

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**REQUEST TO AWARD AN HONORARY DOCTOR OF HUMANE LETTERS DEGREE**

**Action Requested:** Consider approval of the request by the University of Iowa to award an honorary doctor of humane letters degree to Orhan Pamuk at Spring 2008 Commencement.

**Executive Summary:** The University of Iowa wishes to recognize Mr. Pamuk for his exceptional contributions to literature and social thinking. Mr. Pamuk has made extraordinary contributions to world literature through writing that addresses global concerns and offers a multi-faceted perspective.

**Details on Mr. Pamuk's Accomplishments:**

- ◆ Mr. Pamuk was a participant in the University of Iowa's International Writing Program in 1985. While in the Program, he completed much of his acclaimed fourth novel, *Kara Kitap (The Black Book)*, which became the basis for his 1992 screenplay for the movie, *Gizli Yüz*.
- ◆ Mr. Pamuk's contributions to literature are significant for their combination of elegance and social commentary, exploration of the boundaries between new and old orders, secular and religious thought and expression, and mysticism and reality.
- ◆ Mr. Pamuk was the first author in the Muslim world to condemn publicly the fatwa against Salman Rushdie. He has also emerged as a high-profile figure in support of Kurdish political rights.
- ◆ His highly acclaimed 2000 novel, *Benim Adim Kirmizi (My Name is Red)*, was translated into 24 languages and, in 2003, received the French Prix du Meilleur Livre Etranger, the Italian Premio Grinzane Cavour, and one of the most prestigious prizes of international literature, the IMPAC Dublin Award.
- ◆ *The New York Times* named Mr. Pamuk's novel *Kar* as one of its Ten Best Books of 2004. In 2005, he received the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade where he was recognized as a writer "who delves like no other into the historical traces left by the West in the East and the East in the West. He is committed to a cultural concept entirely based on understanding and respect for others."
- ◆ In 2006, 20 years after the University of Iowa's International Writing Program helped Mr. Pamuk cultivate his literary talent, the Swedish Academy announced that he would receive the 2006 Nobel Prize in literature. In a press release, the Academy noted that Mr. Pamuk "in the quest for the melancholic soul of his native city has discovered new symbols for the clash and interlacing of cultures."