Class Officer Nominations
Guide 2014 – 2015

Cornell Class Programs
130 East Seneca Street, Suite 400
Ithaca, New York 14850
607.255.2254; Fax: 607.255.7533
www.alumni.cornell.edu
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GETTING STARTED- THE NOMINATIONS CHAIR AND NOMINATING COMMITTEE

First and foremost, classes in their Reunion year (5th year of class cycle) should identify a nominations chair in the beginning of their 5th year cycle (end of June/July) to oversee the nominations process. When identifying a chair, look for someone who is knowledgeable about the class and its history; can be unbiased and has the best interests of the class in mind; is a strong leader who can delegate well; and has time to devote to running the nominations process (past president is a strong candidate). **The nominations chair should not have any intention to hold an executive class officer role.**

Once identified and agreed upon by all class officers, the nominations chair and the officer group should appoint a nominating committee of three to five members. The committee may consist of former presidents, current officers, or active classmates who do not intend to hold an executive class officer role for the upcoming five-year cycle. It is critical that the committee be representative of the class as a whole and fair and inclusive in developing the slate. Aim to have members from various regions, associations and affinities, with a variety of experiences, backgrounds, and occupations.

THE SPECIFICS OF THE CLASS CONSTITUTION

Review your class constitution, taking note of any mandated succession procedures and term limitations. Term limits, as defined in your class constitution, can help encourage (or perhaps even mandate) a continual renewal of class leaders which is healthy for the leaders, your class, and for Cornell. Some classes have more formal constitutions than others. If your class does not have a constitution in place, your class staff contact can provide you with a CACO tip sheet and template to create one.
REVIEW THE CLASS OFFICER STRUCTURE

The nominations process provides a good opportunity to review your class organization as a whole. Do you have class council members that should be on the executive committee? Does your class need more class correspondents?

If not outlined in your class constitution, a summary of position descriptions is provided at the end of this guide (see Appendix A) and on the CACO website at www.alumni.cornell.edu/caco and click on Class Related Links on the right and look under the topic of Leadership. Position descriptions should be given to all nominees. It is essential that all potential class officers have a clear understanding of the responsibilities and expectations that are associated with their desired position. All potential officers should be advised that they are expected to serve a full five-year term and attend the Cornell Alumni Leadership Conference (CALC) and participate in CACO’s New and Continuing Officer Leadership (NOLT) Webinar Training.

IDENTIFY CLASS LEADERSHIP

Your class leadership should be a committed, energized, and diverse group that represents your class as a whole. It is just as important to find new people to direct and excite your class leadership team as it is to have experience and dependability. The section that follows will help give you a sense of what types of individuals to look for and several ways to generate potential candidates for your leadership slate. Depending on how your class communicates best, you may decide to take a multi-faceted approach or rely on just a few methods.

- Begin by compiling a list of previous and current class officers that includes their contact information. Your Cornell Class Programs staff contact can provide you with this report.
- Contact past and present class officers, informing them of the nominations process. Former and current leaders may indicate an interest in running for office again, they may wish to nominate someone else for a position, or they may have ideas about an ideal candidate.
Committee members should also review incumbents in terms of capabilities, experience, performance and preference.

To identify additional potential officers, evaluate the last five years.
- Who has been organizing and coordinating regional events?
- Who has called or written to expressing interest in getting more involved in class activities?
- Review the Pre-Reunion survey (sent out in the fall of 4th year of class cycle) responses for those that expressed an interest in being involved with the class.
- Review any affinity group leaders in your class. Look to add diversity to your group.
- Consistent dues payers and donors may also be good candidates.
- Communicate with fellow officers (especially campaign and Reunion chairs), Alumni Affairs, Regional Programs, and the Cornell Annual Fund staff to ask for suggestions on other potential leadership candidates.
- Contact your Cornell class staff contact to review any online nominations for class volunteer leadership positions on the new CUVolunteer resource website.

It is also a good idea to send at least one appeal for new officers and volunteers to your entire class. Your Class Programs staff contact can help design and send a recruitment mailing or e-mail to your classmates (see Appendix C for samples). A section of your class web page should also be dedicated to class nominations and include a link to class officer position descriptions. Nominations processes can also be mentioned in your class column.

