



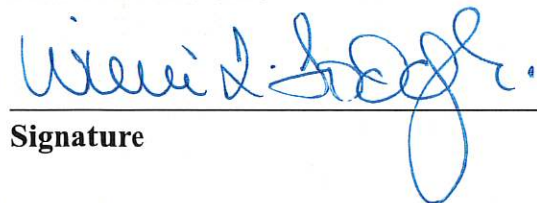
Policy Name: Awarding of Honorary Doctoral Degree Policy

Policy Number: Administrative Policy
03.10.12.01

Date: December 15, 2025

Review Date: December 15, 2028

Approved by Willie L. Todd, Jr., Ph.D.
President and CEO


Signature



AWARDING OF HONORARY DOCTORAL DEGREES: POLICY AND PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

Policy Title: Awarding of Honorary Doctoral Degrees: Policy and Procedural Guidelines

Policy Type: Board of Trustees/Presidential/Administrative/Interim

Policy Number: 03.10.12.01 (2025)

Approval Date: Dec 15, 2025

Responsible Office: Academic Affairs

Responsible Executive: Provost

Applies to: The College Community and Stakeholders

POLICY STATEMENT

Talladega College awards an honorary degree to an individual of exceptional distinction. Talladega College awards honorary degrees, on a highly selective basis, to individuals who have made outstanding and distinguished contributions to society or have attained significant achievements in their field or profession consistent with the institution's mission.

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DEFINITIONS

Academic Year

The period beginning July 1 and ending June 30 of the following calendar year, unless otherwise designated by Talladega College.

Board of Trustees (Board)

The duly constituted governing body of Talladega College, including any standing committees authorized to act on its behalf as set forth in the Board's bylaws.

Committee

The Honorary Degree Review Committee, chaired by the Provost and composed of members designated in accordance with College policy, is responsible for reviewing complete nominations and making recommendations in accordance with this policy.

Committee for Academic Excellence

A standing committee of the Board of Trustees charged with reviewing academic matters, including recommendations for the awarding of honorary degrees, and forwarding recommendations to the full Board for final action.

Confidential / Confidentiality

The obligation to restrict access to nomination materials, deliberations, recommendations, and decisions related to honorary degrees to individuals formally involved in the review and approval process. Confidentiality applies at all stages of the process and includes the requirement that nominees not be informed of their nomination unless and until formally invited by the President following Board approval.

Current Faculty, Staff, or Administrators

Individuals who are employed by Talladega College at the time of nomination, whether on a full-time, part-time, temporary, adjunct, visiting, or contract basis.

Distinguished Achievement

Sustained, widely recognized accomplishment or impact in a professional, scholarly, intellectual, creative, or service-related field that exceeds ordinary expectations and reflects excellence at a regional, national, or international level.

Employed by the College

Holding an active employment relationship with Talladega College, including but not limited to faculty, staff, administrators, adjuncts, temporary employees, and individuals providing services under contract or grant-funded arrangements.

Exceptional and Compelling Circumstances

Rare and unusual situations, as determined by the President and/or Board of Trustees, that justify deviation from standard procedures, timelines, or attendance expectations for the awarding of an honorary degree.

Former Faculty, Staff, or Administrators

Individuals who previously held an employment relationship with Talladega College and who have been separated from all employment with the institution for at least one full calendar year at the time of nomination.

Honorary Degree

A non-earned academic honor conferred by Talladega College to recognize exceptional distinction, outstanding contributions, or significant achievement. An honorary degree does not confer academic credit, alumni status by degree, faculty rank, or any employment, governance, or financial privileges.

Incomplete Application

A nomination submission that lacks required materials, including a justification statement addressing the criteria and the nominee's curriculum vitae or comprehensive résumé, or that is not submitted in the manner prescribed by this policy.

Institutional Priorities

Strategic goals, mission-aligned initiatives, and values formally adopted or endorsed by Talladega College and its governing bodies at the time of review.

Merit

Demonstrated qualifications, achievements, character, and contributions that satisfy the established criteria for an honorary degree, independent of personal relationships, popularity, or social influence.

Nominee

An individual proposed for consideration to receive an honorary degree through the formal nomination process.

Public Good

Activities, service, or leadership that advance the welfare of communities, institutions, or society at large through ethical, charitable, educational, civic, or humanitarian efforts.

Revocation

The formal withdrawal of a previously awarded honorary degree by action of the Board of Trustees, following review and determination that the recipient's conduct meets the conditions for revocation outlined in this policy.

Serving on the Board of Trustees

Holding an active position as a voting, ex officio, or advisory member of the Talladega College Board of Trustees at the time of nomination or conferral.

Simple Majority Vote

Approval by more than fifty percent (50%) of the members present and voting, provided a quorum is established, unless otherwise required by College or Board policy.

Strong Character

A demonstrated record of ethical behavior, integrity, accountability, and respect for others that is consistent with the mission, values, and expectations of Talladega College.

Substantive Service to the Institution

Meaningful contributions of time, expertise, leadership, or resources to Talladega College that go beyond routine participation but, standing alone, are insufficient to justify the awarding of an honorary degree without meeting the other stated criteria.

Purpose

Honorary degrees recognize distinguished scholarship and/or accomplishments in the humanities, the arts, the sciences, the professions, public service, and service to the institution, to society, and to mankind. An honorary degree is an academic award that reflects the high ideals and values of Talladega College, and recipients shall exemplify qualities that embrace Students First, Accountability, Integrity, Diversity, and Excellence.

Criteria

Nominees must display strong character as well as a notable achievement in the areas of humanities, creative arts, professions, or public service, and distinguish themselves in at least two of three categories. The three criteria used for selecting honorary degree recipients are listed below.

