

University Councillor Role Description

As approved by the University Council, November 5, 2016

Thank you for your interest in Queen's governance and giving back to our University through volunteering on [University Council](#). As a Councillor, your time, talent and insight will help shape and advance the University's strategic priorities.

Councillors are identified ambassadors for Queen's and as such, actively participate in the annual meeting of the Council and ongoing Council business during the year. The sections below outline typical expectations of and commitments made by Councillors.

Fast Facts

- As an advisory body, the University Council participates in Queen's governance along with the [Board of Trustees](#) and the [Senate](#)
- Councillors are elected by and from Queen's Alumni for four year terms, and are eligible for re-election for a maximum of 12 years of continuous service
- Councillors may serve on Council committees and/or task forces as well as other University advisory groups, and be elected to the Board of Trustees
- Council approves by-laws that govern its operations in accordance with the Royal Charter and other applicable governance documents
- Founded in 1874 as a body to review and discuss matters of mutual interest to the Board of Trustees, Senate, and the graduates regarding the prosperity and welfare of the University, which Councillors continue to prioritize through annual giving and their roles as University ambassadors

Annual Meeting

As a Councillor, your engagement in the work of the Council and the life of the University is integral to a successful term on University Council, but the time commitment is manageable and predictable. The Annual General Meeting (AGM) is held once a year, typically in November, and the date is set a minimum of six months in advance.

The Executive Committee expects Councillors will make their best effort to attend annual meetings in person, and that remote participation options will not normally be used expect where travel is not practicable. Note that in accordance with [By-law C](#), section 10, the Executive Committee may, at its discretion, ask Councillors who have not participated in-person or remotely at more than one meeting to forfeit their membership on the Council.

Committee Service

Councillors should also expect involvement in committee work. Council Committees meet separately on variable schedules during the year, dependent on their respective mandates, which are subject to change in order to meet the evolving needs of Council.

University Council has three standing committees: [Program Committee](#), [Nominating Committee](#), and [Executive Committee](#). The Program Committee, in collaboration with the Secretariat, develops and recommends the strategic direction and priorities for the AGM to the Executive Committee. The Nominating Committee oversees the process governing the election of alumni to the Council and the election of University Council Trustees to ensure transparency and accountability in these processes. The Executive Committee has the power to transact business on behalf of the Council between regular meetings of the Council and also approves the agenda for the AGM as proposed by the Program Committee. The Executive Committee also oversees other committees and taskforces of the Council.

Special Purpose Committees are created and tasked by the Principal to explore topics of interest to the University, normally limited to a one-year term, and their work is focused on research and preparing recommendations.

Committee work is typically conducted via teleconference, although those Councillors who live in reasonable proximity to Kingston may choose to attend in-person at Queen's. Meetings are scheduled to ensure maximum member availability.

Occasional Expectations

Throughout the year, surveys and questionnaires will be circulated related to the AGM and other Council-related matters, and it is expected that all Councillors complete them and provide their feedback.

Elections are conducted at various points during the year and Councillors are expected to participate in the nomination process and voting. Councillors are notified via email when a call for nominations is issued and polls are open for a particular election. All correspondence and voting is done online.

Councillors can also expect to receive periodic emails from the University regarding special announcements, general updates, or invitations to attend special events.

Annual Giving

Many Councillors choose to demonstrate leadership through supporting Queen's philanthropic priorities. As leaders of the University, Councillors are expected to set an example for fellow Alumni, which includes a commitment to charitable contributions at a level that is meaningful to each individual Councillor. Council aspires to a 100% participation rate on an annual basis.

The Office of Advancement would be pleased to facilitate giving for Councillors who are seeking to identify a fundraising priority that aligns with their interests. In the absence of any personal

interest or commitment, Councillors are encouraged to direct their gifts to the University Council Bursary, which assists students in financial need.

Travel

The expectation for Councillors at the AGM is in-person attendance, however in extenuating circumstances remote participation options may be offered (i.e.: teleconference or Skype).

Councillors may have access to reduced rates for accommodations and/or travel services to help facilitate their attendance at the AGM. Councillors are responsible for coordinating and booking their own travel arrangements.

University Council is a volunteer organization, and as such Councillors are expected to incur their own participation expenses. Councillors are eligible to donate their participation expenses for which an official receipt is issued for tax purposes. Councillors who do not believe they can meet these expectations are encouraged to raise their concerns with the Chair of the University Council.

Should you have any questions regarding the experience of being a member of University Council, the Secretariat would be pleased to coordinate an opportunity for interested individuals to speak with a current Councillor.

If you have further questions you can contact Lon Knox, Secretary of the University, at ucouncil@queensu.ca or 613-533-6095.