

Board of Governors

Frequently Asked Questions

How often does the Board meet?

The full Board meets at least 6 times each year on Fridays, during the day (approximately 9-3). While in-person attendance is strongly encouraged, virtual meeting attendance is available for occasional challenges to in-person attendance. Meeting days include ongoing in-service governor orientation, campus site visits and opportunities to have contact with the Trent community.

Board committees meet virtually 4 – 6 times a year. Members of the Board may be required to sit on at least one committee over their term on the Board.

What is the role of the Board of Governors?

Like most universities, Trent has bicameral governance: a Senate (composed mainly of faculty, academic administrators and students) is the governing body responsible for educational policy, standards, and programs while the Board is responsible for the institution as a whole, its image, its finances, its property and its future.

The Board of Governors conducts its business through committees that bring recommendations to the full Board at regularly scheduled meetings. Board committees' mandates collectively address the University's property, revenues, expenditures, employees, business and affairs, as well as the workings of the Board of Governors itself.

What are the Board committees?

The Committees of the Trent University Board of Governors are:

- Audit & Investment Committee
- Executive Committee
- Finance and Property Committee
- Nominating & Governance Committee
- Trent Lands Committee

As well, there are a number of administrative committees within the University that have one or more seats reserved for Board members in any year.

External governors chair the standing committees of the Board and these assignments are rotated regularly. Committees meet 4 – 6 times a year. The Executive Committee (composed of committee chairs, the officers of the Board, and the President) meets as needed to act for the Board in emergencies between meetings, conducts presidential performance reviews and sets mandates for collective bargaining.

What are the responsibilities of governors?

Governors are expected to be ambassadors for Trent University. All are asked to make themselves and their expertise available to Trent as needed and to take part in University advocacy, advancement, stewardship and philanthropic activities. Governors must make judgements and decisions based on the best interests of the institution as a whole, even if that conflicts with their personal interests, or the interests of any particular constituency.

How much time should a Governor expect to commit to the Board?

The Board generally holds an orientation session and planning session over two days in late August. Board meetings are held in October, December, February, March, May and June. Board members should expect to dedicate the day for each Board meeting. Individual Board members may also be assigned to a Board committee and/or ad hoc committees as may be established from time to time for special projects. The Board and committee meeting schedule is set in the spring of each year. Committee/ad hoc meetings typically run for two hours with some exceptions. Board members are expected to review Board/Committee materials in advance of each meeting. Meeting materials are sent out one week in advance of meetings and can take 3-6 hours per meeting to review. Additionally, governors receive invitations to University events that allow them to enjoy the social and ceremonial side of life at Trent. These events are voluntary as the University appreciates that Board volunteers may have other commitments.

What is the Board composition?

The Board is comprised of The President (ex officio), the Chancellor (ex officio), between 12-18 external appointees, 2 faculty, 2 staff, and 2 students (rotating annually between the Peterborough and Durham campuses). Appointments of external members are normally for three years, and they may be reappointed once for a total service of six years. Seats designated for faculty, staff, and students carry two year terms. Governors are volunteers and do not receive compensation. Governors are eligible for reimbursement of travel expenses.

More information

Please visit Trent's website at www.trentu.ca for an overview of the University or for more information about the Board of Governors please visit www.trentu.ca/governance/board-governors.

Please feel free to contact the University Secretary at (705) 748-1223 if you have any questions.

University Secretariat, December 2022