The best result of your efforts would be to have more than enough volunteers to consider. Obviously, not everyone can be selected as a class officer and not all will be qualified to serve. However, you will already have begun to build a base for an interested class council. To the extent possible, try to find a way for all interested classmates to be involved.

You should have a preliminary list of nominees to share with your Class Programs staff contact by May 1.
WHAT MAKES A GOOD CLASS OFFICER?

Clearly, it is important to consider the right person for the right job. In order to do that, you should know what makes a good class officer. Avoid future poor job performance issues by choosing volunteers carefully from the start. Consider the following points from a presentation by Trustee Emeritus Robert A. Cowie ’55, BME ’56, MBA ’57:

Think PLACE:

P Potential: Take a look at the person’s interests and see where they will best fit into your efforts.

L Leadership: Have they held leadership positions in the past? Do they represent the leadership qualities you need?

A Alumni Involvement: Reflect on their previous alumni involvement, especially service to the class or Alumni Affairs, and any Cornell-related affinity group involvement.

C Case: You need to build a convincing case for why it is important for your classmates to volunteer and support the efforts of your class. It is equally important to build a case for classmates who may already be good volunteers elsewhere to become active as class officers.

E Enthusiasm: Enthusiasm is a must in any leadership position. Volunteers must enjoy what they are doing because their enthusiasm, in turn, affects others.

Volunteers have access to many resources and expertise. When recruiting volunteers, you need to coordinate qualified people with the positions that fit them best. Be honest and up front about the time commitment. Consider which nominees have flexible schedules and who has the ability to make being a class officer a priority. Similarly, it is important that you make potential officers aware of the financial commitment of being a volunteer, as respective fees for attending Reunion, CALC, other events and trainings are requisite parts of the job.

What can you expect from a volunteer?

- An understanding of the job or at least a willingness to learn
- Initiative
- Responsiveness to your guidance
- Ability to meet deadlines and finish assignments
- Desire to give their best effort
- Commitment of their time
- Being good Cornell ambassadors and understanding Cornell’s top priorities

What can a volunteer expect from you, CACO and the Class Programs staff?
- A reasonable job description, including an honest appraisal of time commitment
- CACO is the umbrella group for classes and represents their best interests
- Full and timely presentation of necessary materials and resources (agendas, etc.)
- Responsiveness to an officer’s needs
- Training resources such as webinars, guides, tip sheets
- Training on new tools such as Cornell Connect and other programs that become available

Remember that the best relationships are partnerships. Volunteers are extremely valuable to the University because they provide personal connections, outside perspective, ideas, experience, external visibility, and credibility.

**APPROACH NOMINEES**

Once you have identified qualified nominees, potential officers must be made aware of their recommendation by the committee via phone, e-mail, or other correspondence. The nominations chair or committee members should let them know that their interest is appreciated and/or that they have been selected for a particular position(s).

The nominations chair or committee members should discuss the responsibilities involved in being a class officer, being as realistic as possible in describing the responsibilities and time commitment involved. This includes providing an overview of specific role responsibilities and obtaining a commitment to participate in the New and Continuing Officer Leadership Training webinar (NOLT) in the fall, and the Cornell Alumni Leadership Conference (CALC) on an annual basis. The nominee should be asked to fill out a Personal Assessment Form (see Appendix D) to find out what his/her interests and strengths are. Ideally, the nominee should already be pointed towards filling a
specific class officer position. You may think it makes the most sense for the nominee to choose which position they would like; however, it is best for the class and the individual to have the right person in the right role. Some nominees may need to be persuaded to consider a position other than what they anticipated. It may be helpful to stress that all positions have influence in class affairs, and all positions represent worthwhile volunteer work. Most people will be responsive. Follow-up phone calls and e-mails should be completed as needed.

If you only have names and skeletal information on nominees, the committee may want to develop a biographical questionnaire that is more detailed than the Personal Assessment Form that can be sent to each candidate with their first approach. Such a questionnaire might ask about current and past volunteer work for Cornell, their occupation, and civic or community activities they enjoy. Once more information has been collected; the committee can review each nominee’s credentials, talents, available time, and interests, and then decide if they would be suited for a particular position. You may consider two volunteers for one position, such as co-presidents, co-Reunion chairs, etc.

