

## CHARTER FOR THE UJ AWARDS COMMITTEE

### 1. NAME

The name of the committee is the UJ Awards Committee, hereafter referred to as the UJAC.

### 2. STATUS

The UJAC is a joint committee of the Council and the Senate.

### 3. PREAMBLE

#### ***Honorary Degrees***

3.1 The Higher Education Act, (No. 101 of 1997), as amended, makes provision in Section 65C for the conferment of advanced degrees, including an honorary doctoral degree *honoris causa* as an academic award in any faculty<sup>1</sup> of the institution, provided that the recipient of such a degree is not entitled – based on such a degree – to fulfil any function, carry out any activities or practise a profession.

3.2 The process for the conferral of an honorary degree by UJ entails the recommendation from the UJAC, to Senate for support, and to Council for approval.

#### ***Ellen Kuzwayo Council Award***

3.3 The award recognises outstanding contributions beyond the confines of teaching and research by an individual or organisation over an extended period to the promotion of the well-being of the institution or the well-being of society in respect of matters in which the institution has a particular interest.

3.4 The Committee considers submissions for such awards and makes recommendations to Council.

3.5 To confirm the award's inherent value, a conservative approach is followed in making the awards.

#### ***Alumni Dignitas Award***

3.6 The UJ Alumni Dignitas award celebrates UJ Alumni's achievements by honouring those who have excelled in their respective fields. The Latin word *Dignitas* refers to the almost physical aura surrounding a person once he or she has fulfilled an important task. It, therefore, has the implied meanings of *deserving*, *merit* and *worthiness*.

3.7 To confirm the award's inherent value, a conservative approach is followed in making the awards.

### 4. COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE

4.1 The committee comprises the following members:

4.1.1 Chairperson of Council (Chairperson). When the Chairperson is absent, he/she will, in consultation with the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, appoint an external Council member to act as Chairperson.

4.1.2 At least three external members of the Council appointed by the Council.

4.1.3 Vice-Chancellor and Principal.

4.1.4 Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research and Internationalisation.

4.1.5 Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic

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<sup>1</sup> Reference to "Faculty" includes the College of Business and Economics (CBE) and the Johannesburg Business School (JBS).

- 4.1.6 Two Senate representatives, one of which should be a Senate representative on Council.
- 4.1.7 The Council may appoint co-opted members as it deems fit.

## **5. FUNCTIONS, PROCEDURES AND CRITERIA**

### **5.1 HONORARY DEGREES**

5.1.1 The committee's function is to make recommendations to the Council on the award of an honorary doctoral degree of the University of Johannesburg in terms of the criteria and governance principles detailed below. In this regard, the committee:

- a) Considers proposals for the conferral of an honorary doctoral degree.
- b) Recommends to Council, after having consulted Senate, the conferral of an honorary doctoral degree to a candidate.
- c) Protects and monitors the possible reputational risk for the University related to the conferral of an honorary doctoral degree.

5.1.2 Criteria for awarding an Honorary Doctorate

- a) The University strives for a robust pool of honorary doctoral degree recipients enriched by individuals from all backgrounds. It, therefore, encourages nominations of distinguished individuals whose accomplishments are worthy of academic celebration.
- b) There should be evidence of an exceptional contribution that is innovative, beyond the norm and characteristic of a leader in the field, self-initiated and self-directed, in one or more of the following categories:
  - i) Exceptional intellectual contribution of high scholarly or creative distinction.
  - ii) Exceptional contributions to the promotion of the vision, mission, values, and strategic goals of the University.
  - iii) Exceptional contributions to public life and the well-being of society at large.
  - iv) Exceptional contributions to a paradigm shift in a discipline relevant to the University.
- c) An "exceptional contribution" is usually an input and/or product in a national and/or international context that attests to a creative spirit and intellect. Mere success in a career or social role is insufficient.
- d) The extent to which the candidate meets such criteria must be highlighted in the submission.
- e) Nominations reflecting multiple conferrals of honorary degrees by South African universities are considered on a case-by-case basis.

5.1.3 Eligibility

- a) Serving Council members and permanent employees of the University of Johannesburg are not eligible for the conferral of an honorary degree.
- b) Retired permanent staff may be nominated after three years of retirement.
- c) Normally, an active politician is not eligible for an honorary degree.
- d) An honorary doctoral degree may be conferred posthumously.
- e) Recipients in previous years of an Ellen Kuzwayo or Alumni Dignitas Award are eligible for an honorary degree.

