I. POLICY STATEMENT AND PURPOSE

The award of an honorary doctorate degree is the highest form of recognition offered by Eastern Virginia Medical School (EVMS). It is the policy of EVMS to award honorary degrees on a selective basis to individuals for outstanding achievement and contributions or distinction in a field or activity that reflects the mission of EVMS. Honorary degrees may only be awarded by EVMS upon approval of its Board of Visitors in accordance with this Policy.

II. ELIGIBILITY

A. General Nominees. In order to be considered for an honorary degree, a nominee must be distinguished and have attained statewide, national, or international prominence in public service or a particular discipline or field that are both relevant and appropriate to the EVMS mission.

B. Commencement Speakers. EVMS invites distinguished members of the academic, civic and/or business community to be the keynote speakers at its commencement ceremonies. Each EVMS commencement speaker shall be eligible to be awarded an honorary degree.

C. Diversity. EVMS is committed to awarding honorary degrees to recipients who share the diversity of interests, backgrounds, and concerns of the local, national and global community that EVMS serves.

D. Restrictions. Except under unique and unusual circumstances, honorary degrees shall not be awarded to:

1. Members of the Board of Visitors of EVMS and Board of Trustees of the EVMS Foundation during their terms of service

2. Anyone that already holds an honorary degree from EVMS;

3. Members of the faculty, community faculty, or administrative staff of EVMS, while employed; or

4. Elected officials of the Commonwealth of Virginia or active candidates for elective public office.
III. PROCEDURE

A. Nomination by the President; Approval by the Board. The President shall consider honorary degree candidates and make his/her recommendation(s) to the EVMS Board of Visitors for consideration. The President may, when necessary, convene an advisory committee, which shall include a representative from the Office of Faculty Affairs, to conduct due diligence on the background of nominees prior to recommendation to the Board of Visitors. The EVMS Board of Visitors must approve all awards of honorary degrees.

B. Notification and Conference.

1. Upon approval by the Board of Visitors, the President shall notify the honorary degree recipient(s) and shall issue a formal invitation to the commencement ceremony.

2. All honorary degrees must be conferred within two years of approval by the Board of Visitors and shall be conferred upon individuals, in person, at EVMS commencement exercises.

3. Honorary degrees may be awarded in absentia in compelling circumstances, but only upon recommendation to the Board of Visitors by the President. An honorary degree may also be awarded posthumously if a recipient dies after notification of selection, but before the ceremony.

C. Revocation. EVMS reserves the right to revoke an honorary degree if it determines that the conferral of the degree was based on fraudulent or erroneous information or material omission. In addition, the Board of Visitors may revoke an honorary degree if, in the opinion of the Board of Visitors, the continued endorsement of the individual would be detrimental to the reputation of EVMS.