



Board of Directors Handbook

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Welcome to the Hofstra Hillel Board of Directors

Welcome to the Board of Directors of Hofstra Hillel. As a key member of our leadership team, we hope that you will find this Handbook a useful guide.

This Handbook was created by the Board Leadership Committee to help Board members get a clear understanding of Hofstra Hillel's vital work on our campus. Together with other volunteer and professional leaders, we hope that you will be engaged as an active partner as we build and strengthen the Hofstra Jewish community and foster tomorrow's leaders. This Handbook is a useful tool to answer many common questions and concerns. You might be asking yourself:

- ▶ What's expected of me?
- ▶ What do Board officers and committees do?

While you can find the answers to these and many other questions in the Handbook, it is the people - the students, staff and Board members like you - that really make an organization into a community. Please do not hesitate to contact any of us at any time to discuss a concern or ask a question.

The intent of this handbook is to serve as living document. If you have any suggestions please feel free to send them to us.

Thank you for being a part of our work together. Welcome to the Board of Directors.

Best regards,

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Vision

Hofstra Hillel envisions a world in which every Jewish student makes an enduring commitment to Jewish life.

Mission

Hofstra Hillel's mission is to enrich the lives of Jewish students so that they may enrich the Jewish people and the world.

Why Hillel?

Going to college is the single most common experience for North American Jewry. More than 85% have attended an institution of higher learning - a greater shared experience than bar/bat mitzvah, Jewish camp or youth group experiences, Hebrew or Jewish day school education, or an Israel visit. Throughout their years at Hofstra, Jewish students are confronted with seemingly limitless opportunities for personal growth and exploration. They grapple with choices that will shape their identity and define their future.

Hofstra Hillel is guided by a vision and a set of core values that have emerged over the years of our history. Any student may participate in Hillel. We actively seek to engage Jewish students on their own terms. Students are empowered to take responsibility for their Jewish identity, whether they wish to participate in a community service project, express themselves artistically, participate in a social event, engage in informal Jewish learning or attend religious services.

A Jewish renaissance, an awakening of ideas, hope and optimism, is taking place on the Hofstra campus. A generation of young Jews is searching for a Jewish community filled with celebration, learning and creativity - a community where they belong.

Hillel is committed to a pluralistic vision of Judaism that embraces all forms of Jewish expression.

- ▶ We promote Jewish life at Hofstra and beyond, through broad programming and a commitment to building a diverse Jewish community.
- ▶ We provide a strong community that enriches the lives of our Jewish students and the University as a whole and that enables members of these communities to come together in a welcoming atmosphere to all.
- ▶ We prepare Jewish students to be active and responsible members of the larger community and prepare them to be active and engaged members of the Jewish community after they graduate from Hofstra.
- ▶ We provide a nurturing environment for Jewish students to grow religiously, socially and ethically as well as in love for Israel and, in community with other Jews, with respect for other faiths and a broad understanding of what it means to be Jewish.
- ▶ We infuse Jewish students with the idea of *Kol Yisrael Aravim Zeh Lazeh* (all the Jewish people are responsible for one another) and enable students to express this ideal in action.

About Hofstra University & Hofstra Hillel

Founded in 1935, Hofstra University is a private institution whose primary mission is to provide a quality education to its students in an environment that encourages, nurtures, and supports learning through the free and open exchange of ideas, for the betterment of humankind. Hofstra University is fully committed to academic freedom and to the transmission, advancement, and preservation of knowledge for its own academic community and for the community at large. Hofstra University offers undergraduate and graduate programs taught by a research-active and professionally engaged faculty. Academic excellence guides everything the University undertakes.

The Hillel Foundation at Hofstra University is an independent not-for-profit organization that is strongly affiliated with the University. Although not a university department, Hillel is broadly integrated with the community it serves. Its Rabbi is the Jewish Chaplain to the University, and full-time Hillel staff enjoy administrative privileges on the Hofstra campus. Further, Hillel receives administrative, fundraising, programmatic and financial support from the University.

Mission & Key Functions of the Board of Directors

The Hofstra Hillel Board of Directors is responsible for ensuring that Hofstra Hillel is fulfilling its mission and for the legal accountability of its operations. It is responsible for ensuring effective organizational and strategic planning and for ensuring that Hillel has adequate resources to carry out its mission. It is also responsible for hiring and evaluating the performance of the Executive Director.

Key Functions

▶ **University & Community Relations**

Hillel relies on its continuing strong and symbiotic relationships with Hofstra University and the local and national Jewish communities to support its mission and strategic goals. Board members act as important liaisons to these communities by representing and advocating for Hofstra Hillel's interests in university administration and other key departments including academic offices and alumni affairs. Board members also help to promote a visible and positive image both on the campus and in the wider community.

▶ **Fundraising**

Active Board involvement in fundraising is critical in achieving both short-term and long-term goals. Contributions represents the greatest share of all money that comes in to support Hofstra Hillel's programming and operations. While involvement can take a variety of forms, Board members are expected to participate in fundraising efforts according to their own means and interests.

