify and elect candidates who will be successful as individual trustees, and who will contribute to the effective working of the board as a whole.

The Young Alumni Trustee election process consists of a primary election, in which the senior class votes, and a general election in which the junior and senior classes and the two youngest alumni classes vote.

Becoming a Candidate

In order to appear on the Young Alumni Trustee primary election ballot, prospective candidates must attend a mandatory information session and submit a Young Alumni Trustee Primary Election Candidate Form by the advertised deadline.

Primary Election

All candidates who meet the requirements described above will appear on the ballot for the primary election. The ballot will include brief candidate profiles prepared using information drawn from the Young Alumni Trustee Primary Election Candidate Forms.

The Office of Alumni Engagement will distribute the official ballot and voting information electronically to each member of the senior class and the vote will be conducted electronically via a secure website using a password-protected verification system. The election uses the single, transferable method of voting, allowing seniors to rank all of the candidates in order of preference. The three primary candidates receiving the highest numbers of votes move on to the general election.

General Election

The names of the top three candidates from the primary election will appear on the general election ballot. The general election ballot will include more extensive candidate profiles prepared by the Office of Alumni Engagement.

Each member of the junior and senior classes and each member of the two most recently graduated undergraduate classes are eligible to vote in the general election. As part of the University's commitment to sustainability, the Office of Alumni Engagement distributes all election information electronically unless an alumnus/a does not have an email address on file. The vote is conducted electronically via a secure website using a password-protected verification system. The election uses ranked-choice voting, allowing electors to select a first choice and a second choice from among the candidates.

The results of the general election are announced at Reunions.

Campaigning

The Board of Trustees election process is unlike a typical election in that campaigning is not permitted. By long-standing policy, trustee candidates are not permitted to campaign for election and they do not run on particular platforms.

As noted above, the Board of Trustees of Princeton University works best if every trustee comes to each issue with an open mind, the ability to consider all evidence and an overarching commitment to arrive at the best decision for the University as a whole, not as an advocate for a particular constituency or point of view.

Each trustee is shaped by their own experiences, both at and outside Princeton, which is why the election materials include profiles of the candidates. But trustees who arrive on the board having already staked out positions on issues without access to full information can undermine both the workings of the board and their own effectiveness if they are perceived as beholden to a position they took while campaigning or to a particular constituency that is expecting them to hold to that position.

It bears repeating that the board has a long history of benefiting greatly from trustees who bring intelligence, curiosity, integrity and a deep commitment to Princeton to their service on the board, and from the candor, trust and mutual respect that characterize trustee discussions. In the board's

experience, partisanship detracts from this sense of shared responsibility and thus is detrimental in both the election process and participation in the board.

Because of this, there are two important constraints that **MUST BE OBSERVED**:

- **No issue-based campaigning is allowed.** Candidates cannot make statements proclaiming to represent or advocate for a particular constituency, issue, or point of view.
- **No organized campaigning is allowed.** Candidates cannot engage in any form of organized effort to solicit votes in *any* medium (i.e., posters, e-mail, text message, listservs, blogs, social media, websites, door-to-door campaigning, solicitation of endorsements, addressing groups, blogs, social media, etc.), nor may they deploy other individuals or organizations to engage in such activities on their behalf.

Candidates are however permitted to respond to media inquiries regarding their candidacy, keeping in mind the constraints around issue-based and organized campaigning.

In order to provide the electorate with information about candidates, the Office of Alumni Engagement prepares material that is disseminated to voters. This includes posters, candidate profiles, and other election information that is distributed electronically and posted on campus. In addition, Alumni Engagement will work with the Office of the Dean of Students to publicize the slate of candidates and voting procedures during both the primary and general elections. In observance of the rules prohibiting issue-based and organized campaigning, candidates may not repost election information that is shared by the University.

By submitting a candidate election form, you agree to abide by these campaigning restrictions. Violation may result in disqualification of your candidacy. If you are uncertain about whether or not a situation or action will violate these rules, please contact the Office of Alumni Engagement for guidance.

Frequently Asked Questions

What does the Board of Trustees do?

The Board's powers and responsibilities derive from, and are set forth in, the University's charter, the Board's bylaws, and from resolutions it passes from time to time. The Board has control and oversight of the University's resources. It sets the operating and capital budgets and supervises the investment of the University's endowment, which is managed by the Princeton University Investment Company. The Board also delegates authority to various officers of the University, the faculty, and other members of the University community with regard to a range of issues. The Board and the administration are guided in their decision-making by the Strategic Framework of the University, which is reviewed on a periodic basis.

Who is eligible to vote for Young Alumni Trustee candidates?

Enrolled members of the senior class are eligible to vote in the primary, while enrolled members of the junior and senior classes and members of the two most recently graduated undergraduate classes are eligible to vote in the general election for Young Alumni Trustees.

Would my plans for the next four years prevent me from serving as a trustee?

