1. **Policy Statement**

Since 1848, UW-Madison faculty, staff, students, alumni, and organizational units of the university have made significant contributions to the fields of science, engineering, medicine, law and the humanities. Facilities Planning and Management (FP&M) staff will coordinate the placement of outdoor heritage plaques on campus grounds to recognize these important achievements.

2. **Purpose**

This policy provides guidance on the design specifications, content criteria and approval process for the production and installation of new heritage plaques.

3. **Definitions**

a. **Significant contribution:**
Heritage plaques are created to acknowledge major shifts in thinking or action within a particular discipline. The accomplishment recognizes exceptional innovation, creativity, artistry, dedication, and utility to the benefit of all. In general, an individual/unit’s accomplishments will build over the course of many years of research, teaching and service. In time, the achievement is recognized well beyond the boundaries of the campus, consistent with the goals of the Wisconsin Idea.

b. **Heritage plaque:**
A heritage plaque is a specific type of commemorative historical marker. As of 2015, thirty-one (31) heritage plaques are located within the Bascom Hill Historic District and the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences campus (primarily near Henry Mall). These plaques are the standard model for this policy.

Example of standard UW-Madison heritage plaque
c. **Eligible individuals:**
The significant contribution detailed on the plaque must relate to activities that occurred at UW-Madison, during a period when the individual being recognized worked for the university or was enrolled as a student. Typically, faculty, staff or students will have been separated from the university for five years before their name can be included on a heritage the plaque.

d. **Sponsoring unit:**
Any organizational unit on campus may propose a new plaque. Proposals for a heritage plaque must have the signed endorsement of a senior administrator, at the minimum level of dean or vice chancellor. Each school, college or program may develop their own internal evaluation criteria for nominating a new heritage plaque, drawing on the “significant contribution” definition in this policy.

4. **Scope**

This policy is intended to provide guidance for the installation of heritage plaques only. Other commemorative, memorial or interpretive signs are not included. The process described by this policy is to be followed by all campus units interested in the placement of heritage plaques on university managed property.

5. **Procedures**

a. **Review, approval and installation:**
Sponsoring units shall forward endorsed heritage plaque proposals to the Campus Planning and Landscape Architecture (CPLA) department, in the FP&M division. CPLA staff will work with the sponsoring unit on refining plaque content and the identification of appropriate mounting locations. CPLA will manage the fabrication and installation work orders. The director of CPLA may require changes to the new plaque proposal, to bring the project in to compliance with this policy document. All proposals will be forwarded to the Campus Planning Committee for final approval.

b. **Standard plaque specification:**
Size in inches: 21.25 H x 24 W with rounded top projection for the “Numen Lumen” seal
Material: cast bronze
Mounting system: integrated post cap for a 1.5 inch interior diameter post
Primary title: raised letters, center justified, presented in all capital letters
Body text: raised letters, center justified with sentence case capitalization
Plaque attachment: secured to post with a minimum of two tamper proof fasteners
Post stability: post is secured to a buried (3-foot deep) concrete footing
Sign height: top flat edge of sign is 48 inches above the adjacent pedestrian grade

c. **Language/content:**
Text may include the names of important individuals, general or specific timelines/dates, campus location references, brief summaries of activities or events, and explanations of how the event resulted in a major shift in thinking or action. Text should avoid jargon. Use language that is
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d. Word/line count: The primary text block shall not exceed 100 words, or 600 characters (with spaces) total. Typically, limit text to seven sentences on nine lines. Short sentences are preferable. The primary title line and the funding source for the plaque line are not included in these word counts.

e. Location: In general, heritage plaques will be located in close proximity to a building or place that relates directly to the significant contribution detailed on the plaque. At a minimum, heritage plaques shall not be placed closer than 50 feet from another heritage plaque or other commemorative object or sign (e.g., building name sign, memorial bench, or historical marker). A distance of 100 feet from an adjacent heritage plaque or other commemorative object is preferable.

When siting a new plaque consideration will be given to visibility, possible safety hazards, maintenance, proximity to other landscape features (e.g., waste and recycling containers, public art, and trees, etc.) and accessibility.

f. Funding: The fabrication and installation costs for a new heritage plaque are the responsibility of the sponsoring unit. Currently (2015) fabrication costs are approximately $2,400 and installation costs are approximately $250.

g. Maintenance or replacement: Following installation, all costs associated with maintenance or replacement of the plaque and mounting post will be charged to the sponsoring unit.

6. References

UW-Madison, Campus Memorial Policy, Oct. 2003