▶ **Financial and Organizational Oversight**

The Board is the ultimate governing body of Hofstra University Hillel. As such, its members have a collective responsibility to ensure that Hillel acts ethically and legally in its fiscal and organizational management and that Hofstra Hillel is effectively and efficiently fulfilling its mission. This includes engaging in strategic planning and policy decision-making regarding major programming and fundraising initiatives. Standing and ad hoc committees are the principal operational mechanisms for ensuring this oversight.

Board Member Roles & Responsibilities

Below are seven ways that Board members can make tangible and meaningful contributions to Hofstra Hillel:

1. Have an informed understanding of and support for Hillel's mission.
2. Help to ensure the legal and ethical integrity of Hillel's organizational and financial management.
3. Act as an informed ambassador to advocate for Hillel among its stakeholders, including parents, alumni, Hofstra University administration and faculty, funders, and the local Jewish community.
4. Actively support and participate in fundraising efforts by making a personal financial contribution according to one's own resources and by assisting in identifying and cultivating potential donors.
5. Contribute ideas and creativity to originate and evaluate new programmatic initiatives.
6. Participate on one or more standing or ad hoc committees.
7. Attend Board and committee meetings.

Board Organization

Composition

The Board is comprised of fifteen (15) to thirty (30) individuals including four officers. The Board must have adequate representation from its stakeholders including Hofstra alumni, parents, students, faculty/staff and community members as determined by the Board Leadership Committee. Student Board members are full members of the Board and serve on committees.

The Board is comprised of the following standing committees:

- ▶ Executive Committee
- ▶ Finance Committee
- ▶ Development Committee
- ▶ Board Leadership Committee

Ad hoc committees may be appointed at the discretion of the Chair and Executive Committee to address project specific organizational needs.

Recommendations of the committees are presented to the full Board for review and approval.

Board meetings are generally held in August, November, January and June. A schedule of meetings is published and distributed each summer.

Nominating Guidelines, Process & Terms

Directors are nominated by the Board Leadership Committee and elected by the Board for a three-year renewable term. Student representatives are elected for one-year terms. The nominating process described may vary depending on the needs of the Board and on particular circumstances of the nominee.

- ▶ Prospective Board members will be considered and reviewed throughout the year.
- ▶ The Board Leadership Committee publishes a nominations timetable at the beginning of each academic year. This schedule will outline when nominations will be accepted and reviewed, as well as summarize the review process.
- ▶ The Board Leadership Committee periodically reminds current Board members and staff to identify potential Board candidates with an emphasis on particular stakeholder groups or skills that are underrepresented. The Board Leadership Committee ensures that Board needs are identified that relate to strategic goals for the organization in consultation with the Chairperson and the Executive Director. The Board Leadership Committee may also solicit applications to the Board by networking to recruit from targeted stakeholder groups.
- ▶ Board members or staff wishing to present a candidate for consideration complete a Board Member Referral Form (located in the back of this handbook) for review by The Board Leadership Committee.
- ▶ After the form(s) have been submitted for review, a member of the Board Leadership Committee or a prospective Board member's contact on the Board (if applicable) is responsible for shepherding that applicant through the process.
- ▶ Once identified, the Board Chair, the Executive Director, or a member of The Board Leadership Committee contacts prospective Board members to assess their interest in serving on the Board and to arrange for a personal meeting to discuss the nominees' interest and the nomination process.
- ▶ A packet of printed materials including, but not limited to, recent newsletters, student calendars, and Board member expectations is sent to the prospective Board member.
- ▶ All Board candidates, whether referred or not, will complete a Board Application Form (located in the back of this handbook) for review by The Board Leadership Committee.
- ▶ The Board Leadership Committee and other people who have met the candidate identify any potential conflicts of interest with the candidate, e.g. is s/he on the Board of a competing organization, a vendor of the organization, etc.
- ▶ Prospective Board members are invited by The Board Leadership Committee or their contact on the Board to attend a Hofstra Hillel Board meeting.
- ▶ Pending mutual consent of The Board, the candidate is elected at the meeting and is invited to join the Board of Directors.
- ▶ The Nominating Committee notifies the candidate and provides a list of scheduled Board meetings and other related events and agrees on committee assignment(s).
- ▶ The candidate is assigned an experienced Board member as a mentor who will guide the new Board member during the first year.

Board Officers and Committee Chairs Job Descriptions

Officers are nominated by the Board Leadership Committee and elected by the Board for a two-year renewable term. All Board officers and committee chairs must be elected or appointed members of the Board.

Chairperson

The Chairperson of the Board is the Chief Voluntary Officer of the Hofstra University Hillel.

