

Prepared by the  
Office of the President  
This replaces Executive Policy No. E5.206  
dated November 1984

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I

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EXECUTIVE POLICY - ADMINISTRATION

June 1993

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E5.206     Awarding of Honorary Degrees and Regents' Medals

I.     INTRODUCTION

This Executive Policy directs implementation of Section 5-2c of the Board of Regents Bylaws and Policies. The following objectives, policies, and procedures shall govern the nomination and selection of persons for honorary degrees and regents' medals.

II.    OBJECTIVES

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- A.    To establish a regular mechanism for the review of candidates for honorary degrees and regents' medals.
  - B.    To reflect the fact that honorary degrees are conferred by the Regents on behalf of the University of Hawai'i as a whole, by ensuring systemwide participation in the review process.
  - C.    To ensure that recommendations for honorary degrees are made in a timely manner so that the Board of Regents is accorded the opportunity for careful review and deliberation.

III.   POLICIES

The basic policy is set forth in the Board of Regents Bylaws and Policies, Section 5-2c.

A.    Honorary Degrees

- (1)   Honorary degrees may be awarded upon approval by the Board of Regents.
- (2)   Criteria and conditions for the award of honorary degrees as established by Board of Regents policy are:

- (a) The candidate must be distinguished with the equivalent of a national or international reputation. Scholarship, me ask public service, the professions, and business and industry are examples of general areas in which distinguished accomplishment may warrant the award of an honorary degree by the University of Hawai'i.
- (b) Service or benefaction to the University of Hawai'i does not in itself provide justification for the award of an honorary degree. The candidate must be distinguished in some appropriate field.
- (c) Honorary degrees and shall be not be awarded to members of the Board of Regents or to active employees of the University of Hawai'i nor to former employees of the University until eleven months or more after the date of retirement or separation.
- (d) Honorary degrees shall not be awarded to individuals holding elective office in and from the State of Hawai'i for a period of eleven months or more after retirement or separation.
- (e) Academic degrees earned after a prescribed course of study normally are not awarded as honorary degrees.
- (f) An honorary degree is awarded by the University as a whole rather than by a campus on which the conferral shall take place; therefore, more than one University of Hawai'i honorary degree shall not be awarded to any individual.
- (g) Academic ceremonies at which honorary degrees may be conferred are University celebrations, commencement ceremonies, inaugurations, and special convocations when authorized by the President. Usually, only one honorary degree will be awarded at each ceremony.
- (h) The Board of Regents has the option of establishing a theme. In years when a theme is adopted, an announcement of the theme will be made by April 1 of the year during which nominations are due. During these years, the President has the option of establishing a special theme-subcommittee to

recommend candidates for consideration under the procedures outlined in this policy. This subcommittee shall be chaired by a University faculty or staff member and shall be composed of representatives from the University and from the external community. The selection of a theme does not preclude consideration of other candidates whose names are submitted in accordance with the criteria outlined in BOR policy 5-2c.

- (3) All honorary degrees shall be conferred by the Board of Regents, or at its direction the President.
- (4) All matters concerning the nomination and selection of candidates for honorary degrees and Regents' Medals are confidential, including written communications and deliberation of the Advisory Committee on Honorary Degrees established in accordance with IV.A.2(a). below.

 B. Regents' Medals of Distinction and Regents' Medals

Individuals of exceptional accomplishment and distinction who have made significant contributions to the University, state, region, or nation, or within their field of endeavor, may, at the discretion of the Board of Regents, be awarded a Regents' Medal of Distinction. Other individuals for whom the Board desires to show high esteem may, on occasion, be awarded a Regents' Medal or such other symbol as seems appropriate.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. Honorary Degrees

(1) Initiation

Nominations of candidates for honorary degrees may be made to the President by any member of the University community, except those directly involved in the review and approval of nominations. Nominations may also be made by friends of the University. It is the responsibility of nominators to provide sufficient background information to enable careful and thorough review of the nomination.

(2) Review

- (a) The President shall appoint a University-wide Advisory Committee on Honorary Degrees. The Advisory Committee will be charged with evaluating nominees received from the general invitation for nominations as well as those received from the theme sub-committee (in accord with section it I.A.2(h) above), with respect to the criteria in III.A above. The Advisory Committee will provide to the President by January 1 of each year, its evaluation of each individual nominated prior to November 1 of the previous year. The Advisory Committee will serve as a standing committee for a period of one year.
- (b) The President will share the Advisory Committee's evaluations with the Board and shall meet with the Board to discuss the awarding of honorary degrees.

B. Regents' Medals and Regents' Medals of Distinction

(1) Initiation

Nominations for persons to receive Regents' Medals and Regents' Medals of Distinction may be made to the Chairperson of the Board of Regents or to the President as the Board's Executive Officer. Nominations may be received from any member of the University or external community.

(2) Review

At the request of the Board, the President will convene a Special Medal Advisory Committee, comprised of the Advisory Committee on Honorary Degrees and additional members of the external community identified mutually by the Chairperson of the Board and the President.

C. Exceptions

Exceptions to these procedures, including the deadlines contained herein, may be made at the discretion of the Board of Regents.