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Policy Name

4.4450 Posthumous Degree Policy

Purpose and Scope

Alvernia University seeks to extend sympathy and compassion to the families of students who pass away near the completion of their degrees and to recognize the academic achievement of students who were in good academic standing at the time of death. Conditions specified below must be met in order to receive recognition.

Responsibilities

Title or Role	Definition and What They are Responsible For
Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost	Maintains and enforces this policy. Receives exceptions to the policy.
Senior Leadership Team	Serves as final approval for policy and assists with reviewing exceptions to the policy.

Policy

Posthumous Degrees

- A. Associate & Bachelor's: upon request following the procedure below, a posthumous associate's or bachelor's degree, as appropriate, may be awarded when the student meets all of the following:
 - 1. Had declared a major
 - 2. Had completed, or at the time of death was enrolled in good standing in, credits sufficient to have completed the requirements for their degree
 - 3. Had completed the credit residency requirement at Alvernia.
 - 4. Had a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher and was in good standing within the program
- B. Master's: upon request following the procedure below, a posthumous Master's degree may be awarded when the student meets all of the following:
 - 1. Had completed, or at the time of death was enrolled in good standing in, credits sufficient to have completed the requirements for their degree
 - 2. Had completed the credit residency requirement at Alvernia.
 - 3. Had a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher and was in good standing within the program
- C. Alvernia University does not award Posthumous Doctoral degrees

Certificates of Progress

If, at the time of death, the conditions for award of a posthumous degree are not satisfied, a certificate indicating progress toward the degree at any level, Associate's, Bachelor's, Master's, or Doctoral, may be awarded if the student had both:

- 1. completed at least one semester at Alvernia;
- 2. attained a GPA at Alvernia of 2.0 or higher for undergraduate and 3.0 for graduate

Certificates of Attendance

Upon request, a certificate of attendance is available to the family of any student who had been enrolled at Alvernia at the time of their death and who do not meet the above criteria

Policy Procedure

A formal request for the awarding of the degree or certificate may be initiated by any of the following: a family member, a faculty member, a Department Chair, Dean, or Provost, or a fellow student. If the request is not made by a family member, the family should be contacted, if possible, and consulted about the possible award.

Requests for posthumous recognition must be initiated within 5 years of the date of death. The decision will be communicated to the requester within sixty days of the request. According to the preference of the family, recognition will occur either by the end of the academic year in which the request is made or the end of the academic year in which the student would have been expected to graduate.

The posthumous nature of the degree will be indicated on the diploma and on the student's official transcript. When a posthumous certificate is awarded, the Registrar's Office provides the certificate in accordance with Alvernia University's approved format. The student's diploma or certificate will be sent to the Office of the Provost to be released or mailed to the person legally authorized to manage the deceased student's affairs. Normally, any fees associated with the administration of these posthumous recognitions will be waived.

Posthumous degrees will be noted in the next commencement program, and the family of the deceased will be invited to have a designee receive their student's diploma on stage if they so desire. Certificates of progress or certificates of attendance will not be publicly announced. At the will of the family, all posthumous recognitions can be picked up in person at a scheduled meeting with the University President or designee, or can be mailed to the family.

Exceptions to Policy

Exceptions to this policy must be requested in writing by filling out the Policy and Procedure Exception form (linked below) and submitting to the individual named in the Responsibilities section who assists with reviewing exceptions to this policy.

Policy Review

The Academic Affairs/Registrar policies should be reviewed on a 5-year cycle and updated when institutional needs or goals change.

Approved versions of this policy will be posted on the Alvernia University Portal.

References and Related Policies

This section contains any other policies, 3rd party standards, or guidelines referenced by this policy.

References

N/A

Related Policies

N/A

Exhibits

This section contains any forms or exhibits referenced by this policy.

- [Policy and Procedure Exception Form](#)
- [Form for Request of Posthumous Recognition of an Alvernia student](#)

Document Review Log

Date Reviewed	Description of Changes
8/07/2023	Initial Draft
8/17/2023	SLT Approval