CACO requires that a complete slate of officers be prepared before your Reunion. Class officer groups tend to be most successful when they have been working together from the very start of their five-year class cycle. Historically however, some classes have had trouble finding someone willing to make an advance commitment to serve as a Reunion chair, nominations chairs, or Cornell Annual Fund representative five years into the future. If necessary, these positions may be chosen two years before your next Reunion.

**FINALIZE THE SLATE; CONTACT CANDIDATES**

Once a list of qualified candidates has been developed and their specific interests and skills have been researched, the nominating committee should hold additional meetings or telephone calls to finalize the slate. It is important that the slate be developed by a committee rather than one individual. A blend of some continuing officers, along with a number of new nominees, often provides the right mix of experience and fresh ideas. Once the final slate has been determined,
candidates should be consulted a final time to ensure that they agree to serve in the position for which they have been nominated.

**APPROVING THE SLATE OF CLASS OFFICERS**

CACO requests that a prepared written slate of class officers is posted in the class headquarters or included in the welcome packets if the class opts to do this (see Appendix E for a sample officer slate). The slate is then announced at a class function during Reunion, usually a dinner.

**FOLLOW-UP AND TRAINING FOR NEW CLASS OFFICERS**

Your new class officers will be in place by Sunday of your Reunion. Take advantage of this rare time when all your leaders are together and arrange a group meeting. Reunion weekend is a perfect opportunity to have outgoing officers meet face-to-face with incoming officers to talk about the role, share materials, and provide information. This exchange can be continued after Reunion weekend via phone and e-mail. Inform all current and outgoing officers of this meeting well ahead of time so that they can reserve the time on their schedules, and prepare their questions and turn-over materials.

One of the final responsibilities of the nominations chair is to send your Class Programs staff contact a complete list of approved officer names and positions to be documented in Cornell’s alumni database. It is also advantageous to have the chair continue as an advisory member to the class council to help ensure a smooth transition.

Please note that each new class officer will receive an orientation communication in the summer or early fall from CACO. All class officers should participate in CACO’s New and Continuing Officer Leadership Training webinar (NOLT) in the fall following class elections. It is also important to attend the Cornell Alumni Leadership Conference (CALC) in January for additional guidance and support, and to hold a class officer meeting.
OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUTGOING AND EXPERIENCED OFFICERS

For officers who have served multiple terms and will not be returning to lead their class for another five years, there are many ways to stay active as a volunteer at Cornell. The University has several opportunities available that rely on the knowledge and familiarity gained by experienced alumni volunteers. Those who may no longer be eligible or interested in leading their class are strongly encouraged to support the University by getting involved with their college alumni association, regional Cornell Club, Cornell Career Services, minority alumni associations, the Cornell Alumni Admissions Ambassador Network (CAAAN), and/or mentoring programs. For more information on any of the above ideas or for additional involvement opportunities, please visit alumni.cornell.edu/volunteer and explore the many opportunities available on the new CUVolunteer site.

QUESTIONS? CONCERNS?

Cornell’s extraordinary alumni network is made possible only through the ongoing efforts of volunteers like you, and we are grateful for your enduring dedication and hard work. Class nominations can be a very rewarding experience; we hope you enjoy this process and encourage you to contact your CACO or Class Programs staff contact if you have any questions.

CHECKLIST AND TIMELINE

September 2014

- Ensure that a nominations chair is in place. Immediate past president is often appointed in this position. Present a list of nominating committee members to your Class Programs staff contact. Begin the getting your committee in place. Look for a diverse group that are NOT interested in seeking executive officer roles.

January 2015

- Discuss nominations during your class meeting at the Cornell Alumni Leadership Conference
- Review your class constitution to see if there are term limits or succession guidelines for any of your class officers.
  - Ask current officers if they are interested in continuing and in what role.
- Examine class statistics to identify areas that need diversification or strengthening
- Decide how the slate will be presented to the class.

