

VII. STANDING COMMITTEES

A. Academic and Student Affairs Committee

Granting of Honorary Degree to Oscar Arias SánchezRECOMMENDED ACTION

It is the recommendation of the administration and the Academic and Student Affairs Committee that the Board of Regents approve the granting of an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree to Oscar Arias Sánchez, former president of Costa Rica and recipient of the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1987.

BACKGROUND

RCW 28B.20.130(6) grants to the Board of Regents, upon recommendation of the faculty, the authority to confer honorary degrees upon persons other than graduates “in recognition of their learning or devotion to literature, art, or science.” The faculty Special Committee on Honorary Degrees is responsible for recommending candidates for honorary degrees. On April 12, 2013, the Council recommended to President Young that Dr. Arias be awarded an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree at the University of Washington Bothell June commencement ceremony, where he will be the Commencement speaker. President Young concurs with the recommendation and brings it to the Board of Regents on behalf of the faculty.

Dr. Arias is internationally renowned for his extraordinary career in public service and the promotion of peace and democracy. For more than 40 years, he has worked to further the cause of peace in his nation, the region, and the world.

Born in 1940, he earned a bachelor’s degree in law and economics at the University of Costa Rica and a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Essex in England. He entered public service in 1971 and became Minister of Planning and Political Economy in 1974. He later held positions in Congress and the National Liberation Party and in 1986 was elected President, a position he held from 1986 to 1990 and again from 2006 to 2010.

He came to international prominence during his first term as president when he brokered the 1987 Esquipulas II Accords to end years of conflict in Central America, for which he received the Nobel Peace Prize later that year. He used the monetary award from the Prize to establish the Arias Foundation for Peace and Human Progress, dedicated to the mission of promoting just, peaceful and equitable societies.

VII. STANDING COMMITTEES

A. Academic and Student Affairs Committee

Granting of Honorary Degree to Oscar Arias Sánchez (continued p. 2)

Through his advocacy work, Dr. Arias has promoted policies grounded in the belief that security lies not in military might but in human development through education, jobs, and health. He has become a leader in the global movement for the reduction of military spending. Since 2003, he has led efforts through the United Nations to enact an Arms Trade Treaty.

He is active in many organization, including the International Center for Human Rights and Democratic Development, Economists Allied for Arms Reduction, the International Negotiation Network of the Carter Center, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, the Independent World Commission on the Oceans, and other organizations.

In addition to the Nobel Prize, he has received the Martin Luther King Jr. Peace Award, the Liberty Medal of Philadelphia, the Jackson Ralston Prize, the Prince of Asturias Award, the Albert Schweitzer Humanitarian Award, and the Americas Award.

For his extraordinary and exemplary career in public service, and for his abiding commitment to peace and freedom, achieved through dialogue and understanding, it would be an honor to confer upon Oscar Arias Sánchez an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree at the June UW Bothell commencement.