

**MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Agenda Item Summary Sheet

Committee: Academic and Student Affairs

Date of Meeting: January 20, 2009

Agenda Item: Proposed Amendment to Policy 3.18 Honorary Degrees (Second Reading)

Proposed Policy Change Approvals Required by Policy Other Approvals Monitoring

Information

Scheduled Presenter(s):

Linda L. Baer, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs

Mike López, Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs

Manuel López, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Quality

Background Information:

The Board of Trustees approved policy 3.18 Honorary Degrees on October 16, 1996.

Changes were made to make Minnesota State Colleges and Universities policy consistent with national practice. The proposed revisions remove procedural language from the policy. A new procedure has been developed to provide guidance to the colleges and universities on implementing the remaining policy language.

Cite policy requirement, or explain why item is on the Board agenda:

Second reading to change policy 3.18 Honorary Degrees based on regular review of policies.

Second Reading

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
ACTION ITEM**

**PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO POLICY 3.18 HONORARY DEGREES
(SECOND READING)**

1 **INTRODUCTION**

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3 The Office of the Chancellor is submitting an amendment to Policy 3.18 Honorary Degrees.
4

5 **BACKGROUND**

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7 Policy 3.18 was originally adopted in 1996. The proposed amendment was developed as a part of the
8 policy review process.
9

10 These documents come out of a routine five-year review of all board policies. Major changes to the policy
11 comprise eliminating much of the language because it is more appropriately placed in the procedure
12 document, and generally clarifying language and correcting format. The proposed procedure is modeled
13 after general national practice. It establishes the specific degrees that may be awarded, places limits on
14 the number of honorary degrees that may be awarded, and provides colleges and universities with
15 maximum flexibility to develop their own internal procedures and processes.
16

17 **CONSULTATION**

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19 Consultation for the policy and procedure amendments has occurred as follows:
20

- 21 • This proposed policy amendment was developed by a committee of system employees and
22 students.
- 23 • Reviewed at Academic & Student Affairs Policy Council – 11/27/07; 9/22/08; 12/2/08
- 24 • Reviewed at Academic & Student Affairs Leadership Council - 11/3/08; 1/6/09
- 25 • Mailed out for review and comment – October 2008
- 26 • Reviewed at IFO Meet and Confer – 10/10/08; 11/14/08; 12/12/08
- 27 • Reviewed at MSUAASF Meet and Confer – 10/17/08
- 28 • Reviewed at MSCF Meet and Confer – 12/4/08
29

30 **RECOMMENDED COMMITTEE ACTION**

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32 The Academic and Student Affairs Committee recommends that the Board of Trustees adopt the
33 following motion:
34

35 **RECOMMENDED MOTION**

36
37 The Board of Trustees approves the amendment to Policy 3.18 Honorary Degrees.

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES**

Second Reading

BOARD POLICY

Chapter 3. EDUCATIONAL POLICIES

Section 18. HONORARY DEGREES

3.18 Honorary Degrees

Honorary degrees offered by colleges and universities shall be guided by the following policies.

Part 1. General Provisions Purpose. The purpose of this policy is to establish the rationale for honorary degrees, authorize colleges and universities to grant honorary degrees, and provide for standards and guidelines under which honorary degrees will be conferred.

Subpart A. ~~The Board of Trustees grants to each college and university the authority to award honorary degrees. The decision to use such authority shall be determined by the college or university President.~~

Subpart B. ~~A college or university choosing to award an honorary degree shall establish its own internal process for determining honorary degree recipients. This process is to include appropriate consultation. That process must involve faculty and other members of the college or university community. Any campus committee formed as a part of the honorary degree process should contain a majority of faculty members.~~

Part 2. Honorary Degrees Definition. An honorary degree is a degree title awarded as an honor for an outstanding contribution in some field, rather than as the result of matriculating and earning a degree based on studies at the institution.

Subpart A. ~~Colleges may select from the following categories of honorary degrees based upon the intended recipient's field(s) of contributions, achievement, service, and distinction:~~

- ~~1. Associate of Arts~~
- ~~2. Associate of Science~~
- ~~3. Associate of Applied Science~~

Subpart B. ~~Universities may select from the following categories of honorary degrees based upon the intended recipient's field(s) of contribution, achievement, service, and distinction:~~

- ~~1. Doctor of Fine Arts~~
- ~~2. Doctor of Humane Letters~~
- ~~3. Doctor of Laws~~
- ~~4. Doctor of Literature~~
- ~~5. Doctor of Music~~
- ~~6. Doctor of Pedagogy~~
- ~~7. Doctor of Science~~

Part 3. Rationale. The rationale for honorary degrees is to:

- ~~1. recognize and honor persons who have made exceptional men and women who have given a substantial part of their lives to serving others and who have distinguished themselves through~~

1 ~~their professional careers and/or volunteer service~~ contributions to a specific field or to society in
2 general;

- 3
4 2. ~~to~~ establish a public association between Minnesota State Colleges and Universities and such
5 exceptional ~~men and women~~ persons, thereby providing testimony to the values and quality of the
6 state colleges and universities; and
7
8 3. ~~to~~ assist the state colleges and universities with the goals and objectives of their educational
9 programming, their service and outreach missions, and their institutional advancement ~~objectives~~.

10
11 **Part 4. Guidelines for Selection Authorization.** ~~Following are commonly used criteria for selecting~~
12 ~~honorary degree recipients at colleges and universities. They are intended as guidelines:~~ Colleges and
13 universities may confer honorary degrees according to procedures established by, and with the approval
14 of, the chancellor.

15
16 **Subpart A.** ~~Eminent contribution to the college or university, the system, the community, the State of~~
17 ~~Minnesota, or society;~~

18
19 **Subpart B.** ~~Eminent achievement in a particular field of endeavor;~~

20
21 **Subpart C.** ~~Personal status that will enhance the reputation of the college or university (or the~~
22 ~~system) and serve as an example to its students and its alumni;~~

23
24 **Subpart D.** ~~Potential for contribution to the goals or welfare of the college or university;~~

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26 **Subpart E.** ~~While recipients may be alumni, former employees, former Board of Trustees members,~~
27 ~~or public officials, they may not be (at the time of the award) current employees, incumbent members~~
28 ~~of the Board of Trustees, or incumbent officials of federal, state or local government.~~

29
30 **Part 5. Presentation of Honorary Degrees Internal Process.** ~~Honorary degrees normally will be given~~
31 ~~during commencement exercises, and the recipient should agree to be present as a condition of receiving~~
32 ~~the award. On occasion, honorary degrees may be awarded at convocations or presidential inaugurations.~~
33 A college or university choosing to award an honorary degree shall establish its own internal process for
34 determining honorary degree recipients consistent with the chancellor's procedure.

35
36 **Part 6. Limitations on the Number of Honorary Degrees Limits to Eligible Recipients.** ~~It is expected~~
37 ~~that colleges and universities granting honorary degrees would limit their usage to no more than two per~~
38 ~~academic year. Honorary degrees may not be conferred on currently serving faculty or staff members~~
39 within the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, current members of the Board of Trustees,
40 or current holders of elected political office.

Date of Implementation: 10/16/96,

Date of Adoption: 10/16/96,

Date & Subject of Revisions: