



Principles for Awarding Honorary Doctoral Degrees

- The awarding of an honorary doctoral degree is a highly public action that brings visibility and distinction to both the recipient and to the University as grantor. It is also among the highest honors the University can confer. This distinction should, therefore, be given only for extraordinary accomplishments and in strict conformity with criteria approved by the Board of Trustees.
- Honorary degree recipients share one commonality: Extraordinary distinction. However, the ways in which they demonstrate this distinction, the areas in which they have achieved it, and their geographic locations are likely to be diverse.
- That a nominee may be controversial is not, in itself, reason to deny a degree *honoris causa* to an otherwise worthy recipient; however, no degree should be awarded to any individual when doing so could be reasonably expected to bring dishonor or embarrassment to the University.
- Honorary degrees conferred by the University of Toledo do not give honorees who do not possess earned doctoral degrees the right to use the title of "Dr." All recipients of honorary degrees may, however, list their honorary degrees in their biographies, resumes, or curricula vitae.
- The University will award honorary doctorates only.
- The University confers honorary degrees at its main winter and spring Commencement exercises. The University also may confer honorary degrees at separate Commencement exercises of the College of Medicine & Life Sciences, College of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences and College of Law. Only the degrees of Honorary Doctor of Science and Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters are awarded to College of Medicine & Life Science and College of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Science honorees. The College of Law awards the degree of Honorary Doctor of Laws.

Eligibility for Honorary Degrees

- Persons who have achieved high distinction in any field are eligible.
- Members of the academy (e.g., professors or administrators) must have made contributions far beyond the expected high standards of their field and profession.
- Alumni must have made a contribution that adds a significant new dimension to society's wellbeing, or have made an outstanding contribution to the wellbeing of the University, northwest Ohio area, or beyond.

- Degrees *honoris causa* may be awarded for acts of philanthropy only when those acts are accompanied by a vision that has transformed, or has the potential to transform, the University or the area to which the philanthropy is devoted. Most importantly, honorary degrees shall not be awarded to those whose only distinction is monetary generosity towards the University.
- Achievement of position alone (such as holding the position of chief executive officer of a private-sector firm) is not sufficient; such persons must have displayed a vision or undertaken efforts that have improved or transformed the human condition. Fame in the absence of a significant contribution to society is not considered a sufficient criterion.
- Individuals working full-time at the University of Toledo or who are current members of its Board of Trustees are not eligible for honorary degrees.
- The University's conferral of an honorary degree on an elected or appointed officeholder does not signify the University's political endorsement.
- Honorees need not possess other academic degrees in order to receive an honorary doctoral degree, though the great majority of honorees are likely to hold at least a bachelor's degree.
- A connection with the University or the region is not in itself justification for awarding an honorary degree.

Procedures for Recommending and Awarding Honorary Degrees

- Nominations of candidates for honorary degrees must be submitted in writing, and can be from members of the campus or non-campus communities, to the University's Academic Honors Committee or where appropriate, to the Deans of the Colleges of Medicine & Life Sciences (see [COMLS Principles document](#)), Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences or Law for their college's consideration. The Deans forward their chosen nominee to the University's Academic Honors Committee.

A nomination includes the following:

- A biographical sketch or curriculum vitae that includes academic background and professional training, noteworthy activities, appointments, service, offices, awards and commendations throughout the candidate's career.
- Letters from persons who are competent to evaluate the candidate's achievements. Although the letters should be written in non-technical language, they should be analytical and evaluative, indicating the quality, originality, scope and level of attainment of the candidate. In the case of nationally or internationally known nominees, news releases or publications about the individual may substitute for letters.
- Other documents such as publications by the candidate or news stories about him or her.

- The Academic Honors Committee may develop other information about the nominee and consider such information in its deliberations; it may also undertake background checks through available databases when it considers it appropriate.
- The co-chairs of the Academic Honors Committee shall inform the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs of any nominations for honorary degrees prior to submission of the nominations to the Committee; the Provost, in turn, shall inform the President. In so doing, all parties shall, insofar as possible, respect the need for confidentiality.
- Nominations will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. All discussions of the committees considering nominations shall be strictly confidential. The Academic Honors Committee will review, in executive session if necessary, all proposals to confer honorary degrees. The Committee will then vote, with a simple majority necessary for approval. The Academic Honors Committee will recommend an appropriate doctoral degree for the proposed honoree.
- The Academic Honors Committee co-chairs will submit a letter for each nominee recommended for honorary degrees to the Provost, who will submit these to the President for approval by the Board of Trustees.
- The Board of Trustees or its designated committee shall discuss all nominations. The President or his/her designee is responsible for arranging the conferring of the degree, which shall be done only in person, at a Commencement or other suitable University-wide occasion.

Honorary Degrees

D.B.A. Doctor of Business Administration
 D.C.L. Doctor of Civil Law
 D.C.S. Doctor of Commercial Science
 D.D. Doctor of Divinity
 D.Ed. Doctor of Education
 D.Eng. Doctor of Engineering or Eng.D. Doctor of Engineering
 D.Eng.S. Doctor of Engineering Science
 D.F.A. Doctor of Fine Arts
 D.H. Doctor of Humanities or HH.D. Doctor of Humanities
 D.H.L. Doctor of Hebrew Literature
 D.J.T. Doctor of Jewish Theology
 D.Journ. Doctor of Journalism
 D.Mus. Doctor of Music or Mus.D. Doctor of Music
 D.P.A. Doctor of Public Administration
 D.P.S. Doctor of Public Service
 D.R.E. Doctor of Religious Education
 D.S. Doctor of Science or D.Sc. Doctor of Science or Sc.D. Doctor of Science
 J.C.D. Doctor of Canon Law
 J.D. Doctor of Jurisprudence
 L.H.D. Doctor of Humane Letters
 Litt.D. Doctor of Letters or Doctor of Literature
 LL.D. Doctor of Laws
 Ped.E. Doctor of Pedagogy

Pharm.D. Doctor of Pharmacy
S.M.D. Doctor of Sacred Music
S.T.D. Doctor of Sacred Theology

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