



Reviewed and endorsed by the Trustees Academic and Student Affairs Committee 3-9-18  
Reviewed and endorsed by the Trustees Regulation Committee 3-14-18  
Reviewed and amended by Faculty Senate Executive Committee 10-14-19  
Approved as amended by Faculty Senate 11-18-19

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## UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING REGULATIONS

**Subject: Academic and Honorary Degree Revocation**

**Number: UW Regulation ~~8-254(2-XX)~~2-120**

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### I. PURPOSE

To establish policies and procedures governing the University of Wyoming's revocation of a degree.

### II. GENERAL INFORMATION

The University is a State higher education institution whose Trustees are legislatively empowered to confer academic degrees on students who have earned them, upon the recommendation of the faculty. The Trustees also award degrees honoris causa to individuals who have demonstrated outstanding accomplishments in all professions, public service, or service to humanity. The Board of Trustees recognizes that there may be instances where a degree is awarded to an individual who, upon review, has not properly completed all requirements for the degree. Likewise, there may be instances when an individual who has been awarded a degree honoris causa takes actions that are contrary to the university's high ideals and values of excellence, service, and integrity engendered in the honorary degree award. In such instances, the Board of Trustees may revoke the degree. This Regulation establishes the process for such revocation.

### III. PRINCIPLES

The University may revoke a degree if it has clear and convincing evidence that ~~the degree recipient:~~

A. A.—The recipient of an academic degree:

1. Failed to complete the requirements for the degree that were in effect at the time of the degree conferral; and/or

B.—

2. Engaged in academic misconduct serious enough to negate bona fide completion of one or more explicit degree requirements.

B. The recipient of an honorary degree engaged in conduct that:

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1. Is inconsistent with the stated mission and/or values of the University;
2. Misrepresents or Undermines the accomplishments that were cited as the basis for awarding the honorary degree; and/or
3. Is injurious to the reputation of the University.

#### IV. DEFINITIONS

##### ~~A. Academic Misconduct-~~

: An action attempted or performed that misrepresents one's involvement in an academic endeavor in any way, or assists another student in misrepresenting his or her involvement in an academic endeavor. Examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to the following:

##### ~~1. Plagiarism~~

A. : Presenting the work (i.e., ideas, data, creations) of another, wholly or in part, as one's own work without customary and proper acknowledgement of sources and extent of use, unless authorized by the instructor, if the plagiarism was part of the work presented for credit toward the degree under consideration for revocation.

##### ~~2. Fraud~~

B. : Altering or inventing data, research, or citations for an academic endeavor; fabricating, forging or otherwise misrepresenting to an instructor or an institution one's past or current academic or professional activities; impersonating someone or allowing oneself to be impersonated for an examination or other academic endeavor; using a ghost writer, commercial or otherwise, for any type of assignment. See UW Regulation 6-802 for additional examples of academic dishonesty.

##### ~~B. Allegation-~~

~~Assertion(s) that may justify degree revocation, involving (1) failure of a degree recipient to complete degree requirements and/or (2) academic misconduct on the part of a degree recipient; which are (3) made to the dean or designee of the college from which the degree was awarded.~~

##### ~~C. Charge-~~

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66           : Formal action taken when (1) the dean of a college/school has factual grounds sufficient  
67 to believe that a degree recipient ~~has failed to complete degree requirements, or has~~  
68 ~~engaged in academic misconduct serious enough to negate bona fide completion of one~~  
69 ~~or more explicit degree requirements; and (2) the degree should be revoked; and (2) in the~~  
70 ~~case of academic degrees, the~~ recipient does not consent to revocation of the degree.

71           **D. —**

72           **Charging Party-**

73           ~~The dean: In cases of academic degrees, the dean(s) of the college(s) of the college (or~~  
74 ~~colleges, in the case of a degree awarded by an interdisciplinary program sponsored by~~  
75 ~~more than one college)/school(s) or designee(s), who concludes from an investigation~~  
76 ~~that the degree recipient's academic degree was improperly awarded, and brings the~~  
77 ~~ease charge against the academic degree recipient.~~

78           **E. —** ~~In cases of honorary degrees, where an award may no longer be warranted, the~~  
79 ~~charging party may be the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, the~~  
80 ~~President, or a member of Board of Trustees. The standards and procedures for honorary~~  
81 ~~degree revocation are outlined in section VIII of this regulation.~~

82           **College-**

83           ~~**School:** The college (or colleges, in (s)/school(s) that awarded the ease of a degree~~  
84 ~~awarded by an interdisciplinary program sponsored by more than one college) that~~  
85 ~~awarded the degree. degree.~~

86           **F. — Hearing Committee-**

87           : A committee of five (5) faculty members that will consider the charge and render a  
88 finding of fact on whether grounds exist for revoking the degree recipient's degree.

