



Award of Posthumous Graduate Degree # 380.055

INITIAL EFFECTIVE DATE: June 2010	LAST REVISION DATE: March 28, 2023	RESPONSIBLE UNIVERSITY DIVISION/DEPARTMENT University Graduate School
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POLICY STATEMENT

A posthumous graduate degree may be awarded if (1) the successful completion of the academic work for which the student is enrolled at the time of death would have qualified him or her for graduation; and (2) there is good reason to believe that the work would have been successfully completed that semester if the death had not occurred.

For graduate degrees not requiring a research product, the student must have been enrolled in courses at the time of death that would have completed the degree requirements. For graduate degrees requiring a research product (dissertation, record of study, thesis, or research paper), there are additional requirements. An approved research proposal must be on file at the University Graduate School at the time of the student’s death. In addition, a significant portion of the dissertation, record of study, thesis or research paper must have been reviewed by the committee and the Dean of the college and found to be acceptable. If the research product is found to be acceptable it will justify a grade of P (Passing) in all In-Progress thesis or dissertation credits.

Ph.D. students must have been admitted to candidacy. A doctoral student who has reached candidacy prior to death but would not qualify (as per the qualifications described above) for receipt of the doctoral degree may be awarded a posthumous master’s degree (if he/she had not already received an earned master’s degree from FIU in the area of his or her research).

Exceptional cases will be referred to the Provost for review and recommendation to the President.

SCOPE

Faculty, graduate students, and University Graduate School administration.

REASON FOR POLICY

To state the minimum University requirements for awarding, and procedures for receiving, a posthumous graduate degree from FIU.



DEFINITIONS	
TERM	DEFINITIONS
N/A	N/A

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
N/A

RELATED RESOURCES
Award of Posthumous Graduate Degree Procedure (Available in the Office of the Provost).

CONTACTS
Office of the Provost Florida International University 11200 SW Eighth Street - PC 526 Miami, Florida 33199 Telephone: (305) 348-2151

HISTORY
Initial Effective Date: Florida Administrative Code 6C; Provost - June 10, 2003 Review Dates (<i>review performed, no updates</i>): January 31, 2024 Revision Dates (<i>updates made to document</i>): July 2010; February 2013; March 28, 2023.



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June 2010	March 28, 2023	The University Graduate School

PROCEDURE STATEMENT

The request for a posthumous graduate degree ordinarily originates with faculty who worked closely with the student. The request must include the student’s transcripts, a brief statement about the student’s progress and accomplishments at FIU and an explanation of how the student satisfies the requirements for a posthumous degree.

Awarding a posthumous degree requires approval. Thus it is inappropriate to say anything to the family or friends of the deceased about the possibility that the degree will be awarded posthumously until such time as the request receives University approval. The request for a posthumous graduate degree requires review and approval at the following levels in the order indicated below:

- a. The written request must receive the approval of the graduate committee, the graduate program director, departmental faculty and the chair.
- b. Before the request leaves the department, faculty members for any course in progress at the time of the death must indicate, via a signed memorandum, the grade they will assign for those courses.
- c. If a significant portion of the dissertation, record of study, thesis or research paper has been found to be acceptable after review by the committee and the Dean of the college, the request should include change of grade forms for assignment of P (Passing) in all In-Progress thesis or dissertation credits. The change of grade forms should be justified by a memorandum that is signed by all of the committee members. The change of grade forms should be signed by the Dean of the college. The thesis or dissertation need not be submitted to the University Graduate School.
- d. The request and accompanying documents must receive the approval of the Dean of the school or college in which the department is housed.
- e. The request must subsequently be approved by the Dean of the University Graduate School.
- f. Final approval must be obtained from the Provost on behalf of the President and the Board of Trustees.

After the Provost approves the request, he/she notifies the appropriate Dean, Office of the Registrar and the Chair of the Commencement Committee that it is proper to award the degree

at the next commencement ceremony. The Office of the Registrar is responsible for ordering the appropriate posthumous diploma and delivering it to the Office of Community Relations and Special Events.

Liaison to the family of the deceased

The respective Dean appoints a liaison to the family of the deceased student, usually the faculty who initiated the request. The liaison informs the family of the approval of the posthumous degree request. The liaison's responsibilities include:

- advising the family of the commencement ceremony logistics (date, time, location etc.)
- preparing a 2-3 sentence biography of the student's qualifications for the degree and submitting it to the Office of Community Relations and Special Events
- receiving tickets, parking passes and maps from the Office of Community Relations and Special Events and sending them to the family of the deceased student
- making arrangements with the Office of Community Relations and Special Events for a pre-ceremony meeting with the family together with the Dean of the college/school to present the diploma
- assisting and accompanying the bereaved family on commencement day. Detailed procedures for commencement day are provided in a document by the Office of Community Relations and Special Events.

Awarding of a posthumous degree at commencement

The liaison and the Dean of the college/school meet with the bereaved family before the start of the ceremony and present the posthumous diploma to the family.

The posthumous recognition takes place within the first 30 minutes of the ceremony. The posthumous recognition consists of a brief statement delivered by the President during his commencement remarks. The President recognizes the deceased student and the degree that was awarded, he asks the family to stand, and calls for a moment of silence. The family may leave after the posthumous recognition.