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Policy Information

Effective Date:

September 20, 2006

Last Revised Date:

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Policy Number:

Fac-100

Responsible Unit:

Office of the Provost

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(520) 621-1856

Purpose and Summary

The University of Arizona awards honorary degrees in order to recognize significant achievements within the academic environment and in the world at large. These degrees provide the University with an opportunity to honor individuals for their contribution to the University of Arizona, the state, the nation, or the world.

Policy

Approved honorary degrees for the University of Arizona are Doctor of Fine Arts, Doctor of Humane Letters, Doctor of Humanities, Doctor of Laws, Doctor of Letters, Doctor of Music, and Doctor of Science.

A candidate for an honorary degree may be suggested by anyone, but must be formally nominated by an organized faculty within the University, usually an academic department or faculty of a college. A faculty Advisory Committee on Honorary Degrees reviews all nominations and makes recommendations to the President and Provost. Approval by the Faculty Senate is required for honorary degrees.

Normally, no more than one nomination from a single college or faculty will be approved in any one

year. If exceptions are made, the candidates should represent different subject areas.

Normally, candidates for honorary degrees from the University of Arizona will have some connection to the University, the Tucson community, or the State of Arizona, but exceptions to this general rule may be made if the case is compelling.

Honorary degrees from the University of Arizona will not be awarded to current University of Arizona employees, but may, in exceptional cases, be awarded to former University of Arizona employees.

Only in exceptional cases will the University confer an honorary degree in absentia.

Procedures

1. When nominating a candidate, the originating faculty unit will provide its Dean with a curriculum vita and a brief biographical sketch (maximum 500 words) that clearly points out why the individual should be awarded an honorary degree. It is important that these statements emphasize the significance of a nominee's career rather than repeat, in text format, the details of the curriculum vita.
2. The Dean will call for a vote on the nominee by college faculty members and forward the nomination to the Provost or his/her designee, together with the recommended degree, the result of the college faculty vote and the dean's comments.
3. The Provost or his/her designee will forward all nominations to the Advisory Committee on Honorary Degrees. After receiving the advice of the Committee, the President and Provost will select those candidates whose nominations are to proceed.
4. For each approved nominee, a one-page biographical sketch will be prepared by the appropriate Dean and sent to the Provost. The biographical sketch will be made available to Faculty Senate members at the Faculty Senate meeting where the appropriate dean will present the nomination to the Senate for Executive Session action.
5. In notifying the Board of Regents and the ABOR President of intended recipients of honorary degrees, the President will forward only those nominees receiving support from both a college faculty and the Faculty Senate.

The Advisory Committee on Honorary Degrees

The Advisory Committee on Honorary Degrees will have seven members, including the Secretary of the Faculty, a Dean, and five senior faculty members. The Provost or his/her designee will appoint the committee and may request the advice of the Committee on Committees. The Secretary of the Faculty will serve as chairperson. All other members will serve staggered three-year terms. The Committee is charged with the following responsibilities:

1. Reviewing all nominations forwarded by the Provost
2. Advising the President and Provost on the merits of the various nominees with a view to ensuring high-quality candidates, appropriate degrees, and diversity in fields of accomplishment

Schedule

Honorary degrees are conferred at the Spring Commencement, Winter Commencement, academic convocations, and other important occasions at various times in the year. Given the variety of dates involved, it is not practical to establish separate schedules for considering candidates for each individual occasion. Candidates will usually be considered in a single group each year.

The honorary degree nomination and approval schedule may vary depending on the calendar.

Date	Step
November 1	Departments send nominations to deans
November 15	Nomination, college faculty vote, recommended degree, and Dean's comments to Provost
December 1	Provost or designee refers nominations to the Advisory Committee on Honorary Degrees
December 20	Advisory Committee sends recommendations to the President and Provost
February 1-7	Faculty Senate (in Executive Session) votes
February 7-14	President notifies the Board of Regents and ABOR President of pending awards

Related Information*

[Office of the Provost Honors & Awards web page \[1\]](#)

Revision History*

Approved by Peter Likins, May 2003

Amended to accurately reflect ABOR policy, April 19, 2004

Amended policy approved as interim by Robert Shelton, September 18, 2006

Last revision October 3, 2012

Removed from University Handbook for Appointed Personnel (UHAP), March 8, 2016

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Links

[1] <https://provost.arizona.edu/content/honors-awards>