

# Honorary Degree Committee Report: 2020-2021

Prepared by Meg Galasso, chair

## Committee Membership

FACULTY	UNIT
Yusuf Nur	Business
Lu Wang	Education
	Sciences
Shawna Lewis	Nursing
Meg Galasso, <i>chair</i>	Library
Chris Felts	Humanities & Social Sciences
Karla Stouse	Humanities & Social Sciences

## Committee Charge (from IU Kokomo Faculty Senate Bylaws: 3.7)

The Faculty Senate shall have an Honorary Degree Committee. Notwithstanding Bylaws Section 1.2, faculty members with administrative appointments are eligible to serve on this committee.

The Honorary Degree Committee shall consider candidates for an honorary degree from Indiana University Kokomo. If approved by majority vote of the committee, the candidate's name is sent to the University Faculty Council Honorary Degree Committee, which is the next step in the approval process for honorary degrees from Indiana University.

## Meeting(s)

The Honorary Degree Committee communicated via email and held no meetings this year.

## Summary of Activities

In October 2020, the chair emailed all committee members to present options for how we could proceed with our activities for the year (see appendix A). A majority of members voted to solicit nominations from the IU Kokomo faculty via email to then send to the Chancellor for consideration. Following this decision, the chair reached out to the Director of External Relations and Public Affairs, the committee's primary contact in the Office of the Chancellor, to alert them to our plan to solicit nominations (see appendix B) and establish suitable deadlines. The chair was informed that the Office of the Chancellor planned to confer an honorary degree upon the candidate who had been selected for the 2020 Commencement ceremony which was cancelled due to the pandemic. The chair then passed this information along to the committee and further action was tabled until the 2021-2022 academic year.

## Appendix A: Chair's email to Honorary Degree Committee, October 2020

Hi all—As somewhat expected, our schedules are all pretty packed, thus we haven't found a time that works for all of us to meet on Zoom next week. In the interest of time and progress, let's just get started here via email.

I know that we have some seasoned members of the honorary degree committee, as well as some new folks this year, so here's the briefest summary I can muster:

- The role of the HDC on our campus has changed dramatically over the years. Some confusion and ensuing conversations with administration last year revealed that our role as stated in the [bylaws](#) (voting on potential candidates) did not match either campus procedures (cabinet-generated candidates) or [ACA-62](#) (no campus role in honorary degrees.)
- In Spring 2020, the committee drafted a [proposal](#) to rectify the situation and affirm the role of campus faculty in the honorary degree process, but the pandemic has understandably shifted the priorities in UFC. I don't expect our proposal to get any airtime any time soon.
- Now we're in limbo. I expect the Chancellor and Cathy Valcke to select and prepare a nomination for a candidate as they have in years past. However, now that they (and we) know that there is no expectation for them to inform the HDC in advance and ask for our support for that candidate, I doubt they will contact us at any point in the process.

So we need to decide what we want to do as a committee. Here's an initial summary of options:

1. Propose revising the bylaws to dissolve the committee in order to align with IU policy
2. Advocate for amending the IU policy to include more campus-level involvement
3. Solicit nominations from IU Kokomo faculty (via email) to then send to the Chancellor for consideration
4. Put all of this on hold and revisit in the spring

My recommendation, considering our pandemic circumstances, would be to do Option 3 now and revisit the other options in the spring. That said, I am very open to other suggestions or questions.

Please do respond to this message by next Friday, October 16, with your thoughts, specifically if you are or are not in favor of Option 3 for now.

Thank you all so much!

## Appendix B: Plan to solicit faculty nominations as prepared October 2020

The IU Kokomo Faculty Senate Honorary Degree Committee is soliciting nominations for Honorary Degree candidates. As detailed in [ACA-62](#):

"Candidates for these degrees should have demonstrated in their life and in their work high standards of excellence as evidenced by scholarship or creative activity; by professional development and achievement; by public service to the world, the nation, the state, or the community; in wholehearted commitment to the development of Indiana University; or through excellence in any calling or occupation which visibly contributed to the development of society and serves as a model for present and future generations. In all honorary degree candidates, these scholarly, creative, professional, service, or occupational achievements should be placed in a framework of high personal integrity and concern for the public good."

Previous recipients are listed [here](#).

You may send your nominations (including the name and a brief paragraph describing their notable contributions) to [Cathy Valcke](#), Director of External Relations and Public Affairs, by **November 20<sup>th</sup>**.

If you have any questions, please feel welcome to direct those to your unit's Honorary Degree Committee representative or [Meg Galasso](#), committee chair.