

NUMBER: 1233

TITLE: Honorary Degrees: Criteria and Procedures

APPROVED: August 9, 1979; Revised February 14, 1985; Revised February 13, 1986; Revised September 13, 2012

A. Purpose

Honorary degrees are awarded to bring national recognition to the University; recognize outstanding contributions to society through scholarship, artistic production, or humanitarianism; and recognize major contributions in areas relevant to the mission of the University through significant research or a career of dedicated service. Honorary degrees may be awarded at the University's commencements.

B. Eligibility for Consideration

Since the recipients of honorary degrees will be forever associated with the University, they must therefore be of sufficient stature and character so as to honor the University by receiving an honorary degree from it. Examples of such persons might be: prominent graduates, important business leaders, outstanding professional persons, leaders in public affairs, statesmen, prominent educators, outstanding humanitarians, and persons distinguished in the arts, sciences, and the humanities.

1. There should be clear demonstration why these individuals should be recognized Old Dominion University. In addition, the individuals considered should be recognized for their contributions to society.
2. People who are not eligible for honorary degrees include members of the Board of Visitors and present employees of the University; emeriti faculty and former members of the board should only be considered for honorary degrees on an exceptional basis. Current and former benefactors of the University should be excluded unless they clearly meet the other criteria for being included for degree consideration. There should be no suggestion that an individual is being awarded an honorary degree because of his or her past or possible future financial contributions to the University.

C. Selection Process

1. The Honorary Degree Committee will be comprised of: four faculty members selected by the Faculty Senate, two students selected by the Student Senate, one member of the Alumni Association selected by the Alumni Association, one member of the Board of Visitors appointed by the Rector, and one administrator appointed by the President.

- a. The President will designate the coordinator of the committee.
 - b. The names of committee members will be submitted to the President by the selection body by June 1.
2. The committee will publicize the criteria and guidelines for making nominations. Nominations will be invited from all constituencies of the University, including the Board of Visitors.
 3. The committee will submit a list of nominations recommended for honorary degrees to the President. The President will submit to the Board of Visitors for approval the names of the President's nominee(s), if any, from the list and recommend the appropriate degree(s) to be awarded.

D. Schedule and Procedure

1. The committee members are appointed and notified of the appointment by the President.
2. The honorary degree committee will be appointed and prepared to begin work by September 1.
3. The President will submit the names of the nominees to the Board of Visitors for approval. The recipients approved by the Board of Visitors may be awarded their honorary degrees at one of the university's commencements. After approval by the Board of Visitors, the President shall contact the approved recipients concerning acceptance and conferral of the honorary degrees.

E. Honorary Degree Types

Among the appropriate honorary degrees to be awarded are:

Doctor of Fine Arts (D.F.A.)
Doctor of Humane Letters (L.H.D.)
Doctor of Letters (Litt.D.)
Doctor of Music (Mus.D.)
Doctor of Science (Sc.D.)