

University of Alaska Anchorage Honorary Degree Policy

Policy Category: Academic Affairs
Responsible Office: Office of the Chancellor
Related Policy: BOR-P10.03.020. / R10.03.020 - Honorary Degrees

I: Scope

This policy establishes the process by which the University of Alaska Anchorage will receive, consider and recommend nominations for an honorary doctoral degree to the UA Board of Regents. It establishes general criteria, the eligibility of nominations and formally establishes the UAA Honorary Degree Committee in university policy.

II: Policy Overview

University of Alaska Board of Regents Policy and Regulation P10.03.020 and R10.03.020 govern the nomination, review and award of the six honorary doctoral degrees conferred by the University of Alaska System. Regents Policy calls for the Chancellor of each university to establish a committee and process for the recommendation of prospective nominees.

III: UAA Honorary Degree Committee

The UAA Honorary Degree Committee is established as an advisory faculty committee to receive, review and recommend nominations for award of an honorary degree from the university.

A. Committee Membership

The committee consists of at least six members of the faculty, with one appointed by the Chancellor from each UAA academic college. For the purposes of this policy, faculty from the UAA/APU Consortium Library shall be grouped with the School of Education. At least one of the members of the committee shall be from a UAA community campus. Committee members shall serve staggered three-year terms commencing at the beginning of Fall Semester. A member who has served two consecutive terms, or six years total, may not be reappointed unless a year has lapsed since they last served on the committee. The Chancellor may remove a member of the committee after consultation with the Provost and President of the Faculty Senate. The committee shall annually select a chair from amongst its members, and the chair may not serve more than two consecutive years without a one-year break in service as committee chair.

B. Advisory Membership

The UAA Provost, or their designee, shall serve as an ex-officio advisory member of the committee. The head of the UAA Advancement Department, or their designee, shall serve as an ex-officio advisory member of the committee.

C. Committee Meetings

The committee shall meet at least twice per year to consider proposed nominations, and to brief new and returning members on the honorary degree award process. The committee will convene at the call of the chair, and may meet as needed to accomplish their work. Meetings will be closed to the public to protect the privacy of nominees under consideration.

D. Administrative Support

The UAA Governance Coordinator shall provide administrative support to the committee, including the scheduling of meetings, drafting and maintaining process documents, receiving nominations, facilitating ceremony details for awardees, and coordinating with the Advancement Department and the Chancellor.

IV: Honorary Degree Nomination and Review Process

UAA shall conduct an annual solicitation for nominees to be awarded an honorary degree.

A. Eligibility and Criteria

An honorary doctoral degree is the highest award the university can bestow. It recognizes individuals who have made a substantial and lasting contribution to the university, the State of Alaska, or to their respective field or profession. Nominees should demonstrate strong character. Awardees may not be an employee of the University of Alaska System, member of the Board of Regents, or either hold or be a candidate for an office of public trust in the United States at the time of receiving an honorary degree. Financial contribution to the university shall have no bearing on the degree award process.

B. Call for Nominations

By December 1st of each year, the Honorary Degree Committee shall announce an open call for nominations to the UAA community. The process shall welcome nominations from members of the university community, stakeholders, alumni and members of the general public. Self-nominations are not permitted and serving committee members are ineligible for nomination. Committee members are precluded from proposing nominations to the committee and submitting letters of support. The committee may adopt a nomination form to facilitate its process. Information included in nominations shall include at minimum:

- 1) Nominee name, title and place of residence
- 2) Summary of nominee education, professional experience or curriculum vitae
- 3) Summary of nominee accomplishments and worthiness of award
- 4) Two letters of support
- 5) Name, title of nominators and disclosure of any personal connection

The submission, receipt and review of all nominations shall be kept confidential by both nominators and the committee. Completed nomination packets for an honorary degree must be submitted to the committee by February 14th. In extraordinary circumstances, the committee

may consider nominations submitted after this deadline after consultation with the Provost and Chancellor.

C. Committee Review

The committee will review the nominations and materials submitted, and evaluate the merits of prospective nominees for receiving an honorary degree. Committee members who have a direct personal connection with a nominee shall recuse themselves from proceedings on that nomination. A nominator may request to appear before the committee to speak to a nomination they have submitted. The committee will forward its recommendations, including any nominations not recommended for award, to the Provost by April 15th.

D. Provost and Chancellor Review

The Provost shall review nominations proposed by the committee and make recommendations to the Chancellor by May 1st. The Provost shall submit the names of nominees to UA Human Resources and UA General Counsel for review prior to final consideration by the Chancellor. The Chancellor will review the recommendations of the Provost and the committee, and submit nominations of their choosing to the Board of Regents for consideration. The Advancement Department will prepare biographies of recommended nominees for consideration by the board.

E. Notice and Conferral

After award by the Board of Regents, honorary degree recipients will be notified in advance of the awards ceremony in a time and manner deemed appropriate by the Chancellor. Conferral of honorary degrees will take place during university commencement ceremonies, unless otherwise specified by the Chancellor.

V: Reason for the Policy

The conferral of an honorary doctoral degree recognizes individuals whose contributions have made a lasting impact on the university, the State of Alaska as well as professional accomplishments which are important for a vibrant society. UAA adopts this policy to enact an open, transparent process by which the university community can bring forward nominations. The policy updates and formalizes the work currently being done by faculty, governance and university leadership. It also adopts criteria and procedures to ensure ethical consideration of nominations, as well as protect the privacy of nominees during the review process.