

C-8 AWARD OF POSTHUMOUS DEGREES POLICY

Auburn University may confer posthumous baccalaureate and graduate degrees upon students who are deceased prior to but nearing formal completion of all degree requirements of the programs being pursued.*

Eligibility

To be eligible for the award of an Auburn University degree posthumously, the student generally must have met the following conditions:

1. At the time of death, the student was nearing completion of work required for award of the degree. "Nearing completion" is defined as being enrolled in the senior year (or fifth year for five-year curricula) for undergraduate students. For graduate students in thesis programs, significant coursework should have been completed, and the student should have commenced the research process. Graduate students in non-thesis programs should have completed a substantial portion of the required coursework.
2. The student was in good academic standing and was successfully progressing toward completion of requirements for the degree to be awarded.
3. Recommendation for award of the degree was made by the faculty in the student's major department and approved by the department head, school or college dean, and Provost; and, in the case of graduate students, the Dean of the Graduate School.

Approval Process

The process for identifying and considering candidates for the award of degrees posthumously shall be as follows:

1. The Chief Student Affairs Officer or the Dean of the Graduate School, upon learning of the death of an Auburn University student, shall ascertain the relative academic standing of the student, as specified in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Section A above.
2. If the deceased student is determined to be eligible as a candidate for posthumous award of the degree being pursued, the Chief Student Affairs Officer or the Dean of the Graduate School will so certify to the Provost.

** Final approval for awarding posthumous degrees shall rest with the Board of Trustees, which will act upon the recommendation of the President of Auburn University.*

3. Upon learning that the deceased student is eligible for consideration for the award of a posthumous degree, the Provost will communicate this information to the appropriate school or college dean.
4. The departmental faculty, department head, and dean will determine if the student's overall record merits further consideration and recommendation that the posthumous award be granted; such information will be communicated to the Provost.
5. The Provost will weigh all information relating to each case independently and will prepare a recommendation to the President, who will determine if it should be forwarded for Board of Trustees consideration.

Awarding of Posthumous Degrees

Upon approval by the Board of Trustees, the following procedure will be followed:

1. The family of the deceased will be notified of the approval.
2. The degree will be conferred at the next regularly scheduled commencement exercise.
3. The posthumous nature of the award will be indicated on the diploma, the student's permanent record, and in the commencement program.

Extraordinary Circumstances

Cases that do not meet the above specified criteria may be considered when extraordinary circumstances prevail. In such cases, the appropriate faculty, department head, dean, and the Provost will be consulted prior to a recommendation being prepared for Board of Trustees consideration.

Additional Recognition of Deceased Students

Whereas a posthumous degree may only be awarded to a deceased student who meets the aforementioned criteria, Auburn University may recognize the attendance and/or contributions of a deceased student who is not close to graduating by presenting a posthumous Certificate of Attendance to the family of the deceased student. The Certificate of Attendance shall recognize the student's progress toward the attainment of a degree, and may include recognition of their attendance, participation, or completion of some core element of the student's program. In addition, an Auburn flag, flown on the Samford Hall flag pole shall be presented or sent to the family with a certificate which states: "This Auburn University Flag flew on the Samford Hall flag pole at Auburn University on [date] in memory of [student name]. The Auburn University family shares in your loss and thanks you for giving us the opportunity to be part of your [son's/daughter's/spouse's] life."

Applicability

The provisions of this Policy apply both to the Auburn campus and Auburn University at Montgomery. For Auburn Montgomery, the approval process follows the sequence identified in Section A (appropriate corresponding Auburn Montgomery administrative titles substituted), with the exception that the recommendation to the President shall be forwarded through the Chancellor.

ADOPTED: November 11, 1994

REAFFIRMED: June 19, 2009

REVISED: June 18, 2010