5.1.4 Governance principles and procedure

- a) The Registrar circulates a written invitation each year to Council and Senate members to submit fully motivated proposals, which also reflects the extent to which the candidate meets the criteria stated in 5 above. The proposal must:
  - i) be recommended by the Faculty Board concerned, or

- ii) be proposed by three members of Council and/or Senate, signed by the primary proposer and at least two other members of Council/Senate, indicating support for the proposal(s).
- b) The proposal(s) are subsequently considered by the UJAC, which then may:
  - i) not support a proposal based on non-compliance with the criteria or any other legitimate reason.
  - ii) recommend to Council the conferral of an honorary degree subject to:
    - (1) The committee having sought the advice of the Dean's Committee of the Faculty in which the honorary degree would fall or, if the honorary degree is not faculty-specific, the committee seeks the advice of the Executive Dean<sup>2</sup> of the Faculty in which the discipline of the nominee's contribution falls based on which the submission for the honorary doctoral degree was made (note: Section 65C of Act 101 of 1997 stipulates that the conferment of an honorary degree must be limited to the degrees of a faculty); and
    - (2) Senate's support (at least- two-thirds of Senate members attending the Senate meeting concerned, must vote in favour of the conferral of the honorary degree). In the case of an online vote, conducted outside of the meeting, all members will be included in the voting process. In exceptional circumstances, when Senate cannot meet on the matter, the matter may be dealt with on a round-robin basis, in accordance with the Rules. Before opening the voting, Senate members will have the opportunity to participate in an online conversation on the matter.
- c) The Council decides on the conferment of an honorary doctoral degree by means of consensus or, if consensus cannot be reached, by means of a ballot of Council members present at the meeting. In the case of an online vote, conducted outside of the meeting, all members will be included in the voting process. An honorary degree will only be conferred on a candidate if a majority of the Council members present vote in favour of the conferment of an honorary degree.
- d) Once Council has approved the conferral on an honorary degree, the Registrar informs the candidate of such decision in writing, requesting acceptance (or not).
- e) Once the candidate (or family members in the case of a posthumous conferral) has accepted the award, the honorary degree is conferred at a graduation ceremony of the University within 30 months after the approval of the honorary degree by Council, either virtually or in person. If the honorary doctorate is not conferred within 30 months after the approval by Council, the honorary degree the award will be withdrawn and the candidate will be informed accordingly.
- f) An honorary doctoral degree is an academic award that entitles the awardee to hold the doctoral title *honoris causa* in recognition of his/her outstanding academic contributions or outstanding contribution to public life, but that do not, however, meet the requirements set in the University Rules or the Act for the conferment of a doctoral degree as a result of the successful completion of a recognised programme of study of the University.

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<sup>2</sup> Reference to the "Executive Dean" also includes the Dean of the JBS.

- g) At the relevant graduation ceremony of advanced degrees of the home faculty within which an honorary doctoral degree falls, an honorary doctoral degree is awarded in a field described within the faculties at UJ.
  - h) During the consideration of the proposal(s), the University's governance principles regarding the consideration of confidential business must be strictly adhered to.
  - i) A conservative awards policy is followed to emphasise the extraordinary and inherent value of the awards.
- 5.1.5 Revoking of an Honorary Degree
- a) An Honorary Degree represents a public association between the University and the recipient.
  - b) The University, therefore, reserves the right to revoke an Honorary Degree if a recipient, through behaviour or actions, which become known to the University after her/his award, brings the University into disrepute.
  - c) These behaviours and actions include, but are not limited to, the engagement in conduct that is:
    - i) Inconsistent with the vision, mission, values, or integrity of the University.
    - ii) Undermining the accomplishments that were cited as the basis for awarding the Honorary Degree.
    - iii) Harmful to the University's reputation.
  - d) A proposal to revoke an Honorary Degree is submitted to the Registrar with supporting documentary evidence.
  - e) The proposal and the risks pertaining to maintaining or revoking the Honorary Degree are considered by the Awards Committee.
  - f) Prior to the Awards Committee formulating a recommendation to Senate and Council regarding the revocation of the Honorary Degree, the Registrar must, on behalf of Council:
    - i) Notify the recipient that a revocation is being considered.
    - ii) Provide the recipient with relevant information justifying the intended action.
    - iii) Provide the recipient with an opportunity to provide reasons in writing why the Honorary Degree should not be revoked.
  - g) In formulating its recommendations to Senate and Council, the Awards Committee must record the written submission of the recipient in sufficient detail.
  - h) The decision to revoke an Honorary Degree is subject to:
    - i) Senate's support (at least two-thirds of Senate members attending the Senate meeting concerned, must vote in favour of the revocation of the Honorary Degree).
    - ii) A majority of the Council members present vote in favour of the revocation of the Honorary Degree.

