

January 7, 2021

POLICY ON REVOCATION OF HONORS AND AWARDS:
PROCESS MEMORANDUM

In our discussions on the proposed policy on the revocation of honors and awards, committee members agreed that the policy would be effective only if it is implemented effectively. The committee believes that the process of revoking of honors and awards in cases where individuals have been found to have committed misconduct will be most effective if it is incorporated into existing disciplinary processes. Therefore, this memo provides information about our suggestions for the revocation process.

Consistent with existing university policy on student policy violations and following discussions with the Dean of Students, the committee recommends that, when a hearing board finds that a student has committed misconduct, the revocation of honorific awards should be part of the range of potential sanctions. The committee recommends that awards be revoked in response to any violation that results in separation from the institution (including both suspension and dismissal), expulsion from a residence hall, or removal from college. The proposed policy would revoke only use of the honorific title, not the financial award, for students.

The committee recommends that the MSU Office of Civil Rights (OCR) include revocation of honors and awards as part of the range of potential sanctions in cases of violations of RVSM and anti-discrimination policies.

The committee recommends that unit administrators consider as a type of discipline the revocation of honors and awards for executive managers and faculty and academic staff. In serious discipline cases involving tenured faculty, the committee recommends that the University Committee on Faculty Affairs (UCFA) disciplinary review panel consider in its recommendation to the unit administrator whether any honors and awards should be revoked as part of any serious discipline. Following discussions with the Chair of UCFA, we believe that this is consistent with UCFA's role in serious disciplinary action concerning faculty and academic staff.

University-wide awards committees should submit names of potential award winners to the Dean of Students and to Academic Human Resources to ensure that individuals who have committed serious misconduct violations are not honored.

If this policy passes, existing disciplinary policies, the Faculty Handbook, the Student Rights and Responsibilities, the Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities, the Law Student Rights and Responsibilities, and the Medical Student Rights and Responsibilities should be amended to include the revocation of honors and awards.

The committee recommends that a paragraph should be added to all faculty offer letters informing faculty of the potential for revocation of honors and awards, including endowment

funding, in cases of misconduct. This language needs to be sufficiently open to allow for changes in misconduct policies and awards over many years. Academic Human Resources and legal counsel will be able assist with this language.

This policy does not cover renaming an endowment in cases where the person after whom it is named has committed a violation. There is language currently being used in endowment agreements that accommodates the ability to rename or revoke endowments in certain cases. However, this is beyond the scope of this policy.

Members of the Ad Hoc Committee on Awards and Honors:

Meagan Abel, President, Council of Graduate Students (COGS)

Brianna Aiello, Associated Students of MSU (ASMSU)

Rebecca Campbell, Chairperson, RVSM Expert Advisory Workgroup

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Nick McLaren, Director, MSU Alumni, University Advancement

Anna Pegler-Gordon, Professor, James Madison College

Birgit Puschner, Dean, College of Veterinary Medicine

Theresa Kelley, Associate General Counsel, Office of General Counsel, provided legal guidance to the committee.