Policy Name: Honorary Degree Policy

Approval Body and Date:
- Board of Regents
  - May 10, 2001
  - December 13, 2002
  - March 18, 2004

Responsible Department:
- Board of Regents

Purpose:
Honorary Degree Policy

Policy: Criteria for Selection

The Honorary degrees of Doctorate of Laws, Doctorate of Humane Letters, and Doctorate of Arts shall be awarded to individuals who have made contributions of exceptional substance to Western New Mexico University or who have significantly enriched the educational, cultural, scientific, or intellectual life of the region, state, or nation.

An honorary degree may be awarded either through Procedure A or Procedure B set forth below.

Procedure A

1) Nominations can come from any source, on or off campus, with a deadline of November 1 for the fall presentation or April 1 for the spring or summer presentation.

2) The Office of the President will serve as the clearinghouse.

3) A comprehensive vita will be prepared for each potential candidate.

4) Accomplishments of potential honorary degree recipients will be reviewed by an Honorary Degree Committee composed of:

   A. One or two Regents (one of whom will serve as Chair).

   B. One faculty member elected from each of five departments designated by the Vice-President of Academic Affairs for an academic year so that departments are rotated annually on this committee.

   C. The Chairperson of the Board may appoint up to one additional student and one Western alumnus to the committee.
5) All deliberations of The Honorary Degree Committee will be confidential.

6) Recommendations of the Committee will be made to the President who will take the Committee’s and her/his recommendations to the Board of Regents for final decision.

**Procedure B**

Any Regent may nominate an individual for an award of an honorary degree during an open session of any meeting of the Board of Regents, provided appropriate notice is stated in the agenda.

Nominations made directly by a Regent during an open session of any meeting of the Board need not go through the Honorary Degree Committee process prior to final action by the Board and a comprehensive vita need not be prepared prior to final action by the Board.

A majority of a quorum of the Board may vote in open session to:

1. Approve the award of an honorary degree;

2. Send the matter to the Honorary Degree Committee for further review after Preparation of a comprehensive vita; or

3. Deny an award of an honorary degree.

**General Provisions**

All action by the Board of Regents will be at the open session of the Board. Upon final action by the Board awarding an honorary degree, a biographical sketch will be developed and will become an integral part of the presentation ceremony. Honorary Degrees may be presented only at Commencement or other official or formal convocations of the University.