

## OVERVIEW

Honorary Doctorates are special recognitions that the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) typically awards to several individuals each year during commencement exercises. This document provides an overview of the nomination, selection, and awarding process for honorary degree recipients.

## ELIGIBILITY FOR HONORARY DEGREE

Honorary degree recipients are individuals whose achievements are closely aligned with our institutional mission as a leading school of art and design, or those who have exceptionally strong ties to our community, or those whose primary achievements merit recognition in terms of their major contributions to the cultural landscape. In addition to extraordinary accomplishment, each honorary degree recipient meets the following criteria:

- Embodies—through their work, public service, or commitment to SAIC—one or more of the Core Values:
  - We are explorers
  - Meaning and making are inseparable
  - We are artists and scholars
  - Chicago
  - We make history
- Has proven longevity in their field of accomplishment
- Is highly likely to provide an inspirational example to SAIC stakeholders, especially students
- Is able to accept the award in person at graduation, as honorary degrees are not given *in absentia*
- Is not a currently sitting elected public official
- Has been nominated by someone from the SAIC community, vetted by School leaders, and approved by the President, as outlined in this document

## NOMINATION PROCEDURE FOR HONORARY DEGREE

SAIC welcomes nominations for honorary degree recipients from all members of the School community, including students, faculty, staff, and board members. To nominate someone for an honorary degree, please complete the honorary degree nomination cover sheet (the last page of this document) and attach your letter of support, biography of the nominee, and any supporting documents. Completed nominations are accepted at any time, though nominations are especially encouraged by October 1 of each year, as commencement arrangements are typically finalized the fall prior to commencement.

Nominations from a given year, however, may result in honorary doctorate recipients in future years.

Complete nominations should be sent digitally as a single, PDF document to the assistant to the dean of faculty, Christina Chakos [cchako@saic.edu](mailto:cchako@saic.edu).

#### PROCESS FOR SELECTING HONORARY DEGREE RECIPIENTS

All nominations for honorary degrees are considered by the Honorary Degree Committee, a group of faculty, staff, and students appointed and chaired by the dean of faculty. The makeup of the committee may vary, from year to year, but at a minimum will include:

- Provost and Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs
- Dean of Faculty and Vice President of Academic Affairs
- Vice President and Dean of Student Affairs
- Dean of Undergraduate Studies
- Dean of Graduate Studies
- Chair of the Faculty Business Senate
- Chair of Faculty
- Elected Faculty Liaison
- At least two faculty for the Visiting Artists Program (VAP) committee
- At least one part-time faculty member, chosen by the Faculty Senate

After reviewing the nominations, the committee will make a proposal to the president, which will include whom, in their estimation, should be honorary degree recipients and whom should make the commencement address. The president makes the final selection on honorary degrees. The office of the president then becomes the primary contact for honorary degree recipients, arranging their travel and ensuring that recipients meet all eligibility criteria. Degrees are conferred during commencement exercises.

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**HONORARY DEGREE NOMINATION • Cover Sheet**

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**Name of Nominee**

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**Title/Occupation of Nominee** (professor, artist, former city official, etc.)

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**Primary Affiliation Nominee** (university, gallery, place of business, major, etc.)

**Would this nominee make an effective commencement speaker?**     YES                     NO

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**Name of Nominator**

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**Signature of Nominator**

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**Date**

**SUPPORT MATERIALS**

In addition to this cover sheet, please enclose a dossier of support materials that explains why your nominee should be awarded an honorary degree. Support materials will be of significant consideration in the review process.

Support materials **should** include:

- A letter of support from nominator
- A brief (one-page) bio about the nominee and their accomplishments

The support materials may also include:

- Portfolio of images or writing
- Links to website, sound, video or other materials found online
- Published articles about the nominee's accomplishments
- Curriculum Vitae
- Any other relevant information

Materials should be submitted to the assistant to the dean of faculty via email (cchako@saic.edu as a singular, PDF document that includes this complete form as the first page.