



University Policies

Section III: Academic Affairs (<https://policies.umd.edu/academic-affairs>)

Policy Number: III-3.00(A)

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND PROCEDURES FOR AWARDING HONORARY DEGREES

(APPROVED BY THE PRESIDENT August 01, 1991, Amended July 30, 1997, Amended March 19, 2002)

It is the policy of the University of Maryland, as the flagship campus of the University System of Maryland, to award at each of its commencement ceremonies and on other special occasions, honorary degrees on a selective basis to individuals who have distinguished themselves in their communities or professions, especially those who have a connection with the State of Maryland, the University of Maryland, College Park, or its students.

I. Procedures for Recommendation

- A. The President, or his designee, shall appoint a Committee on Honors and Prizes, whose responsibility it will be to solicit and review nominations for Honorary Degrees from members of the campus community. All voting members of the Committee shall be members of the faculty or academic administrators.
- B. Nominations shall be in writing, and nominators will be asked to provide supporting documentation which should include:
 - a biographical sketch of the proposed recipient;
 - specific reasons for the recommendations; and
 - any information about the connection the proposed recipient has with the University or the State.
- C. Normally, honorary degrees may not be conferred on currently serving faculty, staff, members of the Board of Regents, or current holders of political office in Maryland. Exceptions for compelling reasons can be proposed to the Board of Regents, which will need a two-thirds majority vote for approval.
- D. The Committee may gather whatever additional information it deems relevant and necessary to make a recommendation, except that the prospective recipient may not be contacted.
- E. The Committee shall decide by majority vote whether each recommendation will be forwarded to the President. Those forwarded to the President shall include a recommendation for the type of degree to be awarded.
- F. The President, or his designee, shall review all Committee recommendations. The President may request additional information from the Committee or the individual initiating the recommendation.

II. Recommendations of the President

The President shall submit any recommendations he or she wishes to support to the Chancellor, who in turn submits the request to the Board of Regents for final decision.

III. Confidentiality

Care should be taken to ensure strict confidentiality at all stages of the honorary degree process. In particular there should be no communication with prospective degree candidates during the entire review and approval process. After the Board of Regents has approved the award, the President may notify the recipient of his or her selection. Approvals shall remain confidential until the candidate has been notified. Once the candidate has been notified, the President may begin to make arrangements for awarding the degree.