

# Texas Woman's University University Regulation and Procedure

**Regulation and Procedure Name: Honorary Degree**

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Number: URP: 02.210**

**Policy Owner: Academic Affairs**

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

An Honorary Degree from Texas Woman's University recognizes individuals of prominence who exemplify excellence in scholarship and/or leadership and who demonstrate accomplishment in the professions, sciences, arts, humanities, public service, and service to humanity.

## **APPLICABILITY**

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

## **DEFINITIONS**

None

## **REGULATION AND PROCEDURE**

### **I. Regulation**

The purpose of awarding an honorary degree from Texas Woman's University is to recognize and honor those individuals who meet the criteria through exceptional accomplishment in their respective fields and/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. Procedures**

- A. The following criteria shall serve as guidelines for selection of individuals to receive honorary degrees and the awarding of such degrees:

1. Must evidence outstanding achievement in the humanities, arts, or 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 his or her accomplishments that support the ideals of Texas Woman's and serve as an example to students, alumni, and society.
  3. Must evidence in his or her life a commitment of service to humankind.
- B. Honorary degrees will be bestowed by the Chancellor and President at the appropriate commencement ceremonies, or by the Chancellor and President, or a designee, at other ceremonies or special events.
- C. Texas Woman's University shall confer honorary degrees only at the highest level for which it is authorized to award earned degrees, the doctoral level.
- D. Honorary degrees shall be distinguishable from earned degrees and might include but are not limited to:
1. Doctor of Humane Letters (Hon.)
  2. Doctor of Fine Arts (Hon.)
  3. Doctor of Business (Hon.)
  4. Doctor of Social Science (Hon.)
  5. Doctor of Letters (Hon.)
  6. Doctor of Divinity (Hon.)
  7. Doctor of Laws (Hon.)
- E. Only under exceptional circumstances will Texas Woman's University grant more than one honorary degree per academic year.
- F. An honorary degree will not be conferred on any faculty member, administrator, or other official associated with the University until such individuals have been separated from the University for two or more academic years.

- G. To avoid involving the University in partisan politics, 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 or more years after they have vacated office or terminated employment.

### III. Committee Structure

- A. The Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost will appoint the chair(s) of the Committee on Honorary Degrees.
- B. A quorum will consist of seven (7) members.
- C. The Advisory Committee on Honorary Degrees is the central agency in awarding honorary degrees. The Committee is under the supervision of the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost and is composed of ten (11) members. Committee members will serve staggered two-year terms as noted below. Committee members will include:
  - 1. A representative from each of the five 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;
  - 2. A representative of the graduate faculty, recommended by the Chair of the Graduate Council (Odd years);
  - 3. A representative from Staff Council, recommended by the Chair of the Staff Council (Even years);
  - 4. A representative from the Faculty Senate, recommended by the Speaker of the Faculty Senate (Odd years);
  - 5. One graduate student, recommended by the Dean of the Graduate School (Even years);
  - 6. One undergraduate student, recommended by the Vice President for Student Life (Even years);

7. One member of the Advancement team (Alumni Relations, Institutional Development or Marketing) recommended by the Vice President for University Advancement (Even years).

#### IV. Nominations

- A. The Office of the Chancellor will issue a call for nominations of individuals for honorary degrees at the beginning of each Fall semester. Nominations may originate from the faculty, staff, students, alumni or friends of the University through the submission of the following to the Provost's office:
  1. The nomination form (containing basic personal information and contact information of the nominator, nominee, and nominee assistant or family member). The form is found on the Academic Affairs website.
  2. The following additional items to complete the dossier:
    - a. A formal letter of nomination;
    - b. Curriculum vitae, biography or professional resume;
    - c. Two letters of support in addition to the formal letter of nomination;
    - d. Additional pertinent data or relevant information which may be deemed appropriate.
- B. Completion of the nomination by the deadline is the responsibility of the nominator.
- C. Nominations remain in the pool of nominees for three years after which the person may be re-nominated. Credentials may be enhanced at any time during the three-year period.
- D. A letter of acknowledgement will be sent to each nominator by the chair of the Honorary Degree Committee.

#### V. Recommendation and Approval

- A. All considerations of candidates for honorary degrees will be, at every level, conducted with confidentiality.

- B. The Advisory Committee on Honorary Degrees shall meet shortly after the submission deadline set by the Chancellor. Each member of the Committee shall be supplied in advance with the materials for each candidate.
- C. The Committee will discuss and deliberate on the qualifications of the candidates. After deliberation, the members of the Committee cast written ballots to determine the acceptability of each nominee. If a quorum is present and 80% of those in attendance vote in favor of the candidate, that candidate's name will be forwarded to the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost with the rationale for the Committee's decision. The committee may also indicate to the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost a preferred nominee.
- D. The Chair of the Committee on Honorary Degrees will submit a written report on the Committee's action to the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost for consideration. The Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost will share the recommendation with the Chancellor.
- E. The Chancellor will present recommendations to the Board of Regents at a regular meeting of the Board of Regents.
- F. Honorary degrees will be bestowed by the Chancellor and President 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.
- G. The Board of Regents reserves the authority to grant honorary doctoral degrees outside of the general guidelines it has set out in this Regulation and Procedure.

## **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](#)

<p><b>Publication Date:</b></p> <p><b>Next Review:</b></p>
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