

Senate Honorary Degrees Committee
Criteria and Procedures for Nomination of Honorary Degree Candidates

I. General Principles

In conferring honorary degrees, Dalhousie University (“the University”) seeks to honour individuals whose accomplishments and achievements demonstrate a standard of excellence that will inspire our graduates and the University community and will reflect favourably on the public reputation of the University. The awarding of an honorary degree honours both the individual and the University and contributes to the recognition and celebration of excellence in society in a manner that reflects the University’s character and values within the community and the world.

II. Criteria for Selection

The role of the Senate Honorary Degree Committee (“the Committee”) is to recommend, at least annually, outstanding candidates for honorary degrees across a range of academic disciplines and non-academic areas of achievement. The Committee will seek to nominate candidates who have demonstrated:

- i. Inspirational leadership in, or service to, society;
- ii. Outstanding contributions to, or leadership in, a field or discipline of study or a non-academic area of achievement; or
- iii. Significant pattern of outstanding achievement at, or contributions to, Dalhousie University.

Particular consideration will be given to those candidates whose contributions or leadership have not yet been widely recognized, but which merit such recognition. Every effort will be made to select candidates who reflect Canadian society and the University’s commitment to diversity including, but not limited to racially visible persons, aboriginal persons, persons with disabilities and women.

III. Exclusions

1. The following persons are not eligible for consideration for an honorary degree:

- i. Current members of the faculty, staff, the Board of Governors or Senate or their immediate families. Such members may not be considered for nomination until a minimum of one year has passed since their active connection with the University has ended;
- ii. Current students;
- iii. Individuals who are active in any level of Canadian political life, although exceptions may be made for Governors General or Lieutenant-Governors, judges and others whose appointments place them outside active partisan politics.

2. Honorary degrees are not normally granted in absentia or posthumously.

3. Candidates who have accepted an invitation to receive an honorary degree but have cancelled an invitation twice without reasonable cause.

IV. Degree

Doctor of Laws (LL.D.): Awarded for outstanding achievement or leadership in a field, discipline of study, or non-academic endeavour or for exceptional service to the University or the community at large.

V. Procedures

1. At least once annually, the Secretary of Senate will issue a call for nominations which will be broadcast widely by the University Secretariat to the university community, using traditional means and any additional avenues suggested by members of the Senate Honorary Degrees Committee (“the Committee”).
2. Nominations may be made by any member or constituent group from the University community, or by an external nominator. Any potential conflict of interest with respect to the nominee (association or connection with the nominee) should be disclosed as part of the nomination submission.
3. All nominations must be made in writing using the form specified by the Committee, and signed by a nominator and two additional individuals supporting the nomination. Nominations may be submitted at any time to the Secretary of Senate, University Secretariat.
4. To assure the confidentiality of the process, nominators shall keep the nomination confidential from the nominee.
5. The Secretary of Senate or his/her delegate will review nominations submitted to ensure that they meet the criteria set above before they are considered by the Committee. Names of nominees who meet the criteria will be added to the list of potential candidates for a period of three years from the date of nomination, at which time, if the nominee has not been selected for recommendation to Senate, the name will be removed from the list. If the person is subsequently re-nominated, the name will again be added to the list for an additional three-year period, provided that they continue to meet the criteria.
6. The Committee will review the active list of nominations as required to meet the annual convocation cycles and will recommend prospective candidates who meet the established criteria. The Committee will regularly review the criteria and pattern of nominations and awards to ensure alignment with the goals of the Committee and the University.
7. All decisions of the Committee will be by majority vote.
8. Committee deliberations are confidential and conducted in-camera. The Committee will forward its recommendations to Senate for its consideration in a closed session.
9. Candidates approved by Senate will be contacted directly by the President and invited to receive an honorary degree. Upon acceptance of this invitation, the names and the ceremonies at which the honorary degrees will be awarded will be confirmed to the Office of the Registrar by the President on a confidential basis and will remain confidential until such time as a public announcement has been made by the President. Where possible, honorary degree recipients will be selected to receive their degrees at the Convocation which most closely aligns with their field of achievement.
10. The Senate may suspend the provisions of these criteria and procedures by a two-thirds vote in favour.