

*1. What is your perception of the role of Young Trustee?*

The Young Trustee must bring his or her knowledge, experience, and perspective to the Board of Trustees in order to contribute a primary component that no other trustee can bring: an understanding of modern undergraduate life. Although the Young Trustee is not meant to be an advocate for the undergraduate body, this individual provides a fresh perspective that allows the Board to understand how the initiatives they approve will affect those at this university. As Terry Sanford stated in a 1977 memo, “The reason for including students on the Board of Trustees was quite different from representation. The desire was to get younger members on the Board ... whose viewpoint, close to the students, would be a valuable addition.”

This position is vitally important because all of the current trustees attended Duke at a time significantly different from where we are now. Even for the youngest trustee, Curriculum 2000 did not exist, East Campus was not a freshman-only campus, and new technology had not completely revolutionized their academic and social lives. Although the trustees are able to decide on the direction of the University from a professional perspective, the only way the Board will understand how undergraduates are affected by new developments will be through the Young Trustee.

In order to best contribute to the Board of Trustees, the Young Trustee should have a broad awareness of the many facets which make up the undergraduate experience. The Young Trustee must understand how the proposals brought before the Board will affect students’ access to academics, residential life, the arts, or any other component of undergraduate life – and to be able to clearly articulate those effects to the Board. Lastly, the primary goal of the Young Trustee, as with any member of the Board, is to direct Duke towards the fulfillment of its mission to “provide real leadership in the educational world”.

2. *What personal qualities/philosophies do you possess that enhance your ability to serve as a Young Trustee? What personal qualities/philosophies do you possess that may limit your ability to serve as a Young Trustee?*

As Stuart Smalley (from *Saturday Night Live*) would put it: I'm good enough, I'm smart enough, and doggone it, people like me! All jokes aside, I believe I am best positioned to serve the University as the Young Trustee, and in the last three-and-a-half years, I have developed several qualities which uniquely prepare me for this role, such as:

- an impressive breadth and depth of knowledge about how Duke operates
- demonstrated leadership and facility communicating in board and committee settings
- strong relationships with key academic and administrative leaders

Above all, I am passionate about directing my energy towards positioning Duke as a leader and changemaker in higher education.

Throughout my involvements, I have discussed issues of academics, residential life and policy, the role of civic engagement and service learning, university communication and the Duke brand, international priorities, finances and resource allocation, cultural diversity, our information technology infrastructure, ... and the list goes on. Perhaps alone among my peers, I have looked deeply into 1) the constraints inhibiting faculty from engaging in interdisciplinary work, 2) the tensions which exist between the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences, and the significance of those tensions on academic priorities, and 3) the strategic plans of each school, institute, and major center at Duke. I have a running head-start in my ability to answer the types of questions I have seen asked of current Young Trustee John Harpham on the Academic Affairs committee, and I am ready for any situation.

While I view my knowledge of Duke to be one of my strongest assets, it alone is not enough to make a successful Young Trustee. Instead, a history applying this knowledge holds the

real significance, and this is true for two reasons: 1) it allows a Young Trustee to speak to the effects that new decisions, policies, and resources will have on the undergraduate body, and 2) it helps when creating a vision for Duke's future.

For example, one of the components of my vision is that I am a tireless advocate for increasing students' flexibility in designing and following their academic paths. With one-on-one discussions with trustees, I have talked about the problems that plague students when selecting new courses or programs, as a result of lack of information. With the faculty, I have brainstormed new programs to provide academic credit for the types of studies students pursue as co-curriculars. With Duke's Board of Trustees and administration, I have argued against policies which inhibit students' abilities to pursue their passions. Ultimately, there are things about Duke that I love, and there are others that I want to see improved; however, my experience working on these problems has greatly increased my understanding of these issues and the potential that I envision for Duke.

In addition and in contrast to some of these esoteric academic concerns, I have had a grounded undergraduate experience, and I am eager to share these experiences with the Board. For example, I know the difficulty in keeping up with academics while tenting for Duke-UNC. I can speak to several residential experiences, having lived in a lone block on West and as part of a Selective Living Group on Central. With my entire tuition paid for by financial aid, I understand the stresses placed on students as a result of socioeconomic diversity.

While I haven't lived every experience (namely, I've never studied abroad, worked long hours in a research lab, or been a part of a cultural minority), I will always do everything I can to learn about the experiences I haven't been a part of, and I will share these otherwise silent perspectives with the Board of Trustees.

3. Briefly describe the three most important initiatives you feel the Board of Trustees may face during your term. Given conditions of limited University resources, prioritize these projects and explain your prioritization in detail.

