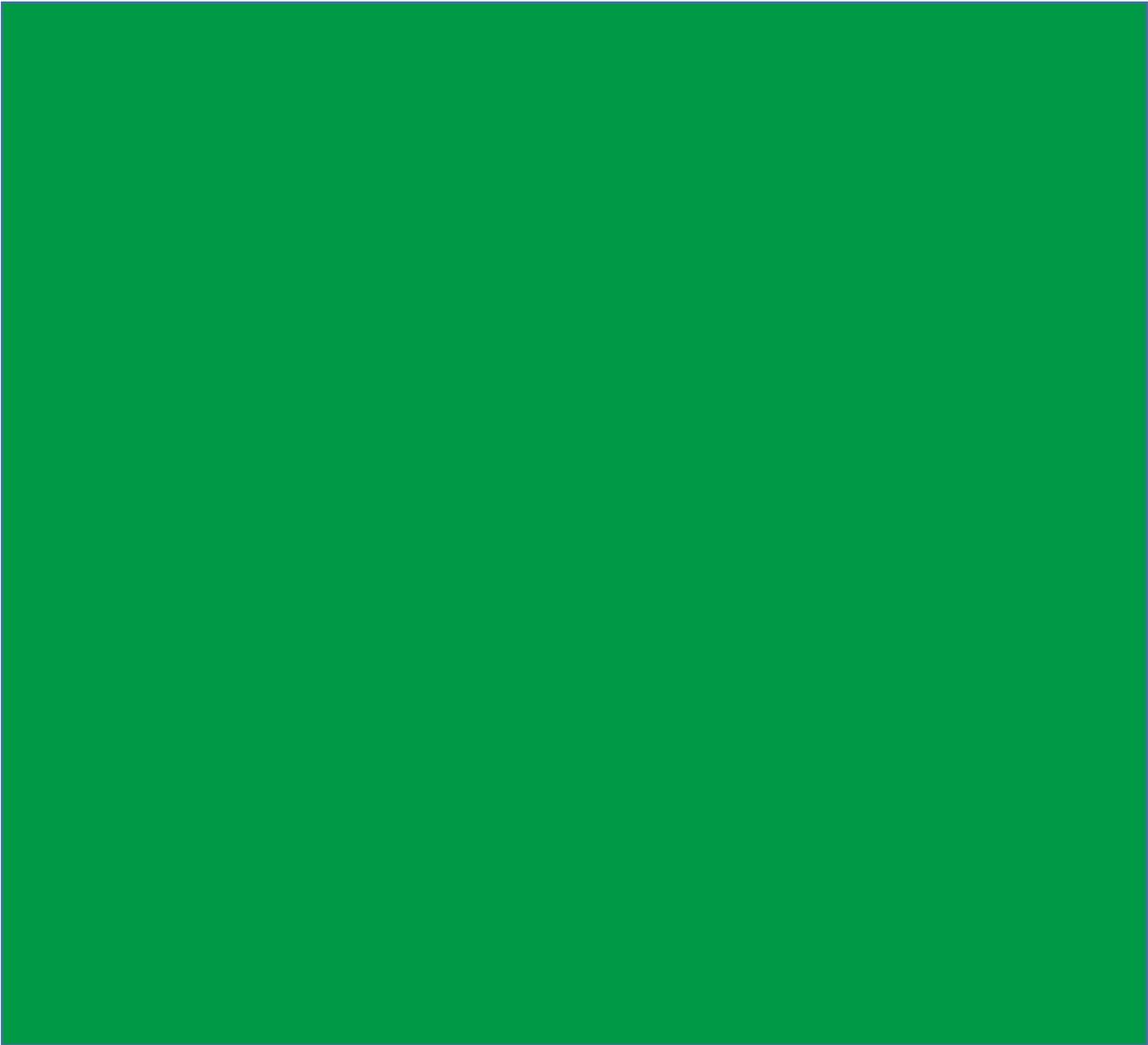




UBC FACULTY OF FORESTRY
REUNION PLANNING HANDBOOK



FORESTRY REUNION PLANNING HANDBOOK

3	Welcome
4	STEP ONE: Decide on a Volunteer Chair & Committee
5	STEP TWO: Contact the Forestry Alumni Engagement Office
6	STEP THREE: Set up a timeline, venue and budget
7	STEP FOUR: Promote the reunion
8	STEP FIVE: Enjoy your reunion
8	STEP SIX: Post reunion follow-up
9	Contact Us
Appendix A	Sample Timeline
Appendix B	Class giving: honouring your class
Appendix C	FAQ's and Contact Information



Dear Forestry Alumnus/a,

Congratulations on your upcoming reunion!

This handbook will help you through the different stages and decisions of planning a successful reunion for your class. No class is the same, and planning an event that suits your year and group is the best way to ensure everyone has a great time.

There is some effort and time involved, but don't worry, you are not alone. The Forestry Alumni Engagement Office is here to help you to achieve your reunion goals! As you read through this guide, you will develop a better idea of the team you will want to assemble and where the Forestry Alumni Engagement Office can help.

Then, at the end of the reunion, when all your classmates have shared tales of adventures and careers, photos have been taken and your classmates have told you how much they enjoyed the event, it will all be worth it! You will wonder why you don't get together more often.

I look forward to helping guide you through the planning process and am here to answer any questions you may have.

Happy reunion planning!

Sincerely,

Janna Kellett
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STEP ONE: DECIDE ON A VOLUNTEER CHAIR AND COMMITTEE

Reunion planning is much easier when it is done by a group of committed volunteers. It is important to have a committee because:

1. A committee will be better placed to brainstorm and identify a reunion activity that will appeal to the largest number of classmates. *(Note: When it comes to planning the 'ideal reunion' there is no standard format and we encourage you to organize an event that you feel will be appropriate and reflective of your group.)*
2. A committee will be able to divide and handle the tasks detailed in this guide, ensuring that one individual is not responsible for all of the planning. This allows for a smaller time commitment for each person.
