

Internal Governing Policies

#52 - Honorary Degree Awards

Approved: December 1, 2009

Monitor: President

The University's program of awarding honorary degrees is outlined below:

Presidential Charge

The President will issue a charge to the Honorary Degree Committee outlining the underlying philosophy to be considered in awarding Honorary Degrees.

Criteria

Honorary degrees may be awarded by the Board to persons who have achieved a record of major distinction at the state or national level in such areas as education, public service, research, humanities, business, or the professions. In exceptional circumstances, honorary degrees may be awarded to persons who, though they have not achieved national or statewide recognition, have made an especially outstanding and significant contribution to the University or higher education.

Elected or appointed public officials in state or local government, members and employees of the Board, and members and employees of the Board of Higher Education are ineligible for award of an honorary degree during their term of office or employment.

Honorary Degree Committee

The evaluation of candidates and recommendations to the President shall be made by an Honorary Degree Committee composed of eight members from the faculty and academic staff, each representing a separate college, school, or unit.

Members shall be appointed by the President to serve two-year terms. The members shall elect the Chair of the Committee.

Nominations

The Committee shall seek nominations from faculty, students, staff and alumni. To augment the nomination process, the President may request individuals or groups of individuals among the various constituencies to make nominations to the Committee.

In considering the nominations, the Committee shall make its recommendations using the Board criteria listed above. The Committee shall interpret that criteria as it applies to each nominee in terms of the supporting data supplied. Those making nominations shall be responsible for providing supporting data.

Awards

The honorary degree awarded shall be based upon the background of the nominee and the nature of the nomination.

No public announcement concerning persons nominated or recommended for honorary degrees shall be made until after final approval by the Board.

Up to four honorary degrees may be awarded each year.

Timeline

The Honorary Degree Committee shall meet in the Fall Semester to initiate the process.

The program shall be actively publicized and nominations shall be sought.

The committee meets at least twice to review nominations and make recommendations to the President. The chair of the committee forwards recommendations to the President by the beginning of the Spring Semester.

The President's recommendations are submitted to the Board for approval. Board approval must be received at least two months prior to the awarding of the degree(s).

After Board approval, recipients are notified.

Degrees are awarded at the selected commencement.