

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
UNIVERSITY OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS (UVI)  
POLICY FOR AWARDING HONORARY DOCTORAL DEGREES**

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**Context**

A review of academic and board policies of our peer institutions indicates that the majority have a policy in place or procedures which govern the awarding of honorary doctoral degrees. For some of the institutions, policies regarding honorary degrees date back to the early 1960's, while, for others, policies have been established within the last 10 to 15 years. In addition, the awarding of honorary degrees is a standard practice within the academy, both nationally and internationally. Of importance also is the fact that none of our peers awards earned doctorates. Therefore, the awarding of earned doctorates is not a prerequisite for the awarding of honorary doctoral degrees. Research indicated that for most of our peer institutions, the honorary degrees most often awarded are: the Doctor of Laws (LL.D.); Doctor of Science (Sc.D.); Doctor of Letters (Litt. D); and Doctor of Humane Letters (L.H.D.).

**The Case for the Awarding of Honorary Doctoral Degrees at UVI**

UVI is at a place and time in its history where the establishment of a policy regarding the awarding of honorary doctoral degrees is appropriate. In all instances, the awarding of honorary doctoral degrees is viewed as having benefits to both the recipient and the institutions which awards the degree. One of the purposes of awarding such degrees is to bring to the awareness of the University community, particularly the students, persons who embody the values and aspirations that UVI has for its students.

**Criteria for the Awarding of Honorary Doctoral Degrees**

1. Honorary degrees will be granted to persons who have demonstrated outstanding accomplishments;
2. Such outstanding accomplishments should meet a combination of the following criteria:
  - a. Has some attachment or connection to UVI or the U.S. Virgin Islands;
  - b. Has a territory-wide, regional, national or international reputation;
  - c. Has made contributions which enhanced the larger society or significantly benefited or enriched a particular group;
  - d. Has made significant contributions to a field of study or discipline currently offered at UVI, or to a field of study or discipline that UVI aspires to offer;
  - e. Has achieved a record of major distinction at a regional, national, or international level in an area such as business, education, the humanities, research, public service or a profession.
  - f. Has demonstrated exemplary personal integrity, concern for the public good, and is well-respected within her/his profession and the community.

### **Procedure for Nomination of Recipients of Honorary Doctoral Degrees**

1. Any member of the UVI administration, faculty, student body, or staff, or the Board of Trustees, may nominate a person to be the recipient of an honorary degree.
2. A nomination shall be submitted in writing and shall consist of the following:
  - a. Letter of nomination;
  - b. CV of nominee;
  - c. Document which clearly delineates distinguished achievements and impact of those achievements, with supporting documents (i.e., scholarly documents; magazine articles; newspaper articles; citations for major prizes, etc.); and
  - d. Other supporting documents, as may be appropriate.

### **Procedure for Selection of Recipients of Honorary Doctoral Degrees**

1. The President shall appoint a committee, comprised of representatives of the faculty, staff, students, and alumni to provide recommendations for consideration by the President. The committee shall:
  - a. Receive nominations;
  - b. Conduct its deliberations with the utmost confidentiality;
  - c. Be responsible for assembling documents for each nominee;
  - d. Review nominees against delineated criteria;
  - e. Forward recommendations to the President for appropriate action
2. The President shall:
  - a. Review recommendation provided by committee;
  - b. Forward final recommendation to the Academic, Research and Student Affairs (ARSA) Committee of the Board of Trustees, which Committee shall recommend to the Board of Trustees the action to be taken on the President's recommendation.
3. The Board of Trustees shall make the determination on the awarding of all honorary degrees by UVI. The President shall notify the nominee(s) of the Board's action only in instances where Board approval for the awarding of an honorary degree is given.

### **Timetable for Process**

- a. Nominations to be submitted by August 22<sup>nd</sup>
- b. Committee appointed by President to provide recommendations to President
- c. President to forward recommendations to ARSA Committee
- d. ARSA Committee to make recommendation to full Board by mid-October
- e. Full Board to act on ARSA Committee recommendation at October 24, 2015 Board meeting

### **Honorary Doctoral Degrees to be Awarded**

UVI will award the following honorary doctoral degrees: the Doctor of Laws (LL.D.); Doctor of Science (Sc.D.); Doctor of Letters (Litt. D); Doctor of Humane Letters (L.H.D.); and Doctor of Business Administration (D. Bus. Adm.).

### **Protocol**

1. An individual should not be informed that he/she has been nominated for an honorary degree.
2. Persons selected by the Board of Trustees will be notified by the President within two weeks of Board's decision.
3. Honorary degrees will be awarded at commencement exercises in May.

### **Limitations and Exclusions**

No current member of the UVI faculty, staff or Board of Trustees shall be eligible for an Honorary Doctoral Degree. A recipient of an honorary degree must be present to receive the degree, except in compelling circumstances due to illness, disability, or other circumstances beyond the recipient's control. No honorary degree shall be awarded posthumously. No more than three (3) honorary degrees will be awarded each year.

With respect to persons selected to serve as commencement speakers, such a person should be at a standard that qualifies her/him to receive an honorary degree. In instances when an honorary degree is awarded to a commencement speaker, that award should be included in establishing the limit of a maximum of three honorary degree awards a year by UVI.