Posthumous Degree Award Policy

Policy Statement
A posthumous degree is an official Duke University degree that is awarded to a deceased student in recognition of the student’s academic achievement. The criteria for the award are established in order to uphold academic and institutional integrity.

A posthumous degree may be awarded if, at the time of the student’s death, he or she was enrolled at Duke University, was in good academic standing and was nearing completion of the requirements in the major degree program, or was reasonably expected to complete the requirements of the major degree program within the current or nearest academic term. For this policy, nearing completion is defined as having completed at least 75% of the requirements in the major degree program. Requests for students who completed less than 75% of the requirements in the degree program will require exceptional consideration by the provost.

Reason for the Policy
To recognize the academic achievement of students who have died, and to empower collegiate units and senior academic administration to award degrees posthumously where the student has completed sufficient academic work.

Procedures
1. Departments should notify their chief academic officer (e.g., College Dean) of a proposed degree to be awarded posthumously.
2. The dean supporting the department’s wish to award a degree posthumously should address a letter to the Provost requesting permission to grant a posthumous degree.
   a. The letter should include the degree and the term for which the student should be awarded the degree posthumously. It should also indicate the student’s proximity to the completion of the degree.
3. If the Provost approves the request, the degree will be submitted to faculty for approval.
4. Upon approval by the faculty, the requestor will be notified in writing, with a copy to the Office of the University Registrar. The University Registrar will move forward with posting the posthumous degree award to the academic record, and order an official diploma.
5. Once the posthumous degree award has been posted to the academic record and the diploma has been ordered and received, the official transcript and diploma shall be mailed to the family (or other designated contact) of the deceased student. If requested by a representative of the deceased student, the University Registrar may arrange for the physical delivery on campus of the diploma to a family member or designated contact.

Contacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Contact</th>
<th>Frank Blalark</th>
<th><a href="mailto:frank.blalark@duke.edu">frank.blalark@duke.edu</a></th>
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<tbody>
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