

Board Meeting  
September 10, 2009

## APPROVE HONORARY DEGREE, CHICAGO

**Action:** Approve the Award of Honorary Doctorate Degree, Chicago

**Funding:** No New Funding Required

The Senate at the Chicago campus has nominated the following person for conferral of an honorary degree at Commencement exercises in May 2010. The Chancellor recommends approval of this nomination.

**N. Scott Momaday**, Prominent author, visual artist, and charismatic performer, Poet Laureate of Oklahoma, generous mentor, role model, and educator--the honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters

Dr. Momaday has held the title of Professor at several institutions of higher education, among them, the University of California at Berkeley, Stanford University, and the University of Arizona at Tucson. His subjects range from English to American Indian studies. He is best known for his transcendent books of fiction and poetry, which have won accolades from the critics and include his book, *House Made of Dawn* which received the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 1969.

He is Poet Laureate of Oklahoma. He was featured in the Ken Burns and Stephen Ives' documentary, *The West*, for his thorough and poignant retelling of Kiowa history and legend. He was featured in the PBS documentary concerning the Battle of Little Big Horn. His play, *The Indolent Boys*, was featured in the award-winning documentary film: *Remember Earth, New Mexico's High Desert*.

In addition to teaching and writing, Dr. Momaday paints and many of his works exist in private collections. He is an active and eloquent speaker and public performance artist. His poetry and prose readings have been enjoyed in public

places that include the Poetry Center in Chicago and the Field Museum of Chicago.

Public service has also been a prominent feature of his career and including service as a Trustee on the Board of the National Museum of the American Indian. Dr. Momaday was most recently recognized in 2007, with the National Medal of Arts “for his writings and his work to celebrate and preserve Native American art and oral tradition.”

The Board action recommended in this item complies in all material respects with applicable State and federal laws, University of Illinois *Statutes, The General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure*, and Board of Trustees policies and directives.

The President of the University concurs with this recommendation.