


February 24, 2022

To: Rob L. Schwartz
Chair of Governance Committee, UNM Board of Regents

From: Terry H. Babbitt 
Chief of Staff

Re: Regents Special Recognition and Awards

This is follow-up to President Stokes' information gathered at your request regarding recommendations to revise Regent Policy 1.6. We continue to enthusiastically support your interest in improving this policy to enhance the opportunity to use these very meaningful tools to recognize outstanding accomplishments and our great supporters within and outside of the university community.

I am including a mark-up of the current policy that has some edits from the 2017 recommended revisions to Regent policy along with suggested guidance from President Stokes and her team. The highlights to consider are referenced below.

- The 2017 reviews included a recommendation to change the Regents' Meritorious Service Medal Regents' Recognition Medal to "Awards" instead of medals. We believe this should be a Regents decision.
- The "Implementation" section was recommended for deletion in 2017 but the team feels strongly it should be retained and enhanced to clarify the process. The language is intended to allow the University President the maximum latitude to appoint a committee, gather nominations and make a recommendation to the Board of Regents. It calls for a small, manageable committee that is representative of various constituents.
- Specific physical description of the actual award to be presented was recommended for deletion by some to allow flexibility to design the artifacts. There could be some historical nostalgia regarding the specific description and Regents should decide if this is important to retain.

We appreciate the anticipated guidance from the Governance Committee before presenting a policy revision at the next appropriate Board of Regents meeting as an action item.

Regents' Policy Manual - Section 1.6: Special Recognition and Awards

Adopted Date: 09-12-1996

Amended: 11-14-1996

Applicability

This policy applies to awards of honorary degrees and other types of special recognition given on behalf of the University at the discretion of the Board of Regents. This policy does not preclude other kinds of awards and recognition by other units or officials of the University.

Policy

It is the practice of the Board of Regents of the University to recognize from time to time the contributions of special people to the University, to the state of New Mexico, or to the national or international community. The Board has established the following awards for this purpose.

- Honorary Degrees.** The University ~~of New Mexico~~ wishes to recognize and thereby encourage individuals by awarding special honors to those persons who have contributed significantly to the cultural or scientific development of the Southwest, or to the spiritual or material welfare of its people. At the same time, due regard should be paid to eminent individuals and scholars whose contributions are of general significance and transcend geographic limitations. In no case should a passing courtesy to the University ~~of New Mexico~~, such as the delivery of a commencement address, be the sole or principal cause for such honorary awards. The award of an honorary degree to a person seeking or holding a political office does not indicate endorsement by the University ~~of New Mexico~~. Political involvement should not prevent selection of an individual for an honorary degree. It is not the University's policy to award honorary degrees to active members of the faculty, staff, or administration. This does not preclude, in an exceptional case, the awarding of an honorary degree to an emeritus member of the faculty or to a former employee whose stature remains or becomes eminent in the years following active service with the University. In such exceptions, sufficient time shall have elapsed to insure objectivity in the process of selection. Honorary degrees will be awarded only upon the approval of the Regents, based on recommendations from the Honorary Degree Committee, whose membership is set out in the Faculty Handbook.
- Regents' Meritorious Service Medal.** The Regents' Meritorious Service Medal will be awarded to a member or members of the faculty and staff of the University ~~of New Mexico~~ in recognition of extraordinary and distinguished service to the University. The criteria for the faculty award will be outstanding teaching, service to students, research, scholarship, publications, performance in faculty and University governance, or other such contributions which have enhanced the institution. The criteria for the staff award will be outstanding

Commented [TB1]: The 2017 revisions recommend changing the #2 and #3 awards from "Medals" to "Awards."

performance of duties and meritorious service which have enhanced the University. Nominations for these awards may be submitted to the President by students, faculty, and staff. ~~Selection. The final decision~~ will be made by the Regents.

3. **Regents' Recognition Medal.** The Regents' Recognition Medal will be awarded ~~by the Regents of the University of New Mexico~~ to a person or persons, other than faculty or staff, who have performed outstanding service to the institution. The criteria for the award will be extraordinary and unselfish assistance to the University over an extended period of time. However, a single service might be recognized if, in the judgment of the Regents, circumstances warrant. Selection will be made by the Regents.
4. **The University Medal.** The University Medal will be awarded by the Regents ~~of the University of New Mexico~~ to a person of national or international accomplishment deserving of high honor. In keeping with the universal nature of the knowledge and public service which are embodied in the very essence of the University, the University Medal will be used to express the appreciation of the University for the accomplishments and contributions of the individual, which may be in any field of knowledge or public service of national or international character. No limits of residence or national origin are to be placed on this award. Since the desirability of honoring such persons should be both obvious and compelling, the Regents will not grant this award on a systematic basis, nor institute fixed time periods for making the award. The medal will be awarded only in the event that the attainments of a qualified individual are such that the administration and Regents are persuaded that this rare and special recognition is clearly deserved.

Commented [TB2]: The 2017 revisions recommend changing the #2 and #3 awards from "Medals" to "Awards."

Implementation

~~Potential recipients of the Regents' Meritorious Service Medal, Regents' Recognition Medal and The University Medal will be reviewed by the Regents Special Recognition and Awards Committee appointed by the University President. The Committee will review the nominations and charge provided by the President and compile recommendations for the President to present to the Board of Regents.~~

Commented [TB3]: The intent is to have one committee recommend the appropriate recipients for the various awards. The President will consider the committee report on nominations and make a recommendation to the BOR for action. The President's charge will include parameters and vetting to take place as part of the review. Honorary Degrees are not included because there is an existing process.

~~The Regents Special Recognition and Awards Committee membership will include: At least one (1) member selected by the University President; one (1) member of the general faculty recommended by the Faculty Senate; one (1) staff member recommended by Staff Council; one (1) member recommended by the Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA) and one (1) member recommended by the Associated Students of the University of New Mexico. Additionally, the University President will appoint the committee chair from within or outside this membership and may add additional representation from the UNM Foundation, health sciences, athletics, branch campuses, alumni and other constituent groups.~~

Commented [TB4]: Membership based on some information from honorary degrees, naming etc. This represents broad constituency because faculty, staff, students and community members are all eligible for various medals.

~~Awards will be a silver alloy medal, or other appropriate device, bearing the seal of the University of New Mexico and other appropriate designs and will be accompanied by a certificate upon which the nature of the service will be cited.~~

Commented [TB5]: This line was recommended for deletion by some to allow for maximum flexibility in award design.