In my opinion, the most important initiatives the Board of Trustees will focus on are those which advance the six central themes of our University. Defined in the strategic plan *Making a Difference*, Duke University has committed itself to upholding the tenets of knowledge in the service of society, interdisciplinarity, centrality of the humanities and interpretive social sciences, internationalization, diversity, and affordability and access.

I think the most exciting initiative, and the one with the most potential economic benefit, is the **advancement of a Global Duke**. We have already started making these motions, such as with the success of the Cross-Continent MBA program and the creation of a new campus in China, but the process of establishing ourselves as an international power is long and involved.

The Board has already committed itself to making discussion of global initiatives a priority for each meeting, and the focus moving forward will be to shape our global investments into a network of opportunities wherein the whole picture becomes larger than the sum of the parts. For example, given that our stated intention for journeying into Shanghai is to “understand China”, how can our lessons learned be used to augment arts and sciences teaching back in Durham? Also, as Duke creates a global university, what steps must Duke take to provide consistency with our core values (top-tier faculty, rigorous honor code, open access to information) as we assimilate into the cultures of our international hosts?

These opportunities have the potential to create an experience unlike anything else. In 1995 when the Fuqua School of Business created the Global Executive MBA, the program was the first of its kind. Now, with the advent of globalization, the global market has become a sandbox for higher education, and our priority is to provide an experience which could not be

duplicated in America: to teach our students how to think, not as Americans, but instead as people from these other countries.

At the heart of this mission lies Duke's commitment to *interdisciplinarity* and *internationalization*. In addition, Duke provides our unique services in order to enrich the communities we are involved with – a global implementation of *knowledge in the service of society*.

A second major initiative the Board will discuss is **renovating and finding new uses for campus space**. One of the quickest and most effective ways to change the dynamic on campus is to change the buildings and their uses. Moving forward, discussions will begin concerning the potential for a renovated Bryan Center and West Union, and this would have a major impact on the student body. With New Campus pushed aside indefinitely (in which the major focus in Phase I was *the centrality of the humanities*), I think these inherently social spaces must reemphasize Duke's commitment to the arts and prominently showcase student productions.

From a different perspective, a redefined campus space can also be a tool to promote *interdisciplinarity*. For example, the new Energy Hub in the Gross Chemistry Laboratory is a multidisciplinary center utilized by the Nicholas School, the Pratt School of Engineering, Trinity College, the School of Law, and the Sanford School of Public Policy. This renovated space brings people together from several disciplines to work on a common interest, and it displays our commitment to researching and collaborating on issues of energy and the environment.

Additionally, the Energy Hub will likely serve as a model for future plans to create physical centers for our academic research initiatives. Given the constraints of a reduced budget for capital construction, Duke must be creative with the potential for renovated space. As an

example of interdisciplinary programs which need a new home, the Social Sciences Research Institute, one of our seven signature institutes, is located at the Erwin Mill Building. This distance severely limits the potential for collaboration with faculty and students in the social science departments on West Campus, and relocation should be considered in the future.

A third initiative which will have a major impact on the entire university will be **renewed strategic planning**. It has been five years since *Making a Difference* solidified our commitment to interdisciplinary and international research, and given the history of our strategic plans, it is likely a new plan will be in development soon.

A new strategic plan for the university will build off of the successes of *Making a Difference*, such as the transformation of the Institute for Public Policy into the Sanford School of Public Policy, extensive strategic hiring in the social sciences, joint-hiring of faculty for shared appointments in departments and institutes, and the creation of DukeEngage. My belief is that furthering our commitment to interdisciplinarity will be a key differentiating factor for Duke, who is already positioning itself as a leader in interdisciplinary research among its peers. Examples of this commitment might include fully integrating interdisciplinary studies into the undergraduate curriculum, or providing a clear incentive structure for faculty collaboration outside and across departments.

Our greatest strength as a University lies with the broad talents of our faculty, and pulling collaborative groups together holds boundless innovative potential. Given the reaffirmation of our strategic plan that each school and institute completed last year, we are prepared to move to the next step with momentum.

*4. What is the one issue that the Board of Trustees may not face during your term, but you feel is important to the future success of Duke University? Explain why this issue is important.*

I fear the Board will be stagnant when it comes to reaffirming one of our six central themes: **diversity**. While the University has invested greatly in diversity of thought with our commitment to interdisciplinarity, there is an unconscious cultural bias which silently plagues our campus.

