



Policy Number: II.20
Policy Level: Operating Policy
Originally Issued: January 13, 2016
Reviewed: February 7, 2018
Revised: July 9, 2018
Reviewed: October 7, 2020
Reviewed: November 9, 2022
Revised: February 10, 2025
Policy Owner: President

Policy Implementation: Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services

Awarding Honorary Degrees

I. Policy Statement and Purpose

In accordance with the State of Alabama Legislative Act #12-0497, the President of the University may confer such honorary degrees as are usually conferred by institutions of similar character. To assure consistency of practice and adherence to impeccable standards of merit, this policy establishes the standards to be used to confer honorary doctorate degrees.

II. Conferring Honorary Degrees

Honorary degrees are conferred to recognize outstanding individuals for their significant contributions to society and are a centuries-old tradition of the academic community. Honorary degrees have great value to the University, the recipient, the community, and society. Honorary doctorate degrees are not earned through academic achievements, rather through generous and altruistic actions or lifetime accomplishments that benefit a community, nation, or humanity in general.

Athens State University may confer the following honorary doctorate degrees:

Doctor of Laws, LL.D.
Doctor of Science, D.Sc.
Doctor of Humane Letters, L.H.D.
Doctor of Humanities, D. Humanities
Doctor of Letters, Litt.D.
Doctor of Music, Mus.D.
Doctor of Fine Arts, D.F.A.

Recipients may only receive one honorary degree from Athens State University. Athens State University will not confer an honorary doctorate degree on an employee of the University.

III. Nominations

Honorary doctorate degrees shall be restricted to those persons outstanding in their contributions or service (1) to the Alabama Education System; or (2) to their state, nation, or the international



Policy Number: II.20
Policy Level: Operating Policy
Originally Issued: January 13, 2016
Reviewed: February 7, 2018
Revised: July 9, 2018
Reviewed: October 7, 2020
Reviewed: November 9, 2022
Revised: February 10, 2025
Policy Owner: President

Policy Implementation: Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services

community; or (3) in their profession or field of endeavor. Contributions shall include cultural, scientific, economic, altruistic or humanitarian activity. The number of honorary degrees awarded shall be limited and restricted to persons of genuine distinction.

Nominations of outstanding individuals should be submitted, in writing, to the President of the University. Nominations should detail the contributions or service of the individual being nominated. The President will review nominations with the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Vice President for Enrollment and Student Services, and the Vice President for University Advancement.

The criteria used to assess the relative merit of the nominee's contributions are:

1. Scholarly Attainments
 - a. articles
 - b. books
 - c. grants
 - d. lectures
 - e. up-to-date in own field
 - f. competitive memberships
2. Creative Attainments
 - a. shows
 - b. readings
 - c. publications
 - d. displayed art
 - e. awards for creative works
 - f. musician/composer
 - g. fine arts
3. Distinguished Public/Community Service
 - a. types
 - b. Length of service
 - c. offices held
 - d. impact on society
 - e. particular skills demonstrated



Policy Number: II.20
Policy Level: Operating Policy
Originally Issued: January 13, 2016
Reviewed: February 7, 2018
Revised: July 9, 2018
Reviewed: October 7, 2020
Reviewed: November 9, 2022
Revised: February 10, 2025
Policy Owner: President

Policy Implementation: Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services

- f. awards/public recognition
4. Altruism
- a. giving history
 - b. pledges
 - c. gifts-in-kind
 - d. planned gifts (wills, estates, trusts)
 - e. life insurance policies

The criteria listed above are for guidance only. The final approval for any award will be made by the President of the University.

IV. Responsibility for this Operating Policy

Policy Owner

As part of the initial approval of this policy by the President and subsequent to the original dissemination of the policy, the President is the policy owner for the ongoing evaluation, review, and approval of this policy. Subsequent reviews and revisions to this policy must be in accordance with approved operating policy procedures and processes.

This policy will be reviewed every two years or more frequently as needed by the Policy Owner. Revisions will be reviewed/affirmed by the Cabinet and approved by the University President. This policy will be updated/published in the University's Policy Library.

Responsibility for Policy Implementation

The President has assigned the responsibility of implementing this policy to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services.