



Board of Trustees

Policy Statement
University Policy Library

Operational Area:	Academic Affairs
Responsible Executive:	Chief Executive Officer
Responsible Office:	President's Office
Effective:	November 1, 2019

Honorary Degrees and Other Awards

Academic Affairs

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I. Introduction

- A. **Authority:** C.R.S. § 23-54-102, *et seq.* (2019) authorizes the Trustees of Metropolitan State University of Denver (MSU Denver) to establish rules and regulations to govern and operate the University and its programs. The Trustees retain authority to approve, interpret, and administer policies pertaining to University governance. The Trustees authorize the President of MSU Denver to approve, administer, and interpret policies pertaining to University operations.
- B. **Purpose:** This policy describes when MSU Denver may award an honorary degree or other honorary award pursuant to C.R.S. § 23-2-102(2), which defines *honorary degree*.
- C. **Scope:** This policy applies to the MSU Denver Trustees and President.

II. Roles and Responsibilities

- A. **Responsible Executive:** Chief Executive Officer
- B. **Responsible Administrator:** Chief Executive Officer
- C. **Responsible Office:** President's Office
- D. **Policy Contact:** President's Office, 303-615-0060



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III. Policy Statement

A. Honorary Degrees

The award of an honorary degree by Metropolitan State University is an extension of its role as an institution devoted to the discovery, transmission, and preservation of knowledge. An honorary degree is the highest award Metropolitan State University of Denver can bestow and recognizes outstanding achievement, intellectual contributions, university service, public service, and/or lasting impact on society. In the awarding of degrees ad honoris, the University reaffirms its commitment to the principles of its mission while conferring honor and distinction upon both the recipient and the University community.

An honorary degree may be approved by the Board only after the President has submitted a recommendation which contains sufficient justification for the Board to make an informed decision about awarding the degree.

An honorary degree may be conferred on any individual who has achieved regional, national, or international distinction, with the following exceptions:

1. A current member of the Board of Trustees of the University;
2. Any individual currently campaigning for or holding an elective office in any governmental body with regulatory or financial influence over the University.

Honorary degrees may be retracted by the Board of Trustees if it is found that the recipient does not embody the values of the institution.



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B. Awards Other Than Honorary Degrees for Persons Outside the University

The Board supports awards other than honorary degrees to recognize distinguished service or accomplishments by graduates of the University, by members of the academic community, by friends of the University, or by other persons outside the University.

Institutional policies shall clearly articulate the criteria for such awards and for procedures for selection.

Board approval is not required for any such award.

IV. Procedures

- A. The Office of the President may establish procedures for soliciting nominations and providing initial recommendations by members of the University community to the President for consideration for honorary degrees.
- B. The President will submit recommendations and associated justification for the awarding of an honorary degree to the Board of Trustees. For December commencement, recommendations need to be made at the first Board of Trustees meeting in the fall; for May commencement, recommendations need to be made at the first Board of Trustees meeting in the spring.
- C. The Board of Trustees will have final authority to approve the awarding of an honorary degree.
- D. The Office of the President will maintain records of conferred honorary degrees.
- E. Honorary degrees will be announced to the University community at an official MSU Denver event or via an official means of communication.



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V. Definitions

- A. **Honorary Degree:** In accordance with C.R.S. § 23-2-102(2), an honorary degree is intended to indicate that the person receiving the degree is learned in any field of public service or has performed outstanding public service or has demonstrated proficiency in any field of endeavor without having completed courses of formal instruction or study or formal preparation or training.

VI. Policy History

- A. **Effective:** November 1, 2019
B. **Revised:** April 1, 2019; November 9, 2007
C. **Review:** This policy will be reviewed every five years or as deemed necessary by University leadership.

VII. Policy Approval

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Janine Davidson".

Janine Davidson, Ph.D.
President, Metropolitan State University of Denver

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Paul Pogge".

John Paul Pogge, Esq.
Chair, Board of Trustees, Metropolitan State University of Denver