

## **HONORARY DEGREES – PRINCIPLES & CRITERIA FOR CANDIDATE SELECTION**

### **1. General Principles**

The awarding of an honorary degree is an important symbol in the life of the University. An honorary degree recognizes uncommonly meritorious accomplishments and activity, both in the academic arena and in broader areas of benefit to society, that reflect the values esteemed by a great university. Honorary degrees are conferred on those whose achievements are of such excellence that they provide, through example, inspiration and leadership to the graduates of the University.

In choosing recipients for this honour the University is also guided by the principle that in honouring individuals for their contributions, the University is also honouring itself by its association with people of such special merit.

### **2. Criteria for Selection**

The following specific criteria are used by the Honorary Degrees Committee in its consideration of candidates. The Committee's goal each year is to present a slate of recipients across a range of academic disciplines and non-academic areas of achievement. Honorary degree recipients, when possible, will be chosen to match the purposes of the Convocation at which the degree is to be granted. Those in category (a) will predominate if possible; those in categories (b) and (c) will normally number less than half of the recipients in category (a), unless the Convocation is being called for a special reason.]

- a. The University normally will give preference to honouring individuals who have made outstanding contributions in the sciences, humanities and professions in which the University itself is active.
- b. Recognition will be given to those whose exceptional accomplishments have contributed to enhancing culture and society in Canada or elsewhere in the world.
- c. The University on occasion will honour those who have made extraordinary contributions to the development of the University or the region or have achieved international standards of excellence in their endeavours.
- d. In general the University will attempt to honour those whose outstanding contributions to their fields or to society have not yet been widely recognized, but who merit such recognition.
- e. Based on an earlier tradition in the University, an honorary degree (*jure dignitatis*) will usually be conferred upon the Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Ontario [who is the Official Visitor of the University].

### **3. Exclusions**

- a. Active members of faculty, staff, the Board of Governors and the Senate are not eligible for honorary degrees. Such members of the University community are not to be considered for nomination until a minimum of one year has passed since their departure from active service to the University.
- b. Honorary degrees are not granted *in absentia* or posthumously.
- c. Normally, active politicians will not be awarded an honorary degree. An exception may be made in the case of a Special Convocation for the installation of the Chancellor or President

when the University may wish to recognize a person in a high position. In such a case, criteria in section 2. above shall apply.

#### 4. **Degrees**

- a. **Doctor of Laws (LL.D.):** Awarded for outstanding scholarly achievement in a field not covered by one of the other honorary degrees or for exceptional service to the University or the community at large. Because of its non-specificity, this is the most frequently awarded honorary degree.
- b. **Doctor of Science (D.Sc.):** Awarded for outstanding academic achievement in the pure and applied sciences, usually through research.
- c. **Doctor of Letters (D.Litt.):** Awarded for outstanding achievement in the humanities, usually of a scholarly nature.
- d. **Doctor of Music (D.Mus.):** Awarded for outstanding achievement in music, particularly in composition or performance.
- e. **Doctor of Civil Law (D.C.L.):** Awarded for outstanding achievement in jurisprudence.
- f. **Doctor of Divinity (D.D.):** Awarded by Huron University College for outstanding service to or scholarship in the religious community.

With the exception of the D.D., the degree to be awarded to a candidate for an honorary degree is decided by the Honorary Degrees Committee of the Senate.

#### 5. **Procedures**

- a. **Nominations:** At least once annually, a call for nominations will be broadcast widely by the University Secretariat to the university community, using the traditional outlets and any additional avenues suggested by members of the Honorary Degrees Committee. Nominations may be submitted at any time to the University Secretary using the form available at [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/senate/honorary/hondeg\\_nomination\\_form.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/senate/honorary/hondeg_nomination_form.pdf)
- b. **Maintenance of Lists:** The initial screening of the nomination will be made by the Senate Secretariat to ensure that the nomination adheres to these guidelines. Names will be added to the list for a period of three years from the date of nomination, at which time, if the nominee has not been selected, the name will be deleted. If the person is renominated, and if the nomination is still valid according to these guidelines, the name will again be added to the list for an additional three-year period.
- c. From the active list of nominations, the Honorary Degrees Committee will select prospective degree recipients as required in the annual convocation cycles. Once a prospective degree recipient has been identified and agreed upon by the Committee, two members of the committee will be assigned to the nomination file in order to execute due diligence, based on publicly available information, to ensure that the nomination conforms fully to the selection principles and criteria.
- d. Nominators will be invited to participate in the conferral of the degree as hooders, presenters or hosts, where and when possible, on the basis of their relevant relationship to the field of accomplishment of the nominee. Selection of these invitees will be determined by a group comprising the President, Director of Convocation, Provost and Secretary of Senate.