

Reunion Program Committees

Roles and Responsibilities

Recruiting Program Committee Members

All in the class are encouraged and welcome to join the reunion committee every five years! Reunion committees (and your reunion year programming) are strongest when new voices from a variety of backgrounds participate. The HAA encourages you to invite all classmates to volunteer to help plan your reunion. There are no limits to the number of committee members, and roles (beyond the roles of Chairs, Class Report Chair, and Reunion Treasurer, highlighted below) can be flexible.

A class-wide interest form sent early in the reunion year is a great way to identify new reunion committee volunteers. In addition to or as an alternative to a class-wide survey, class leaders could also start small by reaching out to a specific group (i.e., House, dorm, sport, student activity) and build from there, invite classmates you personally know, and encourage the initial group to invite more members.

Your HAA College Alumni Programs staff liaison will work with class leaders to recruit your reunion program committee by:

- Reaching out to your Class Committee and past reunion program committee volunteers.
- Creating a short questionnaire to send to your whole class inviting classmates to join the reunion program committee and asking for input on content or areas of focus, considering targeted outreach to past reunion volunteers to make sure they know about this opportunity.

Leaders of the reunion program committee, known as Chairs, will be selected among those interested in being on the committee, if leaders (often past reunion program committee leaders) have not already been identified. Much like how reunion committees are distinct from one another every five years, the Chairs for one reunion need not be the Chairs for the next reunion, although they certainly may indicate interest again. Some may decide to step aside and serve as a committee member in order to give another classmate the opportunity for the leadership role. The HAA staff liaison will work with the volunteers to determine the best way forward.

Expectations and Responsibilities for all Reunion Program Committee Members

- Have fun! This is a joyful and exciting time to reconnect with classmates.
- Review all onboarding and resource documents and be knowledgeable of best practices and other support provided by the HAA.
- Attend committee meetings and/or review notes and next steps.
- Read communications from the chairs and your HAA staff liaison and be responsive where appropriate.
- Serve as a class (and Harvard) ambassador throughout the year.
- Contribute to reunion planning efforts, with a focus on diversity and inclusivity and highlighting a variety of voices and experiences.
- Contribute to reunion outreach efforts, with a commitment to invite classmates via personal outreach.
- Attend reunion events and serve as a greeter or facilitator during select reunion events.
- Maintain a positive and productive relationship with your HAA staff liaison and fellow committee members with respect for planning protocols and guidelines.

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- Commit to joint problem solving with your HAA staff liaison and fellow committee members, as needed.
- Share feedback and experiences with your HAA staff liaison and fellow committee members to better support your current experience, as well as the experience of future classes and your future reunions.

Beyond the Chairs, Reunion Treasurer, and Class Report Chair, there are no set roles for reunion committees, although classes have recommended certain roles based on past experiences. The Chairs and HAA staff liaison can partner to determine what might work best for your reunion program committee, keeping in mind the interests, experiences, and skillset of the volunteers. Volunteers can be part of more than one subcommittee/take on more than one role depending on their interests.

Expectations and Responsibilities for Reunion Program Committee Chairs

Reunion chairs are the lead reunion ambassadors to their classmates. They organize, motivate, and manage the reunion program committee. Reunion chairs work closely in partnership with their HAA staff liaison to develop programming, create an outreach plan, and encourage overall participation in the reunion year.

Key responsibilities include:

- Lead by example with a joyful and collaborative approach to create a fun environment for the other volunteers and partners.
- Work in close partnership with the HAA staff to ensure a positive planning experience for the committee, which includes proactive dialogue and a shared commitment to troubleshooting.
- Spread the come-one, come-all message by generating enthusiasm for the reunion year by word-of-mouth, personal interactions with classmates, and general communication.
- Actively recruit, motivate, support, and oversee committee members.
- Build a committee that represents diverse Harvard experiences, affinity groups, and interests.
- Collaborate with HAA staff to plan and implement major class events and ensure planning is fiscally responsible, on time, and on budget.
- Ensure reunion communications reflect the tone, language, and culture of the class.
- Serve as a liaison (as requested) with the Class Report Chair and reunion gift committee to provide updates on events, the Class Report, and general class outreach.
- Draft a programming report to be included in the front matter of the Class Report.
- Address challenges that might surface during the planning process around outreach, volunteer management, or event planning.
- Schedule reunion program committee meetings and invite members in partnership with the HAA staff liaison.
- Run reunion program committee meetings and manage next steps in partnership with the HAA staff liaison.
- Approve all outgoing communications and work with committee members and the HAA staff liaison to ensure content is accurate and sent in a timely manner.

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In addition to leading the work of the reunion program committee in partnership with the HAA staff liaison, the chairs will also be part of a larger Reunion Leaders group made up of the chairs from the 5th-70th Reunions, and these leaders will be invited to virtual Reunion Leaders Roundtable meetings to learn about important topics and hear from other volunteers. Beyond these roundtable meetings, we hope this group will be a community of practice allowing for the chairs to learn from other volunteers who have planned reunions before. Of course, your staff liaison will continue to be a great resource to determine best practices.

