

## PROPOSAL TO DEFINE HONORARY DEGREE TITLES

### Senate Rules:

#### 5.4.2.3 Conditions of Circumstance for Honorary Degrees

##### A. Role of the University Joint Committee on Honorary Degrees (UJCHD)

The elected Faculty Senators in the University Senate here opt to incorporate by reference the composition and charge to the University Joint Committee on Honorary Degrees as described in AR 11:4. Using the conditions of merit for Honorary Degrees specified SR 5.4.2.4 below, the UJCHD develops recommendations on nominees for Honorary Degrees. The UJCHD submits its recommendations to the elected faculty senators in the University Senate.

The UJCHD may submit to the elected Faculty Senators, through the elected Faculty representatives to the Senate Council, policy recommendations concerning conditions of merit and circumstance for the award of Honorary Degrees.

- \* The prerogative of the elected Faculty Senators to “opt” to utilize the charge to and composition of the University Joint Committee on Honorary Degrees described in the cited Administrative Regulation connotes that changes in the charge or composition specified in the regulation are made only with the concurrence of the elected Faculty Senators. [SREC: 8/2009]

##### B. Role of the Elected Faculty Senators in the University Senate

1. Within the framework of a University Senate meeting, and prior to consideration of any specific nominations, the elected Faculty Senators may exercise its option to decide that no nominees for honorary degrees will be recommended to the Board of Trustees that academic year.
2. If the elected Faculty Senators do not opt for the above outcome (SR 5.4.2.3.B.1), then the elected Faculty Senators shall consider the UJCHD recommendations concerning:
  - (a) the qualifications of the submitted nominees;
  - (b) the appropriateness of the recommended honorary degree title for each;
  - (c) the alternative occasion on which the degree is recommended to be conferred (if not at either the December or May Commencement); and
  - (d) any other recommendations of the committee for departure from the conditions of circumstance specified herein.
3. The respective recommendation for each nominee shall be considered and voted on individually by the elected Faculty Senators. The elected Faculty Senators may in addition approve, or may modify, the recommendation on the degree title or other circumstance of award of the degree. Those nominees, degree titles, and circumstances of award that are approved by the elected Faculty Senators shall be forwarded through the Chair of the Senate

(the President) to the Board of Trustees for final action. Prior to the vote by the elected faculty Senators, the Chair of the Senate (or that Chair's designee), may address the University Senate as to the qualifications of a particular nominee or as to exceptions to the conditions of circumstance.

4. Under extraordinary circumstances, and with written justification to the Board of Trustees through the Chair of the Senate, the elected faculty representatives in the University Senate may through a deliberative process commensurate to the circumstance recommend for an honorary degree a person not among the nominees recommended by UJCHD. This option is not dependent upon the exercise of SR 5.4.2.3.B.2, above.

### **C. Circumstances for Award of Honorary Degrees**

1. The number of honorary degrees awarded during any academic year shall be limited to five, with no more than four at any single Commencement. [US: 2/14/11]

2. The honoree must be present to receive the honorary degree.

3. The honorary degree shall be conferred at either the December or May regular university commencement ceremony, unless otherwise approved by the elected Faculty Senators pursuant to SR 5.4.2.3.B.2.(c). [US: 2/14/11]

### **D. Titles of Honorary Degrees**

The titles [and definitions](#) approved by the elected Faculty Senators for Honorary Degrees are:

Honorary Doctor of Arts

[To recognize extraordinary accomplishments in the creative arts, fine arts, performing arts, or related fields](#)

Honorary Doctor of Laws

[To recognize extraordinary accomplishments in law, politics, governance, diplomacy, or related fields](#)

Honorary Doctor of Science

[To recognize extraordinary accomplishments in scientific fields](#)

Honorary Doctor of Engineering

[To recognize extraordinary accomplishments in engineering, design, technology, or related fields](#)

Honorary Doctor of Humanities

[To recognize extraordinary accomplishments in the humanities](#)

Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters

[To recognize extraordinary contributions to philanthropy, human development, education, or societal well-being](#)

### **5.4.2.4 Conditions of Merit for Honorary Degrees**

#### **A. Principles**

In awarding Honorary Degrees, the University accomplishes several purposes: It pays tribute to those whose life and work exemplify professional, intellectual, or artistic achievement. It recognizes and appreciates those who have made significant contributions to society, the state, and the University. It highlights the diverse ways in which such contributions can be made. And it sends a message that principles, values, and contributions are important. Well-chosen honorees affirm and dignify the University's own achievements and priorities.

Honorary degrees may be conferred upon those who have achieved distinction through outstanding intellectual or creative achievements, or through outstanding leadership in education, business, public service or other appropriate sectors of society.

**B. Conditions**

1. The honorary degree shall be awarded to recognize only exceptional accomplishments as outlined in the above principles. The nominee's special achievement or contribution to society shall be the fundamental consideration and shall be evaluated without regard to the nominee's attainment of influential position or financial status.
2. The nominee shall have gained distinction worthy of recognition extending well beyond his/her own field of endeavor and geographical area of activity.
3. Although it is recognized that it is desirable for the nominee to have a tie to the University of Kentucky or the Commonwealth of Kentucky, such a connection shall not be a requirement.
4. As long as the nominee clearly meets the criteria, his/her selection shall not be affected by the number of previous similar honors received.
5. Former faculty and staff of the University of Kentucky shall meet the same criteria as other nominees; current faculty and staff are not eligible.
6. Elected or appointed officials of the Commonwealth of Kentucky shall not be eligible as honorary degree candidates during their terms of office.