

1.1 COSTUMES

1.1.1 The Job

The class reunion costume or uniform serves to identify and unite the class at Reunions. It also expresses the theme of the reunion and distinguishes your class in the P-rade. The responsibility of the Costume chair is to design and procure all costume components and receive, track and distribute costume orders. Tasks include:

1. Design the costume, coordinating with the Reunion Chair(s), Theme, Artwork and other committee members. Coordinate with the Artwork Chair on designs, artwork and use of the reunion logo. There are often variations on the costume components for classmates and spouses, and usually at least a T-shirt for children. Consider fun extra accessories, such as hats, tiger tails, umbrellas, canes, totes, etc. that can accentuate the theme, particularly in the P-rade.
2. Coordinate with the P-rade Chair on ordering any giveaways. These are small items, often given to classmates right before the P-rade. Many classes provide fun accessories, such as sunglasses, kazoo's, temporary tattoos, etc.
3. Identify and work with vendor(s) for all costume components.
4. Order buttons to be used as name tags at Reunions. These often display the logo or some part of the logo. Remember to leave enough space for names to be written legibly. Note that enough buttons need to be ordered for the major reunion and satellite alumni and their guests.
5. Receive, track and organize costume orders from classmates and vendors.
6. Create a process to distribute costumes at Reunions.

1.1.2 Related Information

Soliciting class input. It is very important to get classmates involved in costume design. Some classes solicit ideas from classmates via surveys or design contests. Be sure to run your ideas past the Reunion Chair(s) and Committee Members, as the Reunion Chair(s) and Class President must approve the final design.

25th Reunion Jacket. The 25th Reunion is the youngest class to wear a class-designed jacket. Liberal use of orange and black is the norm, but other colors sometimes appear in keeping with the reunion theme. In addition, some 25th Reunion classes have chosen to weave the names of classmates into the fabric or the lining of their jackets. Finally, some classes manipulate or re-use jacket designs of their parent or grandparent class. The Costume Chair may consider reaching out to the Alumni Council's Committee on Princetoniana to consult photos of past jacket designs.

Budgeting. There are two facets of budgeting for costumes: first, determine what the cost per classmate and family member will be; second, factor in extras to be ordered by those who register for Reunions after costume orders are due to vendors and additional apparel you hope to sell on-site. Remember to add in any other accessories and P-rade giveaways. Finally, consider the attire needs for the crew (typically 2-3 t-shirts each). A review of past registration forms and Reunion Financial Reports obtained from the Office of Alumni Affairs can be helpful. Costume vendors can also give you ideas for quantities and size distributions.

Working with vendors. Check with the Office of Alumni Affairs and other classes about a vendor's past performance. It can be helpful to work with a vendor who can provide all or most of your products. The more clearly you can communicate your ideas, the more efficiently the design iteration process will run. More refined artwork will increase the likelihood that you will get the finished products with the quality level you had in mind. The University's Office of Risk Management will review vendor contracts if desired. Require samples of your pieces with enough lead time for design changes, and give yourself a comfortable cushion for delivery - we recommend you contract for a May 1 delivery date, with a penalty clause for late delivery.

Costume orders. The other side of the process is receiving orders from classmates. Design the order form carefully to avoid confusion. It should be very clear what parts of the costume are included in the registration fees (and this may be different for classmate, spouse and children) and what parts can be purchased for an additional fee. Check with your vendors on specific sizing information to allow classmates to order the most accurate sizes possible. Design a system to track the incoming orders and create totals for each size and component. If your class website provides for online registration, make sure that the system is set up to track orders and provide total amounts by component and size to be used in ordering from vendors. Confirm with your vendor the date for placing your initial order and the final date that orders can be adjusted/increased.

Costume distribution. There are a few basic approaches to ordering and distributing costumes. The first is essentially "batch processing": use the incoming orders to estimate total needs, and distribute on a first-come first-served basis at Reunions. The second is a specific order approach: existing orders are used to estimate totals, but costumes are distributed based on the specific order received from the classmate. All the components will then be packaged together with the classmate's name and distributed at registration. When more expensive pieces are involved (such as jackets), the specific order approach is strongly recommended. Keep in mind that a well-organized Student Crew can disseminate the costumes in a relatively short time frame.