March 2015
- Create a link on your class website to advertise your nominations process. Include a link to the CACO web page (www.alumni.cornell.edu/caco) for class officer position descriptions.
- Advertise in your class column in the *Cornell Alumni Magazine*
- Post information on your class Facebook page asking for interested classmates to get involved
- Contact different Cornell organizations about engaged classmates who they recommend

March – April 2015
- Remind your class officers of nominations; update them on your progress.
- Recruit classmates for open positions. Send an e-mail to all classmates asking them if they would like to get involved. If you identify specific individuals for positions, request information about their interests and skills via the use of the Personal Assessment Form (www.alumni.cornell.edu/caco).

May 2015
- Contact nominees to confirm their desire to serve in the position for which they have been nominated.
- Submit your preliminary slate to your Class Programs staff contact. (May 1)

June 2015
- Submit your final slate to your Class Programs staff contact
- Finalized slates should be posted in your class headquarters or included in your class Reunion welcome packets if you choose to have them. Solidified, approved slates must be given to your class contact before the conclusion of Reunion weekend. (New officers assume their roles immediately following Reunion weekend.)
APPENDIX

A: CLASS OFFICER POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

While classes are free to develop their own class officer organization and position descriptions, the list below outlines CACO’s suggested roles and responsibilities. CACO mandates that each class maintain an updated class constitution (and an accompanying set of by-laws, if so desired) on file with the Office of Alumni Affairs. Every class should include an outline of their officer structure that includes position descriptions in their constitution and bylaws, and ensure that it is regularly reviewed. If you need a copy of your current class constitution, or want help creating a new document, contact your Class, Student and Young Alumni Programs staff contact.

Keep in mind that there are some responsibilities that many classes may choose to make mandatory for all their officers including: becoming a dues-paying member of their class, attending as many class events as possible, attending as many class officer meetings as possible, and making a yearly gift to Cornell at a level of individual comfort. These responsibilities should also be included in your class constitution.

PRESIDENT

The class president provides overall leadership, initiates class activities, oversees Reunion plans, and develops strategies for strengthening the class. The president communicates regularly with all class officers to ensure that they are fulfilling the duties of their office. The president is responsible for coordinating regular communication between all class officers and may use letters, one-on-one phone calls, group conference calls, e-mail, or other regularly scheduled officer updates for this purpose.

While another class officer may serve as the primary contact for the membership program, the president must stay informed about the class’s membership efforts and progress. As membership communications frequently serve as the primary way classes remain in touch with their classmates, the president frequently authors or contributes to the letters that are included in the annual membership communication plan.
The class president should monitor class statistics including: duespayer numbers; Cornell Alumni Magazine subscribers, attendees at Reunion and regional events, and class fundraising results (dollars and donors). The president should communicate with a designated mentor from the CACO Board of Directors regarding the status of the class, and is responsible for seeking help if the class is experiencing problems. It is also important for presidents to ensure that successful class officer efforts are acknowledged and publicized as best practices within the officer group and among other volunteer leaders, as other groups may benefit from this information.

**Vice President**

The vice president has the potential to become involved in a broad variety of projects and programs. The primary responsibility of the vice president is to shadow the president so that he/she can assume the president’s responsibilities should the president become absent or is otherwise unable to fulfill the duties of the position. The vice president may also assist the president in planning and implementing class activities and facilitate communication among class leadership. In the absence of the class president, the vice president will assume all responsibilities of the president’s office, and may be required to run class meetings, write class letters, and ensure that regular communication among the officer group takes place.

**Membership Chair**

The primary role of the membership chair is to work with Class, Student & Young Alumni Programs staff to plan and create an annual membership solicitation plan for your class. The membership chair will determine whether the class will follow a pre-established, template-style plan (entitled the Ezra Plan) for mailings, or whether the class will draft their own solicitations and communications (after consulting with Cornell Membership support staff). Other responsibilities of the membership chair may include following-up with classmates who do not renew their dues payments, setting duespayer goals, and helping to develop an overall class marketing plan.