3. The most important part of organizing a reunion is reaching out to your classmates. A committee will have access to a much larger network and will be able to promote the reunion by using their own social media tools, sending more personalized emails, and making phone calls. It is this personal touch that will appeal to your classmates and bring them out to your events.

Some of the benefit of stepping forward and forming part of the committee are:

- As an organizer you will have a greater say over developing the event and the different elements
- You will have the opportunity to develop closer ties with your fellow committee members
- You will be the recipient of awesome adulation by your classmates once you have planned the event!

A reunion committee can consist of:

A CHAIRPERSON (or two co-chairs)

who is/are responsible for:

- Connecting with the Forestry Alumni Engagement Office
- Finding and inviting committee members to participate
- Scheduling committee meetings and notifying members of the meetings
- Developing job assignments and motivating people to follow through

COMMITTEE MEMBERS (2-4 people)

who are responsible for:

- Participating in finding, phoning, emailing and/or mailing alumni
- Encouraging attendance and building enthusiasm

- Tracking contact information updates
- Assisting in all aspects of planning and executing the event (food, activities, communications, budgeting, entertainment, fundraising, venues, day of support)

If you already have a few classmates in mind, that's wonderful, If needed, however, the Alumni Engagement Office may be able to help identify additional committee members from amongst your classmates.

STEP TWO: CONTACT THE FORESTRY ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT OFFICE

How the UBC Forestry Alumni Office can help you:

We are here to help you with your planning. In addition to the information contained in this handbook, we can also help with:

- Creating an events page to track RSVP's
- Facilitating on campus activities including building/lab tours, inviting faculty and campus guests
- Making reservations and suggestions for on-campus restaurants (*Please note that off-campus activities and venue bookings are typically the responsibility of the reunion committee*)
- Communications support (see below)
- Providing some great UBC branded items for your and your group, including pens, pins and chocolates
- Posting photos of the reunion that you send us following the event on the Forestry alumni website and Flickr pages for everyone to share, as well as in Branchlines and the Alumni E-Newsletter.

COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT

We can also help by promoting your reunion through the following channels:

- Sending save-the-dates and invitations to classmates
- Faculty of Forestry website Alumni section
- Branchlines magazine upcoming events section (and recap your reunion afterwards)
- Forestry Alumni E-Newsletter (promote in upcoming events and recap your reunion in the News Section)
- Forestry Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn

STEP THREE: SET UP A TIMELINE, VENUE AND BUDGET

Once you have identified your reunion committee, the next step is to get together to decide what you would like to do and establish a timeline, venue and budget for organizing your event. This can be done by phone conference calling (which the Forestry Alumni Office can help to coordinate), over Skype or email.

Choosing a date:

Decide on whether you would like to hold it over a weekend, long weekend or weekdays. You could also organize it around an event, such as UBC Homecoming weekend, the UBC Thunderbirds football team's first home game of the season, usually in September. However, there may be a date or event that is special to your class. Whatever the date, be sure to provide sufficient time for organizing your event.

Think about...

- Choosing a date that coordinates with other events that might appeal to your classmates
- Ensuring your date doesn't conflict with any major holidays
- Establishing a reasonable timeline and giving your committee plenty of time to reach out to your classmates (See Appendix A Sample Timeline)

Choosing an activity

Decide what activity your group would enjoy most, which will help you decide on the venue. The committee may want to canvas some additional classmates in advance in order to determine the best combination of activities and dates. Here are some options, which you can do individually or combine for a weekend of activities:

- Special meal (brunch, lunch and dinner)
- Cocktail reception
- BBQ or picnic
- Tasting event (wine, beer, scotch or food)
- Boat cruise
- Watch a hockey or soccer game
- Visit/tour the Forest Sciences Centre
- Visit one of the Forestry research forests
- Homecoming weekend

Choosing a location:

Depending on where your classmates are located, there are many to choose from. We are very lucky to have one of the most beautiful buildings on campus and would encourage you to host your event (or at least part of it) at the Forest Sciences Centre. The building has a couple of different spaces that may be well-suited to your event such as the Atrium for big groups and the fourth floor Conference Room for more intimate events overlooking the campus, and there are no venue fees. There is also the Loon Lake Research and Education Centre at the Malcolm

Knapp Research Forest in Maple Ridge which has hosted overnight reunions, and we can help put you contact with their booking office.

For information about room capacity and set-up at the Forest Sciences Centre, or for a list of venue and accommodation suggestions in the Lower Mainland, contact the Forestry Alumni Engagement Office.

STEP FOUR: PROMOTE YOUR REUNION

Now it's time to invite your classmates to the reunion. Try to make the save-the-dates and invitations special and unique to your class. Was there an important world event taking place while you were going to school? Did you have a "class joke"? Did the forestry world shift in some way while you were in school? Do you have memories that your classmates would share about your professors, or perhaps about the Coconut Ball, or Omar? Do you have any good photos from your student years?

The invitation should include as much information as possible, such as:

- Date and venue of the reunion
- Detailed information regarding the activities included in the reunion
- How to register for the event (including payment information, if required)
- Campus/venue maps (along with parking information)
- Contact information for the reunion committee and Forestry Alumni Engagement Office

The Forestry Alumni Engagement Office is able to help by:

- Organizing an RSVP page
- Designing and sending out mailed and electronic save-the-dates, invitations and reminders
- Promoting the reunion in our monthly Forestry Alumni E-newsletter, in Branchlines, on the Forestry Alumni events web page and on faculty social media sites

Committee members can start reaching out to their networks to get any missing contact information and let classmates know about the event, for example posting to their personal and/or professional social media sites such as LinkedIn, Facebook or Twitter.

