

Policy on Flag Protocol

Category: Operations

Approval: PVP

Responsibility: Vice-President, External Relations, Marketing & Communications¹

Date initially approved: February 1996, revised October 6, 2025

Purpose:

This policy outlines the protocol for the display, lowering, and raising of flags at Trent University. It incorporates federal and provincial legislation and protocol, addresses both campuses (in Peterborough and Trent University Durham GTA), and provides clear guidance on flag-related practices as symbols of honour, celebration, and mourning.

Authority

The Vice-President, External Relations, Marketing & Communications is responsible to the President and Vice-Chancellor or designate for the administration of this policy.

Flag Display Locations and Standard Flags

Trent University shall prominently display the Canadian flag at both campuses.

In addition, designated locations may on occasion fly the following:

- Ontario Provincial Flag
- Municipal Flags
- Indigenous Flag representing First Nations of the treaty and traditional territory where Trent is located
- Trent University Flag
- Official Guest/ Dignitary Flags
- Special Flags (designated flagpole)

Flags will be flown and maintained in accordance with federal and provincial legislation regarding positioning, order of precedence, handling, and disposal. Only one flag will be flown on each flagpole.

Flag Raising – Special Flags

A flagpole at each campus shall be designated for guests or special flags. [Requests](#) to raise such flags must be submitted to the Vice-President, External Relations, Marketing & Communications and will

¹ July 1, 2026 – Housekeeping edit: Updated title of responsible vice-president.

be assessed in consultation with Director of Communications; ; and/or relevant units guided by practices and protocols of the Government of Canada.

Order of Precedence and Etiquette

Where multiple flags are displayed, the Canadian flag shall be given the position of honour. The order of precedence shall follow Government of Canada protocol.

Criteria for Approval:

- Flags normally must not represent commercial, partisan political, or religious organizations.
- Flags must align with the University's values and not express hate, violence, racism, or discrimination.
- Approval rests with the Vice President or designate with input and advice from the President and Vice Presidents Committee (PVP).

The duration and timing of the display will be determined on a case-by-case basis, but only the Canadian flag shall be flown permanently at each campus.

The raising of any flag other than the Canadian flag shall be reserved for rare and exceptional circumstances, specifically those reflecting initiatives of clear national significance.

NOTE: The denial of a flag-raising request does not preclude individuals or groups at the University from recognizing special, national or international days through meaningful forms of campus engagement and celebration.

Flag Lowering Procedure

The Canadian flag is lowered to half-mast for one full day (or longer if appropriate) to mark:

a) Annual Observances:

In the event an annual observance day falls on a weekend, the flag will be lowered on the day of campus observance.

- National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (Sept 30)
- Indigenous Veterans Day (Nov 8)
- Remembrance Day (Nov 11)
- Other federal or provincial commemorative days as determined by the President

b) Deaths:

1. Current members of the Board of Governors, and Governors Emeritus
2. Current members of the University Senate
3. Recipients of Trent honorary degrees
4. Current or past Chancellors and Presidents and Vice-Chancellors
5. Current students (should a student's death occur during the summer term, a decision as to the lowering of the flag will be considered based on the registration status of the student)
6. Current employees
7. Retired faculty or staff, when a memorial is held on campus
8. Representatives of Government:

- The Sovereign
 - Governor General
 - Prime Minister of Canada
 - Lieutenant Governor of Ontario
 - Premier of Ontario
 - MPs and MPPs representing Peterborough or Oshawa
 - Local Mayors and Regional Chair/Warden
9. Chiefs of the Michi Saagiig Anishinaabeg First Nation
 10. National or provincial figure, or to join in a national mourning or day of remembrance if flags are lowered by the federal/provincial governments
 11. Others, in exceptional Circumstances, at the discretion of the President or Vice-Presidents
- c) **Duration:** The flag shall be lowered for a single day on the occasion of the funeral or memorial service in the circumstances outlined above, except during national and/or provincial periods of mourning, or in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of PVP.
- d) **Campus-Specific Application:** Flags may be raised or lowered at one or both campuses depending on the context.

Officer:

Vice-President, External Relations, Marketing & Communications

Date for Next Review:

September 2030

Related Policies, Procedures & Guidelines

- a) Emergency Response Protocol
- b) University Communications Procedures
- c) [Flag Raising Request Form](#)

Policies Superseded by This Policy:

- a) Previous “Policy on Lowering the Flag to Half-Mast” (August 20, 2024)
- b) All prior internal communications or practices concerning flag etiquette