89           **G. —**

90           **List of Candidates-**

91           : A list of faculty members nominated to serve on the hearing committee. The list shall  
92 name ten (10) candidates from not fewer than five (5) colleges/schools within the  
93 University. All listed faculty members shall hold tenure, shall not be currently serving as  
94 officers of the University, shall have no prior relationship with the degree recipient, and  
95 shall have no prior involvement in the matter before the hearing committee.

96           **H. — Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs-**

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97 : The Chief Academic Officer of the University.

98 ~~I.~~ **Working Day**

99 : A day in which the University is open for business.

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101 **V. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS FOR REVOCATION OF ACADEMIC DEGREES**

102 **A.** Allegations(s) of circumstances that may justify degree revocation shall be made  
103 to the dean of the college/school that awarded the degree. The dean or a designee  
104 shall conduct a preliminary investigation to determine whether there is a factual  
105 basis to conclude that the degree recipient failed to complete one or more explicit  
106 degree requirements or committed academic misconduct which would warrant  
107 revocation of the degree. The investigation shall be made in a timely manner, and  
108 shall be compliant in all respects with relevant federal and state laws and  
109 University ~~regulations~~ Regulations.

110 **B.** If the dean's or designee's preliminary investigation reveals factual grounds  
111 sufficient to justify academic degree revocation, the dean or designee shall notify  
112 the degree recipient in writing, and shall include the following:

- 113 1. A summary of the factual grounds;
- 114 2. The degree recipient's right to a hearing before a committee (the "Hearing  
115 Committee") comprised of faculty members as defined above;
- 116 3. A copy of this Regulation; and
- 117 4. A request for a response from the academic degree recipient within thirty  
118 (30) ~~working days~~ Working Days.

119 **C.** Upon notification to the academic degree recipient, the dean or designee becomes  
120 the "Charging Party" as defined above.

- 121 1. If the degree recipient admits to the facts described in the summary and  
122 agrees to degree revocation, the degree recipient shall execute a statement  
123 to that effect provided by the Charging Party. The degree recipient shall  
124 return the statement to the Charging Party within ten (10) working days of  
125 receipt of the statement. The Charging Party shall forward the statement  
126 to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and to the  
127 President of the University with a recommendation for its acceptance.

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- 128                   a.     Within five (5) working days of receipt of the statement or as soon  
129                   thereafter as practicable, the President shall make a decision  
130                   accepting or rejecting the statement. The President shall then  
131                   communicate this decision in writing to the Board of Trustees, the  
132                   Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, the academic  
133                   degree recipient, and the Charging Party.
- 134                   b.     The Board of Trustees shall consider the matter and make the final  
135                   decision to revoke the degree or dismiss the charge at a special or  
136                   regular meeting. The Board shall communicate its decision in  
137                   writing to the academic degree recipient, the President, the Vice  
138                   President for Academic Affairs, and the Charging Party.
- 139                   c.     The full record of the case shall be maintained in accordance with  
140                   standing University procedures. The record shall include the  
141                   factual grounds justifying revocation of the academic degree, the  
142                   statement executed by the degree recipient, the decision of the  
143                   President, and the decision of the Board of Trustees.
- 144                   2.     If the academic degree recipient contests the facts described in the  
145                   summary, does not return the statement agreeing to revocation of the  
146                   degree within the specified time, or otherwise requests a hearing, the  
147                   Charging Party shall communicate in writing a formal charge (“the  
148                   Charge”) to the degree recipient. The Charge shall specify the degree  
149                   requirements(s) allegedly not satisfied or the academic misconduct alleged  
150                   to have occurred, the evidence, and the basis for concluding that academic  
151                   degree revocation is warranted. In addition, the notification shall:
- 152                   a.     Identify the dean or designee as the Charging Party; and
- 153                   b.     Inform the academic degree recipient that a Hearing Committee  
154                   shall consider the Charge and render a finding of fact in the matter.
- 155                   3.     In the event a Hearing Committee is required, the following steps shall be  
156                   taken:
- 157                   a.     Within ten (10) working days of communicating the Charge to the  
158                   degree recipient, the Charging Party shall notify the Provost and  
159                   Vice President for Academic Affairs of the Charge and the need to  
160                   form a Hearing Committee;

