

# **Texas Woman's University University Regulation and Procedure**

**Regulation and Procedure Name: Honorary Degree**

**Regulation and Procedure  
Number: URP: 02.210**

**Policy Owner: Academic Affairs**

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

An honorary degree from Texas Woman's University ("TWU" or "University") recognizes individuals of prominence who exemplify excellence in scholarship or leadership and who demonstrate exceptional accomplishment in the professions, sciences, arts, humanities, public service, or service to humanity.

## **APPLICABILITY**

This policy is applicable to TWU Students, Faculty, and Staff.

## **DEFINITIONS**

1. "Faculty" means an individual who is employed by TWU as a member of the faculty and whose duties include teaching, research, service, and administration. Professional librarians and graduate assistant titles are excluded from the definition of faculty.
2. "Staff" means each classified, administrative, and professional employee who is appointed to work in a regular full time or regular part time position, excluding students employed in positions for which student status is required as a condition of employment and those employees holding teaching and/or research positions classified as faculty.
3. "Student" means a person taking courses at TWU, a person who is not currently enrolled in courses but who has a continuing academic relationship with TWU, or a person who has been admitted or readmitted to TWU.

## REGULATION AND PROCEDURE

### I. Purpose

The purpose of awarding an honorary degree from Texas Woman's University is to recognize and honor those individuals who meet the criteria as set forth below through exceptional accomplishment in their respective fields or make a positive impact on the University. The awarding of the degree brings distinction to the University by demonstrating the high standards of achievement and emphasis on excellence that characterize Texas Woman's University, as reflected in the University's mission.

### II. Criteria and Guidelines for Selection

- A. The following criteria shall serve as guidelines for selection of individuals to receive honorary degrees and the awarding of such degrees. The individual:
  1. Must evidence outstanding achievement in the humanities, arts, sciences, or in a profession; in government, public affairs, education, or religion; in industry or commerce; or in an auxiliary field or endeavor.
  2. Must evidence distinguished service and performance in their accomplishments that support the ideals of TWU and serve as an example to students, alumni, and society.
  3. Must evidence in their life a commitment of service to humankind.
- B. Texas Woman's University shall confer honorary degrees only at the doctoral level.
- C. To ensure that honorary degrees are distinguishable from earned degrees, the designation for all honorary degrees shall be Doctor of Humane Letters (Hon.).
- D. Only under exceptional circumstances, as determined by the Chancellor and President ("Chancellor"), will Texas Woman's University grant more than one (1) honorary degree per academic year.
- E. An honorary degree will not be conferred on any faculty member, administrator, or other official associated with the University until such individual has been separated from the University for two (2) or more academic years.
- F. The University will not confer honorary degrees on serving members of the Texas congressional delegation, elected and appointed state officials,

members of the state judiciary, or serving members of the TWU Board of Regents until two (2) or more years after they have vacated office or terminated their respective employment.

### III. Nominations

A. Nominations for honorary degrees are open each Fall semester. (For the specific timeline, refer to the *TWU Honorary Degree Nomination Form*, which may be accessed under Forms and Tools below). Nominations may originate from faculty, staff, students, alumni, or friends of the University. Nominations must be submitted to the Provost's Office and include the following:

1. The nomination form containing basic personal information and contact information for the nominator and nominee.
2. The following additional items to complete the nomination:
  - a. A formal letter of nomination;
  - b. Curriculum vitae, biography, or professional resume;
  - c. Two (2) letters of support in addition to the formal letter of nomination; and
  - d. Additional pertinent data or relevant information which may be deemed appropriate by the nominator.

B. Completion of the nomination by the deadline is the responsibility of the nominator. Nominations received after the published deadline will not be considered.

C. Nominations remain in the pool of nominees for three (3) academic years. Credentials may be enhanced at any time during this three (3) year period. After the three (3) year period in the pool expires, the person may be re-nominated after a three (3) year period of non-consideration.

D. A letter of acknowledgement will be sent to each nominator by the chair of the Advisory Committee on Honorary Degrees.

### IV. The Advisory Committee on Honorary Degrees' Consideration of Nominees

A. The Advisory Committee on Honorary Degrees ("Committee") is responsible for reviewing nominations. The Committee is under the supervision of the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost ("EVPAA and Provost").

## B. Committee Structure

1. The Committee is composed of eleven (11) members.
  2. Committee members will serve staggered two-year terms and may be re-appointed for a second term. After serving a second consecutive term, a committee member may be re-appointed after two (2) years off the committee. Committee members will serve as noted below and will include:
    - a. A representative from each of the five (5) academic colleges, recommended by the Dean of the College. College of Professional Education, College of Nursing, and College of Business select new representatives in odd years; College of Arts and Sciences and College of Health Sciences select new representatives in even years;
    - b. A representative of the graduate faculty, recommended by the Chair of the Graduate Council (odd years);
    - c. A representative from Staff Council, recommended by the President of the Staff Council (even years);
    - d. A representative from the Faculty Senate, recommended by the Speaker of the Faculty Senate (odd years);
    - e. One graduate student, recommended by the Dean of the Graduate School (even years);
    - f. One undergraduate student, recommended by the Vice President for Student Life (even years);
    - g. A representative from University Advancement recommended by the Vice President for University Advancement (even years).
  3. The Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost will appoint a committee member(s) as the chair(s) of the Committee for a one (1) year term. Chairs may be re-appointed by the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost for additional one (1) year terms.
  4. A quorum will consist of seven (7) members.
- C. All considerations of nominees for honorary degrees will be conducted with confidentiality at every level.

- D. The Advisory Committee on Honorary Degrees shall meet within thirty (30) days after the submission deadline. Each member of the Committee shall be supplied, in advance, with the materials for each nominee.
1. The Committee will discuss and deliberate on the qualifications of the nominees. After deliberation, the members of the Committee will cast written ballots to determine the acceptability of each nominee.
  2. With a quorum being present, if eighty percent (80%) of those in attendance vote in favor of the nominee, that nominee's name will be forwarded to the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost for consideration.
    - a. If the committee votes in favor of more than one nominee, the Committee may also indicate to the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost a preferred nominee.
    - b. The Committee may only recommend those nominees who are before them for consideration and meet the criteria as set out in this policy.
  3. When forwarding a nominee's name to the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, the Chair of the Committee will submit a written report summarizing the Committee's action(s), the rationale for selected nominees, and if applicable, a preferred nominee, to the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost for consideration.
  4. Nominees recommended by the Committee must be approved by the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost. If a nominee is approved, the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost will forward the nominee to the Chancellor.
  5. Nominees approved by the Executive Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Provost must also be approved by the Chancellor.
  6. Nominees approved by the Chancellor will be submitted to the Board of Regents for consideration at a regular meeting of the Board of Regents.
  7. Only the Board of Regents may approve the conferral of an honorary degree.

- a. The Board of Regents reserves the authority to grant honorary doctoral degrees outside of the general guidelines as set out in this policy.

V. Recognition

Honorary degrees will be bestowed by the Chancellor throughout the year at appropriate ceremonies, such as commencement, convocation, or other appropriate special events. Honorary degree recipients will also be announced at the appropriate Commencement ceremony.

**REVIEW**

This policy will remain in effect and published until it is reviewed, updated, or archived. This policy is to be reviewed once every six years. Interim review may be required as a result of updates to federal and state law or regulations, Board of Regents policies, or internal processes or procedures.

**REFERENCES**

None

**FORMS AND TOOLS**

[TWU Honorary Degree Nomination Form](#)

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