

CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES
FOR HONORARY DEGREES AT MACALESTER COLLEGE

The following was approved by the Honorary Degree Committee at its meeting on January 6, 1981:

The purpose here is to provide a statement that will give some unified perspective for the purpose of awarding honorary degrees at Macalester College and to articulate some guidelines to be used in considering nominees. This statement of purpose and the suggested guidelines are for internal use of the Committee, and it is hoped that they will facilitate clarity, continuity, and consistency in the work of the Committee as its membership changes from year to year.

Honorary degrees are awarded by Macalester College for the purpose of formally recognizing and honoring distinguished alumni, outstanding patrons and servitors of the College, and men and women of pre-eminent achievement. Their character, creativity, and contributions to humanity, whether local or national or international, shall particularly reflect the spirit of Macalester College. Individuals of distinction from such fields as philanthropy, education, religion, social service, creative and performing arts, literature and the humanities, science, business, and public service are to be chosen, upon nomination from within the college community, on the basis of the reflection in their lives of the highest values espoused by the College. The College thus affirms, and hopes to encourage, its vision and mission by the honorary degrees it confers.

Some guidelines that are operative, but which need not be regarded as inflexibly binding, are:

- a. Active Trustees are excluded from consideration.
- b. Only in exceptional circumstances should an incumbent or retired faculty member be considered.
- c. Age is not a relevant factor.
- d. Those currently in politics should not normally be considered.
- e. Those holding numerous honorary degrees, and those apt to be frequently so honored, should not receive primary consideration.
- f. Geographic diversity through selection of local, national, and even international figures should be a long-term goal.
- g. Normally, no honorary degree will be given in absentia.
- h. Degrees may be conferred at Commencement or on Alumni Day.
- I. Normally, about three to six honorary degrees will be conferred annually, with these distributed among the possible categories of selection.
- j. While Commencement speakers may be nominated and considered, there is no precedent that conferral of an honorary degree follows in course.