

## About the In Trust Center Governance Initiative

Amid a context of increasing institutional complexity and change throughout the field of Theological Education, Governing boards are being asked to lead with greater clarity, continuity, and strategic focus. In Trust Center's Governance Initiative is an effort to explore governance models and develop targeted board development programming in response to these increasing pressures on boards, who are being asked to provide continuity and stability in ways they have not in the past. Strong governance is essential to long-term mission sustainability, and we are committed to providing resources and leading the conversation about what makes healthy, effective boards and institutions.

### Governance Survey

The first step in the In Trust Center's Governance Initiative was a first of its kind board study and analysis from accredited institutions in theological education. 71% of ATS accredited schools responded to the survey, including more than a thousand board members and executive leaders from Governing Boards and Advisory Bodies.

The data presented on the following page is not meant as a tool for comparison or benchmarking. Rather, we encourage you to use this summary of practices and demographics from across the field as a point of conversation about your own advisory body. What are your current practices, priorities, and challenges? How do these practices support you or hinder you in addressing your institution's pressing issues? Below are just a few questions to start these conversations.

### Questions for Consideration:

- What questions does this data raise for you?
- What do you see in this data that requires further conversation?
- How regularly does your advisory body discuss its primary functions, such as fundraising, friend raising, advocacy, recruitment, resourcing, and program input? Why are or aren't each of these areas of focus to the board?
- Over 40% of theological schools are embedded in institutions that have a university or college governing board. What is work that only your **advisory body** can do?



The In Trust Center for Theological Schools surveyed executive leaders and governing and advisory board members at ATS accredited schools. 71% of the schools responded. Here's an overview for advisory boards.

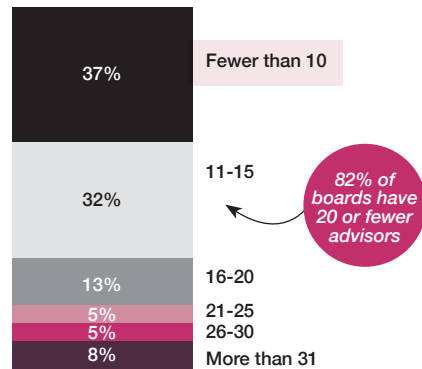
# Advisory Boards Embedded Schools

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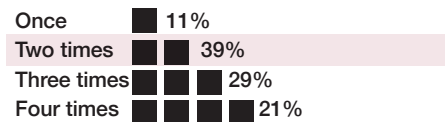
## Meetings & members

This section is a summary of responses from executive leaders.

