

CONFERRAL OF POSTHUMOUS DEGREES POLICY

Purpose

The University of Mary is a caring and humane institution that takes special responsibility to recognize our students' achievements. This is especially true in cases of students who have died. This policy is meant to make clear the University's position, avoid confusion, and enable the University to award a degree when appropriate.

Statement of Policy

The University may grant undergraduate and graduate degrees posthumously. Eligible undergraduate students must have been enrolled in a degree program at the time of death, in good academic standing, and earned a minimum of 90 credits (senior status). Eligible graduate students must have been enrolled in a degree program at the time of death, in good academic standing, and satisfactorily completed a minimum of two-thirds of the graduate degree course work.

Procedure

An immediate family member of the deceased student may request a posthumous degree through the Registrar's Office. For purposes of this policy, immediate family member is defined as spouse, parent, grandparent, adult child, or sibling. The Registrar's Office shall verify eligibility based on the applicable criteria above. If the deceased student is eligible, then (1) the Registrar's Office shall approve the posthumous degree conferral and (2) notify the Office of the President. Then, (3) the President of the University or his or her representative shall communicate plans for the conferral to the requesting party in writing.

A diploma for a posthumous degree will be identical to other degrees awarded; no special notation will be made on the diploma. The immediate family will be invited to Commencement in reserved seating to receive the degree on the deceased student's behalf, one or two of the immediate family will proceed to the stage when the posthumous degree is announced, and the Commencement program will contain a notation that the degree is being awarded posthumously. Recipients receiving a degree on behalf of a deceased student shall be, when necessary, referred to as a "Representative of the Graduate." If the immediate family member is unable or chooses not to attend Commencement, the diploma may be mailed to the immediate family member.

Approved

5 August 2020 by the President of the University

6 August 2020 by the Board of Trustees (EC)

11 March 2021 revised by the Board of Trustees

18 March 2021 delivered to University Senate