## **5.2 ELLEN KUZWAYO COUNCIL AWARD**

### **5.2.1 Procedure and criteria**

- a) The Registrar invites Council members and the Executive Leadership Group every year to submit fully motivated proposals for the Ellen Kuzwayo Council Award to the Registrar before a deadline provided by her/him.
- b) Proposals are considered by the Committee.
- c) The UJAC makes recommendations to the next meeting of Council for consideration by Council.
- d) The criteria for the award are as follows:

- i) The recipient/organisation must have promoted the well-being of the institution beyond the immediate confines of teaching and research over an extended period in a manner that finds expression in the vision, mission, core values and strategic goals of the institution, OR
- ii) The recipient/organisation must have promoted the well-being of society beyond the immediate confines of teaching and research over an extended period in matters that directly or indirectly contribute to the development and functioning of the institution or that directly or indirectly contribute to the promotion of the core values and strategic goals of the institution and with which the institution is proud to be associated.
- iii) Only persons who are not (or no longer) employees or students of the University may be considered for an award.
- iv) The Ellen Kuzwayo Council Award can be made posthumously.
- v) Recipients in previous years of an Alumni Dignitas Award or honorary degree are eligible for an Ellen Kuzwayo Award.

#### 5.2.2 Council

- a) Council's decision to make an Ellen Kuzwayo Council Award is made based on a vote by members of the Council on the recommendations submitted by the UJAC. A decision to make an award is taken by means of a majority of members present. The Chairperson of Council determines how the vote shall take place.
- b) The Ellen Kuzwayo Council Award is in the form of a specially minted medallion and an accompanying protocol.

### 5.3 ALUMNI DIGNITAS AWARDS

#### 5.3.1 Procedure and criteria

- a) The Registrar invites Alumni and staff in time to submit fully motivated nomination forms with CVs for the UJ Alumni Dignitas Award to the Registrar before a deadline provided by him/her.
- b) A subcommittee may be established by the Registrar to provide inputs and recommendations to improve the quality of submissions prior to serving at the UJAC.
- c) A maximum of three awards are made annually. In the case of more than three nominees, the committee will elect the three leading nominees and thereafter will vote on the candidature of each of the three leading nominees. A support vote of two-thirds by the UJAC is required for a nominee to qualify for the award.
- d) The criteria for the award are as follows:
  - i) Nominees must be alumni of the University of Johannesburg.
  - ii) Nominees must be outstanding achievers and widely respected by the industry in which they work; or at the pinnacle of their careers; or must have made an outstanding contribution to the community or to UJ.
  - iii) Age, race, and gender will not play a role in the final selection process.

5.3.2 Council's decision to make an Alumni Dignitas Award is based on a vote by members of the Council on the recommendations submitted by the UJAC. A decision to make an award is taken by means of a majority vote of members present. The Chairperson of Council determines how the vote shall take place.

## **6. MEETING PROCEDURE AND REPORTING**

- 6.1 The UJAC meets at least annually (meeting dates set in advance and contained in the University's Year Programme).
- 6.2 The majority of the members should be present to constitute a quorum.
- 6.3 Members are required to declare any conflict of interest at the meeting.
- 6.4 Members diligently execute their duty of care and fiduciary duty during deliberations and decision-making.
- 6.5 Decision-making is primarily based on the principle of consensus and/or sufficient consensus.
- 6.6 The Chairperson may call an extraordinary or emergency meeting in accordance with the Rules for Effective Meetings.
- 6.7 The Chairperson, in consultation with the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, may invite persons who are not members to attend meetings, provided that they may participate in discussions but may not participate in decision-making.
- 6.8 The University Secretariat provides the secretariat who administers meetings in accordance with the Rules for Effective Meetings in this regard.
- 6.9 The minutes of each meeting are considered at the next meeting.
- 6.10 Reporting to Council takes place in the form of a summarised written report by the Chairperson and, when applicable, items included in the agenda of the Council meeting.

## **7. TERMS OF OFFICE**

- 7.1 The term of office of external members of the Council on the UJAC is for the duration of their term on the Council.
- 7.2 Internal members representing the Management Executive Committee serve by virtue of their office.
- 7.3 The term of office of Senate representatives on the UJAC is three years, and these Senate representatives are eligible for one additional term of office.
- 7.4 The term of office of co-opted members appointed by Council is a maximum of five years, renewable for a second term.

## **8. DISSOLUTION**

- 8.1 The committee may be dissolved by Council in consultation with the Senate.

Approved by Council on 22 June 2017

Amendments approved by Council on 28 March 2018

Amendments approved by Council on 23 November 2018

Amendments approved by Council on 22 September 2020

Amendments approved by Council on 24 June 2021

Amendments approved by Council on 22 September 2021

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