

Policy 2.09 - Honorary Degrees

Policy

The board, upon recommendation of the faculty, may also confer honorary associate of arts degrees, or if it is authorized to award baccalaureate degrees may confer honorary bachelor of applied science degrees, upon persons other than graduates of the community college, in recognition of their learning or devotion to education, literature, art, or science. No degree may be conferred in consideration of the payment of money or the donation of any kind of property. The Board of Trustees reserves and retains sole authority and discretion in the awarding of honorary degrees subject to the specific conditions and limitations set forth in R.C.W. 28B.50.140 (12).

Procedure

The following procedure shall be followed:

1. Nominations for an honorary degree may originate from the Board, President, Administration, Faculty, Staff or Students or from the community at large and should be sent to the Vice President of Instruction's office before February 1st in the year the degree is sought to be awarded.
2. An Honorary Degree Committee, made up of three faculty members selected by the faculty body, and the Vice President of Instruction as an Ex Officio member, will meet and review any nomination that has been submitted and seek input from the faculty as required by statute.
3. The Honorary Degree Committee may consider the following examples of when an Honorary Degree may be merited.
 - a. An exceptional student who has died before completing their degree.
 - b. A civic leader who has made an extensive contribution to the college through their actions in volunteering, mentoring or other endeavors but not "the payment of money or the donation of any kind of property."
 - c. A person who has made a substantial contribution to "education, literature, art or science."
 - d. A person who has contributed substantially to the quality of life and learning of the students of the college.
 - e. In rare cases a person who, as a living example of leadership or community service, represented the core values of the college over an extensive period of time.
4. The Honorary Degree Committee will forward their recommendation along with all written comments from the faculty to the President to be delivered to the Board of Trustees.
5. Honorary degrees will generally be conferred at Commencement, and may be awarded posthumously or in absentia. Few, if any, honorary degrees should be granted in any one year.
6. The Board of Trustees shall consider the recommendations of the Honorary Degree Committee and the submitted comments and any other factors they deem appropriate

and then, in their sole discretion and by their vote, authorize the granting of such honorary degrees as they decide are truly merited.

7. The President shall then notify the recipient, and arrange for their opportunity to be present and suitably attired to receive the degree. In the case of a deceased recipient, a designee shall be determined by the Board (e.g. a member of the recipient's family, spouse, partner or friend), to receive the degree on the recipient's behalf.

Historic Information

- Adopted: November 15, 2023