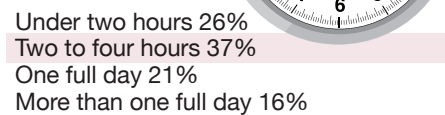
### Board size



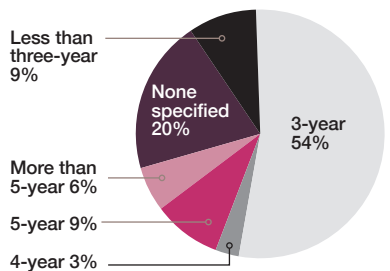
### Board meeting regularity



### Typical meeting duration



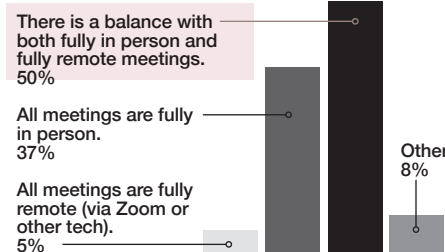
### Board member terms



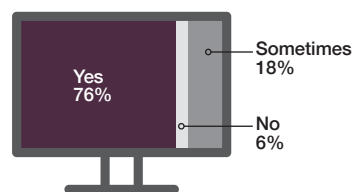
### Renewable terms

**89%**  
Have renewable terms

### How the board meets



### Remote access

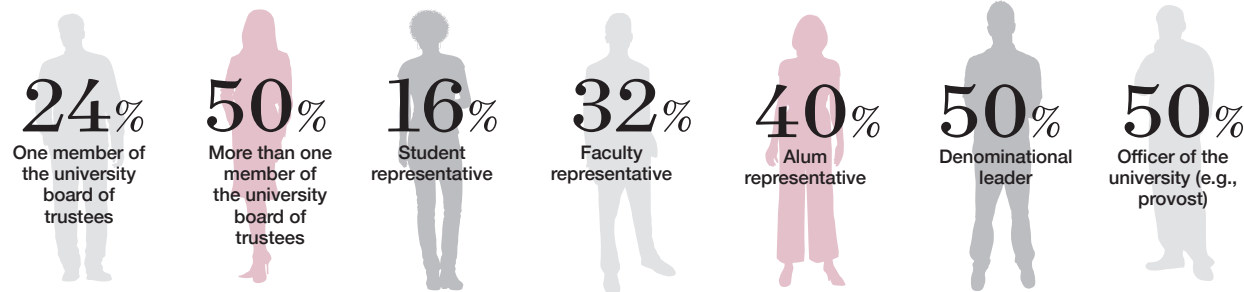


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## Structure & practices

Mix of board member and executive leader responses

### Advisory board member representation



### Annual financial giving



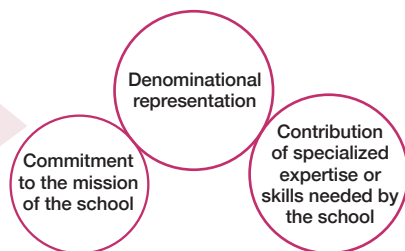
### University board of trustees that have a committee for the seminary

**43%**

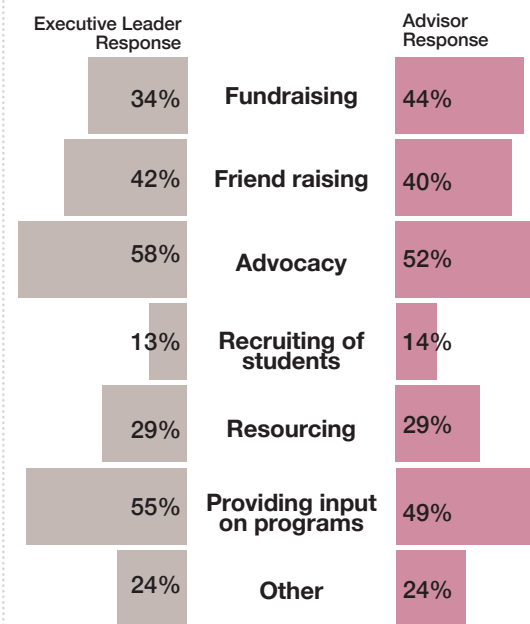
### Top 3-Reasons for advisor recruitment / selection



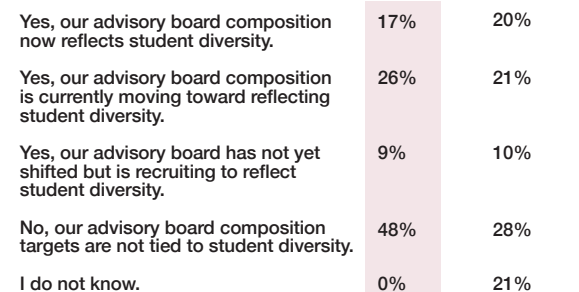
### Top 3 pathways to board service



### Primary functions



### Are you making efforts for board diversity if that is important to the board?

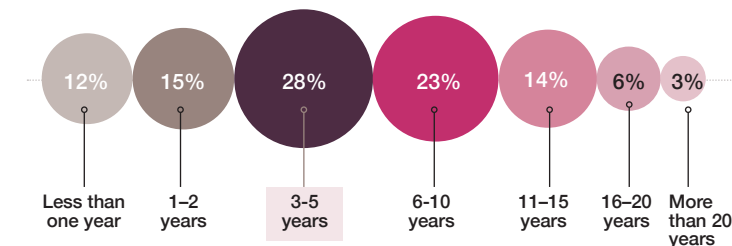


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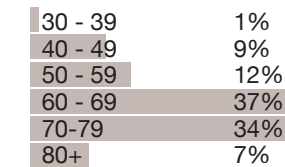
## Composition & experience

Aggregate of advisory board member responses

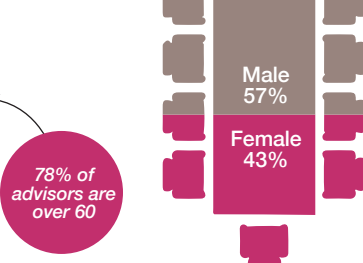
### Advisory board member length of service



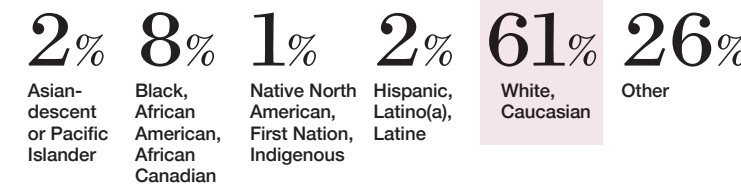
### Age



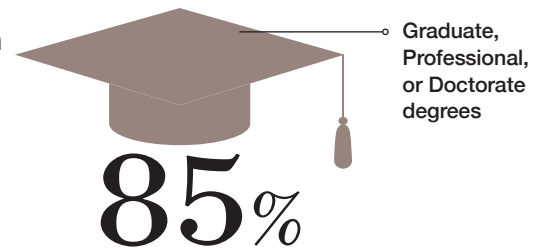
### Gender



### Race/ethnicity



### Education



### Top 3 - Expertise brought to board

