



College of Medicine and Life Sciences

Principles for Awarding of Honorary Degrees

Honorary degrees are awarded to recognize individuals for extraordinary accomplishments and contributions that are aligned with the mission of the institution. The awarding of an honorary degree is among the highest honors the University confers, and brings distinction to both the recipient and the University. Honorary degrees have been conferred at each of the 35 Commencement Exercises of the former Medical College of Ohio/Medical University of Ohio, as well as at the Dedication of the first three buildings erected on the Health Science Campus, namely, the Paul Block, Jr. Health Science Building, the Health Education Building, and the Raymon H. Mulford Library Building, as detailed in the attached list.

The two types of honorary doctorate degrees that were granted by the University of Toledo Health Science Campus (formerly the Medical University of Ohio) are the Honorary Doctor of Science degree and the Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree. The Honorary Doctor of Science degree is awarded to physicians, scientists, and health care providers and educators, who have made substantial contributions to the advancement of medicine, science, health care, and medical/health education. The Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree has been granted to individuals who have made substantial contributions to improving the human condition through their community service, advocacy, and philanthropic efforts. Fame in the absence of a significant contribution to society is not considered a sufficient criterion for the distinction of an honorary degree.

Following the merger of the Medical University of Ohio with the University of Toledo, the recommendation was made that a separate commencement ceremony for graduates of the College of Medicine continue to be held on the first Friday of June each year due to the fact that the medical students do not complete their requirements until the end of May. Nominations of candidates for honorary degrees to be awarded at the annual College of Medicine Commencement are solicited from the faculty and from the candidates for graduation. Nominations are submitted to the Dean of the College of Medicine for consideration by the College of Medicine Senior Leadership Team and honorary degree committee. Nominations should include a statement addressing the qualifications of the nominee for this high distinction, as well as a biographical sketch or curriculum vitae that details the nominee's academic background, professional experience, and accomplishments throughout their career. The committee may also consider original publications of the nominee, documents in the media, and any information available in databases or via the Intranet. Current faculty members are not considered eligible for receipt of honorary degrees, but emeritus faculty members and alumni who have made outstanding contributions to the profession, the University, and their communities are eligible for recognition with an honorary degree.

Nominees should not be told that they are being considered for the honor and members of the College of Medicine committee will maintain the confidentiality of the nominations and discussions. The committee makes recommendations about 1) the number of honorary degrees to award at any given ceremony, 2) the rank order of the nominees, and 3) the rank order of who should be granted the additional honor of giving the Commencement Address. At the former Medical University of Ohio, three to five honorary degrees were awarded at any given ceremony. It is anticipated that only one or two honorary degrees will be awarded at the College of Medicine commencements going forth. The Dean of the College of Medicine sends the nomination to the University's Academic Honors Committee and the Provost. The Academic Honors Committee sends its recommendation to the Provost, who informs the President. A nominee must agree to attend the Commencement, and the honorary degree will be conferred in person by the President or his/her designee. The Board of Trustees gives final approval for all honorary degree candidates.

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