



## Standard Administrative Policy and Procedure

**Subject:** Honorary Degrees Nomination, Review and Award Process

**Number:** UW SAP 2-119.1

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### I. PURPOSE

Awarding honorary degrees provides an opportunity to recognize and reward excellence. The purpose of this policy is to establish the eligibility, criteria, and process for annually nominating, reviewing and awarding University of Wyoming honorary degrees.

### II. ELIGIBILITY

Except as outlined in this section, all candidates who have demonstrated the appropriate criteria outlined in Section III are eligible for nomination. Candidates who are not eligible for nomination are:

- A. Active faculty, staff and administrators of the University (except emeritus faculty), including any current University employee; and/or
- B. Any holders of elected or appointed public offices, those who left office less than one year ago, or their immediate family members.

### III. CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

Substantial evidence that the candidates have demonstrated extraordinary achievements in at least one of the following areas:

- A. Outstanding contribution to the lives of the people of Wyoming,
- B. Outstanding career or lifetime accomplishment on a state, national, or international level by an alumna or alumnus of the University, or
- C. Accomplishments so exemplary as to have won recognition on a national or international level, with relevance to Wyoming.

Examples of substantial evidence may include a significant degree of creativity, resourcefulness, humanitarian concern, personal dedication, intellect, and other qualities consistent with the intent of an honorary degree. While not a requirement, preference may be given to nominations of persons who are dedicated to the purpose, nature, and mission of the University.

#### **IV. JOINT HONORARY DEGREE REVIEW COMMITTEE**

UW Regulation 2-119 (VI) specifies the composition of the joint committee that solicits and reviews applications for honorary degrees. This Joint Honorary Degree Review Committee (“Committee”) consists of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees and three faculty members of the appropriate faculty committee chosen annually by the Faculty Senate. The President of the University shall preside as chairperson without vote.

#### **V. NOMINATION PROCESS**

- A.** Nominations for honorary degrees can be made by current or former members of the Board of Trustees, members of the University faculty and staff, University students, and/or University alumni.
- B.** In early September, the Committee shall review the Call for Nominations.
- C.** In mid-September, the Office of the President shall issue the Call for Nominations for honorary degree candidates.
- D.** Nomination materials must include:
  - i.** A letter of nomination that describes how the nominee meets at least one of the criteria outlined in Section (III);
  - ii.** A vitae or similar document that describes the nominee’s accomplishments, including a list of public recognitions, public presentations, awards, honors, and publications not to exceed ten pages;
  - iii.** Two letters of support detailing explicit examples of how the nominee meets the criterion; and
  - iv.** A one- or two-paragraph summary of the nominee’s qualifications.
- E.** All recommendations shall be submitted in writing to the President of the University by November 1st each year.

#### **VI. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS**

- A.** In early November, the Office of the President shall organize the nominations, conduct background reviews on the nominees, develop materials as the Committee may request, and distribute the nominations and materials to the Committee.
- B.** The Committee may consult with the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs or any other key personnel in reviewing the nominations.

- C. Given the confidential nature of its work, all Committee meetings will occur in executive session and members are prohibited from discussing the Committee's deliberations with anyone except the members of the Committee.
- D. Attendance by Committee members can be in in-person or by electronic media
- E. Between November and January, the Committee shall meet to review the nominations. Those nominations that receive a majority vote of all Committee members in attendance at the meeting will be forwarded by the Office of the President to the Board with a recommendation to award. The Committee may decide to hold more than one meeting, provided it arrives at the final recommendations before mid-January.
- F. Candidates who did not receive a majority vote of all Committee members may, if the Committee deems it appropriate, be passed along to the University of Wyoming Alumni Association for consideration of a Distinguished Alumni Award.
- G. Along with the Committee's recommendations, the Board will be provided with the total number of nominations, but not the names of those who did not receive a majority vote.
- H. The President's Office shall forward the recommendations and number of nominations to the Board at least one week before the Board's January meeting.
- I. In executive session during its January meeting, the Board will review the Committee's recommendations and shall (1) approve the recommendations or (2) request additional information for further and final deliberations during its February meeting.
- J. The President of the University will contact approved candidates to offer an honorary degree. Approved candidates are not announced publicly until acceptance of the degree.
- K. The Office of the President will retain on file for two additional years all nominations. With the presentation of new and pertinent information, honorary degree candidates that were not recommended for approval can be re-nominated again following the process outlined above in Section VI. There is no limit on how many times a candidate can be nominated.

## **VIII. CONFERRING OF HONORARY DEGREES**

- A. In early March, the Office of the President will make the arrangements for the presentations of the honorary degrees during the Spring Commencement Dinner and bestowing of the degrees at the appropriate college commencements.
- B. Honorary degrees that may be conferred include:

- i. L.H.D. (Doctor of Humane Letters): for service to humanity, society, or public service.
- ii. L.L.D. (Doctor of Laws): for achievement in law or the legal field.
- iii. D.A. (Doctor of Arts): for achievement in any artistic field including creative and performing arts, music, design, and architecture.
- iv. Litt.D. (Doctor of Letters): for the advancement of knowledge in the humanities, including history, philosophy, language, literature, religion, and critical and cultural studies.
- v. Sc.D. (Doctor of Science): for the advancement of knowledge in fields such as medicine; engineering; natural, social, or behavioral sciences; or mathematics

**Responsible Division/Unit:** Office of the President

**Source:** None

**Links:** <http://www.uwyo.edu/regs-policies>

**Associated Regulations, Policies, and Forms:** UW Regulation 2-119

**Approved:** Originally approved 1/9/2018; Revised 9/20/2018; Revised 11/22/2024