



Fact Sheet

Special General Meeting

- June 10, 2014 – The members of the Law Society attend a special general meeting in 16 locations throughout the province.
- The members vote to pass a resolution directing the Benchers to declare that Trinity Western University is not an approved faculty of law for the purposes of the Law Society's admissions program.
- The resolution, if adopted, is only an expression of the members of the Law Society, and is not binding on the Benchers. The resolution does not reverse the Benchers' decision made on April 11, which permitted TWU's law school graduates to enter the Law Society's admissions program.

Background

- December 16, 2013 - The Common Law Program Approval Committee of the Federation of Law Societies of Canada grants Trinity Western University preliminary approval of its proposed law school program.
- December 18, 2013- The BC Ministry of Advanced Education determines Trinity Western University is entitled or authorized to issue law degrees.
- January 27, 2014 - In the interest of openness and transparency, the Law Society's Benchers invite the public and lawyers to make written submissions regarding Trinity Western University's law school for them to consider.
- February 28, 2014 - The Benchers receive a notice of motion involving Trinity Western University's law program to be brought forward at the next Bencher meeting on April 11.

The motion proposes that a TWU law school is not an approved faculty of law for the purposes of the Law Society's admissions program. The notice of the motion is provided without any intention to indicate support for the motion but solely to permit the issue to come before the Benchers for consideration.

The motion reads: *Pursuant to Law Society Rule 2-27(4.1), the Benchers declare that, notwithstanding the preliminary approval granted to Trinity Western University on December 16, 2013 by the Federation of Law Societies' Canadian Common Law Program Approval Committee, the proposed Faculty of Law of Trinity Western University is not an approved faculty of law.*



- March 3, 2014 - The Law Society receives nearly 300 written submissions before the deadline. The submissions are carefully considered by the Benchers, along with legal opinions, relevant case law and a submission from TWU.
- April 11, 2014 – After thoughtful discussion, the Benchers determine that Trinity Western University’s law school is an approved faculty of law for the purposes of the Law Society’s admissions program. The prevailing theme of the meeting is the necessity of balancing two Charter Rights – the right to equality and the right to freedom of religion. Most of the Benchers say they made their decision to respect the Rule of Law and the 2001 Supreme Court of Canada decision in *Trinity Western University v. British Columbia College of Teachers*.
 - The April 11 Bencher meeting was made available to the public via webcast so that more people may monitor the proceedings than can be reasonably accommodated in the Bencher room. The webcast is available at <http://new.livestream.com/mediaco/lcbc041114> and is archived on the Law Society website.
- April 14, 2014 – A petition is filed with the BC Supreme Court challenging the BC Ministry of Advanced Education’s decision, which determined that Trinity Western University is entitled or authorized to issue law degrees.
- April 23, 2014 – A written request to convene the special general meeting, signed by at least five per cent of the members, is received by the Law Society
- In late May, TWU files requests for judicial reviews in Nova Scotia and Ontario to challenge the decisions made by the Nova Scotia Barristers’ Society and the Law Society of Upper Canada not to accredit graduates from TWU’s Law School.

General information

- The Law Society of British Columbia regulates the more than 11,000 *practising* lawyers in the province, setting and enforcing standards of professional conduct that ensure the public is well-served by a competent, honourable legal profession.
- As of April 23, 2014 there are 13,114 members of the Law Society in good standing.
- The Law Society is a regulator of lawyers independent of government, and is overseen by a volunteer Board of Governors called Benchers.