

Honorary Doctorates at Pepperdine University

Policy / Practice / Purpose

- **The Honorary Doctorate is associated with persons of the highest values and remarkable character – its purpose is to inspire current graduates and recognize persons worthy of emulation**
- Pepperdine University confers its highest award, the honorary doctorate, upon those individuals who have distinguished themselves in their chosen profession, who have demonstrated a lengthy service to their fellow human beings, and who have exhibited a life of service, purpose, and leadership consonant with the values and mission of the University.
- The University reserves awarding the honorary doctorate to those individuals who have demonstrated in their private and public lives characteristics and behavior worthy of emulation that will inspire our students during their transitional graduation moment.

Criteria for consideration and selection

- Individuals of unquestionable integrity who have distinguished themselves and made enduring contributions to society, throughout the course of a career, in scholarly activity and achievement, in literary or artistic achievement, in public service or civic engagement, in government service, or in other meaningful public endeavors (e.g., law, religion, business, philanthropy, etc.)
- Individuals whose lives exhibit a commitment to improving the lives of others locally, nationally, or globally.
- Individuals whose lives align with and are congruent with the values and ideals of Pepperdine University, values articulated most succinctly in the mission and vision statements of the University.
- Individuals whose lives reflect a long-standing commitment to, and involvement with, Pepperdine University.

Process for selection

- Anyone with a relationship to the University can nominate a candidate. Because of the challenges associated with scheduling, nominees should be communicated a minimum of 6 months prior to the graduation.
- Nominations should come with 1) a clear rationale for honoring the candidate with an

honorary doctorate, and 2) a resume, curriculum vitae, or other summary of their exceptional record of accomplishment. It would also be helpful to note any potential challenges associated with the public honor of this candidate and the association of this candidate with Pepperdine University.

- Throughout the nomination, review, and selection process; candidates will not be informed of their nomination status.
- The Office of the Provost will manage the process of receiving nominations and the process of reviewing those nominations. All nominations are due in the Provost's Office by no later than November in order to be considered for the Board of Regent's December meeting.
- A review committee, chaired by the Provost, will conduct the review process.
- Nominees considered deserving of this honor will be presented to the President of the University for consideration.
- Following discussion and evaluation by the President and the Provost, the Provost will present nominees considered worthy of this honor to the Academic Affairs committee of the Board of Regents for review.
- The Board of Regents is responsible for final approval of nominees.

More information – responses to frequently asked questions

- Delivering a speech at commencement is customary for an individual receiving an honorary doctorate. The commencement address carries no honorarium.
- The University will not consider candidates currently running for public office.
- No honorary doctorate will be awarded *in absentia*.
- No honorary doctorate will be offered solely as a result of a gift to the University.
- The Board of Regents policy of rescinding honors, awards, or recognitions applies to all honorary doctorates.