

To: Dean David Eidelman

From: Abraham Fuks
Chair, Honours & Awards Committee

Date: December 19, 2016

Re: Criteria and Process for Honorary Doctorate Nominations

Background:

The past several years have seen peaks and valleys in the number of nominations received by the University for Honorary Doctorates to be bestowed at the Faculty of Medicine convocation at the end of the academic year. Nominations are received from a variety of sources: the Dean's office, the Honours and Awards Committee of the Faculty, individual professors and students of the Faculty, and the University Honorary Degrees Committee itself. While these are all in accord with University regulations, the resultant situation is often confusing and the basis for the eventual selections not always clear. Lastly, it is not clear what criteria the nominators have in mind when submitting suggestions. Thus, this memo is provided in response to a request from Dean David Eidelman that the Honours and Awards Committee provide recommendations on criteria and processes for nominations for Honorary Degrees in the Health Sciences.

Process:

The Committee reviewed the current criteria for Honorary Doctorates at McGill and ten sister institutions in Canada and elsewhere and used these as a springboard for its discussions. The following criteria and processes are recommended for adoption by the Faculty of Medicine. It should be noted at the outset that the Committee viewed the criteria as factors to be taken into consideration, rather than as technical checklists. Furthermore, some criteria may carry more weight than others but the weighting factors should remain flexible and open.

Selection criteria:

1. Distinguished career/high degree of achievement with relevance to the health sciences
2. International recognition
3. Past or current association with McGill University and Faculty of Medicine
4. Community engagement: academic or general
5. Role model for students
6. Recipient should attend ceremony

Exclusion criteria:

1. Current members of faculty and staff
2. Recently retired faculty and staff
3. Posthumous nomination
4. Government office holders

Process:

1. Any member of the University community and alumni of the University may submit a nomination
2. Nominations may be submitted to the University Secretariat, Office of the Dean, or the Honours and Awards Committee
3. All nominations will be forwarded to the Honours and Awards Committee for review. All nominations will be analyzed and recommendations forwarded to the Dean for final decision and subsequent formal submission to the University Committee.
4. Thus, while the Faculty does not wish to restrict the right of any member of the University community to submit nominations, it is important for the views of the Dean to be considered in selecting persons to be honoured at convocations of the Faculty of Medicine. We therefore recommend that any nominations submitted directly to the University Secretariat and relevant to the Faculty of Medicine be forwarded to the Dean for review as noted in #3 above.
5. We acknowledge and accept the current University process whereby nominations submitted as noted above be retained in eligibility for a period of three years.