

2.06.00.00 Awarding Honorary Degrees



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Policy/Guideline Area

Academic Policies

Applicable Divisions

Community Colleges

Purpose

The Tennessee Board of Regents authorizes the awarding of honorary degrees to recognize individuals whose extraordinary achievements have set a standard that distinguishes them and benefits Tennessee Board of Regents' institutions and the communities they serve as well as society.

The purpose for awarding honorary degrees is threefold:

To honor persons whose careers reflect sustained and superlative achievement in the arts and professions, research, scholarship, public service, leadership, volunteerism, and/or cultural affairs as well as new frontiers of human endeavor.

To advance the educational missions, goals, and programs of the Tennessee Board of Regents' institutions by developing associations with persons who embody the same ideals, values, and aspirations.

To inspire students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, and members of the local, national, and world communities to emulate such standards of excellence, integrity, and commitment to enhance the public good.

Policy/Guideline

I. Criteria for Selection

- A. An honorary degree is special and is awarded only in exceptional circumstances. Relatively few awards should be given by each institution and no more than two per year. No individual will be allowed to receive more than one honorary degree from the same institution.
- B. Current faculty, staff, and regents are not eligible. Faculty, staff, and regents who have been separated from the Tennessee Board of Regents at least three (3) years are eligible. Currently elected and/or appointed public officials and current candidates and/or nominees for public elective and/or appointed offices within the state of Tennessee are not eligible.
- C. Current or prospective benefactors of the institution are not eligible unless they meet criteria outlined in Section A. of the purpose of this policy.
- D. The degree awarded will meet the standards of the institution and will be awarded at its highest level, but not at a level which exceeds that awarded by the particular institution. Each institution may decide what to label the degree (Associate of ..., Master of..., Doctorate of ...). The degree is not to be granted for earned credit such as a PhD.

II. Guidelines

- A. Selection shall be made by a Selection Committee established on each campus by local institutional practices. The Selection Committee shall be comprised of no less than 50% faculty but should include staff and administrators.
- B. Nominations will be solicited from all sources. All deliberations will be confidential. Campus committees should use intense scrutiny of a nominee to ensure continued integrity of the award process. The recipient must attend graduation to be awarded the honorary degree.
- C. The president of the institution must approve any nominee for the honorary degree.

III. Authority

- A. Authority to award honorary degrees at all Tennessee Board of Regents Community Colleges is delegated to the presidents from the Tennessee Board of Regents.

IV. Notification

- A. After the Presidents have informed the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs of the selected nominees for Honorary Degrees, the Vice Chancellor will review the recommended nominees for compliance with this policy and will forward a recommendation to the Chancellor. Upon approval by the Chancellor, the Presidents will notify recipients of honorary degrees.

V. Exceptions

- A. No exceptions will be granted to this policy.

VI. Policy Review

- A. The Awarding the Honorary Degrees policy will be reviewed every three years.

Sources

Authority

T.C.A. § 49-8-203

History

Board Meeting December 3, 2004; Approved by Board on March 27, 2008 to take effect on July 1, 2008; Board meeting March 25, 2010; Revised at Board Meeting March 21, 2019.