Sending a personalized note or making a quick phone call can be incredibly valuable in encouraging a classmate to attend the reunion. This personal touch in reaching out to your classmates may be the most important contribution you make to the success of your reunion.

STEP FIVE: ENJOY YOUR REUNION

Once the word is out regarding your reunion, most of the work is done. However, there are a few more items to finalize in the week leading up to the event. The UBC Forestry Alumni Engagement Office can help with some of these last minute details:

- Send a final reminder to those who have registered with any updated information
- Confirm numbers of guests with food/beverage provider(s), if required
- Prepare nametags for all reunion guests
- Prepare a guest list (indicating payment status) for your registration table

Finally your reunion date has arrived! Celebrate in style with your classmates! Enjoy catching up with old friends, sharing career stories, and making new connections.

STEP SIX: POST REUNION FOLLOW-UP

Congratulations on planning an event that brought your classmates back together to connect, reminisce and have fun. Thank you for all the hard work you put into it!

There are just a few final steps before wrapping it all up:

- Send the Forestry Alumni Engagement Office a copy of the attendees and any updated contact information. This will facilitate the communication efforts in five or ten years' time when we start planning your next milestone reunion!
- Send us any/all photos from the event. We will post the photos on our Forestry alumni website/Flickr page so that they can be shared with everyone who attended the event. We also encourage you to prepare a short recap on your reunion which we can share on the Forestry alumni website, in our Forestry Alumni E-Newsletter and in the Branchlines magazine. Other years love hearing what reunions are happening and seeing who attended.
- We suggest that each reunion committee hold a wrap-up meeting after the reunion to review the event. This provides the reunion committee a chance to celebrate and an opportunity to discuss what worked well and what could be improved for the next reunion. This also provides key learnings and feedback that we can pass on to other reunion groups and helps the Forestry Alumni Engagement Office with feedback for how to better meet the needs of our alumni and reunion groups.

Congratulations on your reunion and your success!

CONTACT US:

For questions about this Reunion Handbook or planning a class celebration, please contact:



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Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z4

APPENDIX A: SAMPLE TIMELINE

Please use this template to assist you in keeping track of your reunion details.

**Note that depending on the plan for your event, you may not require all items on this list and some can be handled by the Alumni Engagement Office.*

8 – 12 MONTHS

- Contact Forestry Alumni Engagement Office to inform them you wish to organize a reunion
- Determine the format of the reunion and who you wish to invite
- Establish a committee
- Consider if you would like to incorporate a class legacy gift to commemorate your class/group (see Appendix B)
- Sign confidentiality agreement to receive class contact information from the Forestry Alumni Engagement Office
- Develop your budget, including estimated attendance numbers and expenses
- Set a date and book a venue

6 - 8 MONTHS

- Decide on a RSVP method and assign a volunteer/committee member as RSVP contact
- Create a task list for volunteer committee members and mark when completed
- Send out a save-the-date
- Book any catering, speakers, musicians or photographers
- Contact the Forestry Alumni Engagement Office to help with promoting the reunion
- Draft invitation (don't forget to ask invitees about dietary and mobility restrictions)
- Work towards tracking down "lost in the woods alumni" contact information

3 – 5 MONTHS

- Send out invitations with all reunion details and RSVP info via email or mail
- Record all acceptances/declines

1 – 2 MONTHS

- Reminder emails or phone calls to all invitees who have not responded
- Confirm all bookings

1 – 2 WEEKS PRIOR

- Provide final numbers to venue for catering
- Confirm the venue has all requested items, including a registration table, microphone, etc...
- Assign day-of tasks to volunteers for the event e.g. registration table, placing signage
- Send reminder to attendees – include final programming way finding and last minute details

EVENT DAY

- Ensure you have all requirements for your registration table (nametags, memorabilia, etc...)
- Take lots of photos

FOLLOW UP

- Provide list of all attendees to the reunion and updated contact information to Forestry Alumni Engagement Office
- Provide a brief update about the reunion (including photos) to share on the UBC Forestry website and alumni publications

APPENDIX B: CLASS GIVING: HONOURING YOUR CLASS

All UBC students benefit from the generosity of those who have gone before them. Alumni are the university's strongest supporters. Alumni contributions are integral to UBC Forestry's success and its international reputation for excellence. As you prepare for your reunion please plan to include a class gift to UBC. This can be a great way to bring everyone together and to support the next generation of students.

