



Operating Policy – Valedictorian Selection

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To coordinate the nomination process for Valedictorian with the following Offices: Arts & Science Program, Faculty of Business, Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Health Sciences, Faculty of Humanities, School of Nursing, Michael G. DeGroote School of Medicine, Faculty of Science, and Faculty of Social Sciences.

2. Valedictorian Process Coordination

- 2.1 The Valedictorian process coordination shall be through the Vice-President (Education) or a designate from the Board of Directors;
- 2.2 The Vice-President (Education) or designate shall:
 - 2.2.1 Advertise the nomination period;
 - 2.2.2 Ensure that the nomination package is refreshed and completed prior to the opening of nominations;
 - 2.2.3 Open and close nominations;
 - 2.2.4 Ensure that each academic division's Selection committee members' names and contact information are recorded and filed for reference purposes;
 - 2.2.5 Maintain open dialogue with associate deans and faculty liaisons to ensure that necessary guidelines and procedures are being met;
 - 2.2.6 Ensure that the names of the successful nominees are received by the Office of the Registrar no later than August 31 for Fall Convocation and no later than April 15 for Spring Convocation.

3. Advertising

- 3.1 The methods of advertising the nomination period shall include:
 - 3.1.1 Published advertisements in the Silhouette and on the Silhouette website, as available;
 - 3.1.2 Posters around campus;
 - 3.1.3 E-mail distribution from Faculty/Program offices to forward to departments, Faculty members (to allow professors to make overheads), and graduating students;

Approved 02Q
Revised 05O, 08R, 15L, 18M, 22Q

- 3.1.4 E-mail notification to Faculty Societies to distribute to graduating students;
- 3.1.5 Posts on relevant MSU social media accounts.

4. Valedictorians

- 4.1 One Valedictorian will be selected from each of the following academic divisions to represent students during Spring Convocation: Arts & Science/Humanities, Business, Health Sciences, Humanities, and Nursing;
- 4.2 Two Valedictorians, (one morning and one afternoon), will be selected from each Social Sciences, Engineering, and Sciences to represent students during Spring Convocation.

5. Nomination Period

- 5.1 The nomination period and all related dates for Spring Valedictorian shall be determined by the Vice President (Education) or designate;
- 5.2 The Selection committee for Spring Valedictorian shall:
 - 5.2.1 Hold nomination reviews and interviews by the date determined by the Vice President (Education) or designate;
 - 5.2.2 Determine who the Valedictorians will be by the date determined by the Vice President (Education) or designate.
- 5.3 Please refer to Section 7 for information on the extension of deadlines.

6. Valedictorian Information & Nomination Packages

- 6.1 The Valedictorian Information & Nomination package shall include:
 - 6.1.1 General guidelines;
 - 6.1.2 Timeline;
 - 6.1.3 Definitions of eligible nominators and secondary nominators;
 - 6.1.4 Nomination package requirements;
 - 6.1.5 Structure of selection committees;
 - 6.1.6 Selection process;
 - 6.1.7 Nomination form;
 - 6.1.8 The location to submit completed nomination packages.

7. Nomination Applications

- 7.1 Nomination forms shall be available online at www.msumcmaster.ca. A paper copy can be provided by the front desk of the MSU office upon request;
- 7.2 Students being nominated for Valedictorian will be required to submit the following, which will be granted the status of complete nomination:

- 7.2.1 Nomination form;
 - 7.2.2 Two-page letter (maximum) from the nominee explaining why he/she wants to be valedictorian;
 - 7.2.3 Curriculum vitae or resume;
 - 7.2.4 Two letters of reference: one must be from an academic source, and one must be from a work or volunteer-based source;
 - 7.2.5 Should any of the above requirements not be met, the nomination for Valedictorian will be deemed invalid and will not be forwarded to the respective Selection committee for consideration. Nominees should be advised that they are not to include any other materials, as their nomination will be considered invalid for not complying with the guidelines of the process.
- 7.3 Selection committee members are unable to nominate students for Valedictorian;
 - 7.4 Should only one nomination be received for an academic division, that nominee must be invited to an interview and should the Selection committee be unsatisfied with the nominee, nominations will be re-opened for an additional two weeks, allowing deadlines to be extended;
 - 7.5 Should no nominations for an academic division be received, the nomination period will re-open for an additional ten (10) business days;
 - 7.6 Nominations will be accepted via email to the nominee's respective faculty/program, as listed in the information and nomination package.

8. Selection Committee Structure

- 8.1 The Vice-President (Education), their designate, and all nominees are unable to be members of any Selection committee;
- 8.2 The Selection committees shall be composed as follows for the Spring Convocation:
 - 8.2.1 Associate Dean, Director, or designate;
 - 8.2.2 Faculty member appointed by the Associate Dean or designate;
 - 8.2.3 Graduate student appointed by the Graduate Students Association;
 - 8.2.4 MAPS student where possible;
 - 8.2.5 Student from the MSU Student Representative Assembly (of that faculty) or MSU member appointed by the MSU Vice President (Education) or designate;
 - 8.2.6 In cases where two academic divisions are being represented at one Convocation, the representatives on the Selection committee can be from either academic division. There must be at least one representative from each academic division on the committee. The committee will be sent a letter reminding that an unbiased decision must be made.

9. Selection Process

- 9.1 Nominees are required to have either an average of at least 7.0 in their last academic year OR a cumulative average of at least a 7.0 in order to be considered eligible for Valedictorian. The grades of the nominee will only be considered in the result of a tie between candidates. In this case, the nominee with the highest average will be named Valedictorian. The Associate Dean, Director, or designate is required to verify that all nominees meet this requirement;
- 9.2 Selection committee members will be guided to focus on the areas of McMaster and/or community involvement and the Interview/Presentation. Selection committee members will also be instructed to weigh these two areas equally and consider the template below for assessing these areas;
- 9.3 McMaster and/or Community involvement: This focus area can be broken into four (4) sections. Selection committee members are asked to consider all of them and the contributions that nominee has made to one or more of these sections:
 - 9.3.1 Student Groups (Faculty Societies, Clubs, etc);
 - 9.3.2 Student Support (Maccess, WGEN, SHEC, Pride, etc);
 - 9.3.3 Student Government (MSU, GSA, Senate, etc);
 - 9.3.4 Community Involvement (Schools, Hospitals, etc).
- 9.4 Interview/Presentation: Nominees that are selected from nomination packages will be invited to an interview with their Selection committee. Please refer to Section 7 for no one or only one nomination in an academic division. The Selection committee sets questions for the interview in collaboration with the Vice-President (Education) or designate and each nominee will be asked the same questions. Committees will be advised to ask questions that will focus on the nominees' experiences at McMaster and their contribution to the University. During this interview, candidates will be required to present a rough outline of the topics they will speak about in their address at Convocation. Nominees will be assessed on their tone and their ability to answer the questions of the committee in a clear and concise manner;
- 9.5 Selection committees will then discuss the nominees and make their decision for Valedictorian. These names will be forwarded to the Vice-President (Education) or designate, who will forward names to the Office of the Registrar, the Office of the President, Public Relations, and other appropriate campus offices. Selection committee members will not notify the successful nominees on their selection; this will be done by the Vice-President (Education) or designate;
- 9.6 The decision of the committee will be communicated by the Vice-President (Education) or designate through email to both the successful and unsuccessful candidates.
 - 9.6.1 The decision should be communicated to candidates within ten (10) business days of the decision of the committee being submitted to the MSU.