



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

HONORARY DEGREES

POLICY:

Utica University honorary degrees may be conferred upon only those individuals who meet the following criteria:

- The candidate has made an outstanding contribution or contributions to an academic discipline, the humanities, the professions, society, and/or Utica University
- The candidate's ideals and values reflect those of Utica University
- The candidate is not a current student, employee, or trustee of the University
- Except in extraordinary circumstances, the candidate is not currently serving as an elected or appointed official in any governmental system
- Except in extraordinary circumstances, the candidate must be able to accept his or her degree in person (see Exceptions, below)

University employees may be nominated for honorary degrees once a full year separates the time the employee was last employed by the University in any capacity and the time of the nomination.

The authority to confer Utica University honorary degrees as well as the decision to do so rests solely with the University's Board of Trustees. Trustees will be guided in their decisions by a review and recommendation process designed to ensure that UC's faculty and administration have opportunities to evaluate nominees' qualifications. In addition, the Faculty Senate has explicit authority to vote whether to recommend nominees for honorary degrees.

Faculty, staff, and trustees of the University may nominate candidates for honorary degrees. With the exception of those who are responsible for vetting and reviewing candidates (see Procedure, below), the nominating process must be strictly confidential and on a "need to know" basis; only the nominator and those individuals charged with reviewing nominations are to know that an individual has been nominated for an honorary degree. If necessary, a candidate's name may be disclosed to individuals whose opinion is formally sought regarding the candidate's qualifications and accomplishments.

The process of calling for and reviewing nominations, and forwarding recommendations as appropriate, will be coordinated by the Utica University Honorary Degree Committee.

Conferring of Honorary Degrees upon Commencement Speakers

Utica University may or may not award an honorary degree to its Commencement speaker in any particular year. The decision as to whether to nominate a Commencement speaker for an honorary degree falls within the purview of the University's Commencement Speaker Committee. If that committee chooses to nominate a Commencement speaker for an honorary degree, the procedures outlined below will be followed. However, given the need to negotiate with Commencement speaker candidates regarding availability and fees, the selection of the Commencement speaker and, therefore, the decision as to whether to nominate the speaker for an honorary degree, may not take place until the spring semester. If needed, the procedures outlined below also provide for alternative approval processes.

Exceptions

Honorary degrees will be granted only to living individuals. However, if a candidate dies during the nomination process or after having been approved for an honorary degree, the degree may be conferred posthumously. In such cases, a person who was personally or professionally close to the candidate may be invited to receive the degree on the candidate's behalf.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all members of the Utica University community.

REASON FOR POLICY:

This policy is intended to ensure that members of the University community have opportunities to nominate candidates for honorary degrees and that honorary degree candidates are held to the highest academic, ethical, and professional standards.

DEFINITIONS:

Honorary Degree: An academic degree that does not require the completion of coursework but that is granted in recognition of the recipient's scholarly, literary, scientific, artistic, public service, or professional achievements, achievements in other areas, or in recognition of the recipient's outstanding contributions to the University in support of its mission.

Utica University Honorary Degree Committee: A University committee charged with reviewing nominations for honorary degrees and recommending candidates to the Faculty Senate, President of the University, and Board of Trustees. Members are:

Chair of the Board of Trustees or a trustee selected by the Chair of the Board of Trustees

- The President of the University or his/her designee (who will serve as recording secretary)
- The Provost of the University or his/her designee
- The three elected members of the Faculty Senate Honorary Degree Committee
- The Chief Advancement Officer or his/her designee

The President of the University or his/her designee will co-chair the Utica University Honorary Degree Committee with a faculty member of the committee who will be selected according to a process to be determined by the Faculty Senate.

Faculty Senate Honorary Degree Committee: A Faculty Senate Committee established within that body's Bylaws and charged with calling for and vetting honorary degree nominations from the faculty; representing the faculty on the Utica University Honorary Degree Committee; and presenting honorary degree candidates to the Faculty Senate for consideration.

PROCEDURE:

Calls for Nominations

The Faculty Senate Honorary Degree Committee will issue a call for nominations to members of the faculty by mid-September of each academic year. The Committee may additionally issue a preliminary call for nominations during the preceding spring semester. The call will be issued via email; however, in addition, announcements may be made at Faculty Senate meetings.

Nominations are due by the first Monday in October. The Utica University Honorary Degree Committee reserves the right to extend the deadline or to consider exceptional candidates who emerge after the deadline.

The Chair of the Honorary Degree Committee will issue a call via email for nominations to staff, administration, and trustees by mid-September of each academic year. The Chair of the Honorary Degree Committee may additionally issue a preliminary call for nominations during the preceding spring semester. Nominations are due by the first Monday in October. The Utica University Honorary Degree Committee reserves the right to extend the deadline or to consider exceptional candidates who emerge after the deadline.

All nominations must be submitted in writing, and must include a justification that clearly demonstrates that the nominee meets the criteria set forth above. Materials such as Web links and newspaper articles, while accepted, are not by themselves sufficient for this purpose. In addition, nominations will ideally include a resume or CV. The Faculty Senate and Utica University Honorary Degree Committees may request additional supporting materials as necessary.

Review of Nominations

The Chair of the Utica University Honorary Degree Committee will convene the committee on or about November 1. During the period between October 1 and November 1:

- The Faculty Senate Honorary Degree Committee will vet nominations from members of the faculty and forward approved nominations to the Chair of the Utica University Honorary Degree Committee, and
- The administrative members of the Utica University Honorary Degree Committee will vet all other nominations and forward approved nominations to the Chair of the Utica University Honorary Degree Committee.