**Secretary**

The class secretary plays an important role in facilitating communication among class officers and maintaining a formal structure for the group. The secretary takes minutes of class meetings and distributes them to all class officers as well as the staff class contact. He/she is also personally
responsible for maintaining a record of all meeting minutes. The secretary may be in charge of ensuring that the class constitution is regularly reviewed and updated and sometimes serves as class historian by documenting important events and changes in the organization’s history. The secretary may also write all class sympathy, congratulatory, and thank you notes.

**CORNELL ANNUAL FUND REPRESENTATIVE**

The Cornell Annual Fund representative, in partnership with the Cornell Annual Fund staff, provides leadership between Reunion campaigns by encouraging all classmates to support Cornell with a gift every year, and highlight the importance of gifts to the Cornell Annual Fund. To accomplish this on an annual basis, the Cornell Annual Fund representative is encouraged to:

- Understand the case for supporting Cornell and the Cornell Annual Fund, and can articulate why they make gifts to Cornell University
- Incorporate messages on giving into the class website (including a link to Cornell’s Make a Gift webpage), membership mailings, Cornell Alumni Magazine column and other appropriate correspondence;
- Make sure that all class officers make a gift to Cornell at a level of individual comfort.
- Contact classmates who have given gifts to Cornell, and thank them for their support (particularly those who may not have been thanked by others);
- Assist other class officers with finding classmates on bad address and helping Cornell maintain accurate contact information;
- Assist Cornell Annual Fund staff in identifying Reunion campaign leadership and volunteers.
- Identify new classmates with the potential to make a leadership level gift now, or in the next Reunion campaign; and
- For some Cornell Fund Reps, serve on a Regional Campaign committee to solicit leadership level gifts to the Cornell Annual Fund.

**CLASS CORRESPONDENT**

Class correspondents serve a vital link in class communications and have one of the most visible class officer roles. Each class has at least one correspondent (and up to three) charged with writing the class column in the Cornell Alumni Magazine. To draft class columns, correspondents use updates gathered from classmates via forms that they choose to submit along with their dues
payments. Correspondents may also utilize news gathered: at events; by fellow officers; or through
links from their class website or emails. Many classes also ask their correspondents to publicize
class events or activities in their columns.

Class correspondents must be committed to spending time collecting and reading news of
classmates and writing about it in a lively, entertaining tone. They must meet strict Alumni
Magazine mandated deadlines six times a year and remain in regular contact with fellow officers
as well as staff from Class, Student and Young Alumni Programs and the Cornell Alumni Magazine.

TREASURER
While the president is responsible for overall leadership and coordination, the treasurer is typically
the most called upon officer for financial and strategic planning purposes. The treasurer must be
broadly available to all officers as many class activities incorporate finances in one way or another.
Guided by the treasurer, each class should establish its own policies concerning officer expenses. It
is the treasurer’s responsibility to make sure that all officers know the answers to questions such
as: What are allowable expenses (e.g. will the class pick up the cost of meals and drinks when
officers meet or when officers meet with classmates)?; Will the class pay for registration fees to
encourage officers to attend meetings, Reunions and conferences such as CALC?; Will the class
reimburse officers for phone calls and travel expenses?; Does your class have a dollar limit for
these reimbursements? The treasurer must review the class account statement for accuracy each
month and should understand all income and expense entries, paying particular attention to
copying, mailing, and reunion related expenses.

The treasurer should validate that each entry is coded to the correct account (e.g. if an expense is
coded to the class account when it should be coded to the Reunion account, the treasurer would
notify Administrative Service manager so a journal transfer can be completed to correct the error).
The Cornell Alumni Magazine should be contacted directly if there are discrepancies or questions
about the monthly magazine statement.
TREASURER RESPONSIBILITIES DURING REUNION MODE
(Year 5 of the Cornell Class Cycle)

A class is considered to be in “Reunion mode” beginning July 1 the year prior to their Reunion until December 1 following their Reunion. Account statements will be mailed to a class that is in Reunion mode beginning in July in preparation for reunion planning. Generally, one or both Reunion chairs serve as Reunion treasurer(s), meaning they budget and monitor a separate Reunion account for Reunion-related transactions (reunion registration fees, deposits and Reunion bills for caterers, florists, bands, souvenir vendors, etc.). Because the Reunion chairs will be making all Reunion arrangements, they will be responsible for overseeing any transactions in the Reunion account. Note that class presidents and treasurers will also receive a copy of the monthly reunion account statement for monitoring purposes.

The class account is used to cover all Reunion mailing expenses as these publications are sent to the entire class. The treasurer can expect to see multiple mailing charges on the class account statements throughout the year. The actual charges will vary upon the method used to send Reunion information. There are no charges for e-mail but there are charges for postage and printing. The Reunion chair will work with the staff in Class Programs to set the mailing plan.

REUNION CHAIR

The Reunion chair is responsible for planning and executing the class Reunion in Ithaca every five years. This is a major event that requires a great deal of planning and work, so many classes have two or more individuals appointed as chairs. Reunion chairs must: enjoy large-scale event planning; be able to adhere to deadlines; work closely with their reunion staff contact in Class, Student & Young Alumni Programs on a weekly basis in the year prior to Reunion; establish a Reunion budget and monitor Reunion account statements; recruit and lead a committee of classmates and fellow officers to help run their Reunion; delegate responsibilities to fellow officers and Reunion committee members; and have the capability to remain flexible during busy times. Reunion chairs are most active in the year prior to their Reunion and when their class is officially in “Reunion mode” (beginning June in the year prior to their Reunion, until October following their Reunion). In non-Reunion years, chairs should still assist their fellow officers by supporting their on-going efforts (e.g., providing classmate updates to class correspondents; hosting class events; affinity networking; supporting fundraising initiatives; and gathering address updates).
Reunion chairs should work on recruiting committee members to help run the Reunion so they are ready to work when “Reunion mode” begins. Chairs and committee members are strongly encouraged to attend the Reunion of the class preceding them so they can familiarize themselves with events, venues, key personnel, registration procedures, promotion, and administration of Reunion. Lastly, it is imperative that Reunion chairs attend Reunion Kick-Off (RKO) – a weekend event held in Ithaca each September, consisting of workshops, class meetings, building tours and caterer meetings. From RKO forward, Reunion chairs are actively planning the class Reunion. Additionally, in January, it is mandatory that they attend the Cornell Alumni Leadership Conference (CALC) for the Reunion Planning Workshop.

**REUNION REGISTRATION CHAIR**

The Reunion registration chair, one of the most important roles a volunteer can hold, will be responsible for working in Cornell’s Reunion registration system to enter classmate registration forms received by mail at the Tompkins Trust Company and to communicate via phone and e-mail with classmates registering for Reunion by mail or online. An activated Net ID and significant level of comfort operating a computer, using an Internet browser, and checking and responding to e-mail and making clarification phone calls is required. Reunion registration chairs must be well organized, self-sufficient managers of materials, tasks and workload. In addition this person needs to have the ability and time to devote to exploring and testing the online registration database system used for Reunion registration. Attendance at one of the Reunion registration webinars in February is mandatory.

**AFFINITY OUTREACH CHAIR**

The Affinity Chair plays an integral role in coordinating a committee that seeks to connect with classmates who affiliate with the many clubs, groups, athletic teams and Greek associations on campus. The Affinity Chair is responsible for appointing an affinity committee comprised of classmates and class council members, working with the class president and fellow officers to prepare an outreach plan that is affinity-based, and coordinating messaging and resources for the affinity committee to use in their outreach efforts. Designated affinity groups include region, student activities, or college/degree-based activities.
NOMINATIONS CHAIR
Succession planning is an important function during the 4th and 5th year of the class cycle. Class officers need to begin planning and recruiting leaders among their class to serve as future class officers or council members. The nominations chair is selected to be in charge of this process and must be someone who is knowledgeable about the class and its history, is unbiased, and has the best interests of the class in mind. Additionally, this person should be a strong leader who can delegate well; and has time to devote to running the nominations process. A past president is a strong candidate. The nominations chair should not have any intention to hold an executive class officer role.

WEBSITE COMMUNITY MANAGER
The responsibility of the website community manager is to create, maintain and monitor all class websites and social media sites. This person works very closely with other officers, especially those involved with class communications and events, to promote class efforts, events and activities. It is imperative to maintain a current and accurate class website leading up to and after Reunion.

