

## **Criteria for Selection of Commencement Speakers and Honorary Degree Candidates**

On recommendation of the Honors and Awards Committee and the President, the Board of Trustees may vote to confer honorary degrees on distinguished individuals. The Board should award an honorary degree only in recognition of extraordinary and lasting distinction. The award should represent the highest intellectual and moral values; it should reflect the very character and quality of the University itself.

1. The awarding of an honorary degree is recognition of a person whose life and achievements serve as examples of the University's aspirations for its students. It should be offered well before the end of a career, while the accomplishments are recent and the activities worthy of highest commendations.
2. An honorary degree may be offered to a person who has contributed significantly to the cultural, scientific, and/or social development of the State, nation, or world. The contribution should be sustained over a period of years and should be lasting in nature. One should be able to document the national or international impact of the contributions. The mere holding of an executive position, public office, or professorship for many years is not sufficient. The creativity of the individual and the extraordinary character of the contributions must be evident.
3. The individual receiving an honorary degree should have a sustained reputation over a period of years. The reputation should extend beyond the boundaries of the University and the state and preferably should extend nationally or internationally. Letters of recommendation should manifest the broadness of that reputation. Affiliation or relationship to the State of Connecticut should be regarded as an especially favorable factor, but should not be a sufficient condition for the awarding of an honorary degree.
4. The activities of the individual should contain outstanding contributions in scholarly research, teaching and learning, the arts, public service, or business. The person might be a distinguished scholar in the natural, physical or social sciences, the arts or humanities, or a distinguished person in public life, business, the professions, or the performing arts. Evaluation will be based on the level of intellectual and professional attainment and the significance of the contributions to the enrichment and/or welfare of the state, nation, or world.
5. The Committee will seek to maintain a balance among various fields of activity, both in a given calendar year and in a cycle of years. A program in the awarding of honorary degrees should maintain a reasonable balance between academic and non-academic recipients, and various fields of endeavor.
6. The Committee will make an effort to recognize the achievements of women and minorities, consonant with the equal opportunity goals of the institution.
7. An honorary degree cannot be awarded to an active member of the University faculty, administration, staff, nor to an appointed or elected official of Connecticut state government. Persons in these categories are eligible for nomination three years after retirement or resignation from their positions at the University or in state government.
8. A member of the Board of Trustees can be awarded an honorary degree from the University of Connecticut providing said Trustee has served as a member of the Board of Trustees for a period of at least 15 years. Said honorary degree to be awarded to the recipient by the Board of Trustees upon retirement from the Board of Trustees.

## **PROCEDURE FOR HONORARY DEGREE NOMINATORS**

1. Nominations will be sent to the Office of the President and may be made by any member of the faculty, staff, student body, administration or Board of Trustees, or by any alumnus of the University. An individual may not nominate himself or herself. The nominator should submit a narrative letter indicating the importance of the candidate's achievements and the reasons why these achievements should be honored by the University, along with a biographical sketch of the candidate. Other documents, such as letters of support for the nomination or articles about the nominee or written by the nominee, are also welcome.
2. The Office of the President will assemble dossiers, ask for further information from the nominator if necessary, duplicate the dossiers for the Honors and Awards Committee, and mail the information to committee members.
3. The President will convene the Honors and Awards Committee early in the academic year. After a period of discussion the members will select nominees to be invited to receive a degree, and may authorize the President to invite alternates if the original invitee declines.

The Committee shall decide how many awards will be recommended, and in what categories, considering a proper balance of fields of endeavor and other factors. The Office of the President will make available a list of previous recipients to indicate the balance of awards from previous years. In any one field, a nominee and alternates may be chosen. An honorary degree cannot be offered to a previous recipient.

4. A Committee report and a slate of nominees will be presented to the Board of Trustees. The Board will make its selections and set the date of the event as the Commencement or a special Convocation.
5. Only under extraordinary circumstances will honorary degrees be conferred in absentia.

**PLEASE KEEP ALL COMMUNICATION ABOUT NOMINEES IN  
THE STRICTEST CONFIDENCE.**

UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

2008 - 2009 Commencement Speaker and/or Honorary Degree Nomination

In order for your nominee(s) to be given serious consideration, it is necessary that this form be completed with care. Use a separate sheet if necessary.

Name of Nominee:

UConn Alum:  Yes  No

Organization:

Present Title:

Summary of Career:

Reason for Nomination:

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Nominated by:

Telephone:

Address:

Unit (if applicable):

Contact Person:

Telephone:

Address:

Unit (if applicable):

Please attach additional supporting material (examples include curricula vitae, articles by or about the nominee, letters of support, or more complete biographical information.).

**PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM BY OCTOBER 20, 2008 TO:**

The University of Connecticut  
President's Office  
352 Mansfield Road, Unit 2048  
Storrs, CT 06269-2048