

Awarding a Posthumous Degree - Policy & Procedures

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 This policy aims to develop an empathetic system for granting degrees to students who have unfortunately passed away prior to finishing their educational journey.
- 1.2 This policy is designed to acknowledge the accomplishments and future potential of these individuals by celebrating their commitment to education and their positive impact on the university community.

2.0 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all students registered in degree programs at AIUB who have regrettably passed away prior to completing the graduation criteria. It encompasses undergraduate, graduate, and professional degree programs offered by the university.

3.0 Definitions

- 3.1 Posthumous degree - a degree conferred upon a deceased student who has completed a significant portion of their academic requirements but has passed away before fulfilling all the requirements for graduation.
- 3.2 Family - immediate family members (parents, spouse, or children).

4.0 Policy

- 4.1 The university understands the effect of a student's unexpected passing and aims to show care and understanding to the grieving family in those difficult moments.
- 4.2 The policy is designed to recognize the achievements of the student who has passed away and demonstrates the university's dedication to nurturing a caring and supportive academic atmosphere.
- 4.3 In order for a student to receive a degree posthumously, they must have finished at least 75 percent of the necessary credits in their chosen degree program at the time of their passing.
 - 4.3.1 The student must be in good academic standing and a registered student at the time of death.
 - 4.3.2 Graduate students in a Master's or PhD program must have completed all coursework and made significant progress on their thesis or dissertation.
 - 4.3.3 If a student has applied for graduation and is eligible but passed away prior to the formal approval of degree completion, no action will be required under this policy.

- 4.4 The family of the deceased student shall initiate the posthumous degree request by contacting the Office of the Registrar and Enrollment Services.
- 4.5 The university must request appropriate documentation, such as academic transcripts and official records, to verify the student's academic progress before considering the grant of a posthumous degree.
- 4.6 The recommendation for awarding a posthumous degree rests with the Registrar and is ultimately approved by the Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA), who shall be responsible for evaluating and approving all eligible cases.
- 4.7 Posthumous degrees shall be conferred during regular graduation ceremonies, with appropriate arrangements made to commemorate the memory of the deceased student during the ceremony.
- 4.8 The parchment of a posthumously awarded degree shall be inscribed with a notation recognizing the honor as "posthumous." The student's academic records and transcript shall also carry this notation to distinguish it from regular degree conferrals.

5.0 Procedures

- 5.1 The Registrar oversees the assessment and authorization of requests for degrees awarded posthumously, ensuring collaboration with family members to collect necessary documentation for verification purposes.
- 5.2 The Academic Affairs Office will be responsible for ensuring that this policy is carried out and offering guidance as needed to the Registrar's Office and Enrollment Services Department.
- 5.3 The family of the deceased student shall initiate the posthumous degree request by contacting the Office of the Registrar and Enrollment Services.
 - 5.3.1 The family member must provide relevant information, including the student's name, academic program, date of passing, and contact details.
 - 5.3.2 The request must be submitted one month prior to the next graduation ceremony.
- 5.4 The Registrar shall convene to review the posthumous degree request and supporting documentation.
 - 5.4.1 The Registrar will verify the student's academic records to determine if the eligibility criteria for a posthumous degree are met.
 - 5.4.2 The Registrar will adjust the status of the student in the student information system.
 - 5.4.3 The Registrar may seek additional information or clarification from the academic advisor, faculty members, or any other relevant parties.

- 5.4.4 The decision of the Registrar is based on the fulfillment of the eligibility criteria and the academic merits of the deceased student.
- 5.4.5 If the Registrar approves the posthumous degree request, they will submit their recommendation to the Office of Academic Affairs for final approval.
- 5.5 Once approved, the diploma for the posthumous degree shall be inscribed with a notation indicating it is awarded posthumously and added to the student's academic records.
 - 5.5.1 The unfulfilled graduation requirements are waived.
 - 5.5.2 A grade variation will be applied to assess academic standing for distinction. Any distinction will be noted on the transcript.
 - 5.5.3 Hold/Service Indicators will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- 5.6 The Office of the Registrar and Enrollment Services shall make appropriate arrangements to recognize and honor the memory of the deceased student during the regular graduation ceremony.
 - 5.6.1 A family spokesperson may be invited to attend the ceremony to accept the posthumous degree on behalf of the deceased student.
 - 5.6.2 If required, the documentation can be issued prior to the ceremony and the date of the award will be the approval date.
 - 5.6.3 The student's name will be listed in the program of the next ceremony with a notation/indicator for posthumous award.
 - 5.6.4 If a family member receives the degree, the student's name will be read out with a mention that it is being received on their behalf.
 - 5.6.5 If a family member does not receive the award, the student's name will be read out with a mention that it is a posthumous award.
- 5.7 Throughout the process, the Office of the Registrar and Enrollment Services shall maintain empathetic communication with the designated family spokesperson.
- 5.8 All details concerning the posthumous degree request and conferral process shall be handled with utmost confidentiality and in compliance with relevant university policies on student records and data privacy.
- 5.9 If the posthumous degree request is denied, the family spokesperson may appeal the decision in writing to the Office of the President.
 - 5.9.1 The appeal will be reviewed by a committee, which considers any additional information or evidence provided by the family and makes a final determination.

Related Policies and Documents

Academic Standing Policy

Commencement Policy

Confidentiality and Privacy Policy

Graduation Requirements Policy

Student Records Management Policy