

Title	Honorary Degrees		
Classification	Board	Oversight & Responsibility	Office of the President; VP Academic
Category	Education & Teaching	Effective Date	2026 Mar 26
Approval	Board	Policy No	1040

This policy is applied in a manner consistent with applicable statutory and legal obligations, including university collective agreements and terms of employment.

NOTE: The most up-to-date versions of our policies are posted on the policy & procedure website. If you've printed this policy, check the website to be sure you have the current version.

BOARD POLICY STATEMENT

The Board will approve the awarding of all Royal Roads University honorary degrees.

PHILOSOPHY

The Board believes that in recognition of outstanding individuals, it is appropriate to award honorary degrees.

PRESIDENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The President will develop administrative procedures for handling nominations and to facilitate the Board's decisions.

Based on Board-approved criteria, the President, working with a Board committee, will bring forward recommended candidates for Board review and approval. There should be evidence of broad support for nominations.

INFORMATION, ACTION AND MONITORING REQUIREMENTS FOR THE BOARD

The Board may approve honorary degree recipients, whose names shall be added to a pool from which the President may select for convocation ceremonies.

HONORARY DEGREES

The Doctor of Laws, honoris causa, is the university's highest honour and is awarded to individuals of significant merit who reflect the university's vision and values who have achieved a significant record of success and community service. The Board of Governors considers candidates with achievements in a broad range of categories, including business, public service, the professions, leisure and the arts, the sciences, voluntary service in the community, or service to the University of long-standing or exceptional merit.

Nominators must keep the nomination confidential including with the potential nominee, members of the RRU community, and the public. Board Secretariat will undertake due diligence by thoroughly screening nominations. Nominations may be put forward by present and past members of the Royal Roads University, such as: staff; students; faculty; associate faculty; board of governors; and alumni. Once approved by the Board of Governors, nominations will be held active for a period of three years, however, a candidate may be re-nominated or resubmitted for approval. Normally, there should be only one

honorary degree awarded at each convocation, with the potential of there being one awarded for each of the morning and afternoon ceremonies. Honorary degrees will be conferred at every convocation but not necessarily every ceremony. A balance should be considered between outstanding Canadians and international nominees.

CRITERIA

1. Nominees should be of exceptional merit who have made substantial contributions to society, nationally and/or internationally, including: visionary leaders and exemplary public figures; leading academics in all disciplines and interdisciplinary areas; community builders and philanthropists; public intellectuals and opinion makers.
2. Nominees' achievements should celebrate the university values (CARING, CREATIVE and COURAGEOUS) and serve as an inspiration and role model to our students, graduates, and our community.
3. Individuals nominated should reflect the diversity of society, including women, Indigenous persons, racialized group members and visible minorities, persons with disabilities, persons identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and/or queer (LGBTQ), and others reflecting diversity.

ELIGIBILITY

1. Active members of faculty and staff at RRU are not eligible for honorary degrees. Retired members may, however, be nominated if no longer active.
2. Normally, an active politician should not be nominated for an honorary degree.
3. Current members of the Board of Governors or their family members are not eligible.
4. Only in exceptional circumstances will a degree be awarded in *absentia*.
5. Posthumous honorary degrees will not be awarded.
6. People who have already received honorary degrees from other institutions will still be considered.

NOMINATIONS

Nominations may be put forward by present and past members of the Royal Roads University community, such as staff, students, faculty, associate faculty, Board of Governors and alumni.

The Board of Governors considers candidates with achievements in a broad range of categories: business; public service; the professions; leisure and the arts; the sciences; voluntary service in the community; and service to the university of long-standing or exceptional merit.

The nomination deadlines are:

- May 1
- December 1

To submit a nomination, fill out the Honorary Degree nomination form and follow the submission instructions.

Nominators must keep the nomination confidential, including with the potential nominee, members of the Royal Roads community and the public. Once approved by the Board of Governors, nominations will be held active for a period of three years. Successful candidates will be informed in writing by the President of the decision to schedule the award, and nominators will only receive an update on the status of their nomination at this time. A candidate may be re-nominated or resubmitted for approval.

Documentation:

Nominations, with required documentation, may be submitted in confidence to the Board of Governors' Secretary (BoardofGovernors@RoyalRoads.ca). Items may be in a singular PDF package or sent as individual documents.

1. Completed nomination form
2. Resume or curriculum vitae of the nominee
3. Reasons for recommending the honorary award, consistent with the profile of individuals as outlined in the selection criteria: (approximately 2 pages)
4. Letters of support: minimum of two, but no more than four

REVOCATION OF HONORARY DEGREES

In situations where maintaining the honorary degree would be harmful to the University's reputation and/or is found to be in conflict with the University's values, the Governance and Nominating Committee may recommend to the Board the revocation of an honorary degree.

In such situations, the Advisory Committee on Honours and Awards, in its advisory capacity, will review and provide factual information to the Governance and Nominating Committee. The President and the Governance and Nominating Committee will review the information provided. If the committee decides in favour of revoking the honorary degree, that recommendation will be brought to the Board of Governors for discussion and final approval.

CONTACT

To submit a nomination or to ask questions, contact the [secretary](#) to the Board of Governors.

The Board secretary will communicate with the nominators. Staff will undertake due diligence by thoroughly screening nominations.

While not every nominee will be awarded an honorary degree, all submitted applications will also be considered for other RRU awards.

INTERPRETATION

Questions of interpretation or application of this policy or its procedures will be referred to the President whose decision is final.

REVIEW AND REVISION HISTORY

Date	Action
2006-Sep-08	Approved by the Board
2017-Mar-31	Revised – current published version
2021-Oct-12	Transfer to new template – no content change
2022-Oct-06	Revised
2024-Feb-15	Revised – minor editorial change
2024-Sep-17	Revised – minor editorial change
2026-Mar-26	Reviewed – no content change
Next Review	
2029-Mar-26	For review