

VII. STANDING COMMITTEES

A. Academic and Student Affairs Committee

Granting of Honorary Degree to Jon HuntsmanRECOMMENDED 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 Laws degree to Jon Huntsman, former Governor of Utah and former United State Ambassador to Singapore and China.

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 26, 2013, the Council recommended to President Young that Mr. Huntsman be awarded an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree at the University of Washington 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.

Mr. Huntsman is renowned for his exemplary career in public service. He served under four presidents, starting as a staff assistant to President Ronald Reagan. President George H.W. Bush appointed him as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Asia, Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Trade Administration, and U.S. Ambassador to Singapore, at age 32 the youngest American to head a diplomatic mission in over 100 years. He served as Deputy United States Trade Representative in the administration of President George W. Bush. President Barack Obama appointed him as U.S. Ambassador to China. He earned significant international respect for his ability to develop consensus around difficult trade issues, which led to multiple new trade agreements and improved international relations. He is noted for having built bridges between the U.S. and China and is credited by both countries for improved relationships.

Mr. Huntsman was twice elected governor of the State of Utah. He is credited with achieving consensus on major tax, education, and health policy reforms. His success was marked by broad support across the political spectrum: in 2008, he carried every county in the state and won with a 78 percent statewide majority. Under his leadership, Utah ranked first in the nation in job creation and was named the best-managed state by the Pew Center.

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Born in 1960, he earned a bachelor's degree in international politics in 1987 from the University of Pennsylvania. He is a distinguished fellow of the Brookings Institute, a trustee of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, and a visiting fellow at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

For his superb and diverse career in public service, and for his enduring commitment to serve his country in ways that transcend partisan politics, it would be an honor to confer upon Jon Huntsman an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree at the June commencement ceremony.