



Press Release

Albertans' Views About the University of Alberta's awarding of an Honorary Degree to David Suzuki

Calgary, AB, June 4, 2018 - — A majority (62%) of Albertans have heard that the University of Alberta is planning to award David Suzuki with an honorary doctorate degree (PhD) in Science this spring, with awareness highest in Edmonton (70%) compared to Calgary (62%) and the rest of Alberta (55%).

As the award ceremony for David Suzuki's honorary degree approaches, the poll reveals that Albertans' views about the topic are diverse and often divided.

- Two thirds (65%) of Albertans agree (31% strongly/ 34% somewhat) that **“University honorary degrees should only be given to Canadians who embody the best interests of the country,”** while 27% disagree and 8% don't know.
- Two thirds (65%) of Albertans agree (31% strongly/ 34% somewhat) that **“Federal and Provincial Governments should not bail out public institutions who lose private donors due to their decisions to grant honorary degrees to controversial figures,”** while 24% disagree and 11% don't know.
- Half (48%) of Albertans agree (17% strongly/ 30% somewhat) that **“Governments should review the funding of Canadian public institutions who offer honorary degrees to controversial figures who do not align with the public mission and principles of the institution,”** while 40% disagree and 13% don't know.
- Four in ten (41%) Albertans agree (18% strongly/ 23% somewhat) that **“The University of Alberta has lost touch with its mission and who it serves,”** while 39% disagree and 20% don't know.
- Four in ten (41%) Albertans agree (20% strongly/ 21% somewhat) that **“I will have a worsened impression of the University of Alberta if they follow through and award an honorary degree to David Suzuki,”** while 50% disagree and 9% don't know.
- Four in ten (40%) Albertans agree (12% strongly/ 29% somewhat) that **“Critics of the University of Alberta's decision are just too thin skinned,”** while 43% disagree and 17% don't know.

About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between May 22 and 28, on behalf of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation. For this survey, a sample of 801 Albertans was interviewed. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within ± 4.0 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Albertans been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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