

3.14 GRANTING OF DEGREES AND OTHER AWARDS

3.14.1 Purpose

This policy guides the State Regents and institutions of the State System with respect to the granting and conferral of degrees and other forms of academic recognition.

3.14.2 Authorization for Conferral of Degrees

Institutions shall confer only those degrees and other forms of academic recognition as authorized by the State Regents. Authorization for conferral of a particular degree will be given at the time the State Regents approve the program containing the prescribed course of study and requirements for graduation.

3.14.3 Diplomas

All diplomas awarded shall be conferred with authorization of the State Regents by the institution where the student has completed requirements for a degree program. Diplomas awarded shall be in a uniform format prescribed by the State Regents as described below.

- A. Diplomas awarded shall bear the names of officers of the State Regents serving in the current academic year, and the chancellor.
- B. For the institution, the diploma shall bear the signatures of the chairman of the governing board, the president of the institution, and one academic officer.

Sample diplomas for use in the current academic year will be provided each December 1 to the State Regents' office.

3.14.4 Reporting

Degree conferrals shall be reported as an integral part of the procedures under the State Regents' UDS. The *Data Request Manual* will prescribe reporting procedures. A list of each degree and recipient will be validated annually by the president of each institution on forms provided by the State Regents' office. Awards given for completion of short courses, non-credit offerings, micro-credentials, basic education courses, or other experiences shall be submitted to the State Regent staff for record keeping using the UDS system.

3.14.5 Degree Revocation

- A. Once conferred, an earned degree may be revoked only after an institution - following its established procedures and affording lawful due process - makes a finding supported by clear and convincing evidence that a graduate committed a serious violation of academic integrity or academic misconduct including, but not limited to, a significant misrepresentation related to admission or other act of fraud in obtaining the degree. After adoption of such a finding, the institution's governing board may then recommend revocation of that graduate's degree to the State Regents through its board chair or president.
- B. The State Regents will review the institution's recommendation but not perform a de novo review of the record. The State Regents will approve the recommendation to revoke unless there is substantial evidence in the record that the institution acted in an arbitrary and capricious manner

during the degree revocation process. The graduate may submit new or previously undiscovered evidence to the State Regents that the institution did so act, but it must be received by the State Regents within thirty (30) days of the graduate's receipt of notice from the institution of the governing board's recommendation to revoke their degree. The institution will have thirty (30) days to submit a written response to any new or previously undiscovered evidence submitted by the graduate.

- C. The Chancellor will notify the institution's board chair or president of the State Regents' decision to approve or not approve the recommended revocation. The institution may then notify the graduate of that final determination and proceed accordingly.

3.14.6 Honorary Degrees

Institutions in the State System are authorized to confer honorary degrees granted by the State Regents upon individuals who have made outstanding contributions to society through intellectual, artistic, scientific, professional, or public service accomplishments. The following criteria shall guide institutions in the selection of individuals to receive honorary degrees and in the awarding of degrees. Honorary degrees are made at the discretion of the institution's governing board. Notification of all honorary degrees shall be sent to OSRHE staff for record keeping.

- A. An institution shall confer honorary degrees only at the highest level for which it is authorized to award earned degrees.
- B. Any honorary degree conferred shall be distinguishable from earned degrees. Typical examples of current national practice for such degrees are as follows:

Doctor of Fine Arts (D.F.A.) for distinction in the fine arts (painting, architecture, drama, sculpture, etc.).

Doctor of Social Science (Soc.Sc.D.) for distinction, usually in academic life, in the social sciences.

Doctor of Science (Sc.D.) for distinction in any field of science or medicine.

Doctor of Humane Letters (L.H.D.) for distinction in scholarly contributions to the humanities or contributions to the general welfare in any number of fields.

Doctor of Letters (Litt.D.) for distinction and peer recognition through publications, creative works, or scholarly research in the fields of the arts, humanities, or social sciences.

Doctor of Divinity (D.D.) for distinction in the field of theology or for extraordinary leadership, scholarly or administrative, in the area of religion.

Doctor of Laws (LL.D.) for government and public service or for preeminence in any field.

- C. Institutions may confer a number of honorary degrees not to exceed five during any academic year. During any five-year period, the number of honorary degrees awarded may not exceed a ratio of one honorary degree

to each one thousand earned degrees conferred by the institution during the same period. Notwithstanding these limitations, each institution shall be entitled to award one honorary degree each year.

- D. Institutions shall not confer honorary degrees upon any faculty member, administrator, or other official associated with the institution until those individuals have been separated from the institution for two or more academic semesters.
- E. Institutions shall not confer honorary degrees upon individuals currently serving in an Oklahoma political position.
- F. Institutions shall not confer honorary degrees based upon quid pro quo arrangements, either for contributions promised or received, or for any other mutually beneficial arrangement between the institution or an official of the awarding institution and a recipient.
- G. Honorary degrees may be revoked by the Board of the institution granting the degree.

3.14.7 Posthumous Degrees

Institutions in the State System are authorized to confer posthumous degrees. Such degrees shall be unearned, non-academic degrees recognizing the meritorious but incomplete earned work of a deceased student who has completed at least two-thirds of their academic degree. Decisions to confer a posthumous degree are made at the discretion of the institution's governing board. Notification of all posthumous degrees shall be sent to OSRHE staff for record keeping.

3.14.8 Other Awards

Awards given for completion of short courses, non-credit offerings, micro-credentials, basic education courses, or other experiences need not be submitted for State Regents' approval

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