



UNIVERSITY POLICY BOT-01.03-02/24

TO: The University of West Florida Community
FROM: Dr. Martha D. Saunders, President
SUBJECT: Bestowing Honorary Awards and Recognitions
RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Board of Trustees

I. Purpose:

The University of West Florida (the “University”) has an opportunity to enhance the status of the University and build its relationships with community partners and constituents through conferring special University-level recognitions. This policy provides a process to confer appropriate recognitions; to develop and implement procedures that are clear, transparent, and accessible for all stakeholders at the University; and to ensure appropriate responsibility for this important function.

II. Policy:

A. General Criteria for Personal Recognition

The Honorary Awards and Recognition Committee (“HARC”) will award recognition based on the following criteria:

1. Excellent character exemplifying at least one of the University values;
2. Extraordinary achievement or distinction in the arts and sciences, education, professional life, public service, philanthropy, or private enterprise; and
3. One of the following:
 - a. Distinction on a national or international level;
 - b. A significant connection with or history of support of the University; or
 - c. A record of distinguished contributions to the area served by the University.

B. Nomination Process for Honorary Degrees or Personal Recognition

Any University stakeholder may submit a nomination to the HARC for consideration. Nominations from the external community should be channeled through a University stakeholder. Nomination forms are available at <https://uwf.edu/HonoraryAwards>.

All complete nomination packets must be submitted to the President's Office in digital format. The President will seek the advice and counsel of the HARC and may also consult with past recipients of awards to help in the determination.

After due consideration, the HARC may endorse a different level of recognition than the nominator recommended when the committee members deem a different award to be a better fit for the accomplishments and contributions apparent in the nomination materials. In such cases, the HARC Chair will provide a written rationale for this change in honor.

C. Types of Honorary Awards and Recognitions

1. The Honorary Doctorate Degree

The honorary doctorate degree is a standard means by which universities recognize distinguished performance. The honorary doctorate is routinely regarded as the highest form of recognition a university can bestow. Typically, recipients will participate in the commencement ceremony where the degree will be conferred. Recipients may be asked to serve as a commencement speaker; however, serving in such a role is not a requirement. The nomination packet will indicate whether or not the individual is recommended as a commencement speaker.

The following degree options have emerged as standard designations in higher education for honorary doctorate degrees:

- a. LLD: Doctor of Laws
- b. ScD: Doctor of Science
- c. LittD: Doctor of Letters (also known as a Doctor of Literature)
- d. PedD: Doctor of Pedagogy
- e. LHD: Doctor of Humane Letters
- f. DD: Doctor of Divinity

Honorary degree recipients do not receive compensation but will receive an appropriately designated UWF diploma and may keep their doctoral hoods. UWF reimburses for the rental expense of robes used in graduation ceremonies as well as travel expenses incurred if the honoree resides outside of Escambia and Santa Rosa counties. An honorary doctorate degree may be awarded posthumously.

Additional nomination information and forms are available online at <https://uwf.edu/HonoraryAwards>.

2. The Founders' Medallion

The Founders' Medallion was established in 2006 to coincide with the celebration of the University of West Florida's 40th anniversary in honor of those University faculty, staff, and community visionaries who were leaders in establishing the University. The Medallion symbolizes the founding ideals and vision of the University and is awarded to those who have exemplified those ideals. Nominations for the Founders Medallion are welcomed from any member of the UWF community.

Founders' Medallion recipients are individuals of accomplishment who:

- a. Recognize the transforming power of education;
- b. Have a record of substantial and sustained service or leadership to the University, leaving a distinct and positive impact on the University;
- c. Embody UWF's values; and
- d. Value the worth of the individual and relationships.

Additional nomination information and forms are available at <https://uwf.edu/HonoraryAwards>.

The presentation of the Founders' Medallion may take place at UWF Commencement or at any other appropriate time and venue. The Founders' Medallion may be awarded posthumously.

3. The Presidential Medal of Honor

The President may award the Presidential Medal of Honor to individuals who have distinguished themselves by their actions and have contributed in some manner to the wellbeing of the University and the geographic region. This award emphasizes contributions primarily through public service and philanthropy.

Presidential Medal of Honor recipients are individuals of accomplishment who:

- a. Have advanced the education, research, or outreach mission of the University for the benefit of the region;
- b. Have a record of substantial and sustained service or leadership through public service or philanthropy to the University and the region;
- c. Leave a distinct and positive impact on the University and community;
- d. Embody UWF's values; and

- e. Have made substantial impacts in their chosen professions.

Additional nomination information and forms are available online at <https://uwf.edu/HonoraryAwards>.

The presentation of the Presidential Medal of Honor may take place at UWF Commencement or at any other appropriate time and venue. The Presidential Medal of Honor may be awarded posthumously.

D. Commencement Speaker Selection

The HARC will recommend Commencement speakers based on the application materials of Honorary Doctorate Degree candidates. Such recipients are often invited to speak in conjunction with the receipt of the award, but doing so is not required. The President may also consult with HARC on the selection of Commencement speakers who are not receiving an honorary award.

E. Naming Rights

Advancement forwards proposals to the HARC for review involving “in honor of” naming rights. Philanthropic-based naming rights remain under the purview of Advancement. Although this approval process may be similar to other forms of personal recognition, the levels of review and confirmation serve to protect the institution. Details regarding naming rights requests can be reviewed at this website: <http://uwf.edu/foundation/Policies/NamingGuidelines.cfm>

F. Emeritus Designation for Faculty

The honorary title of “Emeritus” is reserved only for retired UWF employees who have terminated full-time employment. The University Personnel Committee serves as the reviewing body for these honorary decisions.

