Posthumous Degree Guidelines

A student may be considered a candidate for a posthumous degree when the following requirements are met. Posthumous degrees may be awarded at the undergraduate and graduate level.

Requirements for Nomination:

1. A student must have been in good standing with the institution at the time of death. Good standing is defined as not having any of the following statuses: academic probation, academic dismissal, disciplinary suspension or expulsion.

2. The student must have been enrolled at the time of death (Winterim, Interim, and Summer sessions excluded) or their continuous enrollment was interrupted by their injury, illness, deployment, or other extenuating circumstances.

3. An undergraduate student must have earned 90 undergraduate credits (at the institution or through transfer).

4. A graduate student must be within 75% of degree completion.

5. The college in which the student was enrolled recommends the awarding of a posthumous degree with support from the department chair or program director and the dean.

Nomination/Approval Process:

1. Any university student, faculty, or staff member can suggest a candidate be considered for a posthumous degree. This request must be made to the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs or Dean of Students.

2. The student’s degree audit file will be obtained from Registration and Records to verify the program/plan and progress toward degree completion. The Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs will notify the department chair/program director and dean of the college in which the student was enrolled of the student’s eligibility for the posthumous degree.

3. The department chair or program director and dean of the college in which the student was enrolled makes the formal recommendation of the candidate for a posthumous degree in the form of a written request to the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. The request must include the name of the student, the degree/program to be awarded, and the recommended semester for degree conferral.

4. If approved by the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs:

   a. The Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs will notify appropriate university personnel (e.g., registrar, commencement coordinator).

   b. The Dean of Students will inform the immediate family of the university’s decision and desire to recognize the student (This process will be kept confidential until and unless approved at all levels). If the family desires to represent the student and receive the diploma at a
commencement ceremony, this must be relayed to the commencement coordinator for planning purposes. If the family does not wish to attend the commencement ceremony, the diploma will be mailed to the requested address.

5. A posthumous degree will be printed in the commencement program. If the family chooses not to participate, this award may still be read during the ceremony (unless explicitly requested otherwise by the family). Example: Jane M. Doe – Awarded Posthumously