This bias manifests itself in many ways. Sometimes it is in raw numbers:

- only 16% of all undergraduates in the Computer Science department are women
- of all 44 regular rank faculty with a primary appointment in Economics, not a single faculty member is black

Other times, the bias is explicit in a policy:

- international students are selectively admitted based on their ability to pay tuition

While the sources of these biases may be grounded in real concerns, such as economic constraint or quality of research, we must be cognizant of their cumulative effects on our culture. As a student body, we have begun to feel these effects, as evidenced by the backlash that prompted the DSG Gender Summit and numerous Chronicle articles and letters-to-the-editor focusing on the role of women on campus.

Diversity is important for the same reason stated in our strategic plan: “Faculty and students benefit most by interacting creatively and productively with the widest possible range of individuals, ideas, and peoples.” We must practice what we preach and commit ourselves to rooting out our biases.

*5. What unique challenges do you foresee in your role as Young Trustee and how would you prepare for them?*

The role of a trustee member is difficult, particularly for an undergraduate, because the scope of the Board of Trustees encompasses all schools and all institutes at this University. Most likely, a prospective Young Trustee has had little to no experience analyzing the various degree programs offered at the Business or Graduate school, or how a new interdisciplinary collaboration between the Nicholas School and the Sanford School will divert resources from the undergraduate Public Policy department. However, the role of the Young Trustee implies an obligation to widen one's scope and see how each of the pieces of the puzzle fit together to form a picture of Duke University.

I believe that in order to understand how the components of this University interact, the best preparation is information. I will seek to learn all that I can about the resources each school and institute at Duke offer, to complement my intimate knowledge of Duke as an undergraduate campus. Of course, I know that the biggest asset I potentially bring to the Board of Trustees is my perspective as an undergraduate, but it is important to understand the role of undergraduate life as only one component of a University which contains a top-class medical center and an international network of academics.

Furthermore, it will be an entirely new role for me to be an agenda-less member of the Board, who is not trying to accomplish any one thing by the end of my term. Instead, I will take the principles which are important to me, such as increasing interdisciplinary research or hooking students' co-curricular passions into the academic experience, and use those ideals to inform my discussions. In addition, I will be constantly open to feedback from the student body to provide context and anecdotes to situations I may not know everything about.

*6. Duke is constantly defining and re-defining its identity. What is your interpretation of “Duke?” How have you lived this identity? What future redefinitions might you suggest?*

In the attempt to pick a word that encapsulates the essence of Duke, one word comes to mind: innovation. Duke is a university that is not afraid to challenge established norms and take risks. We have our relative infancy to thank for this gift – we have not spent the last 300 years entrenching ourselves in “the way” that we do academics, and thus we have the ability to innovate and capitalize on new ideas.

Duke was the first institution to implement a global immersive service initiative that has integrated hundreds of Duke students into dozens of worldwide communities. We were the first to react to the expanding “going green” initiative; following our first Winter Forum analyzing the Green Economy, we created the first PhD program in the nation administered jointly by a school of the environment and school of public policy. Additionally, as Duke works to create new and innovative partnerships with other universities around the world, we solidify our position as a top-class research university with an expanding global presence and a demonstrated commitment to civic engagement and premier academics.

In my own way, I have attempted to complete a unique education at Duke – one that I could not receive anywhere else. Whether through my freshman FOCUS program, the completion of a certificate in an interdisciplinary hybrid of Visual Studies, English, and Computer Science, or my undergraduate research project which builds upon my extracurricular work outside the classroom, my experience at Duke is unlike anything else I could have imagined.

As Duke moves into the future, it will be our ability to capitalize on our natural innovative tendencies and diverse skill sets that will set Duke apart from its peers.

*7. Why do you want to be the Young Trustee?*

Believe it or not, I think this kind of work is fun. I love immersing myself in an environment and learning everything I can about how it all works – how the pieces fit together to create the full structure. Since coming to Duke, I am so grateful for the opportunity I have had to dig in and start to understand the institution which has afforded me these opportunities. If I pair that desire with my drive to give back and make a positive change, I know that I will be a great Young Trustee.

I know that I'm ready, and oddly enough, I have gotten that preparation not from my time on a board committee, but from my interaction on the search committee for the new Dean of Arts and Sciences. Only in that environment did I start to understand my role in making decisions about events I ultimately would not be a part of (since I'm graduating). Additionally, I found myself getting more excited for each new meeting. There was always something new to learn – the internal politics of arts and sciences, or new ideas on innovative teaching – and I loved my conversations with faculty members who have “been there, done that”.

I want the opportunity to learn from those that have everything to teach, and I am loathe to leave a place where I am constantly searching for ways I can improve myself and give back to the community. As the Young Trustee, I will do everything I can to work towards a bigger and better Duke.