

Honorary Degree Criteria & Nomination Requirements

Introduction

The most prestigious award conferred by Trent University is the Honorary degree. It is awarded to those individuals who have made extraordinary academic or social contributions to Canada, or internationally, particularly in fields of relevance and importance to the Trent University/wider regional community.

The selection of honorary degree recipients is overseen by the University Honours Committee, a subcommittee of Senate Executive. The committee will seek approval from Senate Executive to recommend a slate of honorary degree candidates to Senate for approval. The nomination and approval process for honorary degrees is confidential, and all involved in the process must respect this requirement. As such, candidates should not be consulted on their nomination. Any member of the Trent community can submit a nomination. To avoid undue influence, the review process by the committee is carried out anonymously, that is, the names of those who submitted the nomination are redacted from all documentation reviewed by the University Honours Committee.

In a given year, every effort will be made to ensure that degree recipients represent diversity across gender, race, age and ability. As well, effort will be made towards achieving balance across Trent University's scholarly community. Trent University may revoke an honorary degree in situations where it is determined that maintaining the honorary degree would be harmful to the University's reputation or in conflict with the University's values as outlined in Trent's [Vision and Mission](#).

Timeline

The University Honours Committee receives candidate nominations for Honorary degrees year round. A selected candidate who cannot guarantee attendance at a particular convocation will be invited to postpone their award acceptance to convocation the following year (to a maximum of two years).

Types of Honorary Degrees

The committee will select the appropriate type of honorary degree to be awarded from the following list:

- **Doctor of Laws (LL.D.):** awarded to recognize contributions in scholarly or professional achievement, or public or community service,
- **Doctor of Letters (D.Litt.):** awarded to recognize contributions specifically in literature, arts and culture.
- **Doctor of Science (D.Sc.):** awarded to recognize contributions in science and science policy

Eligibility

1. To be considered, a candidate must have sufficient stature and recognition to ensure that the awarding of an honorary degree enhances the reputation of Trent University.
2. The candidate, in character and conduct, shall have reflected the fundamental principles for which Trent University stands.

3. Consideration will be given to candidates who have achieved eminence in scholarship or rendered distinguished contributions in their field; the Honours committee will give preference to those fields of endeavour that reflect Trent University's mission and core values.
4. There should be a reasonable chance that the candidate will accept the honorary degree and be available to attend convocation in person and deliver an inspiring address to the graduands.

Limitations

Trent University will not normally award honorary degrees: posthumously; in absentia; to active politicians; to financial donors whose only affiliation to Trent is monetary; or to current members of its own faculty, staff, students, or Board of Governors (consideration can occur after 3 years post-service). Individuals may not nominate themselves or members of their own family.

Nomination Consideration

The University Honours committee will consider the following when reviewing each nomination:

- In what ways is the candidate's achievement truly outstanding?
- In what ways has the candidate made an extraordinary contribution to scholarship, society and culture?
- Will this person's achievement be seen to be important and exemplary to the students who will graduate at convocation?
- Has this candidate already been recognized by other honours and awards?
- Has this candidate been appropriately recognized by the field or profession in which they excel?
- Is it appropriate for Trent University to honour this candidate at this time?
- Is the candidate already aware of Trent University and would the candidate appreciate the significance of the award?
- Does this candidate help Trent University achieve the goal of reflecting the diversity of Canadian society or the academic diversity of the university in the honours it bestows?

Nomination Package

Checklist of information to be included in a complete nomination package:

- The proposed honorary degree candidate's name, telephone number and email (if known).
- A short, biographical summary (350 word maximum), eg. summarized CV or resume. Include any connections to Trent University /wider regional community.
- Nomination letter

Note: The letter of nomination is the most important element for the committee's consideration of a candidate. The nomination letter should comprise details about the candidate's achievements that the nominator believes qualify the candidate for consideration for an honorary degree. It should clearly describe why the candidate should receive an honorary degree and include, as appropriate, information about the nominee's community/provincial/national/international activities, distinguished or notable professional achievements or service that reflects a high standard of excellence in his or her field; publications, research or creative work; and previous awards and recognition.

- Optional: Letters of support (no more than three). Each letter should speak to specific aspects of the candidate in order to support the main nomination letter.

- Submit the nomination package to:

University Honours Subcommittee c/o Richelle Hall
Bata Library, Suite 108
1600 West Bank Drive
Peterborough, Ontario K9L 0G2
phone: (705) 748-1011 ext. 1387
email: richellehall@trentu.ca