

Oklahoma State University Policy and Procedure

AWARDING POSTHUMOUS DEGREES

2-0114
ACADEMIC
AFFAIRS
December 2008

GENERAL STATEMENT

1.01 Institutions in the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education are authorized to confer posthumous degrees granted by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. Such degrees shall generally be unearned, nonacademic degrees recognizing the meritorious but incomplete earned work of a deceased student, **generally a student who was deceased in his/her last semester of work**. In the case of doctoral students, the degree shall generally be awarded to a student who was deceased after admission to doctoral candidacy. Requests to confer a posthumous degree must be made by the institution, approved by the governing board, and considered by the State Regents, along with diploma design, on a case-by-case basis. (*OSRHE Policy Statement on Granting of Degrees, 1999*)

1.02 Oklahoma State University may confer posthumous degrees in recognition of incomplete earned work that represents substantial progress toward degree completion. In instances where the student's death occurred during or as a result of participation in a University sponsored activity, greater flexibility with regard to progress toward degree may be exercised.

POLICY

2.01 At the time of death the student should have completed the majority of the degree requirements and be currently enrolled in good academic standing.

2.02 Exceptions to this guideline may be made when the student's death occurred during or as a result of participation in university sponsored activities, or in the case where chronic illness prevented current enrollment.

PROCEDURE

3.01 The student's department or college initiates the request for the award of a posthumous degree.

3.02 The dean of the student's college should then forward a written request to the Office of Academic Affairs explaining why the degree should be awarded. In the case of a graduate student, the written request should originate from the office of the student's

academic dean, be routed to the Graduate Dean, and then to the Office of Academic Affairs. Any information about the student's activities or achievements while attending OSU should be included in the request.

3.03 The Provost and Senior Vice President will review the request and forward it, along with a recommendation, to the President, who will determine whether it should be forwarded to the OSU Board of Regents.

3.04 Upon approval by the OSU Board of Regents, a formal request including a copy of the diploma prepared by the University Registrar will be submitted to the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education.

RECOGNITION

4.01 Upon final approval by the State Regents, the Office of Academic Affairs will notify the student's dean.

4.02 A representative of the student's college will contact the student's family to determine whether they wish to come to campus for commencement activities. If not, the college will make arrangements for delivery or presentation of the diploma to the family.

4.03 Names of all recipients of posthumous degrees will be listed, along with degree and major, on a separate page in the commencement program.

4.04 Special recognition of these students will be made by the President just prior to the individual recognition of all degree candidates present at the ceremony.

4.05 Families who choose to attend commencement activities will be provided reserved seating and the President will note their presence as he or she recognizes the posthumous degree recipients.

Approved:

DSAS Council (3/12/03)

Commencement Committee (3/14/03)

Faculty Council (11/11/03)

Instruction Council (3/28/03; 11/21/03)

Deans Council (12/11/03; added clarification in Procedure 2)

Revisions:

Faculty Council (11/12/08)

Council of Deans (11/13/08)

Executive Team (pending)