



### III-3.00 – POLICY ON THE AWARDING OF HONORARY DEGREES

(Approved by the Board of Regents, November 30, 1989; Amended July 13, 2001; Amended February 17, 2017; Amended June 21, 2019)

1. Each institution is authorized to grant honorary degrees with approval by the Board of Regents.
2. Each year, the Chancellor shall solicit nominations from institutions with a deadline for receipt of the materials at the end of the fall semester. The Committee on Education Policy and Student Life will review all nominations and make recommendations to the full Board. Full Board action will occur during the February meeting.
3. In accordance with standard practice at American institutions of higher learning, 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 recipients regarding a likely degree until after the Board of Regents has approved the award. After approval, presidents may begin to arrange for the awarding of the degree. Approvals shall remain confidential until the candidate is notified of his/her selection. Degrees may be conferred at any time within five years of approval, unless withdrawn by the Board of Regents for cause.
4. Each institution shall establish procedures for recommending candidates for these degrees. Procedures shall, in all cases, include, at a minimum, a means for soliciting nominations from schools, departments, and individual faculty members and shall describe the review process and the role of the faculty in the process. Procedures shall be on file in the Chancellor's Office.
5. Prospective recipients of honorary degrees shall exemplify the highest standards of personal and professional conduct, and shall have
  1. made exceptional contributions in intellectual, scholarly, or creative areas; or
  2. 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
  3. compiled a record of distinguished public service.
6. 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.

## USM Bylaws, Policies and Procedures of the Board of Regents

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7. The president of an institution that wishes to award an honorary degree shall submit a recommendation to the Chancellor. The written recommendation shall include the following information:

- a. type of honorary degree to be awarded (e.g., Doctor of Humane Letters, Doctor of Laws, Doctor of Public Service, Doctor of Sciences);
- b. biographical sketch of the proposed recipients;
- c. justification for awarding the degree; and
- d. probable date of award.

8. The Chancellor shall submit the request to the Board for consideration and shall inform the president of the institution of the Board's decision.

9. The president shall report to the Chancellor in a timely fashion all honorary degrees awarded.

10. If an institution president concludes that an honorary degree holder no longer meets the criteria or upholds the standards for which the degree was awarded or if the institution president learns that the honorary degree holder has engaged in conduct that is antithetical to the mission or values of the University System of Maryland and/or the honorary degree-granting institution, that institution's president can recommend that the Board of Regents take action to revoke that recipient's honorary degree, and the Board will consider the recommendation.

Replacement for: BOT XI-L

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