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- 161                   **b.**        Within twenty (20) working days of the notification, the Provost  
162                    and Vice President for Academic Affairs shall draft a list of  
163                    candidates for the Hearing Committee, and present it to the  
164                    Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate;
- 165                   **c.**        No later than the next regularly scheduled meeting of the  
166                    Executive Committee, the Executive Committee shall select the  
167                    Hearing Committee members from the list of candidates;
- 168                   **d.**        Within fifteen (15) days of being designated, the Hearing  
169                    Committee shall convene in order to:
- 170                               **1.**        Elect one of its members as chair;
- 171                               **2.**        Review the Charge;
- 172                               **3.**        Establish a schedule under which it will:
- 173                                       **i.**        Receive and consider the factual evidence supporting  
174                                        the Charge;
- 175                                       **ii.**       Receive and consider any information that the academic  
176                                        degree recipient may wish to submit in rebuttal to the  
177                                        charge;
- 178                                       **iii.**      Hold one or more hearings with the academic degree  
179                                        recipient; and
- 180                                       **iv.**      Render a written finding of fact regarding the Charge to  
181                                        the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.
- 182                   **e.**        The Hearing Committee shall make every effort to complete its  
183                    review and render a finding of fact to the Provost and Vice  
184                    President for Academic Affairs in a timely manner. The Hearing  
185                    Committee shall, however, allow sufficient time to consider fully  
186                    all evidence and arguments brought before it.

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188 **VI.    HEARING PROCESS FOR ACADEMIC DEGREE REVOCATION**

- 189                   **A.**        As soon as possible after the Hearing Committee has elected its Chair, the Chair  
190                    shall institute a discovery process to prepare for the hearing. Discovery shall be  
191                    limited to an exchange of information between the Charging Party and the

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- 192 academic degree recipient of (1) relevant documents, which may include a  
193 written rebuttal from the academic degree recipient; and (2) lists of witnesses (if  
194 any), including a summary of the factual testimony expected from each witness.  
195 Exchange of information shall be completed, and ~~also~~ provided to the Hearing  
196 Committee, not later than ten (10) working days prior to the hearing. The  
197 Hearing Committee Chair shall have final authority over the suitabilityrelevance  
198 of documents and witnesses.
- 199 **B.** The Chair, the Charging Party, and the academic degree recipient shall use their  
200 best efforts to convene a hearing on the earliest possible mutually convenient date  
201 following the election of the Chair. The Hearing Committee shall allow the  
202 academic degree recipient reasonably sufficient time to prepare a defense.
- 203 **C.** The hearing may be delayed by the Hearing Committee Chair for good cause  
204 shown upon request of the academic degree recipient, the Charging Party, or a  
205 member of the Hearing Committee.
- 206 **D.** The Hearing Committee meetings and process shall conform in all respects to the  
207 provisions of the Family Educational Right to Privacy Act (FERPA). All charges  
208 and information gathered regarding the charge(s) shall be confidential. The  
209 hearing shall not be open to the public unless the academic degree recipient so  
210 requests and the Hearing Committee concurs.
- 211 **E.** The parties involved in the process are the Charging Party and the academic  
212 degree recipient. The Hearing Committee Chair shall preside over the meeting  
213 and any adjournments thereof.
- 214 **F.** The burden of proof shall be on the Charging Party to prove the charge by clear  
215 and convincing evidence.
- 216 **G.** The hearing shall be recorded by a certified court reporter at the University's  
217 expense.
- 218 **H.** The academic degree recipient may be advised or represented at the hearing, or  
219 any adjournments thereof, by legal counsel at his/her expense.
- 220 **I.** If the Charging Party requests, University counsel shall represent the Charging  
221 Party.
- 222 **J.** The University shall provide outside counsel to advise the Hearing Committee  
223 and assist in the conduct of all proceedings.

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224 K. At the hearing, the Charging Party and the academic degree recipient may present  
225 ~~an~~ opening and closing statements and present witnesses for questioning by the  
226 Hearing Committee. No depositions may be taken unless a witness is unavailable  
227 to testify in person or by some other means on the day of the hearing and the  
228 Hearing Committee Chair determines that the testimony of that witness is  
229 necessary to the ~~committee's~~Committee's deliberations. Hearing Committee  
230 members and their counsel may ask questions of the Charging Party, the academic  
231 degree recipient, their respective counsel, and all witnesses.

232 L. Formal rules of evidence do not apply. The Chair shall control the conduct of the  
233 hearing and shall rule on the admissibility of any evidence and may exclude any  
234 witnesses, documents, interrogatories, or cross-examinations ~~which~~that are  
235 untrustworthy, irrelevant, or redundant.

## 236 VI.VII. FINDINGS AND DECISION FOR ACADEMIC DEGREE REVOCATION

237 A. The Hearing Committee shall present written findings of fact to the Provost and  
238 Vice President for Academic Affairs. These findings shall state whether the  
239 charge was substantiated by clear and convincing evidence and shall also set forth  
240 the specific pertinent factual findings. These findings shall be by majority vote  
241 and shall be reported to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs as  
242 soon after the conclusion of the hearing as is practicable. The findings shall be  
243 communicated in writing to the Charging Party and the academic degree recipient.

