

Guidelines for the Awarding of Honorary Degrees

Preamble

By awarding honorary degrees, the University recognizes those individuals whose accomplishments are of such excellence that they provide inspiration and leadership to its graduates. As well, through its choice of honorary degree recipients, the University makes a public declaration of its values. In selecting candidates, the University should attempt to choose individuals of such a calibre that in honouring them, it too is honoured. The Honorary Degrees and Convocations Committee should attempt, through its recommendations of nominees, to reflect the cultural diversity of the country and the international character and diversity of the University itself. It should also attempt to honour those whose outstanding contributions to their fields or to society have not yet been widely recognized.

I. General Policies

1. Eligibility and Exclusions

Canadians and non-Canadians may be considered for honorary degrees. Generally speaking, active or newly retired members of staff, voting members of the Board of Governors, and Canadian politicians currently in office should not be considered for honorary degrees. Normally, honorary degrees are not awarded posthumously or in absentia.

2. Criteria

Some of the factors to be considered by the Committee in its deliberations are:

(a) Accomplishments of Note

These accomplishments could include scholarly distinction and outstanding contributions to the creative or performing arts.

(b) Service to the Community at Large or to a Profession or Discipline

This service could include outstanding achievements in the area of public service at the national or international levels, at the local or community level, or to a profession or discipline.

(c) Appropriateness to a Special Anniversary

This could include the centenary of a school or faculty or a like event.

(d) Service to the University

This service must normally be of long standing and unusual merit. It is customary to confer an LLD on the Visitor, on the Chair of the Board when that person steps down from that office, and on the Principal when that person retires or leaves the University.

3. Degrees Conferred

The following are the honorary doctorates conferred by the University:

Doctor of Divinity, honoris causa (DD):

Awarded for outstanding scholarship in theology or service to the religious community

Doctor of Laws, honoris causa (LLD):

Awarded for outstanding scholarly achievement in law or for exceptional service to the University or the community at large

Doctor of Letters, honoris causa (DLitt):

Awarded for outstanding achievement in the humanities, social sciences, or in the performing arts, of a scholarly or creative nature

Doctor of Music, honoris causa (DMus):

Awarded for outstanding achievement in music, particularly in composition or performance

Doctor of Science, honoris causa (DSc):

Awarded for outstanding achievement in the pure and applied sciences, usually of a scholarly nature

II. PROCEDURES

1. The Honorary Degrees and Convocations Committee

The Honorary Degrees and Convocations Committee shall meet in the winter term to receive nominations for the awarding of honorary degrees at spring convocations of the following year. It shall meet in the fall term to receive nominations for the following fall.

Meeting dates for the Honorary Degrees and Convocations Committee, and the deadlines for submission of nominations, shall be placed before Senate in February of each year, along with a call for nominations. Deadlines for submission, under ordinary circumstances, should be respected. Late submissions are returned to their sponsors and may be resubmitted for consideration at the next appropriate meeting of the Committee.

2. Nominations

Nominations may be received from individuals both within and without the University. The same stringent criteria shall apply to all nominations.

Nominations for honorary doctorates to be awarded at the spring convocations are normally forwarded by deans of faculties.

Nominations for honorary doctorates to be awarded at the fall convocation are normally chosen from the Standing List. The Graduates' Society may also nominate a candidate to be honoured at the fall convocation.

Nominations should include the following information: name and address of nominee; career summary; education; awards received; reasons for recommending award; evidence of suitability as a convocation speaker. Supporting documentation may be attached (e.g., curriculum vitae, news clippings).

3. Recommendations and Standing List

An honorary degree is the highest order the University can bestow. Thirteen honorary doctorates a year should be the maximum number awarded.

The Honorary Degrees and Convocations Committee, after considering a nomination or re-nomination, may reject it, in which case the file is destroyed, agree to forward the nomination for approval by Senate, or place the nomination on a Standing List for consideration at a later date.

Names placed on the Standing List shall remain there for a period of three years, after which time, if the nominee has not been selected or re-nominated, the name shall be deleted.

4. Citations

Citations to be read at Convocation shall be submitted in advance to the Secretariat and should not exceed three minutes in length.