



Minnesota State Colleges and Universities
Board Policies
Chapter 3 – Educational Policies

3.18 Honorary Degree

Part 1. 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.

Part 2. 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.

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

1. recognize and honor persons who have made exceptional contributions to a specific field or to society in general;
2. establish a public association between Minnesota State Colleges and Universities and such exceptional persons, thereby providing testimony to the values and quality of the state colleges and universities; and
3. assist the state colleges and universities with the goals and objectives of their educational programming, their service and outreach missions, and their institutional advancement.

Part 4. Authorization. Colleges and universities may confer honorary degrees according to procedures established by, and with the approval of, the chancellor.

Part 5. Internal Process. A college or university choosing to award an honorary degree shall establish its own internal process for determining honorary degree recipients consistent with the chancellor's procedure.

Part 6. Limits to Eligible Recipients. Honorary degrees may not be conferred on currently serving faculty or staff members within the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, current members of the Board of Trustees, or current holders of elected political office.

Part 7. Report to Board. The Chancellor shall provide a report on honorary degrees awarded to the Board in January and July of each year. The report shall include information about the number of degrees awarded, names of recipients, and degree designations.

Date of Implementation: 10/16/96

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Date and Subject of Revision:

01/21/09 - most language was removed and will be placed in a procedure, language was clarified and format was corrected. New Part 7 was added.