Ordinarily, the Utica University Honorary Degree Committee will decide which candidates to recommend for honorary degrees no later than October 31. Members of the Faculty Senate Honorary Degree Committee will then present the candidates to the Faculty Senate at its November meeting, with the intent of calling for a vote at the Faculty Senate's December meeting. At least one week in advance of the formal presentation, members of the Faculty Senate Honorary Degree Committee will provide members of the Faculty Senate with supporting documentation, including letters of nomination, as well as the proposed honorary degree to be conferred.

The Faculty Senate will vote whether to recommend nominees to the President of the University, who will in turn recommend nominees to the Trusteeship Subcommittee for consideration at its

winter meeting. In accordance with the Bylaws of the University, the Trusteeship Subcommittee will vote whether to recommend nominees to the Committee on Advancement, Marketing, and Enrollment, which in turn will vote whether to recommend nominees to the full Board of Trustees at its winter meeting.

Ordinarily, no more than two honorary degrees will be awarded in any academic year. A third candidate may be considered if there are compelling reasons to do so.

The President of the University will notify nominees that they have been selected to receive an honorary degree. Nominations must remain confidential until then.

Alternative Procedures

Because decisions regarding honorary degrees may not be made until the spring semester, an alternative timeline may be followed. Similarly, extraordinary circumstances such as the conferring of an honorary degree during the fall semester may necessitate alternative procedures. In such cases, the following processes may be followed, as necessary:

- The Chair of the Utica University Honorary Degree Committee may convene a subcommittee consisting of, at a minimum, the chair of the Board of Trustees, at least two faculty members of the Committee, and the Chief Advancement Officer or his/her designee.
- Voting by the Faculty Senate may take place via Survey Monkey or other electronic means.
- The Faculty Senate's Executive Council may act on behalf of the full Faculty Senate, in accordance with that body's Bylaws.
- The Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees may act on the behalf of the full Board, in accordance with that body's Bylaws.

Note: The alternative procedures outlined above will preserve this policy's intent to present nominees to the faculty for consideration before nominees are presented to the trustees.

When applicable, the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees will consider nominees at its February or March meeting, but no later than April 15. The actions of the Executive Committee will be presented to the full Board for affirmation at its final meeting of the year.

Voting

All members of the Utica University Honorary Degree Committee will have voting privileges. Members must attend meetings in person, or participate via telephone or other electronic means, in order to vote. A simple majority of the committee's membership, providing that there at least two faculty members, will constitute a quorum, and a simple majority of those voting, with at least two faculty members voting in the affirmative, will be required to approve motions.

Selection of Honorary Degrees

The Office of the Registrar will select the appropriate degree based on the candidate's qualifications and accomplishments. See List of Honorary Degrees.

Conferring of Honorary Degrees

Honorary degrees will normally be conferred during the University's Commencement ceremony in May. However, the University may, at its discretion, confer a degree during a special event other than Commencement.

With the exception of degrees that are awarded posthumously, no honorary degrees will be conferred in absentia.

Honorary degree recipients will be recognized with an official diploma and a citation that will be read aloud. Recipients will also be honored by mention in printed programs, news releases, features on the University's website, etc. Honorary degree recipients are also listed in the University's undergraduate catalog.

RESPONSIBILITY:

It is the responsibility of the Faculty Senate Honorary Degree Committee to issue annual calls for nominations to the faculty of the University, to review those nominations, to make recommendations to the Utica University Honorary Degree Committee, and to present candidates for honorary degrees to the Faculty Senate.

It is the responsibility of the Utica University Honorary Degree Committee to issue annual calls for nominations to staff, administration, and trustees, to review nominations, and to make recommendations to the Faculty Senate and Trusteeship Subcommittee regarding the conferring of honorary degrees.

It is the responsibility of the Faculty Senate to consider and vote upon such nominations at a fall semester regular meeting, normally the last regular meeting of the fall semester.

It is the responsibility of the Trusteeship Subcommittee to consider and vote upon such nominations at its first meeting of the spring semester.

It is the responsibility of the Office of the President to coordinate nominating and voting processes with the Executive Committee and/or full Board of Trustees and to notify candidates who are to be awarded honorary degrees.

It is the responsibility of the Office of the Registrar to determine which degree will be conferred upon honorary degree candidates.

It is the responsibility of the Provost of the University, in consultation with the three School Deans, to select an individual to read the citation.

It is the responsibility of the Office of Marketing and Communications to coordinate production of a framed diploma for the honorary degree recipient and to provide publicity as appropriate. It is the responsibility of the Office of Advancement to make all travel arrangements for honorary degree recipients.

ENFORCEMENT:

Enforcement of Utica University policies is the responsibility of the office or offices listed in the "Resources/Questions" section of each policy. The responsible office will contact the appropriate authority regarding faculty or staff members, students, vendors, or visitors who violate policies.

Utica University acknowledges that University policies may not anticipate every possible issue that may arise. The University therefore reserves the right to make reasonable and relevant decisions regarding the enforcement of this policy. All such decisions must be approved by an

officer of the University (i.e. President, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Executive Vice President and Chief Advancement Officer, Vice President for Financial Affairs, or Vice President for Legal Affairs and General Counsel).

RESOURCES/QUESTIONS:

For questions or additional information, please contact the Office of the President at (315) 792-3222.

Please note that other Utica University policies may apply or be related to this policy. To search for related policies, use the Keyword Search function of the online policy manual.

Laura M. Casamento, President

Date

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Promulgated

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