



Policy Name:	Honorary Degree Policy
Effective Date:	Unknown
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Last Review Date:	February 15, 2023
Approving Authority:	Northwest Leadership Team
Responsible Office:	Provost
Category:	Academics and Enrollment

I. Purpose

Northwest Missouri State University's honorary degree is the highest honor bestowed by the university. The purpose of awarding an honorary degree is to recognize individuals with exemplary contributions to academia or society that align with the mission and values of the university.

II. Policy

The Northwest Missouri State University honorary degree may be conferred to individuals who have:

- achieved distinction in academic endeavors; and/or
- achieved distinction in his/her profession; and/or
- rendered outstanding contributions or service to humanity; and/or
- made a recognized scholarly or service contribution as a regional, national, or international figure.

Institutional mission and complement of programs determine the types of honorary degrees that may be conferred. Honorary degrees may be selected from the following:

- Doctor of Humane Letters (L.H.D.) – Awarded to someone who is distinguished in areas regarding humanities or human welfare
- Doctor of Laws (LL.D.) – Awarded for contributions to government or public service
- Doctor of Letters (Litt.D.) – Awarded in recognition of contributions to literature or creative/performing arts
- Doctor of Pedagogy (Ped.D.) - Awarded to distinguished educators
- Doctor of Science (Sc.D.) - Awarded to recognize contributions to fields of science, social science, engineering, or technology

In general, the Northwest Missouri State University honorary degree may not be conferred:

- to faculty and staff members until at least five years after they have been separated from the university;
- to elected or appointed public officials of Missouri until at least one year after they have vacated office;
- in consideration of money or other gifts of value to the University; or
- to individuals posthumously or in absentia.

Any member of the Northwest Missouri State University faculty, staff, the Northwest Foundation, or the Northwest Leadership Team is eligible to submit nominations for an honorary degree. Candidates may not nominate themselves to receive an honorary degree. Final authority for awarding honorary degrees is vested in the Board of Regents.

Process and Timeline

The nomination form, guidelines, and procedures are available from the Provost's Office. Nominations for degree conferrals are due to the provost by August 15 for the winter commencement ceremony and by January 5 for the spring commencement ceremony.

Upon receipt of a nomination, the provost will convene the Honorary Degree Nominating Committee to consider the nomination. The committee will consist of six members:

- one faculty member from the College of Arts and Sciences;
- one faculty member from the School of Agricultural Sciences, the Booth School of Business, or the School of Communication and Mass Media;
- one faculty member from the School of Computer Science & Information Systems, the School of Health Science and Wellness or the School of Education;
- one representative of the Northwest Foundation;
- one member of the Northwest Leadership Team; and
- the provost, who will chair the committee as a non-voting member.

The committee will use the following guidelines:

- No more than two (2) honorary degrees may be conferred during any one year, with no more than one (1) honorary degree being conferred at each commencement ceremony.
- It is not necessary to confer honorary degrees each year.
- All matters relating to honorary degrees will be confidential prior to public announcement by the president.
- Nominees may be considered as potential commencement speakers.

The provost will submit a recommendation to the president for submission to the Board of Regents. Recommendations are due to the president by September 20 for the winter commencement ceremony and by February 15 for the spring commencement ceremony.