

American Society of Biomechanics  
Honors and Awards Policy

The American Society of Biomechanics (Society) confers honors and awards, including but not limited to elected membership as a Fellow or Executive Board member, Society awards for contributions to the field of biomechanics, Grants for travel or scholarship, and Meeting awards honoring excellence in research presented at the meeting (Honors) on individuals for significant contributions to the field or interests of the field, and are determined in the Society's judgment and discretion. The Society retains the right to grant, defer or decline to grant an Honor to any person. The Society also retains the right to revoke or suspend an Honor already granted if, in its judgment and discretion, the Society determines that it is in the best interests of the field to do so. Suspension means the Honor (and the ability of the recipient to exercise any associated privileges and rights) are held in abeyance until notice by the Society that the Honor is reinstated or revoked.

The [Glossary of key terms](#) for the Society's [Code of Conduct](#) and [Investigation](#) Policies also apply to this Honors and Awards Policy.

**Underlying Policy Rationale — Interests of Excellence in the Field.**

While not the only interest that is critical for excellence in the field and is considered by the Society in deciding who should hold an Honor, professional ethics is an important such interest. When the Society awards an Honor, the Honor reflects the Society's judgment that an individual's contributions to, and effect on, the field are exemplary. The Society takes into account the effect on the field of the totality of the individual's work and professional and ethical conduct and reputation. It expects those who hold Honors to demonstrate that participation in and recognition by the field are privileges; and that the field's leaders, and others it celebrates, embody highly professional and ethical conduct in their work.

Unethical conduct includes, among other acts, sexual harassment and discrimination based on other factors unrelated to ability and promise (e.g., race and ethnicity), whether alone or intersecting with sexual harassment. These acts perpetuate longstanding structural and systemic barriers to full participation of all talent in the field, which have immediate adverse impact on individuals and undermine excellence in the field. Such unprofessional and unethical conduct may occur in research, learning/teaching, or practice.

**Ethics Considerations in Awarding Honors**

The Society finds, in its discretion, that determined unethical conduct of a current or prospective holder of an Honor—as well as credible, but undetermined, questions about the ethical conduct of such an individual—can contribute to longstanding structural and systemic barriers in the field. Consequently, ***for the purpose of placing heavier weight on what is best for excellence in the field than what is best for any individual*** when the two must be balanced, the Society will not confer any Honor on any individual whose conduct has been determined to be unethical. That determination will be based on the Society's own review or investigation and, if useful in the Society's discretion, the Society's consideration of any others' determinations (with supporting information) made available to the Society.

The Society also will not confer any Honor on any individual whose ethical conduct is the subject of a credible question known to the Society, so long as the question has not been finally and favorably determined to the Society's satisfaction, in its discretion. Determined unethical conduct may also justify suspension or revocation of an Honor. ***When applying this policy in situations of credible but undetermined questions, the Society is***

*withholding judgment and is not making a statement or determination regarding any individual. Rather, the Society is implementing a prophylactic measure to support the field's priority efforts to break down longstanding barriers to excellence.*

**THE SOCIETY'S CONFERRAL OF AN HONOR IS AN EXERCISE OF ITS DISCRETION, NOT AN OBLIGATION. THE SOCIETY, IN ITS DISCRETION, MAY SUSPEND OR REVOKE AN HONOR IF ITS ASSESSMENT OF THE RECIPIENT'S ACTUAL OR POTENTIAL IMPACT ON THE FIELD CHANGES FOR ANY MISSION-DRIVEN REASON.**

**Awareness of Conduct Issues—Required Disclosures:** The Society is aware of conduct issues about the holder or potential recipient of an Honor if its President or any individual who participates (whether as a staff, an advisor or a decision-maker) in the official Honors process is aware. These individuals must notify the Society's Diversity Chair (Society Official), who will make the head of the Honors process aware.

Anyone who makes a nomination or recommendation and knows that the nominee has been determined to have engaged in unprofessional or unethical conduct, or that a credible but undetermined question exists about the nominee's conduct, is required to make a disclosure to the Society Official as part of the nomination process. A person who is being considered for an Honor (upon becoming aware of being considered), or who holds an Honor, has a continuing duty to disclose to the Society Official the existence of any fact, situation, or circumstance that could be considered relevant to the Society's decision whether to award the Honor under provisions of this Honors Policy. Failure to make a disclosure may result in the Society withholding, suspending or revoking an Honor, in the Society's discretion.

