

POLICY

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Title: Award of Posthumous Degrees

Policy Statement

The University of Vermont seeks to recognize the academic achievements of students who were enrolled at the University at the time of their death, and to commemorate those achievements for the benefit of their families and the community. This goal must be achieved with due attention to academic and institutional integrity. Posthumous degrees may therefore be awarded under the criteria and procedures set forth in this statement.

Reason for the Policy

This policy is designed to establish consistently administered criteria and procedures under which posthumous degrees may be awarded.

Applicability of the Policy

This policy applies solely to the award of degrees to students enrolled in degree programs at the University of Vermont at the time of their death. It does not apply to honorary degrees, which may be awarded under applicable criteria and procedures; see [Honorary Degrees; Candidate Selection Guidelines and Criteria, Board of Trustees Policies, Procedures, and Planning Manual](#).

Definitions

None

Procedures

Any member of the University community or member of the family of the deceased may recommend a student enrolled in a University of Vermont degree program at the time of the student's death for consideration for posthumous award of the degree. If the request for consideration is initiated by someone who is not a member of the family of the deceased, the Office of the Provost and Senior Vice President must obtain from the student's family approval of the request for consideration.

The request must be submitted to the Office of the Provost and Senior Vice President, which will first verify the death of the student and next ascertain their enrollment status and academic standing. Once these steps are completed, the Provost and Senior Vice President will initiate and oversee the progress of the consideration and approvals required below.

The Provost and Senior Vice President will advise the individual who made the request of its final disposition. If the final decision is favorable, and the request did not initiate from the family of the deceased, the Provost and Senior Vice President will also notify the family.

A posthumous degree will customarily be conferred at the next regularly scheduled commencement exercise and presented to a member of the student's family or their representative. The commencement program will note that the degree was presented posthumously. The graduation application fee shall be waived. A posthumous degree may also be presented by an appropriate University official to the family in a private gathering.

The Office of the Registrar shall post the notice of the award of the posthumous degree to the student's transcript.

A. Undergraduate degrees

An undergraduate degree may be awarded posthumously if:

1. At the time of death, the student was enrolled in courses required for completion of the degree and nearing completion of work required for award of the degree.;
2. The student was in good academic standing and successfully progressing toward completion of requirements for the degree to be awarded;
3. A favorable recommendation for award of the degree is made by the student's major department and college dean, and is then referred through normal channels to the Faculty Senate for approval; and
4. The President awards the degree in due course.

B. Graduate degrees

A graduate degree may be awarded posthumously if:

1. At the time of death, the graduate student was nearing successful completion of the work required for the degree;
2. The student was in good standing;
3. A favorable recommendation for award of the degree is made by the student's graduate committee, the Graduate College Executive Committee and the Dean of the Graduate College, and is then referred through normal channels to the Faculty Senate for approval; and
4. The President awards the degree in due course.

C. Medical Doctor degrees

A Medical Doctor degree may be awarded posthumously if:

1. The student completed the Clerkship Level and the required (non-elective) components of the Advanced Integration Level of the curriculum;
2. The student was in good academic standing and was successfully progressing toward completion of requirements for the degree to be conferred;

3. A favorable recommendation for award of the degree is made by the Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education and the Dean of the College of Medicine, and is then referred through normal channels to the Faculty Senate for approval; and
4. The President awards the degree in due course.

D. Extraordinary Circumstances

Requests for consideration that do not meet the above criteria may also be considered when extraordinary circumstances, such as outstanding service to the University, prevail. In these situations, a request for award of the degree must be reviewed and favorably recommended by the appropriate department and/or dean or, as applicable, the Graduate College Executive Committee and Graduate College Dean, or the Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education and the Dean of the College of Medicine, and the Provost. If these recommendations are favorable, the request will be referred through normal channels to the Faculty Senate for approval and subsequently to the Board of Trustees to award the degree in due course.

Contacts

Questions concerning the daily operational interpretation of this policy should be directed to the following (in accordance with the policy elaboration and procedures):	
Title(s)/Department(s):	Contact Information:
Provost and Senior Vice President	(802) 656-4400 Provost.Office@uvm.edu

Forms/Flowcharts/Diagrams

- None

Related Documents/Policies

- None

Regulatory References/Citations

- None

Training/Education

Training will be provided on an as-needed basis as determined by the Approval Authority or the Responsible Official.

About this Policy

Responsible Official:	Provost and Senior Vice President	Approval Authority:	President
Policy Number:	V. 2.23.3	Effective Date:	June 7, 2010
Revision History:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • V. 3.0.5.1 effective April 30, 2007 • V. 2.23.2/V. 30.5.2 effective June 7, 2010 • Reaffirmed January 6, 2021, October 14, 2024 		

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