



Awarding of Honorary Degrees

Senate Guidelines

Honorary Degrees are awarded by The University of Lethbridge Senate (“Senate”) as articulated within *The Post-Secondary Learning Act* of the Province of Alberta, and are the highest honour that the University of Lethbridge (“University”) awards.

1. **Criteria**

Recipients of these degrees represent diverse backgrounds and fields including academics, arts and performance, athletes, public intellectuals, visionary leaders in public, private and non-profit sectors, contributors of long-standing and exemplary service to the University, and community builders and philanthropists.

Recipients shall personify the values expressed in the liberal education philosophy of the institution - they cultivate humane values and seek to foster such things as intellectual growth, social development, aesthetic sensitivity, personal ethics, and the dimensions of a scholar's personality.

Recipients who are honoured have made substantial contributions to society at the provincial, national and/or international levels and/or to the University in such areas as their professions, business, public life, philanthropy, the arts, humanities, and the sciences. People in virtually all fields of endeavour are eligible and the recipients need not be in prominent positions however, the distinctive feature is that they will have given exemplary public service within the scope available to them.

- Nominations are not accepted for any individual holding active elected office in Canada.
- Nominations are normally not accepted for current members of the University Senate and/or Board of Governors, or a University employee unless there are extraordinary circumstances such as national or international recognition.
- Nominations are normally championed for former President’s, Board Chair’s and Chancellor’s and would not be considered until they have left these positions.
- Nominations are not accepted for posthumous awarding; however, if a nominee that has been voted in by Senate passes away between being chosen as a recipient and the ceremony, Senate would award this posthumously.

2. **Nomination Process**

Nominations are accepted on an ongoing basis throughout the year; however, January 15 of each year is normally the annual deadline for the Senate Honorary Degree Committee to consider nominees to recommend to Senate. Nomination packages are to include:

- Nomination Form – (name and contact information of the nominator and nominee);
- If available, a curriculum vitae, and/or a biographical sketch (video submissions are also acceptable);
- A short summary of how the nominee has met the criteria for an honorary degree along with, if known, which honorary degree would be requested;
- A statement on any connection and/or importance of the nominee to the University with an understanding that it is common practice that if successful the recipient would be responsible for delivering an inspirational address to University graduates at a Convocation Ceremony; and
- At least two (maximum of four) letters of support, preferably with at least one letter of support being from a member of the University Community (Employee, Retiree or Alumni).
- Video submissions are also accepted.

Nominees are not to be made aware of the nomination. The Honorary Degree Committee will hold nominations for three years (current plus two).

In recognition that the University also has a process recognizing outstanding Alumni as well as volunteerism, if the nomination is considered by the Senate Honorary Degree Committee to be also or more appropriate in those areas the nomination package may also be forwarded for consideration in that process.

3. *Senate Honorary Degree Committee (“Committee”)*

Following the annual submission deadline, the Committee shall review each nomination package, including the carry overs from the previous two years. All proceedings of the Committee are *in camera*. A short list of candidate’s worthy of an honorary degree from the University will be compiled using the information of last year’s short list as reference to determine appropriate number to recommend as well as for appropriate diversity. The normal practice is to confer one honorary degree at each of the convocation ceremonies per year, with the exception of expedited or special case recipients. The Committee will be made aware of any pre-approved, non-conferred recipients to assist them in deciding how many individuals should be short listed each year prior to Committee deliberations.

In presenting a short list to Senate, the Committee will be mindful of the University’s commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion and Indigenization to strive for diversity of backgrounds, disciplines and spheres of contribution. There is also a commitment to award at least one academic degree (those other than Doctor of Laws) per year. The recommendation of what types of degree each individual should be awarded (see below) will be recommended by the Committee and presented alongside the shortlist to Senate. Senate reserves the right to request additional verification and background checks, such as academic credentials and criminal record, if determined by the Committee.

4. *Degree Awarded*

Honorary degrees are conferred *honoris causa*, “for the sake of honor”. Individuals may receive Doctor of Letters (D.Litt. *h.c.*), Doctor of Science (D.Sc. *h.c.*), or Doctor of Laws degrees (LL.D. *h.c.*).

- Doctor of Letters *honoris causa* degrees (D.Litt. *h.c.*) are awarded in recognition of one’s lifetime of excellence in a particular humanistic, cultural, or artistic field, or other notable contributions to society.
- Doctor of Science *honoris causa* degrees (D.Sc. *h.c.*) are awarded in recognition of extensive contributions within their disciplinary field.
- Doctor of Law *honoris causa* degrees (LL.D. *h.c.*) are awarded in recognition of those who have made a profound or significant contributions to the society or University at large in the area of scholarship, culture and in areas of Law, public policy or public service - including humanitarian and philanthropic contributions to society.

5. *Senate Consideration*

The recommendation from the Committee shall then be forwarded to Senate for their consideration at an *in-camera* portion of their meeting. In order for a nominee to be considered approved, they must receive greater than 50% of affirmative votes by Senate.

6. *Conflict of Interest*

Senate and Honorary Degree Committee members must act fairly and objectively within their evaluation. Members should self-identify to the Secretary to Senate and/or the Chair, any actual and/or perceived conflicts of interest (such as close associations and/or participating as a nominator or referee). Those who participate as a nominator or referee will be excused from voting only. If there is a reasonable apprehension, the Chair shall rule on the eligibility of the Member, and they may be excused from any voting.

7. *Notification to Candidates, Nominators and Public*

If, upon receiving their call of congratulations from the Chancellor, an approved nominee accepts an honorary degree, the conferral of the honorary degree shall be scheduled at a time that is mutually convenient to the University and the candidate, provided that it is no longer than three years after an affirmative vote by Senate. If Senate deems that extraordinary circumstances have arisen, they may choose to carry forward a candidate further.

The public will not be made aware of the awarding until invitations to that ceremony are provided to the public, and/or the public announcement occurs. Nominators, however, will be confidentially notified if their nomination was not successful after the three years, and/or approved and the candidate accepted.

8. *Use of the Title*

In recognition of the honorary degree being an honorific title, not being a representation of a formal academic qualification bestowed by the University, the use of the title Doctor. is only recognized internally by the University. In official correspondences, and during University ceremonies and events, recipients will be addressed as Doctor (Name). Within the broader community this designation is not used, and this recognition would be appropriately listed as an award within a curriculum vitae using, for example “LL.D. *h.c.*”.

9. *Revocation*

The Senate of the University reserves the right to revoke any honorary degree conferred by the University through a recommendation from the Senate Honorary Degree Committee.

For additional information, please contact the Senate Office 403-329-2482 or governance@uleth.ca.