

**Guidelines for the Awarding of Honorary Doctorate Degrees**  
**Approved by General Faculty**  
**September 30, 2015**

1. **Purpose.** The purpose of this policy and procedures is to set forth the guidelines for the award by New Mexico Highlands University (the University) of honorary doctorate degrees.
2. **Policy.** The policies established in furtherance of the foregoing purpose are as follows:
  - A. The honorary doctorate degree is awarded by the University to individuals who have distinguished themselves in their respective fields, and/or in recognition of individuals whose meritorious contributions and achievements have benefited society.
  - B. The authority to confer honorary degrees rests with the Board of Regents (the Board).

**Procedures**

3. **Administration.** The Office of the President shall receive nominations from the University community and other sources, propose candidates, obtain necessary biographical information on the candidates, screen nominations and submit recommendations to the Faculty Senate for approval, based on the criteria in this document. Once approved by the Faculty Senate, candidates will be submitted to the Board of Regents for final approval. All discussions and votes are to be kept confidential.
4. **Guidelines.** While the authority to grant degrees is vested in the Board, the following guidelines are intended to identify and select candidates for the honorary doctorate degree:
  - A. Persons recognized by the award of honorary doctorate degrees from the University should include prominent alumni, business and professional persons, civic leaders, national leaders in public affairs, statesmen, prominent educators and distinguished persons in the arts, sciences and humanities.
  - B. Honorary doctorates to be awarded by the University include:
    - (1) **Doctor of Laws**—usually awarded to persons distinguished in general service to the state, to learning and to humankind;
    - (2) **Doctor of Letters**—usually awarded to scholars in particular disciplines or as a reward for scholarly work of a restricted nature;
    - (3) **Doctor of Science**—usually awarded to persons who have distinguished themselves in the sciences;
    - (4) **Doctor of Humane Letters**—usually awarded to persons who have distinguished themselves in the humanities.
  - C. The current position of the person nominated for an honorary doctorate should not suggest a real or apparent conflict of interest because of a direct or indirect relationship with the University.
  - D. An honorary doctorate shall not be conferred:
    - (1) On the basis of financial contributions to the University,
    - (2) Merely to obtain publicity,
    - (3) Upon faculty or administrators currently serving the institution
    - (4) Upon current members of the Board.
  - E. Honorary doctorates shall not be awarded *in absentia*.
5. **Preparation and Presentation.** Honorary degree citations shall be prepared by the president of the University or his or her designee and conferred at commencement.

NOTE: This document was based on Eastern New Mexico's Honorary Degree Policy.