

430.3 – Posthumous Degree

Purpose:

The purpose of this Operational Procedure is to establish procedures for the awarding of a posthumous degree to a deserving student who deceased before completing all degree requirements, while still maintaining the academic integrity of the program of study and institution.

Procedure:

1. Requirements for Nomination:

- a. A student must have been in good academic and disciplinary standing at the time of death.
 - i. Good academic standing is defined as not being deficient for their classification (warning, academic probation or suspension).
 - ii. Good academic standing is defined as not being deficient for their classification (warning, academic probation or suspension.). Good disciplinary standing is defined as having no pending disciplinary charges or outstanding disciplinary sanctions.
- b. College requirements for earned credits in residence must have been satisfied.
- c. Student must have been enrolled at time of death (summer excluded), or their continuous enrollment was interrupted by their injury, illness, deployment, etc.
- d. A student must have completed 75% of degree requirements (measured by credits attempted and successfully completed) to be nominated for a posthumous degree.

2. Nomination/Approval Process:

- a. Anyone may initiate a request for conferral of a posthumous degree by notifying the Assistant Dean who supervises the program in which the student was enrolled at the time of death.



- b. The Assistant Dean shall request the Director of Academic Records & Registrar to verify the students program/plan and progress toward degree completion.
- c. Academic Records & Registrar will verify the student's disciplinary standing with the Vice President for Student Affairs.
- d. If qualified, the Assistant Dean will move the nomination forward to the respective Academic Dean.
- e. The Academic Dean will recommend the candidate for a posthumous degree in the form of a formal written request to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.
 - i. The request must include:
 1. Student name and ID
 2. Degree, program and plan to be awarded
 3. Recommended semester for degree conferral
- f. The Vice President for Academic Affairs will confer as needed with appropriate faculty and academic officers of the college division in which the student was enrolled to reach consensus on the awarding of the degree.
- g. If supported, the Vice President for Academic Affairs will submit a recommendation to the college President for formal approval.
 - i. If approved by the president:
 1. The Vice President for Academic Affairs will forward written formal approval to the Director of Academic Records & Registrar to begin the process for degree posting and commencement proceedings, if applicable.
 2. The college President will inform the immediate family of the college's decision and desire to recognize their student with this honor (this process should be kept confidential until and unless approved at all levels). If the family desires to represent the student and receive the diploma at a commencement ceremony, this must be relayed to the Administrative Assistant – VP for Academic Affairs for planning.



3. Miscellaneous Details/Considerations:

- a. A posthumous degree will be printed in commencement programs within the appropriate college section. If the family chooses not to participate, this award may still be read during the ceremony (unless explicitly requested otherwise by the family).
- b. If the student had an account balance, that debt will be forgiven.
- c. Exceptions to the aforementioned minimum requirements may be considered in special cases, with support of the faculty senate, administrative chain of command, and the college president.
- d. The statement "awarded posthumously" will be printed on the student's academic record, but not on the diploma

References:

[North Dakota State Board of Higher Education Policy 430.3 Posthumous Degrees](#)

History of This Procedure:

First policy draft reviewed by the Faculty Senate on May 1, 2014, reviewed by the Operations Council on May 14, 2014 and approved by the Executive Council on May 30, 2014.

Revisions – August 4, 2014; reviewed by the Operations Council on November 9, 2016 and approved by the Executive Council on November 18, 2016; February 20, 2019, changed from a policy to an operational procedure as reviewed by the Campus Council on April 26th, 2023, and reviewed by the Executive Council on May 17th, 2023, approved by the President on June 8th, 2023.