

NUMBER: 1233

TITLE: Honorary Degrees: Criteria and Procedures

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

Purpose:

Honorary degrees are awarded to:

1. Bring national recognition to the university;
2. Recognize outstanding contributions to society through scholarship, artistic production, or humanitarianism; and
3. Recognize major contributions in areas relevant to the mission of the university through significant research or a career of dedicated service.

Eligibility for Consideration:

The most important single guideline determining eligibility for consideration is implied in the fact that the recipients of honorary degrees will be forever associated with the university, and 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.

There should be clear demonstration why these individuals should be recognized by an institution of higher learning and more specifically Old Dominion University. Also, the individuals considered should be recognized for their contributions to society.

There are a number of people who should not be considered for honorary degrees. First among these are members of the Board of Visitors and present employees of the university. In addition, emeriti faculty and former members of the board should only be considered for honorary degrees on an exceptional basis. Finally, actual benefactors of the university, and especially prospective benefactors, 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.

Selection Process:

There will be an honorary degree committee comprised of:

- Four faculty members
- Two students
- One member of the Alumni Association
- One member of the Board of Visitors
- One administrator

The faculty members will be selected by the Faculty Senate and their names submitted to the president by June.

The student members will be selected by the Student Senate and their names submitted to the president by June.

The alumni member will be selected by the Alumni Association with the name to be submitted to the president by June.

The Board of Visitors member will be appointed by the rector.

The president will appoint the member of the administration and designate the chair.

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.

The committee will submit a list of no more than ten nominations 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. Those persons so recommended and approved shall be retained in the pool of awardees for one year.

Calendar:

Honorary degrees may be awarded at the university's commencements. The honorary degree committee will be appointed and prepared to begin work by September 1. It will submit its list of nominations to the president by November 15. The president will submit the names of the nominees to the Board of Visitors for their approval at their December meeting. The recipients approved by the Board of Visitors may be awarded their honorary degrees at one of the university's commencements during the following year. After approval by the Board of Visitors, the president shall contact the approved recipients concerning acceptance and conferral of the honorary degrees.

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.)