

**Document Name:** University Relations Committee Terms of Reference

**Executive Officer:** Chief Advancement Officer, Chief Communications Officer  
Director, Government Relations, & Associate Vice-  
President (Student Life & Student Affairs)

**Approval Authority:** Board of Governors

**Date Document Approved:** June 2026

**Mandatory Review Date:** June 2029

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## **AUTHORITY**

The University Relations committee is established by the Board of Governors pursuant to section 18 (c) of the *Carleton University Act* and made a committee pursuant to section 8.02 of the *Carleton University By-law No. 1* (“the By-Law”). The Committee operates under the authority of, and is accountable to, the Board.

## **MANDATE**

The University Relations Committee provides strategic oversight, guidance, and advice to advance the University’s interests in external relations and student experience. This includes philanthropy and advancement, alumni engagement, government and community relations, and institutional communications and reputation. The Committee supports the Board in fostering internal community and building strong external partnerships, enhancing the University’s profile, and ensuring alignment of external relations strategies with the University’s mission and strategic priorities.

## **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

In fulfilling its mandate, the University Relations Committee shall undertake the following responsibilities:

### **1. Student Campus Life**

Provide oversight, guidance, and strategic advice to the Board on matters relating to the quality and vibrancy of student campus life and the overall student experience. This includes:

- a. Reviewing and providing input on strategies, priorities, and initiatives that shape the student experience outside the academic environment, including student engagement, campus culture, and sense of belonging;
- b. Monitoring key indicators, trends, and risks related to student well-being, mental health, inclusion, and campus climate, and providing advice to support a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment;
- c. Providing oversight and advice on major student life domains, including student leadership and governance (e.g., student associations), residence life, athletics and recreation, co-curricular programming, and student services;
- d. Receiving updates on significant initiatives, programs, or issues affecting student campus life, and advising on alignment with institutional priorities and commitments to equity, diversity, and inclusion;
- e. Supporting the Board's understanding of the evolving needs and expectations of students, including undergraduate, graduate, and diverse student populations, and advising on opportunities to enhance the student experience; and
- f. Ensuring alignment between student campus life initiatives, the University's strategic plan, and broader external relations objectives, including student recruitment, retention, and reputation.

## **2. External Relations and Strategic Alignment**

- a. Provide strategic guidance and advice to the Board on the University's external relations priorities and strategies, including but not limited to Indigenous Communities;
- b. Ensure alignment of advancement, communications, and external engagement activities with the University's mission, academic priorities, and strategic plan; and
- c. Monitor external trends and emerging issues and the evolving external environment that may affect the University's reputation, partnerships, or stakeholder relationships.

## **3. Advancement and Philanthropy**

- a. Provide oversight and advice on fundraising and advancement strategies, including annual, major, and planned giving.
- b. Review and monitor progress toward annual and multi-year fundraising goals and initiatives.
- c. Provide guidance on policies and practices related to donor engagement, gift acceptance, and stewardship.
- d. Encourage and support Board engagement in advancement and philanthropic activities, where appropriate.

## **4. Alumni Engagement**

- a. Evaluate and provide advice on strategies to strengthen relationships between the University and its alumni.
- b. Assess and provide feedback on initiatives intended to support alumni engagement, participation, and long-term connection to the institution.

**5. Government and Community Relations**

- a. Provide strategic guidance on the development and maintenance of effective relationships with government and key external stakeholders.
- b. Review and advise on strategies related to community engagement, including relationships with local, national, and international partners.

**6. Communications, Brand and Reputation Management**

- a. Assess and provide advice on institutional communications strategies, including public affairs, media relations, and issues management.
- b. Review and provide input on branding, marketing, and reputation management strategies.
- c. Monitor and assess significant reputational risks and advise the Board on mitigation approaches.

**7. Awards and Recognitions**

- a. Oversee processes related to Board-level awards and recognitions within the Committee's mandate.

**8. Other Duties and Responsibilities**

- a. The Committee shall:
  - o Make recommendations for Board approval on matters within its mandate; and
  - o Escalate any significant issues, risks, or matters requiring Board attention in a timely manner.
- b. The committee will monitor, receive updates and report on key developments and material risks within the Committee's mandate.
- c. Review no less than every three (3) years, the Committee's terms of reference, and recommend changes to the Board, as necessary;
- d. Perform such other functions as may from time to time be assigned to the Committee by the Board or the Executive Committee.

**MEMBERSHIP**  
**Committee Members**

The Committee shall be composed of appropriate representation drawn from across Board constituencies. The Committee may also appoint up to four (4) non-voting

members (who are not otherwise members of the Board of Governors) for specific purposes on the recommendation of the Executive Committee acting in turn on the advice of the Committee chair.

All members of the Committee shall serve a one-year term which may be renewed by the Executive Committee.

### **Executive Support**

The Chief Advancement Officer, Director of Government Relations and the Chief Communications Officer report and provide support to the Committee in submitting, in coordination with the Secretary, reports, advice, and recommendations in keeping with the Committee's mandate.

### **Standing Invitations**

The Provost and Vice-President (Academic), the Vice-President (Research, Innovation and International), the Vice-President (People, Finance and Operations) and General Counsel have a standing invitation to attend meetings of the Committee.

### **Secretary**

- a. The University Secretary and Chief Governance Officer (Secretary) or their designate shall be the Secretary of the Committee.
- b. The Secretary will prepare, in consultation with the senior team and the Chair of the Committee, the agenda and all documentation in support of items of business for the Committee's agenda and will keep records of the Committee's business.

### **PROCEDURE :**

#### **Quorum:**

Quorum for meetings shall consist of one-half the number of voting members of the committee plus one, present in person, by teleconference or by videoconference, at least one of whom must be the chair or vice-chair of the Committee.

#### **Meeting:**

The committee meets in closed session. Where matters before the committee are of a particularly confidential or sensitive nature, the Committee may move in camera. The Committee meets a minimum of three times per year, and more frequently as required to fulfill its mandate.

Meetings are held in accordance with the [Appendix A of the By-law](#).

#### **Minutes and Reports:**

Minutes of the meeting prepared by the Secretary will normally be approved at the next regular meeting of the Committee.

The Committee Chair or Vice-Chair will report to the Board of Governors on its activities following each meeting.

**Revisions and Approvals:**

- 97<sup>th</sup> Meeting, Sept. 28/15 - deferred formal review until completion of By-law review in Spring 2016
- 599<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Board, December 1, 2016 – approval of revised terms of reference
- 616<sup>th</sup> Board of Governors Meeting, June 27, 2019, approved revised terms of reference and rename of the Community Relations and Advancement Committee to the Advancement and University Relations Committee.
- 629<sup>th</sup> Board of Governors Meeting, March 10, 2022, approved revised terms of reference.
- 652<sup>nd</sup> Board of Governors Meeting, June 4, 2026, approved revised terms of reference.