- 1) Distinguished professional, scholarly, intellectual, or creative achievement
- 2) Demonstrated interest in activities that contribute to the public good, including public service and/or philanthropy
- 3) Exceptional and distinctive achievements on behalf of Talladega College

Effective academic year 2026-27, no person is eligible to be nominated for or receive an honorary degree while that person is employed by the College or serving on the Board of Trustees.

Nomination Process

Any member of the Talladega College community – Board of Trustees, President, Executive Cabinet, deans, faculty, staff, alumni, students, and other institutional stakeholders – may submit a nomination. Each nomination must be accompanied by 1) a clear statement justifying the conferral of the degree as it relates to the criteria and 2) the nominee's curriculum vitae or comprehensive resume. While not required, the committee will review up to three (3) supporting documents submitted at the time of application. *Note: An incomplete application will not be considered.*

All application materials should be submitted electronically (preferably as a PDF) in one email to: Provost@talladega.edu.

Although many distinguished candidates are nominated each year, not all nominees will be recognized. Therefore, all nominations will be kept confidential at all stages of the process, and nominees should NOT be notified of their nomination to avoid any misunderstandings when selections are announced.

Nominations should be made due to merit, not popularity. Substantive service to Talladega College is not sufficient justification for an honorary degree if the individual does not meet the other criteria for an honorary degree.

Review Process

The Committee will request nominations for honorary degrees by July 15. Members of the Board of Trustees, Executive Cabinet, deans, faculty, staff, alumni, students, and other stakeholders may nominate individuals for honorary degrees. Nominations of candidates for honorary degrees must be received by September 15 to be considered for honorary degrees awarded at Commencement the following May or at another suitable occasion. However, the Board of Trustees, the President, or the Provost may extend that date in the event of exigent circumstances. Nominations must be accompanied by a clear statement delineating the reason for the honor and ensuring that the two criteria are addressed. All aspects of the nomination and deliberation process are conducted with strict confidentiality. It is critical that the nominee not be made aware of their nomination (i.e., nominators should not notify the nominee at any time during the process).

After receipt by the Provost's Office, complete nominations will be reviewed by the Committee, chaired by the Provost, to ensure each nominee meets the stated criteria. The Provost will forward the names and credentials of the candidates receiving a simple majority vote of the Committee as a recommendation to the President. Next, the Board of Trustees' Committee for Academic Excellence will consider the recommendations. Subsequently, the Academic Excellence Committee will submit its recommendation to the Board of Trustees for final approval at the November Board Meeting. Only after the Board of Trustees takes the following action will the President invite the honorary degree recipient. The President, on behalf of the Board, is the only person authorized to ask a person to receive an honorary degree.

Note: Several factors are considered in the final selection process, including the candidate's availability, disciplinary affiliation, and relevance to current events and institutional priorities.

Expiration of the Board's Approval

Talladega College may award an honorary degree to an approved candidate at any time within two years of the Board's granting of approval. After two years, the invitation to award the honorary degree becomes null and void. However, if the individual is nominated later, a new application with all required documents will be required.

Other Notes on Honorary Degrees

The institution should limit nominations to those who are sure to enhance the College's prestige. Except in extraordinary circumstances, the College will award a maximum of two honorary degrees at commencement or other appropriate functions per academic year. The institution may choose not to grant an honorary degree in an academic year. Talladega College does not pay a speaking fee to an honorary degree recipient (it is customary for the institution to cover expenses).

Honorary degrees may be awarded in absentia, but only upon recommendation to the Board by the President in the case of extraordinary and compelling circumstances. In the event of unexpected inability to appear at the scheduled time, the conferral may be postponed to the next appropriate ceremony, provided that the degree is conferred within two years after being authorized. A degree may be awarded posthumously if a recipient died after notification of selection but before the ceremony.

Nominations should be made due to merit, not popularity. Substantive service to Talladega College is not sufficient justification for an honorary degree if the individual does not meet the other criteria for an honorary degree.

Limitations

Current faculty, staff, or administrators are not eligible for an honorary degree. Former faculty, staff, or administrators who meet the criteria for an honorary degree may be considered after a minimum of one calendar year's absence from the institution at the time of nomination.

Revocation of the Honorary Degree

The Board of Trustees of Talladega College has the authority to revoke a previously awarded honorary degree. If the Board of Trustees, in its judgment, determines the recipient of the degree has engaged in conduct that: 1) is inconsistent with Talladega College's mission and/or values; 2) undermines the accomplishments that were cited as the basis for awarding the honorary degree; or 3) is injurious to the reputation of Talladega College. The revocation of an honorary degree will be made after an evaluation of the necessity for such action using the same procedures followed for the selection and nomination of the honorary degree recipient. The utmost care should be taken to ensure confidentiality if there is any possibility that an honorary degree could be revoked.

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PUBLICATION

This policy shall be widely published and distributed to the Talladega College community. The Director of Institutional Research and Effectiveness and the Chief Marketing and Communications Officer will make every effort to:

1. Communicate the policy in writing, electronically, or otherwise, to the College community within fourteen (14) days of approval.
2. Submit the policy for inclusion in the online Policy Library once the library is uploaded.
3. Post the policy on the appropriate websites; and
4. Educate and train all stakeholders and appropriate audiences on the policy's content, as necessary.
5. Failure to meet the publication requirements does not invalidate this policy.

REVIEW SCHEDULE

Next Scheduled Review: 12/15/2028

Approval: 12/15/2025

Revision History: xxxxx

RELATED DOCUMENTS

FORMS