G. Review Process

HARC will make a formal recommendation that will be confirmed by the Board of Trustees upon request of the President. The successful candidate will be notified in writing by the President’s Office. All parties involved in the process should exercise discretion in speaking with nominated individuals prior to official notification being issued by the President’s Office. A waiver of this requirement may be granted by the President.

No college or other subunit may award honorary degrees, or confer university-level awards.

III. The Honorary Awards and Recognition Committee

The ten-member HARC is a standing committee whose responsibility is to oversee the granting of university-level recognition to worthy individuals. The HARC consists of several types of individuals to ensure broad representation across the University. Nine members of HARC, including the Chair, are eligible to vote.

A. Membership

1. Four voting faculty members, serving staggered three-year terms, are recommended by the Provost and appointed by the University President in consultation with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. The College of Business; the College of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities; the Hal Marcus College of Science and Engineering; and the Usha Kundu MD College of Health will each be represented by a faculty member from the respective college.
2. One voting UWF workforce member, serving a three-year term, is recommended by the Staff Senate to the Vice President for Finance and Administration and appointed by the University President.
3. Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, voting
4. Student Government Association President, voting
5. University Archivist, voting
6. Vice President for the Division of University Advancement, Chair
7. President, nonvoting except in cases of a tie

B. HARC Rights and Responsibilities

1. A formal recommendation by HARC represents a majority vote of the committee members. HARC members may provide a proxy to another HARC member when they are unable to attend a meeting. In cases of a tie, the President shall cast the deciding vote.
2. Although HARC is responsible for reviewing all University-level honorary recognitions, the primary responsibility is the identification of an honorary degree candidate in relation to the winter and spring commencement ceremonies. HARC may designate more than one honorary degree candidate for each commencement ceremony.
3. HARC will review completed nomination packets on behalf of the University. The members also may independently gather additional information to enrich the review and discussion of each candidate.

4. HARC members may actively pursue nominations for their own candidates for honorary awards recognition; however, if an individual moves a candidate's name forward for consideration, the nominator must recuse themselves from the formal voting on the proposed candidate.

IV. The Role of the President

The President is responsible for presenting candidates recommended by HARC to the Board of Trustees along with supporting documentation. The president may also suggest a nomination and work with HARC members to develop the appropriate submission of materials for the HARC review process. The President may designate consultants to the process as deemed necessary.

V. The Role of the HARC Chair

A. Receive Nomination Protocols

The Chair will be notified by the President's Office when a nomination has been received. The Chair will acknowledge receipt of the nominations and advise nominators regarding the anticipated timeline for deliberation and decision. The Chair will also advise nominators if the nominations are incomplete or have other challenges associated with the timing of the submission.

B. Monitor and Maintain an Appropriate Pool of Nominees

The Chair will issue an open call twice per year for nominations from UWF's constituents, including faculty, staff, students, and BOT members. The open call notice will contain directions for the preparation of a complete nomination application to the President's Office.

C. Coordinate Materials and Meeting Details for Candidate Reviews

The Chair will forward only complete nomination applications to the committee members a minimum of two weeks prior to scheduled meetings. The Chair will also arrange for the time and location of meetings.

D. Prepare Formal Request for BOT Action

The Chair will draft the agenda memorandum and provide any other necessary documentation for objective review and approval by BOT members at the next regularly scheduled meeting. The President or President's designee will be responsible for presenting the HARC recommendations to the BOT for confirmation.

E. Maintain/Revise Nomination Protocols

Protocols for HARC will be posted online. HARC will review the protocols at the first meeting of the academic year to determine if any changes are needed. If any changes are

made to the protocol, the HARC Chair will be responsible for disseminating those changes, including updating the website.

F. Provide a Written Rationale to the Nominator if HARC Redirects the Award

The rationale will link the HARC decision explicitly to selection criteria.

VI. The Role of the Board of Trustees

The BOT may authorize the President to confer awards and recognitions following a recommendation by HARC. The BOT, in its discretion, may gather additional information on the nominee beyond the materials submitted for consideration.

VII. Timeline for Selection of Honors Related to Commencement Presentations

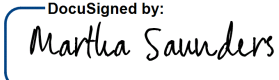
A. Fall Meeting of the HARC

The fall standing meeting should take place in September to prepare and forward nominations for the September BOT meeting; successful candidates would be recognized at the spring graduation. The Coordinators will need to be active in recruiting nominees during the preceding spring semester to accommodate the necessary time needed for a September BOT review.

B. Spring Meeting of the HARC

The spring standing meeting should take place in February or March to prepare and forward nominations for the February BOT meeting; successful candidates would be recognized at the fall graduation. The Coordinators will need to be active in recruiting nominees during the preceding fall semester to accommodate the time needed for a February BOT review.

Approved by the University of West Florida Board of Trustees on February 15, 2024.

Approved by:  **Date:** 02/15/2024
Dr. Martha D. Saunders

Authority: BOG Regulation 1.001, Powers and Duties of the Board of Trustees

Cross Ref.: None

History: Approved May 2002; amended February 2003, November 2014, and February 2024

Last Review: February 2024