

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

**Agenda Item Summary Sheet**

**Committee:** Academic and Student Affairs

**Date of Meeting:** May 22, 2013

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

- Proposed Policy Change       Approvals Required by Policy       Other Approvals       Monitoring
- Information

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

Policy amendments require Board action.

**Scheduled Presenter(s):**

Douglas Knowlton, Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs

**Outline of Key Points/Policy Issues:**

The proposed amendment transfers the honorary degrees reporting process from the policy to the accompanying procedure 3.18.1 Honorary Degrees.

**Background Information:**

On occasion, colleges and universities wish to recognize the contributions of an individual awarding an honorary degree. Some language in policy was moved to procedure; other language was updated; a degree in Engineering and Technology was added to the list of awards in the procedure. Systemwide, four honorary degrees were awarded in 2012. The chancellor will report to the Board annually. MnSCU will maintain a list of recipients of honorary degrees on the MnSCU website; institutions do this individually as well. The proposed amendment streamlines the reporting process. The procedure is included in this packet as requested.

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

<b>BOARD ACTION ITEM</b>
<b>PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO BOARD POLICY 3.18 HONORARY DEGREES (SECOND READING)</b>

**BACKGROUND**

This is the second time the policy will be revised since its adoption in 1996. Some language in policy was moved to procedure and the procedure is attached. Other language was updated and a degree in Engineering and Technology was added to the list of awards in the procedure. The policy and procedure are not used very often; only four honorary degrees were awarded in 2012. The chancellor will make an annual report to the Board. MnSCU will maintain a list of recipients of honorary degrees on the MnSCU website; institutions do this individually as well. The proposed amendment streamlines the reporting process.

**RECOMMENDED COMMITTEE ACTION**

The Academic and Student Affairs Committee recommends the Board of Trustees adopt the following motion:

The Board of Trustees approves Board Policy 3.18 Honorary Degrees.

**RECOMMENDED BOARD OF TRUSTEES MOTION:**

The Board of Trustees approves Board Policy 3.18 Honorary Degrees.

*Date presented to the Board of Trustees: May 22, 2013*

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

<b>BOARD POLICY</b>
Chapter #3 Educational Policies
Section #18 Honorary Degrees

**3.18 Honorary Degrees**

**Part 1. Purpose.** ~~The purpose of t~~ 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 means 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 an annual report to the Board 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. Colleges and universities shall report to the system office on the honorary degrees awarded each year.

*Date of Adoption: 10/16/96,*

*Date of Implementation: 10/16/96,*

***Date & Subject of Revisions:***

*1/21/09 - most language was removed and will be placed in a procedure, language was clarified and format was corrected. New Part 7 was added.*

There is no additional HISTORY for policy 3.18.

***POLICY CONTENT FORMAT***

*Single underlining represents proposed new language*

*~~Strikeouts~~ represent existing language proposed to be eliminated.*

**MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES**  
**DISCUSSION DRAFT PROCEDURE DOCUMENT**  
**DATED 1/29/13**

**PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO PROCEDURE 3.18.1 HONORARY DEGREES**

1 **3.18.1 Honorary Degrees**  
2

3 **Part 1. Purpose and Applicability.** The purpose of the honorary degrees procedure is to  
4 ~~specify~~ identify the awards that may be conferred, to provide guidelines for selection of  
5 honorary degree recipients, provide limits to the number of honorary degrees, and specify  
6 how awards are presented. ~~These~~ these procedures ~~apply to~~ implement ~~Policy~~ 3.18 Honorary  
7 Degrees.  
8

9 **Part 2. Authorized Honorary Awards.** Colleges and universities may select from the  
10 following categories of honorary degrees based upon the intended recipient's field(s) of  
11 contribution, achievement, service, and distinction.

- 12 1. Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts (Hon. D.F.A.)
- 13 2. Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters (Hon. LH.D.)
- 14 3. Honorary Doctor of Laws (Hon. LL.D.)
- 15 4. Honorary Doctor of Literature (Hon. Litt.D.)
- 16 5. Honorary Doctor of Education (Hon. D.Ed.)
- 17 6. Honorary Doctor of Science (Hon. Sc.D.)
- 18 7. Honorary Doctor of Engineering and Technology (Hon. D. Eng. & Tech.)  
19

20 **Part 3. Guidelines for Selection.**  
21

22 **Subpart A. Intention.** Honorary degrees should recognize and honor persons who have  
23 made exceptional contributions to a specific field or to society in general.  
24

25 **Subpart B. Procedures.** Each college and university shall establish procedures for  
26 recommending candidates for honorary degrees. These procedures should include  
27 provisions for consultation with the institution's faculty.  
28

29 **Subpart C. Justification for Awards.** Service or benefaction to the college or university  
30 does not in itself provide justification for the award of an honorary degree. To be  
31 recognized and honored, the candidate must be distinguished with a regional, national or  
32 international reputation.  
33

34 **Part 4. Limits to the Number of Honorary Degrees.**  
35

36 ~~1.~~ **Subpart A.** Colleges and universities granting honorary degrees generally should limit  
37 their award to no more than one per commencement ceremony.

1 ~~2.~~**Subpart B.** ~~No individuals shall ever~~ Colleges and universities may grant receive more  
2 than one a second honorary degree in a different category to a person from the same  
3 college or university when there are compelling circumstances.

4  
5 **Part 5. Presentation of Honorary Degrees.** ~~Honorary degrees customarily shall be awarded~~  
6 ~~during commencement exercises, and the recipient should agree to be present as a condition~~  
7 ~~of receiving the award. On occasion, honorary degrees may be awarded at convocations, or~~  
8 ~~presidential inaugurations, or other similar ceremonies. The recipient should agree to be~~  
9 ~~present as a condition of receiving the award. An honorary degree may be awarded in~~  
10 absentia in the case of compelling or extraordinary circumstances.

11  
12 **Part 6. Report to System Office.** Colleges and universities that have awarded honorary  
13 degrees will submit an annual report in September of each year to the System Office. The  
14 report shall include information about the type of degrees awarded, the names of the  
15 recipients, and the rationale for the award.

16  
17 **Part 7. History of Honorary Degrees Awarded.** A history of honorary degrees awarded  
18 shall be maintained on the MnSCU website at [www.mnscu.edu](http://www.mnscu.edu).

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**Related Documents:**

Policy 3.18 Honorary Degrees

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**Procedure History:**

*Date of Adoption: 01/30/09,*

*Date of Implementation: 01/30/09,*

***Date & Subject of Revisions:***

*3/18/09 - Language was corrected in Parts 1-3.*

*There is no additional HISTORY for procedure 3.18.1.*

***PROCEDURE CONTENT FORMAT:***

*Single underlining represents proposed new language.*

*Strikeouts represent existing language proposed to be eliminated.*

*Words not underlined represent existing language that is proposed to remain in procedure.*