

Mid-Atlantic Christian University Board of Trustees Policy #13

SUBJECT: Awarding of honorary degree/fide et amore

DATE: May 2006

REVISED: May 2015

REVIEWED: April 2020

NEXT SCHEDULED REVIEW: Spring meeting of even numbered years, Spring 2022

APPROVED BY BOARD OF TRUSTEES: October 18, 2013

Policy for: Mid-Atlantic Christian University

Procedure for: President

Authorized by: Chairman of the Board of Trustees

Issued by: Board of Trustees

I. Purpose

The University chooses to recognize and honor individuals of extraordinary achievement, distinguished service, or exemplary character by awarding them an Honorary Doctorate appropriate to their accomplishments. In so doing, the University uses the occasion to make a public statement about its mission, its aspirations, and its institutional values.

II. Policy

The University chooses to award honorary degrees for reasons which can be summarized as follows:

1. To recognize superior leadership or achievement in a chosen field of endeavor or in the face of extraordinary circumstances;
2. To acknowledge a selfless spirit of service that has contributed significantly to improving the world, the Church, or the individual's particular community;
3. To express appreciation for exceptional generosity that has advanced the vision of Mid-Atlantic Christian University to be a national leader in Christian higher education; or
4. To publicly identify and recognize worthy role models for students, faculty, alumni, and the community to emulate in their own lives.

The recipients of honorary degrees, although chosen for any of the reasons listed above, exemplify Christ-like characteristics of leadership and service. They have been determined

to be living role models, working tirelessly for the good of others. The University uses the bestowing of honorary degrees to demonstrate and reinforce the importance of taking an active role in serving the Kingdom of God.

The honorary doctorate is the highest honor conferred by the University.

At Mid-Atlantic Christian University, honorary degrees are conferred in a public ceremony, most likely in connection with commencement exercises but perhaps at convocation or any other service deemed appropriate. Relating the experiences of honorary degree recipients to graduating students serves as a capstone to the University's efforts to develop in students the knowledge, skills, motivation, and religious, and moral convictions that will compel them to join others in addressing critical issues facing society and the church.

III. Procedure

Honorary degrees are awarded by the Board of Trustees upon recommendation of the President.

1. Presentation of the candidate's name to the Honorary Degree Task Force may be made by any member of the Board of Trustees, Administration, or Faculty.
2. Early in the academic year, the President's office will invite nominations for an honorary degree. The deadline for submission of all materials related to the nomination will be October 15.
3. Nominations shall be written and should include:
 - a) A biographical statement containing name, address, professional title, place of birth, educational background, employment history, and other honorary degrees, if any;
 - b) Appropriate written documentation for the nomination, including a list of primary contributions that qualify the individual for the honorary degree;
 - c) A minimum of two written references from knowledgeable persons in academia or in public or private sectors who are familiar with the nominee's contributions.
4. By November 1, the President will forward complete appropriate nomination files to the chair of the Honorary Degree Task Force, who will call a meeting. The President is not obligated to forward a nomination.
5. The Honorary Degree Task Force shall study the candidate's credentials, and, based on the criteria listed above, make a recommendation to the President concerning the conferral of the award. Nominees receiving a consensus or approval within one vote of consensus will be recommended to the President as suitable for the award.
6. The President may
 - a) Reject the nomination, ending all action;

- b) Endorse the nomination with appropriate comments, and forward the file to the Trustees; or
 - c) Extend the study.
7. Nominees usually are not persons actively engaged at the University in full-time, contractual, or salaried positions or currently members of University boards, councils, or committees. They may be local, national, or international, according to the guidelines in the following section.
 8. Honorary degrees shall not be awarded in absentia or posthumously except under extraordinary circumstances.
 9. Only under exceptional circumstances will the University grant more than one honorary degree during an academic year, and, likewise, the University may choose not to grant an honorary degree in any particular year.
 10. Honorary degrees to be considered, but not limited to, are:
 - a) Doctor of Divinity (D.D. h.c.)
 - b) Doctor of Pedagogy (P.E.D. h.c.)
 - c) Doctor of Letters (Litt.D. h.c.)
 - d) Doctor of Commerce (Com.D. h.c.)

Considerations:

Those wishing to bestow said honor or charged with the responsibility of doing so should consider the following:

1. The honorary degree should be conferred sparingly lest its worth be diminished. Indiscriminate bestowal exposes the University to demands on behalf of unworthy candidates as well as to a charge of lack of integrity.
2. The bestowal of the honorary degree should honor achievement rather than acknowledge a candidate's potential for achievement.
3. The honorary degree, generally, should be an addition to, not a substitute for, academic distinction and graduate degree/degrees.
4. The university should not restrict the granting of honorary degrees to one profession. Noteworthy achievements are registered in many professions.
5. The University should avoid concentration of honorary degrees to the graduates of one or only a limited number of academic institutions.
6. The award should not be limited to academic attainment, rather, any person having made a significant contribution to the community life and welfare of Mid-Atlantic Christian University would be eligible for consideration.
7. Said honor may be received only once by any one person.
8. Faculty eligibility is not to be predicated upon retirement.

Task Force:

The Honorary Degree Task Force is composed of representatives of the administration, faculty, and alumni. The President is an ex-officio member of the committee. The Task Force is usually comprised of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Director of Institutional Advancement, and the following, appointed by the President: one member from the Bible department, one member from the faculty, and one member from the Alumni Association. A chair person will be appointed by the President from among the committee members. The length of service on the task force is determined by the President.

The Task Force conducts its meetings as needed and makes its suggestions to the President by January 15. Because the committee's work is advisory in nature, the deliberations of the committee will remain confidential and reported only to the President.

The President and the Board of Trustees

The President receives the report of the Honorary Degree Task Force. The President confers with the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees about the nominees. After consulting with the Executive Committee, the President makes recommendations to the Board of Trustees. The board makes the final decisions on the awarding of honorary degrees and must have a 75 percent majority to award said degrees.

Faculty Concurrence

The Faculty may vote to add their concurrence to be noted on the citation of the degree by a simple majority. Only full-time regularly ranked faculty will be given an opportunity to review the documents of the candidate and vote.

Rescinding Honorary Degrees

The University reserves the right to rescind honorary degrees from individuals who, through their actions, in the opinion of the Board of Trustees, have brought the University into disrepute. The exercise of these powers shall be rare and may only be taken after thorough consideration of the relevant evidence at an appropriate meeting. The holder of the honorary degree should be given a full opportunity to respond to the University's proposed action before a final decision is made.

IV. Published: Policy Manual

V. Reason for Revision

VI. Appendices