More information for Chairs can be found on the separate Leadership and Motivation Best Practices document.

Role of Class Treasurer in a Reunion Year: Reunion Treasurer

The Class Treasurer will be asked to serve as the Reunion Treasurer. If they are unable to serve in this role, a proxy should be identified.

The Class Treasurer manages the class treasury and will be consulted about decisions impacting the reunion budget. The HAA will need to have written approval of the reunion budget and pricing from the treasurer(s) before the reunion registration form for in-person campus programming launches. If any additional elements are added to the budget following the budget-approval period, the treasurer(s) will need to provide written consent. Following the reunion year, the treasurer(s) will either be given a check if the class accrues a surplus or will be asked to reimburse the HAA from the class treasury if the class incurs a deficit. In cases where the class appoints a different volunteer to serve as reunion treasurer, approval will still be needed by the Class Treasurer for any pieces that might impact the class treasury.

More information about this work can be found on the separate Budgeting Process and Best Practices document.

Role of Class Secretary in a Reunion Year: Class Report Chair

The Class Secretary will be asked to serve as the Class Report Chair. If they are unable to serve in this role, a proxy should be identified.

The Class Report Chair will work with a staff member in the Class Report Office, as well as the HAA staff liaison, to raise class awareness of the Class Report and submission deadlines and encourage high participation by the class through an email and outreach campaign in partnership with staff and other volunteers. The Chair does not edit or assemble the entries or manage the printing or delivery of the book (the Class Report Office staff member will do this).

The Chair will write a foreword to be included at the front of the book and will work with the Chairs and HAA staff liaison to obtain a programming report and reunion committee list to be included at the front of the book as well (in addition to getting a gift committee report and committee list working with the Harvard College Fund volunteer leaders and staff).

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Even if not serving as an active member of the program committee beyond the Class Report Chair role, the HAA will include the Class Secretary on all committee correspondence in order to ensure they remain informed of all reunion year news and developments.

Communications/Website/Social Media Subcommittee

While all reunion committee members should include communications and outreach as part of their efforts, these volunteers are responsible for the development of an outreach campaign to encourage classmates to attend reunion programming and submit a Class Report entry. In partnership with HAA staff, they are responsible for the development and execution of a strategy that integrates the use of the class website, emails, and social media.

Key responsibilities include:

- Determine a regional, affinity, or House-based outreach effort, and identify leads for those specific groups or regions to reach every classmate through a personal text, call, or email.
- Collaborate with the reunion chairs in planning and executing class outreach strategies and provide regular updates.
- Assist with the writing of electronic class communications and social media posts.

Depending on the class's online presence through a website or various social media channels, the committee may identify volunteers to oversee updating of a class website and social media accounts in support of larger outreach efforts. This work might also be tied into the work of the Communications and Outreach subcommittee rather than being its own group.

More information about this work can be found on the separate Outreach and Engagement Best Practices and HAA Broadcast Email Service documents.

Programming Subcommittee(s)

Another role is the Programming subcommittee. These volunteers are charged with developing the programming for each Class. These events provide classmates with an opportunity to reconnect through events of direct relevance and interest.

Key responsibilities include:

- Create customized programming based on class interests and age group, to include class survey, Glimpses, TED-style talks, panels, social gatherings, and presentations.
- Ensure panels align with overall reunion planning and recruit panelists with distinct stories.
- Utilize the Class Report to identify themes emphasized by classmates.
- Guide panelists in shaping ideas, panel direction, and event format.

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Volunteers can decide to focus their efforts on specific events, or broadly on different categories of events and initiatives, including, as examples, **(1) class survey, (2) virtual programming, (3) regional in-person programming, and (4) the spring campus-based programming.** Committees can decide if this work should be managed in four separate subcommittees by topic, or all together as a group.

More information about this work can be found on the separate Virtual Events Overview and Best Practices, Pre-Reunion Events Overview and Best Practices, Class Surveys, and In-Person Events Overview and Best Practices documents.

Memorial Service Subcommittee

The volunteers focused on the Memorial Service will be dedicated to the organization of the Memorial Service program, which may include the integration of music, readings, and participation from both the class and clergy. Typically, 5th—20th reunion classes hold their service in a smaller space on campus. Beginning with the 25th Reunion, the service is held in Memorial Church, and the program will involve more logistical pieces. The planner(s) will work directly with the HAA staff liaison on all details related to the service, and not with the church staff.

More information about this can be found on the separate Memorial Services Best Practices document.

Merchandise and Favors Subcommittee

Some reunion committees might choose to offer a merchandise item (“favor”) to classmates who attend the on-campus programming. Committees also have the alternative or additional option of working with the HAA staff liaison and campus partners to offer online on-demand merchandise stores to classmates throughout the year. Management of merchandise and favors may only need to be managed by the Chairs and the Reunion Treasurer in partnership with the HAA staff liaison, but there might be the opportunity for other volunteers to play a role.

More information about this can be found on the separate Merchandise and Favors document.