The Board is comprised of individuals with a diverse range of backgrounds, including many who live and work abroad. All members of the senior class who successfully complete the requirements for graduation are eligible to serve as Young Alumni Trustee, so long as they do not return to Princeton as a member of the student body, faculty, or staff or otherwise receive a salary or funding under any University program, such as a fellowship.

Can I run for alumni class office if I am running for Young Alumni Trustee?

You may not serve as both an alumni class officer and a Young Alumni Trustee. If you run in the Young Alumni Trustee primary but are not selected to be on the general election ballot, you may subsequently run for alumni class office. If you are on the general election ballot for Young Alumni Trustee, you may not run for class office, as the elections run simultaneously.

Can I run for Young Alumni Trustee if I graduate in December?

All members of the senior class who successfully complete the requirements for graduation are eligible to serve as Young Alumni Trustee. If you graduate in December, you may run for Young Alumni Trustee during the cycle following the completion of your degree requirements.

How will expenses incurred through service on the board be handled?

The University covers expenses a trustee incurs in connection with service on the board. This includes travel and accommodations for board meetings.



2025 Young Alumni Trustee Essential Dates

Week of February 24	Information Sessions: Mandatory information sessions will be held for seniors interested in serving as Young Alumni Trustee. Representatives from the Office of the President and the Office of Alumni Engagement will discuss the role and how the election process works. Prospective candidates are required to attend one of the two information sessions to be eligible to run for YAT. Registration required in advance.
Friday, March 7	Deadline to submit Young Alumni Trustee Primary Election Candidate Form (5:00 p.m. ET)
Monday, March 31	Primary Election: online voting begins (Class of 2025 only)
Tuesday, April 8	Primary Election: online voting closes (5:00 p.m. ET)
Wednesday, April 9	Primary Election results announced
Wednesday, April 30	General Election: online voting begins (Classes of 2023, 2024, 2025 and 2026)
Wednesday, May 14	General Election: online voting closes (5:00 p.m. ET)
Friday, May 23	Election results are verified by the Deputy Vice President for Alumni Engagement, a designated member of the faculty and a designated member of the Board of Trustees
Friday, May 23	Election results announced at the Alumni Council Annual Meeting
Saturday, May 24	Election results announced at the P-rade

Young Alumni Trustees 1969-2024

Current:

2024	Ms. Aisha Chebbi
2023	Mr. Mutemwa Raphael Masheke
2022	Ms. Naomi Hess
2021	Ms. Morgan Smith

Past:

2020	Mr. Jackson Artis	1994	Mr. Christopher D. Young
2019	Ms. Sarah Varghese	1993	Mrs. Doris Lee Sohmen-Pao
2018	Ms. Myesha Jemison	1992	Ms. Adrienne K. Wheatley
2017	Mr. Achille Tenkiang	1991	Mr. Hoon Cho
2016	Ms. Azza Cohen	1990	Ms. Michel N. Zhu Parris
2015	Mr. Tumi Akinlawon	1989	Mr. Elgin R. Clemons
2014	Mr. Brian Reilly	1988	Ms. Cecilia Rey Hallisey
2013	Mr. Kanwal Matharu	1987	Mr. Todd A. Cox
2012	Ms. Angela Groves	1986	Mrs. Mary B. Tabor Engel
2011	Ms. Aku Ammah-Tagoe	1985	Ms. Jocelyn E. Russell
2010	Mr. F. Josh Grehan	1984	Mr. Timothy C. Wu
2009	Ms. Elizabeth A. Dilday	1983	Ms. Tiffany W. Bluemle
2008	Ms. Meaghan P. Petersack	1982	Mr. Joel L. Achenbach
2007	Mr. James Williamson	1981	Ms. Lisa S. McGovern
2006	Mr. Brady P. Walkinshaw	1980	Ms. Anne C. Mackay-Smith
2005	Mr. Matthew J. T. Margolin	1979	Dr. Armistead C.G. Webster
2004	Mr. Rishi S. Jaitly	1978	Mr. Robert A. Connor
2003	Mr. Olivier Kamanda	1977	Kenneth Offit, M.D.
2002	Mr. Charles H. Brown	1976	Ms. Nancy B. Peretsman
2001	Mr. Jin H. Kim	1975	Mr. Aaron Harber
2000	Mr. Spencer B. Merriweather, III	1974	William H. Frist, M.D.
1999	Mr. Brian C. Johnson	1973	Dr. Marsha H. Levy-Warren
1998	Mr. Jeffrey S. Siegel	1972	Eric L. Richard, Esq.
1997	Ms. Sarah E. Stein	1971	The Rev. Dr. Eugene Y. Lowe, Jr.
1996	Mr. George T. Whitesides	1970	Joseph Julnes Dehner, Esq.
1995	Ms. Sejal Shah Gulati	1969	Richard Cass, Esq. Brent Henry, Esq.