

# **Honorary Degree Policy**

## **Honorary Degree**

The Board of Regents confers the honorary degree in recognition of outstanding merit or achievement without reference to the fulfillment of academic course requirements. The purpose of the honorary degree is to recognize individuals by awarding special honors to persons whom have contributed significantly to the cultural, educational, or scientific development of programs or services at NMT, as well as those eminent individuals and scholars whose contributions are of more general significance and transcend geographic limitations.

It is not the Institute's policy to award honorary degrees to currently employed faculty, staff or administration, though exceptional cases shall not be precluded from being considered for the award.

The award of an honorary degree to a person seeking or holding a political office shall not constitute endorsement by NMT. However, political involvement shall not prevent consideration of an individual for an honorary degree.

Honorary degrees are awarded upon the recommendation of the Honorary Degree and Awards (HD&A) committee with concurrence of the Faculty Council and the approval of the Board of Regents.

## **HD&A Committee Selection**

Selection and appointment of the HD&A Committee members is the annual responsibility of the Faculty Council's Nominating Committee whose own members are elected at the start of each academic year by the NMIMT's Faculty Council. The HD&A Committee is composed of three faculty members, each of whom serves a two-year term with a one, two rotation.

The Nominating Committee selects faculty members to replace the HD&A Committee members who have either completed their term or who are no longer employed by the Institute or for any other reason are no longer members of the HD&A Committee. Following committee members' selection, the Nominating Committee shall request that approval of the new committee be included for vote at the October Faculty Council meeting agenda. The HD&A Committee shall then elect its chairperson for that academic year.

## **HD&A Committee Protocol**

1. The HD&A Committee shall solicit and collect nominations from all Institute sources. Solicitations for nominations shall not be restricted to faculty and staff of NMIMT. Nominations should close by November 1st.
2. The committee shall review the supporting documents provided for each candidate. Strong consideration should be given to nominees whose contributions are to NMIMT.

3. The Committee shall recommend an honorary degree or degrees for a particular year. If no honorary degree is recommended, the Nominating Committee shall notify the Faculty Council, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs, who in turn notifies the President.
4. If the Committee decides there are appropriate candidates, the nominees shall be submitted to the Faculty Council at the December meeting. If the Faculty Council recommends any or all of the nominees, these names shall be submitted to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, who in turn submits them to the President. The President then submits the names to the Board of Regents for final approval. Upon the action of the Board of Regents, the Registrar shall be notified of the intended award for formal entry to the record and inclusion in the final commencement program.

### **Nomination Procedure**

1. A person wishing to make a nomination should prepare and submit a letter of nomination to the chairperson of the HD&A Committee before November 1st.
2. If the HD&A Committee determines to recommend that an honorary degree be awarded to an individual, the Committee Chair shall notify the party who nominated that individual that he or she has the committee's approval to proceed in soliciting letters of support from appropriate individuals who would support the nomination.
3. The nominating party shall proceed to solicit letters of support and other pertinent, factual data concerning the nominee. Letters of support should be written to the HD&A Committee, New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, 801 Leroy Place, Socorro, New Mexico 87801. The deadline for supporting documentation is December 1st.
4. The Board of Regents shall act on the recommendations of the President no later than the first Board meeting of the spring semester.
5. The awardees shall be officially notified by the President of the Institute via a letter of congratulations and a formal invitation to attend spring commencement following Board approval.
6. The nominating party should make it his or her responsibility to follow up with all appropriate entities throughout this process. At the start, contact will be with the HD&A Committee and the Faculty Council. If the nominee is selected for the award of honorary degree, the nominating party will need to work closely with the Registrar's Office and the Office of Advancement to ensure that program details, commencement scripts, formal documents, graduation accessories, press releases, etc., and commencement protocol are arranged and that the awardee is informed.

*(Adopted by the Board of Regents on October 31, 2000)*