

COLLEGE *of* CHARLESTON

OFFICIAL DIVISIONAL POLICY Academic Affairs Division

Posthumous Degree Policy

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1.0 **Introduction**

A posthumous degree may be awarded for a deceased student upon the recommendation of the relevant Dean or Deans and as approved by the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs (hereafter, “Provost”) or the President.

2.0 **Eligibility**

A student who dies while actively pursuing a degree at the College of Charleston (hereafter, “College”) may be considered for a posthumous degree based on the following criteria:

2.1 The student was in good academic standing and making satisfactory progress towards degree completion.

2.2 The student must have been enrolled in courses needed to complete the requirements for an undergraduate or graduate degree.

- An undergraduate student must have already completed at least 90 semester hours, and must have completed at least 30 credit hours at the College.

- A graduate student must have been within one semester of completing the coursework for the degree, or must have completed at least 75% of the graduate credits required by the graduate program of study.
- For graduate degrees requiring a research project (dissertation, thesis or research paper) the research proposal must have been completed to the satisfaction of the committee members.

2.3 The determination that a posthumous degree is to be awarded, consistent with these criteria, shall be made by the Provost, subject to the review and determination of the President of the College. The decision of the President is final.

2.4 Posthumous degree award requests for degree programs jointly administered by the College and other universities will be reviewed on an individual basis by the designated academic representatives of the participating institutions, contingent on the willingness of all partner institutions to consider such requests.

3.0 Date of Award for Posthumous Degrees

The posthumous degree shall be awarded consistent with the regular degree conferral cycle of the College, following the decision of the President or Provost to award the posthumous degree.

4.0 Presentation of Posthumous Degrees

The President, Provost, and/or Dean makes a personal presentation to the family. If a presentation is not possible or desired, the diploma may be made available to an appropriate family or other representative by the Office of the Provost or the Office of the President.

If a posthumous degree is awarded, the deceased student's name will be listed in the next Commencement Program or Bulletin, parenthetically noted "Posthumous."

5.0 Recognition of Deceased Students and Alumni/Alumnae

No provision of this Policy shall prevent the College of Charleston Alumni Association or any academic or administrative unit of the College from appropriately honoring the contributions, accomplishments, or memory of a deceased student, alumna, or alumnus. However, only the Provost or President shall have the authority to approve the awarding of a posthumous degree.

6.0 Policy Manager and Responsible Department or Office

Provost (or Provost's Designee), Office of the Provost

7.0 Departments/Offices Affected by this Policy

Office of the President
Office of the Provost

All Academic Deans, Departments, and Academic Programs
Graduate School
Office of the Registrar

8.0 **Procedures Related to this Policy**

See Appendix A, as attached to this Divisional Policy.

9.0 **Related Policies, Documents or Forms**

Faculty/Administration Manual
College of Charleston Undergraduate Catalog
College of Charleston Graduate Catalog

10.0 **Review Schedule**

Approved: August 2004
Revised: September 2016
Next Review Date: October 1, 2021



Signed: _____
Brian R. McGee, Provost

APPENDIX A
Posthumous Degree Award Procedure

The following procedures shall be used in reviewing requests for and awarding posthumous degrees:

- Family or friends of the deceased must contact the appropriate academic unit to request the awarding of a posthumous degree.
- The request must be in writing with a copy of the student death notification (e.g., state death notification form, newspaper article, funeral service program).
- The Department Chair or Program Director of the appropriate academic unit ordinarily forwards the request to the Dean, who will make a recommendation to the Office of Academic Affairs/Provost (or President) for awarding of a posthumous degree. Requests also may be initiated by a Dean or other academic administrator.
- With the assistance of the Graduate School and/or the Office of the Registrar, as appropriate, the Office of the Provost reviews the student's record to determine if the student has met the requirements for a posthumous degree. The determination that a posthumous degree is to be awarded shall be made by the Provost, subject to the review and determination of the President of the College.
- Upon receiving a decision from the Provost (or the Provost's designee), the Dean or other designated College administrator shall notify the individual who made the original request of that decision.
- If the request for a posthumous degree is approved, the words "Honoris Causa" shall be printed on the diploma. There also shall be a notation of the posthumous award on the transcript.