- ▶ Ensures the effective action of the Board in governing and supporting the organization, and oversees Board affairs. Acts as the representative of the Board as a whole, rather than as an individual supervisor to staff.
- ▶ Represents Hillel in the community and to key stakeholders and constituencies including Federations, synagogues, other Jewish communal agencies and key offices and departments of Hofstra University.
- ▶ Works with Hillel's Schusterman International Center and ensures participation in programs such as the Schusterman Hillel International Lay Leadership Conference, Summit, ABLU programs, etc.
- ▶ Develops agendas for meetings in concert with the Executive Director. Presides at Board meetings.
- ▶ Establishes an effective committee structure in which each committee has clear goals, objectives and timelines that correspond to the organization's mission. Works with the Executive Director to appoint committee chairs.
- ▶ Establishes search and selection committee for hiring an Executive Director. Convenes the Board for discussions on evaluating the Executive Director and negotiating compensation and benefits package; conveys information to the Executive Director.
- ▶ Ensures that Board matters are handled properly, including preparation of pre-meeting materials, committee functioning, and recruitment and orientation of new Board members.

Vice-Chairperson

- ▶ Acts as the Chairperson in his or her absence; assists the Chairperson in carrying out his or her duties. Performs other responsibilities and duties as prescribed by the Board Chair.
- ▶ Work with Board Chair and Director to guide board to understand Hillel's mission and to develop an organizational plan to realize the mission.
- ▶ Ensure legal and ethical integrity and maintain fiscal accountability.
- ▶ Help Board Chair, Director and Hillel as a whole focus on key issues in order to move the organization forward.
- ▶ Respond to crises when they arise.

Board Officers and Committee Chairs Job Descriptions Cont.

Treasurer

- ▶ Chairs the Finance Committee.
- ▶ Manages the Board review of, and action related to, the Board's financial responsibilities.
- ▶ Ensures that appropriate financial reports are made available to the Board.
- ▶ Regularly reports to the Board on key financial events, trends, concerns, and assessment of fiscal health.
- ▶ Ensures, through the Finance Committee, sound management and maximization of cash and investments where appropriate.
- ▶ Performs other responsibilities and duties as prescribed by the Board Chair.

Secretary

- ▶ Maintains records of the Board and ensures effective management of the organization's records.
- ▶ Maintains minutes of Board meetings.
- ▶ Ensures that minutes are distributed to members shortly after each meeting.
- ▶ Is sufficiently familiar with legal documents (i.e., articles, by-laws, IRS letters, etc.) to note applicability during meetings.

Standing Committees

Executive Committee

Chair: Chairperson of the Board of Directors

- ▶ Works with the Executive Director to guide the Board to understand Hillel's mission and to develop an organizational plan to realize the mission.
- ▶ Ensures legal and ethical integrity and maintains fiscal accountability.
- ▶ Helps the Executive Director and Hillel as a whole focus on key issues in order to move the organization forward.
- ▶ Responds to crises when they arise.
- ▶ Ensures that each committee is guided by a written plan of objectives, next steps, and timelines and that each committee meets on a regular basis.

Finance Committee

Chair: Treasurer

- ▶ Oversees development of the budget and presents it to the Executive Committee and full Board for approval.
- ▶ Ensures accurate tracking, monitoring and accountability of funds.
- ▶ Ensures adequate financial controls.
- ▶ Reviews major grants and associated terms.
- ▶ Works with the Fundraising Committee regarding strategic financial planning and major fundraising initiatives.

Board Officers and Committee Chairs Job Descriptions Cont.

Development Committee

Chair: As Elected

- ▶ Determines annual fundraising goal with Executive Director.
- ▶ Oversees development and implementation of the fundraising plan.
- ▶ Identifies and cultivates prospective donors through personal meetings and hosting events.
- ▶ Recommends prospective donors and assists with follow-up.
- ▶ Ensures 100% campaign participation by Board members.
- ▶ Coordinates development activities with appropriate officers and departments of Hofstra University.
- ▶ Works with the Finance Committee regarding strategic financial planning and major fundraising initiatives.

Board Leadership Committee

Chair: As Elected

- ▶ Works in consultation with the immediate past Chairperson of the Board.
- ▶ Develops written procedures for nomination and recruitment of new Board members.
- ▶ Identifies, cultivates and nominates new Board members.
- ▶ Ensures that the Board includes sufficient representation from all stakeholders including parents, alumni, students and community members.
- ▶ Assesses overall Board performance and effectiveness of each committee.
- ▶ Recommends new committees and suggests alternative Board structures and models.
- ▶ Ensures that Hillel's bylaws are updated and adhered to.
- ▶ Provides opportunities for Jewish study and Jewish celebration for the Board.
- ▶ Makes sure that membership on the Board is balanced according to geography, gender age, size of gift and demographics.
- ▶ Provides orientation programs, resource materials and training for new and continuing Board members.

Ad Hoc Committees

Ad hoc committees may be appointed by the Board Chairperson to address discreet issues as is deemed necessary and appropriate by the Board. The Board Chairperson may appoint members and committee chairs.

Board of Directors Membership Application

PART I

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home phone: _____

Work phone: _____

Email: _____

PART II

Why are you interested in becoming a member of the Board of Directors?

What do you believe is the most important service that Hillel can/should provide?

Please list any other volunteer commitments below.