CLASS HISTORIAN
The responsibility of the class historian is to collect and store a written and pictorial account of all class events and activities (those that are successful and even those that are not). This may include officer succession records; class mailings; photos from classmates; event favors; relevant articles from magazines and newspapers; and any other memorabilia deemed appropriate. This person will work closely with the class council to communicate the importance of the archive, gather memorabilia, and ensure that all records are properly preserved. The historian may also work with: Reunion chairs to create a display of class history at reunion; membership chairs and Annual Fund representatives to create more meaningful class solicitations; or the class web community manager to store or publish class history online. Some classes find that the historian and secretary roles can be intertwined into one officer position.

CLASS COUNCIL
The responsibility of the class council is to coordinate regional class activities and maintain class enthusiasm during non-Reunion years. Because classmates are scattered throughout the world, regionally-based class activities are very popular and may even help identify future class
leadership. Class council members are crucial gatherers of classmate information including news for the class column and address updates; they can also provide a vital link between classmates and their leaders by relaying ideas for events or suggestions for improvement.
CLASS ACTS INTERMISSION: Recruiting New Volunteers

Finding New Volunteer Leaders
When recruiting volunteers, it is important to strive for balanced leadership. It is especially important to seek a diverse group of volunteer—one that represents the entire class. One way to recruit new volunteers is to send an appeal with a mailing. Officers should respond to all classmates who express an interest.

Another way to identify leadership is to look at lists of class duespayers and donors. You may decide to review affinity lists for contacts as well. Alumni Affairs staff can provide these lists.

Evaluate the last five years. Who has been organizing and coordinating regional events? Who attends events on a regular basis? Who has mentioned they want to get more involved with class activities?

Talk with fellow class officers, Alumni Affairs staff, and Cornell Annual Fund staff for other leadership potential. Send an e-mail or postcard asking classmates if they are interested.

Contact your Cornell staff contact to review any nominations that have been entered on the CUVolunteer website.

Personal phone calls and person-to-person contact are among the best ways to meet potential volunteers. Let them know you need their help, and tell them why they may be just the person you are looking for.

Recruiting New Members
New members are what keep a class alive and running. They provide new ideas and enthusiasm and eventually may move into key leadership positions. Recruiting quality people to become members of your organization is one of the biggest challenges members of classes face. It is important that current leaders understand the organization’s goals and objectives before they start recruiting new members. The current leaders must convince potential members that the organization will fulfill their needs.
Steps in Recruiting

1. The first step before planning a recruitment campaign is to look at your organization and define its goals and objectives and identify the reasons for joining. You can’t sell your organization unless you know what you are selling. You should be able to answer: “What is our purpose?” “What are our future plans?”

2. Build a profile of the type of people you want to recruit. Be inclusive of all characteristics – ethnicity, gender, age, etc.

3. Publicize your organization. The publicity will require your best efforts in many areas, including creativity, budgeting, and time management. Write out a timeline and set deadlines. Be creative.

4. Once you recruit new members you must work to retain them. New members need to feel like they belong. Get them involved in your activities right away, and most important, get to know them.

Hints on Recruiting

- Incumbent leaders must be willing to share committee decisions and activities with classmates who want to become more involved.
- A succession process should be implemented to ensure that an easy transition is obtained from the outgoing class officer group to the incoming officer group.
- More intense personal contact may be needed to persuade a classmate to join the class officer group.
- Anticipate typical comments to justify nonparticipation: “I don’t have time” or “How would I benefit?” You must be prepared to answer these questions before they are asked.
- The opportunity for involvement must be presented to a potential officer with clarity and enthusiasm. If you are not enthusiastic about being an officer, then the potential class officer may not want to join.
   Remember – the best initial contact is a personal one.

What to Expect from Volunteers

You can expect volunteers to understand, or at least be willing to learn the job. They should display initiative and be responsive to your guidance. Look for commitment to finish the assignment and those who are willing to give their best effort. The class should be treated with a sense of priority, respect and enthusiasm that is obvious to the classmates they will represent.
C: SAMPLE LETTER AND E-MAIL MESSAGES

Sample letter:

Dear John,

In the past few days, you should have received a Class of XXXX announcement looking for new leaders for our class. At each Reunion, every Cornell class approves a new slate of officers to lead them for the upcoming five years. It is crucial that we find dedicated Cornellians who are interested in leading and strengthening our already solid class. There are a variety of positions that fit various levels of time commitment and interest.