244 B. Within five (5) working days of receipt of the Hearing Committee findings or as  
245 soon thereafter as practicable, the Provost and Vice President for Academic  
246 Affairs shall forward a written recommendation to the President of the University  
247 regarding whether the academic degree should be revoked or the charges  
248 dismissed. The recommendation shall be communicated in writing to the  
249 Charging Party, the Hearing Committee, and the academic degree recipient.

250 C. Within five (5) working days of receipt of the Provost and Vice President for  
251 Academic Affairs' recommendation or as soon thereafter as practicable, the  
252 President shall make a decision on the case. The President shall communicate the  
253 decision in writing to the Charging Party and the ~~degree~~academic recipient.

254 1. If the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs recommends  
255 dismissal of the charge, and the President concurs with that  
256 recommendation, the charge shall be dismissed.  
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2. If the Provost Vice President for Academic Affairs recommends revocation of an academic degree, and the President does not concur with that recommendation, the charge shall be dismissed. The President shall provide an explanation in writing of the reasons for dismissing the charge to the Charging Party, academic degree recipient, and Hearing Committee. The explanation shall become part of the full record of the case and proceedings.
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3. If the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs recommends revocation of an academic degree, and the President concurs, the President shall forward to the Board of Trustees a recommendation to revoke the academic degree and the reasons for it, along with the full record of the case and proceedings.
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4. If the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs recommends dismissal of the charge, and the President does not concur with that recommendation, the President shall forward to the Board of Trustees a recommendation to revoke the academic degree and the reasons for it, the recommendation of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the full record of the case and proceedings.
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- D. If the case is forwarded to the Board of Trustees, the Board shall consider the matter at a special or regular meeting.
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1. The academic degree recipient may submit a written argument to the Board, indicating why the Board should dismiss the recommendation for revocation of the academic degree. The written argument must be submitted no later than twenty (20) working days after the academic degree recipient is sent notice of the President's recommendation. The academic degree recipient shall provide a copy of the written argument to the Charging Party.
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2. The Charging Party shall submit a written response to the Board of Trustees within ten (10) working days from receipt of the degree recipient's written argument. The Charging Party shall forward a copy of the written response to the degree recipient.
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3. The Board may request oral argument from the parties, or request additional written argument from the parties.
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4. The Board shall revoke the academic degree or dismiss the charge.

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292                   5.       The Board shall communicate its decision, in writing, to the Charging  
293                   Party, to the academic degree recipient, and to the President within five (5)  
294                   working days of the decision.

295                   E.       The decision of the Board of Trustees final.

296                   F.       The full record of the case shall be maintained in accordance with standard  
297                   University procedures. The record shall include the charge, all evidence  
298                   presented, a transcript of the hearing, the findings of the Hearing Committee, the  
299                   recommendation of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, the  
300                   decision of the President, and the decision of the Board of Trustees.

### 301 VIII. REVOCATION OF HONORARY DEGREES

302                   The authority to revoke a previously awarded honorary degree rests with the Board of  
303                   Trustees. The Board of Trustees may revoke an honorary degree if, in its judgment, and  
304                   taking into account the President of the University’s recommendation, the recipient of the  
305                   degree has engaged in conduct that: 1) is inconsistent with the stated mission and/or  
306                   values of the University of Wyoming; 2) misrepresents or undermines the  
307                   accomplishments that were cited as the basis for awarding the honorary degree; or 3) is  
308                   injurious to the reputation of the University of Wyoming.

309                   Recipients have the right to appeal revocation of an honorary degree. The written appeal must  
310                   be made within 30 days of the public announcement of revocation. The appeal shall be  
311                   submitted to the chair of faculty senate. The chairperson will convene an ad hoc committee  
312                   composed of the Faculty Senate chair, a past chair of faculty senate, and the Provost or  
313                   a representative designated by the Provost. The ad hoc committee will consider the merits of  
314                   the appeal. It will submit its recommendation to the President of whether the revocation  
315                   decision should stand. The recommendation shall be made to the President within 7 working  
316                   days of receiving the appeal, after which the President will convey the recommendations to the  
317                   Board of Trustees for action, along with the President’s recommendation.

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**Effective Date:** July 1, 2018

**Responsible Division/Unit:** Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

**Source:**

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**Links:** <http://www.uwyo.edu/generalcounsel/current-uw-regulations-and-presidential-directives/index.html>

**Associated Regulations, Policies, and Forms:**

**History:**

University Regulation 254; adopted 7/17/08 Board of Trustees meeting

Revisions adopted 3/4/11 Board of Trustees meeting

Revisions adopted 11/14/14 Board of Trustees