

# Honorary Degrees

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## [AR on Honorary Degrees](#)

An honorary degree is granted for the purpose of honoring those who exemplify the ideals of the University through their significant achievements and contributions to society.

The Committee on Honorary Degrees solicits nominations for degrees to be awarded at May Commencement exercises. Nominations and supporting information (please include a CV or resume of accomplishments of nominees, if possible) should be sent to the Graduate School by *October 16*. If desired, nominations and supporting materials may be submitted anonymously. The Committee will take into account the criteria, principles, and guidelines approved by the Graduate Faculty in the selection of honorees, as indicated below:

### **Criteria:**

Honorary degrees may be conferred upon those who have significantly benefitted humanity and society by:

1. Outstanding intellectual achievements,
2. Outstanding creative accomplishments, or
3. Outstanding leadership in education, business, public service, or other appropriate sectors of society.

### **Principles and Guidelines:**

1. The honorary degree shall be awarded to recognize only the exceptional accomplishments as outlined in the above criteria. The nominee's special achievement or contribution to society shall be the fundamental consideration and shall be evaluated without particular regard to the nominee's attainment of influential position or financial status.
2. The nominee shall have gained distinction worthy of recognition extending well beyond his/her own field of endeavor and geographical area of activity.
3. Although it is recognized that it is desirable for the nominee to have a University of Kentucky or a Kentucky tie, such a connection shall not be a requirement.
4. As long as the nominee clearly meets the criteria, his/her selection shall not be affected by the number of previous similar honors received.
5. Former faculty and staff of the University of Kentucky shall meet the same criteria as other honorees.
6. Elected or appointed officials of the Commonwealth of Kentucky shall not be eligible as honorary degree candidates during their terms of office.
7. Except on special occasions or in unusual circumstances, the number of honorary degrees awarded at any given ceremony shall be limited to three.
8. The honoree must be present to receive the honorary degree.
9. The honorary degree shall be conferred at the regular university graduation ceremony or at a special assembly or convocation.

### **Nomination Dossier:**

Please include the following items in the dossier for the Honorary Degrees Committee's deliberations:

- a cover page listing the primary contact person for the nomination, including address, phone number, and a list of supporting materials included in the dossier;
- although nominations frequently have more than one nominator, please specify the name of one individual as the primary contact for the nomination and provide an address and phone number;
- a formal letter of nomination setting forth the nominee's qualifications relative to the Criteria, Principles, and Guidelines cited above;
- Curriculum Vitae or Bio/professional resume;
- other supporting letters, pertinent data, or additional relevant information which may be deemed appropriate.

Please note that the decision regarding which honorary degree nominees are to be forwarded to the President is made by a faculty committee and confirmed by the Board of Trustees. This process takes a period of time and decisions are not released to the public until after a vote by the Board of Trustees in the spring. Nominators will not receive any notification until the process is completed.

**Address nominations by October 16 to:**

Dr. Pat Whitlow, Assistant Dean  
203 E Gillis Building  
University of Kentucky  
Lexington, KY 40506-0033

*last updated on August 28, 2006*