

*The Princeton University Board of Trustees released this statement on September 30, 2026:*

The Board of Trustees thanks the members of the Resources Committee for their service on this important committee. We write to share some guidance from the Board of Trustees ahead of the new academic year.

As the Committee considers any new dissociation petitions, please be reminded of the Board's "strong presumption against the University taking a political position or playing an active role with respect to external issues of a political, social, or moral character." Put another way, the Trustees have set an exceptionally strong presumption *against* dissociation, an action that should only be taken in "highly unusual situations." The Committee may find it helpful to periodically remind the community of this strong presumption against dissociation, as former Chair John T. Groves did in a [2025 column](#) in the Daily Princetonian.

Dissociation criteria attend to questions of *sustained* campus interest, *core* University values, and potential for community *consensus*. These are criteria that are by design not susceptible to frequent change and they do not need frequent testing.

In this context, consensus should be understood to mean near unanimity of agreement about how the University should respond to a particular dissociation petition. Such consensus is and will be exceptionally rare. Even if there is deliberative and widespread agreement about the political issues underlying a dissociation proposal, there may nevertheless be no consensus about any specific actions that the University might take in response to the issue. When the political issues underlying a dissociation proposal are obviously controversial on campus, achieving consensus about how the University should respond is likely to be impossible. And if dissociation submissions clearly fail the consensus criterion, there is no need to thoroughly examine whether other criteria are met, to burden disputants with establishing a lack of consensus, or to otherwise extend consideration of the petition.

We advise the Committee to quickly dispose of petitions when the potential for consensus is lacking, and to avoid becoming a tool for intensifying division. Intellectual debate and disputation are healthy and necessary in a university community, but they are the province of the faculty and the students, not administrative process.