# May 2021 Commencement
## Proposed Honorary Degree Recipients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Honorary Degree</th>
<th>Ceremony</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>William G. Nelson, M.D., Ph.D.</td>
<td>Doctor of Science, <em>honoris causa</em></td>
<td>UConn Health (Schools of Medicine and Dental Medicine) May, 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>William Nordhaus</td>
<td>Doctor of Humane Letters, <em>honoris causa</em></td>
<td>UConn Graduate School - Masters May, 2021</td>
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William G. Nelson, M.D., Ph.D.

Dr. Nelson is the Marion I. Knott Professor of Oncology and Director of the Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins. As Director, Dr. Nelson oversees an internationally renowned cancer center that sees more than 13,000 new cancer patients and garners more than $150 million in direct costs for research each year. He currently holds Professorships in Oncology, Medicine, Pharmacology, Pathology, Radiation Oncology, Urology, and Environmental Health Sciences – the most ever at Johns Hopkins. He also maintains a joint appointment at the Howard University College of Medicine.

His research focused on the molecular pathogenesis of prostate cancer. In 1941, Charles B. Huggins described beneficial responses of advanced prostate cancer to castration, a finding for which he was awarded a Nobel Prize. For more than half a century afterward, the origin of prostate cancer itself was attributed to an over-abundance of male hormones. Dr. Nelson, his colleagues, and his trainees discovered that prostate cancers arose not in response to androgen stimulation, but rather as a consequence of chronic or recurrent inflammation. They went on to describe the key pre-cancerous lesion in the prostate, proliferative inflammatory atrophy (PIA), and to report the most common acquired genome defect in prostate cancer, epigenetic ‘silencing’ of the carcinogen-detoxification gene \textit{GSTP1}.

These research findings about the cause of human prostate cancer have had a number of practical applications. First, PIA lesions appear to arise upon exposure to repeated infections and to carcinogens present in over-cooked meats, providing a mechanistic basis for many population-scale associations of lifestyle and prostate cancer risk. Second, molecular diagnostic assays for \textit{GSTP1} epigenetic defects form the basis for US and European regulatory agency-approved tests for prostate cancer diagnosis. Finally, several of the molecular mechanisms identified have fueled a wave of new drug development for prostate cancer prevention and treatment.

Dr. Nelson is also highly sought after as a lay communicator for cancer medicine and cancer research, whether on network television, by way of a quarterly column in \textit{Cancer Today}, in testimony to federal and state legislative bodies, or radio and social media outlets. His national leadership includes serving on the Board of the V Foundation, as a Scientific Co-Chair for Stand Up 2 Cancer, on the Scientific Advisory Board for the Prostate Cancer Foundation, and as Executive Editor of \textit{Cancer Today}.

Owner of eleven issued patents, he is a co-founder of Digital Harmonics, providing algorithmic tools for both biomedicine and defense, and of Brahm Astra Therapeutics, creating new anti-cancer drugs.
William Nordhaus (UConn Health)

William Nordhaus is the Sterling Professor of Economics and Professor of Forestry and Environmental Studies at Yale University. He was awarded the 2018 Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences (together with Paul Romer) for his path-breaking work on the economics of climate change and the need for government policy (such as a carbon tax) to induce reductions in carbon dioxide emissions. Long before climate change was widely recognized as an existential threat, Professor Nordhaus brought his considerable expertise in the area of economic growth to bear on the question of how to define and achieve an efficient path for economic growth that recognizes the interactions between growth and climate change. He pioneered the field of “integrated assessment” modeling through his development of integrated computer-based economic and scientific models that incorporate both the costs and the benefits of efforts to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and the associated feedback loops. This work has been critical in the debate over climate change. In addition to his work on the economics of climate change, Professor Nordhaus has also made seminal contributions in the areas of wage and price behavior, health economics, “green” national accounting, the political business cycle, productivity, and the “new economy.”

Professor Nordhaus is on the research staff of the National Bureau of Economic Research and the Cowles Foundation for Research. He has been a member and senior advisor of the Brookings Panel on Economic Activity in Washington, D.C. since 1972. He serves on the Congressional Budget Office Panel of Economic Experts and was the first Chairman of the Advisory Committee for the Bureau of Economic Analysis. He was also the first Chairman of the American Economic Association Committee on Federal Statistics. From 1977 to 1979, he was a Member of the President’s Council of Economic Advisers, and from 1986 to 1988 he served as the Provost of Yale University. He is a member of the National Academy of Sciences and a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. In 2004, he was awarded the prize of “Distinguished Fellow” by the American Economic Association (AEA) and served as President of the AEA in 2015-2016.

Professor Nordhaus received his undergraduate degree from Yale University in 1963 and his Ph.D. in Economics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1967. He has been on the faculty of Yale University since 1967 and has been Full Professor of Economics since 1973.