PSU, Authorization to Award Honorary Degrees

Summary:
The State Board of Higher Education policy permits institutions, with the concurrence of their faculty, to award honorary degrees. Each institution proposing the award of honorary degrees has received the Chancellor’s approval of criteria and procedures for selection that ensure the award honors distinguished achievement and outstanding contributions to the institution, state, or society.

Portland State University requests authorization to award honorary doctorate at the University’s 2009 Commencement Ceremony. The University is proud to recognize the achievements of Dr. Paul Hawken, an environmentalist, entrepreneur, author, and a leading voice for a more just and sustainable world. Dr. Hawken’s commitment to sustainable business practices will be an inspiration to PSU’s graduates in their future careers.

Dedicated to sustainability, Dr. Hawken’s professional life has included starting and running ecological businesses, writing and teaching about the impact of commerce on living systems, and consulting on economic development, industrial ecology, and environmental policy. In his book, *The Ecology of Commerce*, he introduced the comprehensive outcome principle that takes into account the entire result of an event or process to all parties, not just the immediate participants. This principle was influential in full-cost accounting and the eventual emergency of ecological footprint and triple bottom line standards for sustainability. His book, *Natural Capitalism: Creating the Next Industrial Revolution*, popularized the now-standard idea of natural capital and direct accounting for nature’s services. Dr. Hawken is currently the head of PaxIT, PaxTurbine, and PaxFan, three companies associated with Pax Scientific, a research and development company focused on energy-saving technologies that apply natural geometric forms to industrial design.

Dr. Hawken also heads the Natural Capital Institute whose projects include the documentary film “Blessed Unrest,” based on Dr. Hawken’s recently published book and WiserEarth, the first open source database of the hundreds of thousands of civil society organizations around the world dedicated to environmental restoration and social justice. Dr. Hawken has served on the board of many public organizations, including Point Foundation (publisher of the *Whole Earth Catalogs*), Center for Plant Conservation, Conservation International, Trust for Public Land, Friends of the Earth, and National Audubon Society. He was the founder and chair of The Natural Step in the United States as well as The Natural Step International in Stockholm.

Among recognition and awards received by Dr. Hawken are the Green Cross Millennium Award for Individual Environmental Leadership presented by Mikhail Gorbachev in 2003; World Council for Corporate Governance in 2002; Small Business Administration Entrepreneur of the Year in 1990; Utne One Hundred Visionaries who could Change our Lives in 1995; Western Publications Association Maggie award for Natural Capitalism as the best Signed Editorial/Essay in 1997; Creative Visionary Award.
by the International Society of Industrial Design; Design in Business Award for environmental responsibility by the American Center for Design; Council on Economic Priorities’ 1990 Corporate Conscience Award; American Horticultural Society Award for commitment to excellence in commercial horticulture; Metropolitan Home Design 100 Editorial Award for the 100 best people, products, and ideas that shape our lives; The Cine Golden Eagle award in video for the PBS program “Marketing from Growing a Business”; California Institute of Integral Studies award for Ongoing Humanitarian Contributions to the Bay Area Communities; Esquire Magazine’s award for the best 100 People of a Generation (1984); and four honorary doctorates.

Staff Recommendation to the Board:
Staff recommends the Board authorize Portland State University to an award honorary doctorate to Dr. Paul Hawken at their June 2009 Commencement ceremonies.

(Board action required.)