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Prominent philosopher and Rhodes Scholar, Dr. Cheryl Misak, to be granted University of Lethbridge honorary degree

The University of Lethbridge's first Rhodes Scholar, Dr. Cheryl Misak (BA '83), has achieved global recognition for her contributions to the world of philosophy through the highest standards of scholarship and numerous publications, and as an academic who has served as vice-president and provost at the University of Toronto.

Misak will be recognized with a ULethbridge honorary degree at [Fall 2026 Convocation](#) on Saturday, Oct. 17, 2026, at 10 a.m. in the Co-op Centre for Sport & Wellness gymnasium.

"It's fitting to be granting an honorary degree to one of our most distinguished alumna who embraced liberal education during her time as a ULethbridge student and has embodied those ideals throughout her professional career," says ULethbridge Chancellor Terry Whitehead (BA '94), who will be presiding over the final convocation ceremony of his four-year term.



Dr. Cheryl Misak

Dr. Cheryl Misak (BA '83) entered the University of Lethbridge with her sights set on becoming a lawyer. She had a gap in her timetable during her first semester, and an introductory course in philosophy was the only class that fit her schedule. She was taken with the subject from the beginning. Even though she debated the merits of pursuing a career in philosophy, eventually she followed her passion for the subject.

Misak earned a reputation for academic excellence from her earliest days as a university student. Upon graduating with great distinction, she was awarded the Faculty of Arts & Science Gold Medal. She was eyeing a Rhodes Scholarship that year but ultimately attended Columbia University, completing her master's in 1984. She reapplied for the Rhodes Scholarship and was accepted. She completed a Doctor of Philosophy at Oxford in 1988.

She held teaching positions at Oxford and Queen's University before joining the University of Toronto. Quickly moving up the ranks to the University of Toronto's highest designation, University Professor, she also became chair of the Philosophy Department, dean of the Mississauga Campus of the University of Toronto, acting head of the Mississauga Campus, deputy provost, and vice-president and provost at the University of Toronto. Her extensive administrative experience and collaborative style of leadership benefit her colleagues and the entire university.

As a philosopher, Misak is renowned for her thought-provoking, clear and challenging philosophical arguments. With numerous publications and eight books on her resumé, she is considered an expert on pragmatism, which holds that the meaning and truth of an idea depend on its practical consequences. Her research interests also include the history of analytic philosophy, the philosophy of medicine, legal philosophy, political philosophy and ethics.

Over the course of her career, Misak has earned many honours, including being named the University of Lethbridge Alumni Association Distinguished Alumnus of the Year in 2009. She is also a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada and was awarded the Alberta Centennial Medal in 2005. The international list of honours is long and illustrious, including an honorary fellowship at Balliol College Oxford and research fellowships in Cambridge and Berlin, a testament to her commitments to philosophy, the students she teaches and effective university administration.

To view online: <https://www.ulethbridge.ca/unews/article/prominent-philosopher-and-rhodes-scholar-dr-cheryl-misak-be-granted-honorary-degree>

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Our University's Blackfoot name is Iniskim, meaning Sacred Buffalo Stone. The University is located in traditional Blackfoot Confederacy territory. We honour the Blackfoot people and their traditional ways of knowing in caring for this land, as well as all Indigenous Peoples who have helped shape and continue to strengthen our University community.