

Frostburg State University
Policy on the Awarding of Honorary Doctoral Degrees

I. Introduction

- A. FSU will award Honorary Doctoral Degrees to recognize individuals who have attained achievements of extraordinary distinction. Awards represent the University's highest recognition of outstanding and distinguished contributions of scholarship, creativity, leadership, and humanitarian or public service that represent a state-level, national or international model to others and reflect the missions of the University and the University System of Maryland. Honorary Degrees are not awarded to encourage or reward financial contributions to the University.

II. Criteria

- A. In accordance with the most current Board of Regents (BoR) Policy III – 3.00 Policy on Awarding of Honorary Degrees, Frostburg State University (FSU) may recognize members of the community for their significant contributions to their professions, the greater community, or Frostburg State University through the award of honorary doctoral degrees.
- B. These guidelines and procedures are established by Frostburg State University to ensure that the identification, approval and invitation processes for all honorary doctoral degree recipients are consistent with University System of Maryland (USM) policies. Other considerations in the selection of recipients include the timeliness of scheduling, the availability of the recipients, and the overall planning for commencement events.
- C. Consistent with BoR policy,
 - 1. “Prospective recipients of honorary degrees shall be:
 - a. individuals who have made exceptional contributions in intellectual, scholarly, or creative areas; or
 - b. individuals who have risen to a position of eminence in their chosen field or who have acquired a national or international reputation in a selected field or endeavor; or
 - c. individuals who have compiled a record of distinguished public service.
 - 2. Normally, honorary degrees may not be conferred on currently serving faculty, staff, members of the Board of Regents, or current holders of political office (elected or appointed). Exceptions for compelling reasons can be made only by two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Regents.”

III. **Honorary Degree Committee**

- A. The membership on the Honorary Degree Committee shall consist of the following members:
 - 1. The Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs (ex officio, Chair)
 - 2. The Vice President for University Advancement (ex officio)
 - 3. A College Dean (two-year appointment, rotated among the FSU Colleges)
 - 4. Three tenured faculty selected by the Faculty Senate (three-year staggered, renewable terms)
 - 5. The most recent, former Chair of the Faculty (ex officio)
 - 6. Two tenured faculty members selected jointly by the Provost and the Chair of the Faculty to ensure diversity (e.g., gender, college representation, race) in the membership of the committee.
- B. Selection of membership shall occur each spring semester prior to the upcoming academic year. During the initial selection process, faculty shall draw straws for the staggered terms ensuring there are two members for each of the different terms. The same process should be used in identifying the sequencing of the service of College Deans.

IV. **Annual Timeline and Process for Selection**

A. Annual Timeline:

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| September 1 | The Provost will issue a call to the University community for nominations for an honorary degree. |
| September 25 | All nominations that include a brief biographical sketch and justification for the awarding of an honorary degree must be submitted to the Provost's Office. Criteria for consideration must be included in the justification. Updated nominations from previous years will be welcome. |
| October 15 | The Committee on Honorary Degrees provides recommendations to the President. |
| November 15 | The President submits the University's recommendations to the Chancellor in accordance with the USM Board of Regents Policy. |
| Spring Semester | Consistent with the Board Policy, the President announces any decisions by the Board of Regents regarding the awarding of honorary degrees. |

B. Selection Process:

1. Following the receipt of nominating materials, the Provost will distribute the materials electronically to all committee members.
2. The Committee will meet as often as necessary to consider each nomination in terms of the established criteria.
3. For each nomination, the Committee will vote to recommend or not. In each case, at least two-thirds of the voting membership (6 of the 9 committee members) must vote in the affirmative for a positive recommendation.
4. The committee should then rank those candidates receiving a positive recommendation with a brief justification provided for each candidate.
5. The rankings and all supporting materials will be forwarded to the President by the established deadline.
6. In the case of a candidate who does not receive a positive recommendation, the Provost shall meet with the nominator of the candidate to explain the committee's decision and provide any advice regarding a future resubmission of the candidate's materials.

I. **Confidentiality**

- A. Strict confidentiality during all stages of the honorary degree process must be maintained until a formal announcement is made by Frostburg state University. There should be no communication with a prospective degree recipient regarding a likely degree until after the Board of Regents has approved the award. After approval, the President may begin to arrange for the awarding of the degree. Degrees may be conferred at any time within five years of approval, unless withdrawn by the Board of Regents for cause.

Reviewed and Recommended by:

Faculty Senate (11/9/2019)

University Advisory Council (Date TBD)

Approved by the President (Date TBD)