

POSTHUMOUS DEGREE POLICY

Definition

A deceased student may be considered a candidate for a posthumous degree when nominated by the dean of the college in which the student was enrolled at or prior to his or her death, and when minimum academic degree requirements have been verified by the Registrar. Posthumous degrees may be awarded at the undergraduate and graduate level.

Requirements for Nomination

1. A student must have been in good academic standing with the institution at the time of death. Good standing is defined as not being academically deficient for their classification (academic probation, continued probation, suspension or expulsion).
2. University requirements for earned credits in residence must have been satisfied.
3. Student must have been enrolled at time of death (summer excluded), unless his or her continuous enrollment was interrupted by injury, illness, deployment, etc.
4. An undergraduate or graduate student must have completed at least 75% of degree requirements, as determined by the Registrar, to be nominated for a posthumous degree.

Nomination/Approval Process

1. Anyone may identify a candidate for a posthumous degree, but such a suggestion must be made to the Dean of the appropriate school for consideration to begin the formal process.
2. The student's degree audit file shall be obtained from the Registrar's Office to verify program/ plan and progress toward degree completion.
3. The Dean of the school in which the student was enrolled will recommend the candidate for a posthumous degree in the form of a formal written request to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs. The request must include the name and ID of the student, the degree/program/ plan to be awarded, and the recommended semester for degree conferral.
4. If supported by the provost, the provost will submit the recommendation to the university president for formal approval. If approved by the president,
 - a. The provost will notify the registrar to begin the process for degree posting and commencement proceedings, if applicable.
 - b. The President or his/her designee will inform the representative of the decedent's estate of the university's decision and desire to recognize their student with this honor (this process should be kept confidential until and unless approved at all levels). If the representative of the decedent's estate agrees and desires to represent the student and receive the diploma at a commencement ceremony, this must be relayed to the registrar for planning. The representative of the decedent's estate has the right to refuse.

Miscellaneous Details/Considerations

1. A posthumous degree will be printed in commencement programs. If the representative of the decedent's estate chooses not to participate, this award may still be read during the ceremony (unless explicitly requested otherwise by the family).
2. If the student had financial debt to the university, this debt will be waived.
3. Exceptions to the aforementioned minimum requirements may be considered in special cases, with the support of the Dean and Provost and approval of the president.
4. The statement "awarded posthumously" will be printed on both the student's academic record and on the diploma.