



ACADEMIC COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORT

SESSION:

Public
 Non-Public

ACTION REQUESTED:

Decision
 Discussion/Direction
 Information

TO: Academic Council

DATE: May 26, 2020

FROM: Governance & Nominations Committee (GNC)

SUBJECT: Review of Honorary Degrees Committee Terms of Reference

COMMITTEE MANDATE:

- Section 1(a) of the GNC Terms of Reference lists one of the responsibilities of the committee as advising Academic Council on the establishment, terms of reference, composition, membership and retirement of its committees.
- As part of the implementation of By-law No. 2, the GNC has been asked to review the Terms of Reference for all of Academic Council’s standing committees.
- The GNC has reviewed the Terms of Reference for the Honorary Degrees Committee and is consulting with Academic Council on the proposed changes.

CONTEXT & RATIONALE:

- In order to assist the GNC with its review of the Honorary Degrees Committee’s (HDC) Terms of Reference, we conducted a benchmarking exercise reviewing the membership and mandate of other Canadian universities’ committees responsible for honorary degrees.
- The HDC Terms of Reference are currently contained within a document that sets out the honorary degree candidate selection criteria and selection process.

Recommendation:

- Create separate HDC Terms of Reference and honorary degree selection procedures.

Committee Membership:

- GNC provided direction to include an option to have an alumni member as a member of the HDC.
- GNC supported including an elected administrative staff member on the HDC.

HDC Mandate:

- The mandate of the committee reflects the responsibilities set out in the existing honorary degrees policy document.

NEXT STEPS:

1. Council's feedback will be communicated to GNC at the meeting on June 16, 2020 (if necessary).
2. The Terms of Reference will be presented to Academic Council for recommendation on June 30, 2020 and to the Board for approval in the fall.

SUPPORTING REFERENCE MATERIALS:

- proposed Terms of Reference of Honorary Degrees Committee
- current Honorary Degrees Committee document

ACADEMIC COUNCIL Honorary Degrees Committee

1. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Honorary Degrees Committee (“Committee”) is a standing committee of the university’s Academic Council whose mandate is to consider all honorary degree nominations and recommend to the President those candidates who meet the established criteria for the awarding of an honorary degree.

Specifically, the Committee will have the following responsibilities:

- a) oversee the nominations process, including the call for nominations;
- b) encourage nominations and recommend potential honorary degree recipients that reflect the diversity of Canadian society and the university community;
- c) use its best efforts to provide a balanced representation among scholarly disciplines, service, and other fields of accomplishment;
- d) recommend to the President the type of degree to be awarded and the appropriate convocation at which the degree should be conferred;
- e) develop and maintain a pool of candidates for honorary degrees from which candidates may be drawn over time; and
- f) maintain the utmost confidentiality of the nominations and selection process.

2. MEETINGS

The Committee will meet at least once per year. In accordance with the university’s Act and By-laws, the Committee will conduct only Non-Public meetings.

3. MEMBERSHIP

The Committee will be composed of:

Ex-officio

- President & Vice-Chancellor (Chair)
- Chancellor
- Provost & Vice-President, Academic or designate
- Senior administrator responsible for advancement or designate
- Secretary of Academic Council or designate (non-voting)

Commented [BD1]: Allows for flexibility in case of a change in title

Elected

- Three (3) tenured, tenure-track or teaching faculty members
- One (1) administrative staff member
- One (1) student (undergraduate or graduate)

Commented [BD2]: Updated from term "core faculty" & consistent with By-law No. 2

Commented [BD3]: Added per GNC's direction

The Committee Chair also has the option of adding one (1) alumni member, to be selected through an expression of interest process conducted by the Governance and Nominations Committee.

Commented [BD4]: Per GNC's direction

4. QUORUM

Quorum requires that a majority of the Committee members entitled to vote be present.

DRAFT

Item	8.7
Approved by	UOIT Academic Council
Date approved	December 2005

HONORARY DEGREES

1.0 CRITERIA

Honorary degrees are to recognize persons who have:

- made an outstanding intellectual and/or scholarly contribution in their chosen field of academic eminence;
- provided outstanding service and/or contributions to greater society through non-academic achievements and/or public service; or
- made major contributions in areas relevant to the mission of UOIT and/or to Durham Region/Northumberland County.

