



UNIVERSITY OF
WEST GEORGIA

Last Approved N/A
Effective N/A
Next Review N/A

Area Administration/
Governance
(Procedures)
Chief Or Chief
Responsible Academic
Party Officer

Awarding of Posthumous Degrees/Certificates

Authority for Procedure granted by UWG [PL #1010 Deceased Response Policy](#)

This procedure outlines the process for awarding a Posthumous Degree or Certificate of Achievement to a deceased student meeting specified eligibility criteria, but who had not completed all degree requirements.

A. General Eligibility

To be eligible for any **Posthumous recognition**, the student:

- Must have been in **good standing** with the University at the time of death.
- Must have been **enrolled or eligible** for continued enrollment.
- Must have maintained conduct (e.g., unrelated to criminal activity or serious misconduct) consistent with the University's **standards and values**.

B. Eligibility Criteria by Degree Level

1. **Posthumous Undergraduate Degrees** may be awarded if, at the time of death, the student:
 - meets the **General Eligibility** requirements,
 - had completed at least **75% of their program of study course work**, and
 - held a **minimum UWG cumulative GPA of 2.00**.
2. **Posthumous Graduate Degrees** may be awarded if, at the time of death, the student:
 - meets the **General Eligibility** requirements,
 - had completed at least **75% of their program of study course work**, and
 - held a **minimum UWG cumulative GPA of 3.00**.
3. **Posthumous Doctoral Degrees** may be awarded if, at the time of death, the student:

- meets the **General Eligibility** requirements, and
- had been **admitted to candidacy** and made **tangible progress** toward completing approved research, such as producing a dissertation in draft form or another acceptable product to the student's advisory committee, demonstrating mastery of course material and independent research capability.

C. Additional Recognition of Deceased Students

If a Posthumous Degree cannot be awarded in accordance with the foregoing eligibility requirements, the University may honor the deceased student's educational progress by presenting a **Certificate of Achievement**. The Certificate of Achievement is **not a degree or diploma**. It serves as a **symbolic acknowledgment** of the student's academic effort and engagement in their educational journey at the University of West Georgia (UWG).

1. Eligibility for Certificate of Achievement

- A **Certificate of Achievement** may be awarded if the student meets the **General Eligibility requirements** and held a **minimum UWG institutional GPA of 2.00**.

D. Review and Approval Process

1. Notification of Student Death

- Upon notification of a student's death, the **Dean of Students** or their designee shall notify the **Registrar's Office**.
- The **Registrar** will update the student's academic record accordingly.

2. Initiation of Review

- When a request for a **Posthumous Degree** or **Certificate of Achievement** is submitted by a community member, faculty member, staff member, or student, the review and award process is initiated.

3. Eligibility Evaluation

- The **Registrar** evaluates the student's eligibility for a Posthumous Degree or Certificate of Achievement based on the established criteria outlined in this procedure.

4. Recommendation for Approval

- If the eligibility criteria are met, the **Registrar** or designee forwards a recommendation to the **Provost** for final approval.

5. Exception – Doctoral Degrees

- For doctoral candidates, the **Registrar** verifies enrollment status only.
- The **Office of the Provost**, in consultation with the student's advisory committee, determines whether the student made tangible progress toward completing approved research sufficient to warrant a posthumous doctoral degree.

6. Provost Review and Notification

The Provost or designee shall

- Approve or deny the recommendation; and
- Notify the **Registrar** and **Chairperson of the University Commencement Committee** of the decision.

7. Final Communications and Delivery

- The **Office of the President** will send the University's official **letter of condolence**, which will be delivered with the posthumous degree or certificate to the family or next of kin.
- The **Registrar** coordinates the **printing and mailing** of all Posthumous Degrees and Certificates of Achievement.

For additional information, see UWG [PL #1010 Deceased Response Policy](#).

E. Awarding at Commencement

A designated University Official, prior to the commencement ceremony, will coordinate with the family or next-of-kin to determine how the Posthumous Degree is to be presented.

F. Record Keeping

A record of the award shall be noted in the student's academic record by the Registrar's Office.

Definitions

Certificate of Achievement: A recognition given posthumously to honor a student's educational progress toward a degree and excluded from the University's official count of certificates.

Posthumous Degree: A University System of Georgia (USG) degree awarded posthumously and excluded from the University's official count of degrees.

Guidelines/Related material

- **Board of Regents Policy Manual [07.03.05.02 Death of Student](#)**
- **[UWG PL 1010 Deceased Response Policy](#)**

Approval Signatures

Step Description

Approver

Date