What is a class gift?

A class gift is a contribution that is meaningful to members of the graduating class, made in the name of the class in support of student awards or key project in the Faculty or University.

Why give a class gift?

Organizing a class gift fosters community among class members, adds a meaningful philanthropic component to reunion festivities, and creates a lasting legacy from the class.

Reunions give alumni a chance to reflect on how far everyone has come since graduating. A class gift is a way to celebrate success and give back to current and future generations of students. A class may choose to dedicate their gift to honour the memory or special accomplishment of a classmate or faculty member.

Support from UBC Forestry Development Team

Class organizers can take advantage of the professional fundraising expertise and support available through UBC Forestry's Development team. Our team would be happy to work with your group to develop your campaign and provide support and assistance throughout the process.

We look forward to meeting and working with you to create a lasting legacy for your class.

Sarah Doran-Coelho
Development Officer
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APPENDIX C: FAQ'S AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Can you provide me with a list of all of my classmates?

Yes – we can provide you with your class list. However, please note that the list is only accurate when alumni keep us informed of changes to their contact information. As you come across new information that we should know about, we ask that you send it through to us and we can update our database.

You, and anyone else who will have access to the list, will need to sign a confidentiality agreement stating you will not share the information with anyone and will use it only for reunion purposes.

Some of my classmates don't have information listed: Can you find them for me?

Yes, we are happy to do a call out through our publications, website and social media to see if we can find them. At the same time, we highly recommend reaching out to your classmates. As part of your save-the-dates and invitations, inform them that *John Smith* cannot be located and ask if anyone has had contact with him. This usually will turn up a few leads.

Some of my classmates are not listed?

Sometimes alumni identify with a class other than their official graduation year. If you give us a list of alumni outside of your year that you would like to include in your class list, we can pull and send their contact information as well.

How much should we charge people to come to the reunion?

Pricing depends on several factors, including the event programming, whether the reunion runs over one or more days, how many people are in your class/estimated to attend and the venue. We will be happy to help you develop a budget for your event.

Who handles the money?

The reunion committees are responsible for their budgets and for collecting money from their classmates. We suggest putting a reunion committee member in charge of the budget and collection of money. We recommend that all money is collected in advance rather than on the day of.

Are reunions open to spouses/partners?

It is always up to the reunion committee to decide whether partners/spouses are invited. For the more senior classes, partners/spouses are traditionally included.

How does the Forestry Alumni Engagement Office help with organizing the reunion?

We can help you in a number of ways, such as: providing class lists; inviting faculty members; organizing campus-based activities such as restaurant reservations and building tours; promoting the event; creating an RSVP page; and sending out and tracking save-the-dates and invitations.

Can we have a tour of campus or a specific building?

Absolutely! The Forestry Alumni Engagement Office can help you organize a tour of a number of campus buildings and a tour of campus itself. We ask that you give us plenty of lead time to ensure building and tour guide availability.

Can we invite retired/emeriti faculty who taught us?

You're welcome to invite whoever you would like to your reunion. When it comes to active faculty and staff, we ask that you approach the Forestry Alumni Engagement Office who can help facilitate an invitation. However, for retired and emeriti faculty, if you have a relationship with a former professor we urge you to extend the invitation as they will be more inclined to respond to your group.

Please let us know if you feel there are some FAQ's that you would like to see added to future editions of this handbook.