**Restorative Remedies:** In the event of determined conduct inconsistent with an Honor — or in the event of a credible but undetermined question about such conduct —the Society may provide opportunities for restorative remedies (that diminish the effect of such conduct or credibly questioned conduct, elevate understanding of harm caused by such conduct, enhance relationships, improve conduct, advance safety for those affected, and prevent recurrence of any undesirable conduct, eventually enabling positive participation in the field and possibly Honors). The Society may pursue or encourage other institutions to pursue such remedies where, in the Society's judgment and discretion, the Society determines restorative remedies are possible with authentic consent by the accused and the target and without perpetuating barriers to participation of all talent in the field or otherwise undermining excellence in the field. The Society would generally endeavor to consult the accused and the target and consider, among other factors:

- (a) the egregiousness, prevalence, effect, and age of such conduct, the stage of career when it occurred;
- (b) whether an individual with determined unprofessional and unethical conduct takes responsibility for the conduct and demonstrates through action (non-repetition) that s/he learned the necessary lesson and is unlikely to repeat similar conduct;
- (c) whether an individual appears to be sincerely committed to demonstrating professional and ethical conduct, understanding how the determined conduct or questions of conduct occurred, avoiding a repetition, and restoring relationships—not just to qualify for receipt of an Honor, but recognizing the importance of professional and ethical conduct to excellence in the field.

**Process for Suspension or Revocation of Existing Honors.**

Upon notice by the Society to a person already holding an Honor, a suspension or revocation shall take effect. At least 30 days before a notice of revocation or suspension, the Society will give the holder of the Honor a notice of intent to revoke or suspend the Honor. The notice of intent will include a statement of the interests of the field served by the proposed revocation or suspension, in the Society's judgment. The holder of the Honor will have an opportunity to submit to the Society, within 14 days of receiving a notice of intent, a written statement of any reasons why s/he believes it would not be in the best interests of the field for the revocation or suspension to be affected. After that 14-day period, whether or not a statement has been submitted, the Society will act in its discretion. The Society, at any time, may review and act on pertinent information that was not available or known to it at the time of its decision.

### **Special Circumstances – Honors Held by Deceased Individuals.**

Special circumstances arise when unprofessional and unethical conduct of a deceased person who holds an Honor is raised. The Society will exercise its discretion to address such situations on a case-by-case basis and may determine that no action is needed without heightened concerns. It will consider the following:

- A deceased person is unable to participate in even an informal investigation or process, is unable to defend against allegations, e.g., of sexual harassment, or to participate in restorative remedies.
- A deceased person cannot continue unprofessional and unethical conduct, eliminating threats that the conduct will be ongoing.
- Unless heightened concerns for continuing impact on the field exist, the need to protect the interests of the field in eliminating barriers to inclusion may be limited, and the interest of fairness to the accused may be greater.
- Heightened concerns for impact on the field, even after death, may exist when the act of unprofessional and unethical conduct has been determined during a person's lifetime (or is established by unequivocal facts) and is highly egregious (respecting a single event or frequency). This is particularly so when the deceased holder of the Honor is very prominent in the field, or the Honor is exceptional, or there is a named Honor continuing to be conferred on others.
- When action is warranted, it may range from revocation of the Honor to a statement about intolerance of the type of conduct raised. Revocation is an extraordinary remedy. The Society will exercise its judgment on a case-by-case basis. If a statement is made, the Society would speak to intolerance of the type of conduct raised, without judging or stating whether the conduct occurred, and without adding commentary to any existing determination made on the subject. When a statement is made, the Society may include examples of types of unprofessional and unethical conduct faced and consequential actions taken under the Society's current policy generally, to demonstrate the authenticity of its intolerance for the type of conduct and mitigate impact on the field.
- The Society is not expected to newly investigate a question of professional and ethical conduct related to a deceased holder of an Honor.