

Student Graduate Honorary Speaker: Nomination Guidelines

The Student Graduate Honorary Speaker provides a formal address to all fellow graduating students and to faculty and guests at Convocation. The speaker offers an address that celebrates the accomplishments of the graduating class, reflects on the experiences of the year, and provides a message for the future. To address one's peers and College faculty and guests is among the highest distinction a student can receive. Any Columbia College student, staff, or faculty member can nominate a graduating student to be a Student Graduate Honorary Speaker. Potential candidates should be graduating and attending the convocation in the year that they are speaking, be a strong public speaker, and have a history of positive and engaged activity in their program.

The Award

Columbia College will usually select one or two Student Graduate Honorary Speakers for Convocation.

Eligibility and Criteria

Nominees will be considered by the Selection Committee in terms of the criteria listed below:

- Open to all students graduating from a program at Columbia College
- Student must be graduating at the upcoming Convocation for the year they are nominated
- The student's positive and engaged activity in their academic program will be considered
- Candidates should have strong public speaking skills and be able to provide a strong message within the time allowed (4-6 minutes)
- Demonstrate academic success
- Currently in good disciplinary standing (in all areas including attendance)

*Please be advised that if your nominee is not registered for convocation, **they will not** be eligible to be a speaker at the event.*

Nominations

Nominations are to be made on the form available from the Student Services office, or online at columbia.ca/convocation:

- Nominators must be faculty, staff, or a student at Columbia College
- To nominate a student for the Student Graduate Honorary Speaker, the nominator must complete the nomination form and have the candidate sign the form and confirm all contact information is correct. Attached to the nomination form must be a letter or paragraph outlining the rationale for nomination.
- Nominations are to be received by the Manager of Student Services no later than **February 27, 2026**.

Selection Process

- Nominated students will then be sent a letter asking them to submit a short essay (approximately 250 words) explaining why they would like to be one of the Student Graduate Honorary Speaker.
- After reviewing the information provided by the nominees, the selection committee will contact finalists for a personal interview and an outline of their speech. Interviews normally take place no earlier than two months prior to the convocation event. The candidate must provide a written proposed speech to be reviewed by the committee prior to the interview.

Notification Process

- After the interview process, the successful candidate will be contacted by phone.
- Those who were selected for an interview but were not selected as a Student Graduate Honorary Speaker will receive a letter informing them of the committee's decision
- An e-mail will be sent to the individual who nominated the Student Graduate Honorary Speaker, as well as the Program Chair of the program/department from which the Student Graduate Honorary Speaker is graduating.
- Once chosen, the student speaker will work with the Office of the Registrar and Student Services to rehearse the speech in preparation for the convocation.