



Connecticut State University System

Developing a State of Minds

BR#01-57



RESOLUTION

revising

POLICIES AND PRODECURES  
FOR THE GRANTING OF HONORARY DOCTORAL DEGREES  
in the  
CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

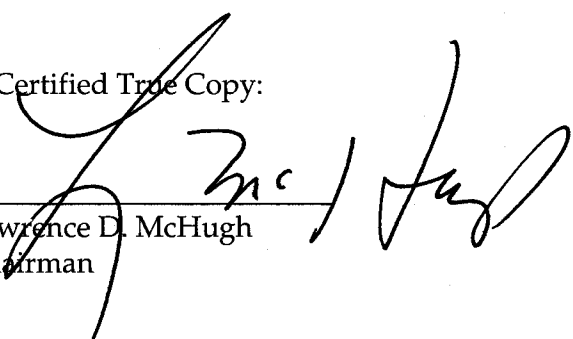
October 4, 2001

WHEREAS, Current policies and procedures for the granting of honorary doctoral degrees within the Connecticut State University System have been reviewed by the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees and recommendations or changes have been formulated therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That Board of Trustees resolution # 00-47 is hereby repealed, and be it further

RESOLVED, That the addendum to this resolution, entitled "Policies and Procedures for Granting Honorary Doctoral Degrees in the Connecticut State University System," is hereby adopted.

A Certified True Copy:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Lawrence D. McHugh  
Chairman

## **Policies and Procedures for Granting Honorary Doctoral Degrees in the Connecticut State University System**

October 4, 2001

The granting of honorary doctoral degrees to individuals who have made a significant contribution to society or to a university is a common practice in higher education. In the Connecticut State University System the purpose of granting honorary doctoral degrees is to honor a person and to advance the work and reputation of the Connecticut State University System.

Honorary degrees shall be granted only when circumstances warrant such action. It is possible that in some years no honorary degree will be awarded. The conferring of the Presidential Medal should be considered for meritorious recognition. A person awarded an honorary doctoral degree by one CSU university will not be awarded an honorary degree by another CSU university within five years after the award of the first.

- No person during his or her term as a member of the Board of Trustees and no person during his or her employment by the Connecticut State University System shall be granted an honorary degree.
- No Connecticut resident holding elective office from a Connecticut constituency and no Connecticut resident holding appointive office in the legislative, executive, or judicial branches of state government shall be considered for an honorary degree during the term of his/her election or appointment and for one year, thereafter.

Identification of potential recipients of honorary doctoral degrees will be made under the supervision of the university president. The president shall be responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of the name of the potential recipient until the process has been concluded and the prospective recipient has agreed to accept the honorary degree.

The university president himself/herself shall forward to the Chancellor of the Connecticut State University System the name of a potential recipient with an explanation as to why the individual merits the honor, a thorough discussion of the potential recipient's background and an assessment of the benefits and possible criticism or controversy which may result from the potential recipient's being granted an honorary doctorate.

The Chancellor of the Connecticut State University System shall present the university president's recommendation to the Academic Affairs Committee together with his or her own recommendation.

Until this point there shall have been no communication either formal or informal with the prospective recipient about the possibility of receiving an honorary degree.

## Policies and Procedures for Granting Honorary Doctoral Degrees in the Connecticut State University System

When the Academic Affairs Committee has given its approval to the awarding of the honorary degree, the university president will ask the prospective recipient to communicate privately in writing his or her commitment to accept the honorary degree at a specific place, at a specific time, and at a specific ceremony, and, if requested, the commitment to deliver an address.

When a prospective honorary degree recipient confirms in writing his or her commitment to accept the offered degree at the specified time, place, and ceremony, and if requested, his or her commitment to deliver an address, the nomination will be presented to the full Board of Trustees for confirmation.

The process of proposing a nominee, committee deliberation, and Board action should occur as early as possible, with final approval by the full Board of Trustees not less than six weeks before the ceremony.

All honorary degrees will be conferred by the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees or by a Trustee designated by the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees. Following is the wording to be used when conferring the honorary degree: *"BY VIRTUE OF THE AUTHORITY VESTED IN ME, THE TRUSTEES OF THE CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM CONCURRING, I CONFER UPON YOU THE DEGREE, DOCTOR OF \_\_\_\_\_ HONORIS CAUSA, AND INVEST YOU WITH ALL THE RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES PERTAINING THEREUNTO. IN TOKEN THEREOF I HAND TO YOU THE DIPLOMA AND DIRECT THAT YOU BE VESTED WITH THE HOOD APPROPRIATE TO YOUR DEGREE."*

The format of the diploma presented to the recipients of honorary degrees shall be approved by the Trustees. The hood to be worn by the recipients of honorary degrees shall be a design approved by the Trustees.

**ITEM**

Revision to the Policies and Procedures for the Granting of Honorary Doctoral Degrees in the Connecticut State University System

**BACKGROUND**

The Board of Trustees for the Connecticut State University System has authorized the granting of honorary doctoral degrees since 1984, with revisions to the policy in 1985, 1991, 1994, 1998 and 2000. Since 1985, approximately 90 honorary doctoral degrees, including three proposed by all four university presidents, have been awarded.

In the spring of 2001, the Academic Affairs Committee requested an examination of the policies and procedures to 1) emphasize the purpose and significance of the award, and 2) provide an appropriate timeframe for the committee and the Board to consider the honoree.

**ANALYSIS**

Current Board procedures identify distinguished merit as the sole criterion for granting an honorary doctorate. In addition, there is no mention of a timeframe for completing the approval process.

The suggested revisions introduce an expanded statement of purpose for conferring an honorary doctorate as a means of elevating the honor. Increased consideration of the Presidential Medal is recommended as a possible avenue for meritorious recognition. A stipulation that a person awarded an honorary doctoral degree by one CSU institution will not be awarded an honorary degree by another CSU institution within five years after the first award is also proposed.

The revisions also return to the procedure in effect prior to 2000. While the 2000 revision to the policy sought to streamline the approval process, the trustees have now reconsidered the impact of bypassing full discussion of requests prior to the university president extending the invitation to the potential candidate to accept the degree. The proposed policy requires that as much time as possible be allowed to complete the process of review and action with final approval by the full Board of Trustees not less than six weeks before the conferral ceremony.

**CHANCELLOR'S RECOMMENDATION**

Approve the revisions to the Policies and Procedures for the Granting of Honorary Doctoral Degrees in the Connecticut State University System.