Policy Title: Honorary Degrees

**Purpose:**
- To recognize and honor exceptional persons who have given a substantial part of their lives to serving others and who have distinguished themselves through their professional careers and/or volunteer service;
- To establish a public association between Minnesota State Community and Technical College and such exceptional persons, thereby providing testimony to the values and quality of M State;
- To assist M State with the goals and objectives of its educational programming, its service missions and its institutional advancement objectives.

**Definitions:**
- **Honorary Degree:** a degree awarded as an honor for an outstanding contribution in some field, rather than as the result of matriculating and earning a degree based on studies at the institution.

**Policy:**
Minnesota State Community and Technical College (M State) may select up to two recipients per year for honorary degrees to be conferred during the graduation ceremony of the campus nearest the community in which the recipient lives. Selection of recipients must follow the process outlined below.

**Part 1. Process for Selection of Honorary Degree Recipient(s)**
The President and/or his/her designee of M State will, when s/he determines an individual should be considered for an honorary degree, form a committee to review the proposal according to the criteria below. The committee shall be comprised of College faculty and other members of the College and may include members of the community. The majority of the committee shall be comprised of faculty.

**Part 2. Awarding Degree**
M State may choose to award one honorary degree during one of the four spring commencement ceremonies.

M State may choose to grant a second honorary degree in a different category when there are compelling circumstances, but never to the same person or at the same commencement ceremony location.

**Part 3. Limits to Eligible Recipients**
Service or benefaction to M State does not in itself provide justification for the award of an honorary degree. To be recognized and honored, the committee shall consider the following:

a. The College’s purpose for honorary degrees (listed under the Purpose statement) and 
b. Eminent contribution to the College or university, the system, the community, the
State of Minnesota or society; or

c. Eminent achievement in a particular field of endeavor; or
d. Personal status that will enhance the reputation of the College (or the system) and serve as an example to its students and its alumni; or
e. Potential for contribution to the goals or welfare of the College.
f. Distinguished with a regional, national, or international reputation.

Honorary degrees may be conferred upon alumni, former employees, former Board of Trustees members or public officials. At the time of the award current employees, incumbent members of the Board of Trustees or incumbent officials of federal, state or local government are not eligible.

Part 4. Degrees to Confer

Honorary degrees may be awarded in the following categories based upon the intended recipient’s field(s) of contribution, achievement, service and distinction.

1. Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts (Hon. D.F.A.)
2. Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters (Hon. L.H.D.)
3. Honorary Doctor of Laws (Hon. L.L.D.)
4. Honorary Doctor of Literature (Hon. Litt.D.)
5. Honorary Doctor of Education (Hon. D.Ed.)
6. Honorary Doctor of Science (Hon. Sc.D.)
7. Honorary Doctor of Engineering and Technology (Hon. D. Eng. & Tech.)

The Honorary Degree recipients may identify the degree as an award but may not use the honor in a misleading manner such as indication of degree completion or a title (Dr. or Doctor).

The recipient should agree to be present as a condition of receiving the award. An honorary degree may be awarded in absentia in the case of compelling or extraordinary circumstances.

Associated Policies:
Minnesota State System Board Policy 3.18

Associated Procedures:
M State Honorary Degree Procedure and Nomination Form

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