The reason I am writing to you personally is because you were nominated as someone who would be a strong leader for our class. Despite what I am sure is a very busy schedule, I hope you will take a few moments to seriously consider volunteering as a class officer. If you have questions or are interested, feel free to drop me a note at XXX@cornell.edu and I will do whatever I can to help.

The Class of XXXX has already left a strong mark on the university. I hope you will make sure that we continue to grow and help ensure that our class will be known as “The Exceptional Class of XXXX!” Thank you for your ongoing support of the university and your commitment to our alma mater.

XXX, Nominations Chair
Sample e-mail to current class officers:

Class of 1984 Officers~
As many of you know, I am heading up the nomination committee for our class officer nominations at our 25th Reunion.

I wanted to touch base with all of you to see if you are interested in continuing as a class officer going into our 30th Reunion, either in your existing office or a new one. I am also open to suggestions of new classmates that you think would make good additions to our officer/class council ranks, as it's always good to have new volunteers with new ideas.

In the next few days there will be an e-mail going out to all Class of 1984 classmates soliciting interest in helping with the class going forward. This is a way for us to reach out to the entire class population to potential tap new volunteers who might be outside of our line of sight, but are eager to help.

It has been an honor to work with such a great group of volunteers (both current and past) supporting the Great Class of 1984 over the past 25 years. I look forward to seeing you all in Ithaca in June.

Terri
Sample newsletter to entire class:

Class of 2007 Alumni Class Officer Elections

Interested in channeling your Cornell spirit? Want to reconnect with Cornell and your classmates? Ready to use your leadership skills and talents as a Cornell alum?

Volunteer as an Alumni Class Officer!

Your Class of 2007 Alumni Council is putting together the slate of officers for the next five-year cycle, and we have many exciting opportunities available. Being a class officer is a great way to reconnect with the university and old classmates. Please consider volunteering your time and helping the Class of 2007! You can sculpt the future of the Class of 2007 by helping to connect your classmates to each other and Cornell.

Class Officers plan and implement activities, such as Reunion and other regional events, that keep you and our classmates in touch. Learn more about being an Alumni Class Officer at http://www.alumni.cornell.edu/caco. It’s a modest time commitment over the next five years, and you’ll be working with other officers, past officers, and a great team of Cornell staff.

Please contact Sara Tam, Nominations Chair, at st279@cornell.edu by April 25th if you are interested in getting involved or if you have any questions.

Cornell University

Class of 2007 Newsletter
**Cornell Class Officer**

**Personal Assessment Form**

Name & Class Year: 

Class officer position you currently hold: 

Previous class officer positions held & dates: 

Other Cornell Activities you are currently involved in (please indicate if you are a chair/officer in the organization): 

I’d like to be considered to help the CACO Board with special projects. 

☐ Diversity  ☐ Leadership  ☐ Young Alumni  ☐ On campus undergraduate activities 

Skill Assessment

Please answer the next three questions as honestly and realistically as possible. Assessment forms will only be read by the CACO Executive Committee. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers.

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<th>Skill Area</th>
<th>High level of skill, comfortable teaching others</th>
<th>Skilled in the area, can own project, prefers not to teach others</th>
<th>Some skills, can’t own the project</th>
<th>Minimal experience, would like to learn more</th>
<th>Minimal experience, very little interest in learning more</th>
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Class of 1997
Class Officer Slate
Term June 2012 – June 2017

Presidents
Lauren Myers-Marion
Bob Berstein

Membership Chairs
Lauren Myers-Marion
Bob Berstein

Secretary
Keith Scala
Jay Marshall Wolman

Cornell Annual Fund Representative
Adam Wolf

Class Correspondents
Sarah Carter
Erica Nelson

Treasurer
Keith Scala

Reunion Chairs
Josh Steiner
Eva Chiamulera

Affinity Chair
Andrew Fabian

Website Community Manager
Mitsy Lopez (VP Class Communications)