



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
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UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING REGULATIONS

Subject: Academic and Honorary Degree Revocation
Number: UW Regulation 8-254 (2-XX)2-120

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:

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.~~

~~B. 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~~

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 degrees 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 ~~easecharge 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-~~

97 : The Chief Academic Officer of the University.

98 **I. Working Day**

99 : A day in which the University is open for business.
100

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.

- 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;

- 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.

187
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
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.

- 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 **VIVII. 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.
- 257 **2.** If the Provost Vice President for Academic Affairs recommends
258 revocation of ~~an~~ academic degree, and the President does not concur with
259 the recommendation, the charge shall be dismissed.

260 that recommendation, the charge shall be dismissed. The President shall
261 provide an explanation in writing of the reasons for dismissing the charge
262 to the Charging Party, academic degree recipient, and Hearing Committee.
263 The explanation shall become part of the full record of the case and
264 proceedings.

265 3. If the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs recommends
266 revocation of an academic degree, and the President concurs, the
267 President shall forward to the Board of Trustees a recommendation to
268 revoke the academic degree and the reasons for it, along with the full
269 record of the case and proceedings.

270 4. If the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs recommends
271 dismissal of the charge, and the President does not concur with that
272 recommendation, the President shall forward to the Board of Trustees a
273 recommendation to revoke the academic degree and the reasons for it, the
274 recommendation of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs,
275 and the full record of the case and proceedings.

276 D. If the case is forwarded to the Board of Trustees, the Board shall consider the
277 matter at a special or regular meeting.

278 1. The academic degree recipient may submit a written argument to the
279 Board, indicating why the Board should dismiss the recommendation for
280 revocation of the academic degree. The written argument must be
281 submitted no later than twenty (20) working days after the academic
282 degree recipient is sent notice of the President's recommendation. The
283 academic degree recipient shall provide a copy of the written argument to
284 the Charging Party.

285 2. The Charging Party shall submit a written response to the Board of
286 Trustees within ten (10) working days from receipt of the degree
287 recipient's written argument. The Charging Party shall forward a copy of
288 the written response to the degree recipient.

289 3. The Board may request oral argument from the parties, or request
290 additional written argument from the parties.

291 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.

301 302 VIII. REVOCATION OF HONORARY DEGREES

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

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

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

Associated Regulations, Policies, and Forms:

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