



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 of the institution, provided that the recipient of such a degree is not entitled – on the basis of such a degree – to fulfil any function, carry out any activities or practise a profession;

3.2 Since the award is a Council award, it is considered by Council, on the recommendation of the Committee constituted in terms of this Charter.

Ellen Kuzwayo Council Award

3.3 The award recognises outstanding contributions beyond the confines of teaching and research by an individual over an extended period of time 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 In order to confirm the inherent value of the award, a conservative approach is followed in making the awards.

Alumni Dignitas Award

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

3.7 In order to confirm the inherent value of the award, 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 Council appointed by Council;

4.1.3 Vice-Chancellor and Principal;

4.1.4 Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research and Internationalisation;

4.1.5 Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic

4.1.6 Two Senate representatives, one of which should be a Senate representative on Council;

4.1.7 Council may appoint co-opted members as it deems fit.

5. FUNCTIONS, PROCEDURES AND CRITERIA

5.1 HONORARY DEGREES

5.1.1 The function of this committee is to make recommendations to 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 and 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.

5.1.4 Governance principles and procedure

- a) The Registrar circulates a written invitation each year to all members of Council and Senate 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 clearly faculty-specific, the committee seeks the advice of the Executive Dean of the faculty in which the discipline of the nominee's contribution falls on the basis of 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 exceptional circumstances, when it is not possible for Senate to meet on the matter, the matter may be dealt with on a round-robin basis, in accordance with the Rules. Before opening of 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 secret ballot of Council members present at the meeting; an honorary degree will only be conferred on a candidate if at least 80% 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, subject to appropriate logistical arrangements;
- 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;
- 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 Faculty of Humanities, the Faculty of Law, the Faculty of Health Sciences, the Faculty of Science, the Faculty of Education, the Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture (once this Faculty offers a doctoral degree), the College for Business and Economics, the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment or any other branch of education in which the study could be undertaken in a recognised faculty of this University;

- 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, in order 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 in the event that a recipient, through behaviour or actions, which become known to the University subsequent to 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) Undermines the accomplishments that were cited as the basis for awarding the Honorary Degree.
 - iii) Is harmful to the reputation of the University.
- 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) The Awards Committee in formulating its recommendations to Senate and Council must record in sufficient detail the written submission of the recipient.
- 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) At least 80% 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 must have promoted the well-being of the institution beyond the immediate confines of teaching and research over an extended period of time in a manner that finds expression in the vision, mission, core values and strategic goals of the institution; OR

- ii) The recipient must have promoted the well-being of society beyond the immediate confines of teaching and research over an extended period of time 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.

5.2.2 Council

- a) Council's decision to make an Ellen Kuzwayo Council Award is made on the basis of a vote by members of Council on the recommendations submitted by the UJAC. A decision to make an award is taken by means of at least a two-thirds majority of members present. The Chairperson of Council determines the manner in which 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 CV's 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 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, at the pinnacle of their careers, and 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.

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 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.

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