OUS, Honorary Degrees for Individuals Held in WWII Internment Camps

In 2007, the Oregon Legislature passed House Bill (HB) 2823. This legislation authorizes OUS institutions to award honorary degrees to particular individuals that were held in internment camps during World War II and did not graduate because of the internment. As previously reported to the Board, the University of Oregon, under the authority of this legislation, would like to award honorary degrees—18 bachelor’s degrees and one master’s degree—to 19 individuals at a ceremony on Sunday, April 6, 2008.

The Oregon State Board of Higher Education has a policy on honorary degrees. Under that policy, OUS institutions are required to promulgate institutional policies on how those to receive honorary degrees are selected and are to present the names of those candidates to the State Board of Higher Education for approval at least 90 days before the award of the degree. In order to facilitate and encourage OUS institutions to comply with the letter and spirit of the legislation, staff proposes suspending application of this policy for those to receive honorary degrees under the legislation.

Staff Recommendation to the Board:
Staff recommends that the Board suspend application of its honorary degree policy, including the 90-day requirement, for the University of Oregon and any other OUS institution that would like to award honorary degrees to individuals pursuant to HB 2823 passed by the Oregon Legislature in 2007 and approve of the University of Oregon awarding these degrees on Sunday, April 6, 2008, and of any other OUS institution awarding honorary degrees under this legislation in the future.

(Board action required.)