RESOLUTION ON AN HONORARY DOCTOR OF LAWS DEGREE FOR PRESIDENT OSCAR ARIAS SANCHEZ

Background statement:

Oscar Arias Sanchez was born in Heredia, Costa Rica, September 13, 1941. He was educated there and abroad—attending Boston University with the original intention of studying medicine. Impressed by North American politics, he returned to his native country to pursue further study in law and economics. He was awarded a grant by the British government to study at the University of Essex and the London School of Economics and Political Science. Obtaining a doctorate from the University of Essex, he returned to Latin America where he held a professorship in the school of political science at the University of Costa Rica from 1969-1972.

Arias was appointed minister of national planning and political economy by President Jose Figueres in 1972. He served that office with distinction until 1977. The following year he was elected to represent Heredia in the national legislative assembly. In addition to his career in politics as a member of the National Liberation Party, he served as a member of the ad hoc commission of the National University of Heredia. He was a director of the technological institute of Costa Rica and a member of the national council of university rectors. In 1976 he served on the board of directors of the International University Exchange Fund and the following year he was a member of the North-South Roundtable. He strongly supports education—seeing it as a major contributor to equalization of income, political stability and economic development.

On February 2, 1986, he won the election for president of his country and was inaugurated May 8, 1986. He has used the resources of the presidency to promote stability and effect a return to diplomacy as a means of resolving the many conflicts bedeviling the region. In recognition of his gallant efforts to stabilize the turmoil devastating the societies and economics of the neighboring republics in Central America, Oscar Arias Sanchez was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize October 13, 1987.

Cal Poly has a special interest in the dedication and support that President Arias has shown for higher education because of our role in the development of the new Escuela de Agricultura de la Region Tropical Humeda. This educational project, which will offer a four-year baccalaureate degree in the areas of agricultural production and ecological conservation in the humid tropical zone, will also give members of our faculty and staff valuable experience by diversifying our focus and broadening our perspective. Thirty-two of our colleagues have already been involved over the past two years and the prospects are that an additional 30-50 will benefit from this cooperative effort in the next twenty-four months. President Arias has been very attentive in establishing the project and very gracious in sharing with us the talents of Dr. Jorge Manuel Dengo, First Vice-president of the republic, to act as Interim Director of the new college.
WHEREAS, Dr. Oscar Arias Sanchez, President of the Republic of Costa Rica, has achieved distinction through his efforts to promote peace and understanding in a region of the world long disturbed by civil strife and disregard for human rights; and

WHEREAS, International recognition for his contribution to diplomacy and the relaxation of armed conflict was duly celebrated by the 1987 Nobel Peace Prize; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Arias has also distinguished himself as an educator and advocate of academic excellence on the national and international level; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Arias has devoted time, effort, and resources to the successful establishment of the Escuela de Agricultura de la Region Tropical Humeda (EARTH) in conjunction with California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo; therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the California Polytechnic State University Academic Senate strongly recommend that President Baker urge the Board of Trustees of The California State University to award the Degree of Honorary Doctor of Laws to Oscar Arias Sanchez, President of the Republic of Costa Rica; and be it further

RESOLVED: That this honorary degree be conferred at Cal Poly Commencement, June, 1989.

Proposed By:
Reg Gooden, Statewide Senator
July 12, 1988
Memorandum

To: Charles Andrews, Chair
   Academic Senate

From: Warren J. Baker
      President

Subject: RESOLUTION ON HONORARY DOCTOR OF LAWS DEGREE

I want to acknowledge and thank you for your October 7 memo with which you transmitted the resolution adopted by the Academic Senate in closed Executive Session relative to the awarding of an honorary Doctor of Laws Degree. I am fully supportive of the resolution and have forwarded to the Chancellor's Office a recommendation that the Trustees award the honorary Doctor of Laws Degree proposed by the Academic Senate.