



**Saint Mary's University Board of Governors**  
**JOINT COMMITTEE FOR HONORARY DEGREES**  
**Terms of Reference**

**1. Purpose**

The Honorary Degrees Committee ("Committee") is a Joint Committee of the Board of Governors pursuant to Section 3, Article 4 of the University's By-laws. The Committee is appointed by and has responsibility to the Board of Governors ("Board") to recommend suitable persons for the award of honorary degrees from the University.

**2. Accountability**

The Committee is established by the Board and is accountable to the Board through the Chair of the Committee. The Board may, from time to time, delegate any of its powers under section 8(1) of the Act to the Committee.

**3. Membership**

The Committee shall consist of five members, as follows:

- Two members of the Board appointed by the Board, one of whom shall be the President and Vice Chancellor
- Two members of faculty appointed by the Senate in accordance with Senate's policies and procedures
- One member appointed by the Saint Mary's University Students Association

Committee members are appointed by the Board for a term of one year and may be reappointed for further terms at the discretion of the Board.

The President shall chair the Committee.

**4. Meetings**

The Committee will meet at least twice per academic year. Meetings of the Committee are closed to the public.

All meetings of the Committee are called by the Committee Chair at their discretion. The preference is for meetings to be held in person; however, business of the Committee may be conducted electronically as needed. Members are encouraged to attend meetings in person. A member of the Committee may participate in a meeting by means of telephone or other communication facility. A member participating in a meeting by such means is deemed for all purposes to be present at that meeting. If a Committee member is not able to participate in a

meeting, that member can speak to the Committee Chair in advance of the meeting so that the Committee Chair can share the member's perspective at the meeting. That member may also submit written comments or documentation to the Committee Chair and University Secretary in advance of the meeting.

A majority of the members of the Committee shall form a quorum. The Chair is included in the count. The Committee may meet in joint session with one or more other Board committees.

Every Committee meeting agenda will include an opportunity for members to declare any conflict of interest in accordance with the Board of Governors Code of Conduct policy.

All Committee meetings will allow for an in-camera session to be conducted in accordance the Board's Guidelines for In-Camera Sessions.

The Office of the University Secretary will be responsible for providing governance and administrative support to the Committee, including taking minutes at Committee meetings. Minutes of a Committee meeting will be provided to the Committee at least seven days in advance of the next regularly scheduled Committee meeting. Once approved, the minutes will be included in the consent agenda of the next Board meeting for information.

## **5. Responsibilities**

The specific responsibilities of the Committee include the following:

- *Adopting guidelines for the awarding of honorary degrees so as to ensure that recommendations of suitable persons:*
  - *Reflect the intellectual, cultural and gender diversity of the University as well as Canadian society as a whole*
  - *Provide a balanced representation among scholarly disciplines, service and other fields of accomplishment*
  - *Enhance the reputation of the University*
- *Recommending to Senate, and if approved by Senate, recommending to the Board, suitable persons for the award of honorary degrees from the University*

## **6. Reporting**

The Chair of the Committee will provide oral or written reports of its proceedings at the Board meeting following each meeting of Committee. If there is no action item or crucial information, written reports from the Committee can be included in the consent agenda without an oral report.

The Committee will provide an annual written report of its work to the Annual General Meeting of the Board and to the Senate.

## **7. Resources**

The President will appoint an Executive Advisor (usually a member of the University's Executive Management Team or Senior Management Team) to the Committee. The Executive Advisor will

attend all meetings of the Committee but will not be a voting member of the Committee. The Chair may, at their discretion, also invite guests to attend meetings as resources, as required. For greater certainty, such resources are not members of the Committee.

#### **8. Terms of Reference Review**

The Committee will review its Terms of Reference annually at the first meeting of the Committee in the respective Board year and report their findings to the Governance Committee. The Governance Committee will review the Committee's findings and recommend any proposed changes to the Board for approval.

#### **9. Evaluation**

At the discretion of the Committee Chair, the Committee may assess its own performance at any time. Notwithstanding any Committee self-evaluation, the annual Board self-evaluation will include an assessment by Committee members of the Committee's performance.