2.0 DEGREES CONFERRED

Academic Council may award either of the following honorary degrees:

2.1 Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa* (LLD)

Awarded for outstanding achievement in the social sciences in the broadest sense, or significant community contributions at the local, national, or international levels.

2.2 Doctor of Science, *honoris causa* (DSc)

Awarded for outstanding achievements in the pure and applied sciences and engineering, usually through research.

3.0 COMMITTEE ON HONORARY DEGREES

Academic Council shall establish a Committee on Honorary Degrees to be comprised of:

- The Chancellor
- The President (Chair)
- The Provost
- The Vice-President of Advancement
- Three faculty members
- One student representative
- The Secretary, Academic Council (ex-officio, non-voting)

The Committee on Honorary Degrees is charged with reviewing all nominations and recommending to the President a list of names of potential degree recipients, the type of degree in each case, the appropriate convocation at which the degree should be granted, and the choice of convocation speaker.

4.0 GUIDELINES

- 4.1 Faculty and staff at UOIT are not eligible for nomination until at least three years after retirement.
- 4.2 A nominee may not be an active Canadian politician.

Approved by Academic Council, December 2005

- 4.3 The nominee must be living (if the candidate was to pass away after accepting the nomination, but prior to its award, the degree would be awarded posthumously).
- 4.4 Nominations that reflect the diversity of Canadian society are encouraged.
- 4.5 UOIT shall be under no obligation to award an honorary doctorate in any year.
- 4.6 Normally not more than one honorary degree will be awarded at convocation, although a second single degree may be awarded in exceptional circumstances.
- 4.7 The Committee shall direct particular focus to individuals who have not received honorary degrees from other institutions, but who are clearly meritorious candidates.

5.0 SELECTION PROCESS

- 5.1 The Committee on Honorary Degrees shall call for nominations for honorary degrees in September of each year. Nominations may be received from members of the university community and the community at large.
- 5.2 Nominations should include appropriate background information, such as basic personal information, a summary of the nominee's achievements and other appropriate supporting documentation.
- 5.3 All nominations must be forwarded to the Committee on Honorary Degrees on or before October 31.
- 5.4 The Committee shall meet in November of each year to develop a list of worthy candidates to serve for the convocation(s) of the coming year.
- 5.6 Recommendations of the Committee on Honorary Degrees will be forwarded to the President for his/her consideration. Names of candidates will be kept on a reserve list for three years.
- 5.7 Recipients will be selected by the President from among the approved candidates on the reserve list. Candidates chosen shall be contacted directly by the President.
- 5.8 The outcome of the Committee's deliberations shall not be released out of respect for the nominee and to ensure the integrity of the process.
- 5.9 If the nominee declines the invitation or is unable to be present at the respective convocation, the President may approach the next nominee on the approved list.
- 5.10 In the event that an individual declines acceptance of an honorary degree that has been approved by the Committee, or where the conferring of an approved degree has not been scheduled within three years of approval by the committee, the Honorary Degree will be deemed to be cancelled.
- 5.11 Confidentiality at all points in the nominating process is critical. No discussion concerning nominees shall take place outside of those directly involved in the evaluation process or the formal evaluation meetings. Discussion and voting will be in executive session by all evaluating groups.
- 5.12 Whenever possible, names of Honorary Degree recipients should be reported to Academic Council before being announced to the media.
- 5.13 Due to the confidential nature of the proceedings, nominators will be contacted after nomination consideration only if the candidate is selected to receive an honorary degree.

6.0 CONVOCATION PROCEEDINGS

- 6.1 The President will identify someone to present each nominee at convocation. This will normally be a UOIT faculty member and frequently the individual who nominated the recipient.
- 6.2 Each honoree, and especially those from out-of-town, will be hosted by a UOIT faculty or staff member, usually the individual performing introductions at convocation. He/she will be responsible for ensuring

that the honoree(s) are met at airports, escorted to and from campus events and generally made to feel welcome and appreciated.

- 6.3 Nominees will normally address convocation but, in some cases, may not be asked to do so.
- 6.4 Speeches should be brief (not to exceed ten minutes) and introductions should be confined to three minutes. All speeches should be directed to the graduating class.
- 6.5 UOIT will normally host either a luncheon or a dinner for honorees, their immediate families, and special friends.