

Student

Board of Trustees Policy

SUBJECT: Awarding Posthumous Degrees	NUMBER: 3.7
	DATE: May 15, 2023 Resolution # 23-60
	SUPERSEDES: NA

Purpose

This Policy provides the process for the recognition and awarding of a degree to an eligible student who was enrolled at SUNY Schenectady at, or prior to, their death. Posthumous degrees are provided to the family of the deceased student as a meaningful acknowledgement of the student’s accomplishments while attending SUNY Schenectady.

Definitions

N/A

Policy

SUNY Schenectady may award a degree posthumously in recognition of a student’s work and satisfactory progress towards degree at the time of death.

Eligibility:

To be considered for a posthumous degree or certificate, upon review by the Registrar’s Office and the respective division/school dean, the deceased student must have otherwise been eligible for graduation had they been able to complete the remaining degree or certificate requirements.

Procedure

A family member or legal representative of a student must contact the Registrar’s Office to initiate the process. The Registrar’s Office will gather the appropriate academic documentation (transcripts, degree audit, etc.) to verify the deceased student had been matriculated in a degree or certificate program at the time of their death. Upon successful verification, the Registrar’s Office will waive any remaining degree or certificate requirements and send all relevant academic documents to the dean of the division/school in which the student was enrolled.

Pending the dean's review of the records provided by the Registrar's Office, the division/school dean in which the student was enrolled must submit a letter of recommendation to the Vice President for Academic Affairs to support the award of the degree or certificate or cite specific reasons for not making the award. The Vice President for Academic Affairs, upon review of the dean's recommendation, shall submit a memo to the President outlining their recommendation. The President, retaining the right to accept or deny the Vice President's recommendation for any reason, shall forward any approvals for the award of posthumous degrees or certificates to the Board of Trustees for consideration.

Pending the approval to award a posthumous degree or certificate by the Board of Trustees, the Registrar's Office will print the deceased students' diploma. Posthumous degree and certificate award counts will not be included in any reporting associated with the College's completion rates.

Awarding

Posthumous degrees and certificates will be printed in the commencement program within the appropriate college division/school. The statement "awarded posthumously" will be printed on the student's academic record, but not on the diploma.

- A. The award of the degree will be read during the graduation ceremony, unless explicitly requested otherwise by the family.
- B. Should they wish to do so, a family member may accept the posthumous degree or certificate on behalf of the deceased student during the graduation ceremony.
 - i. In the event that a family member is not present to accept the deceased student's degree, the Registrar's Office will send the diploma to a designated family member or their legal representative.