UGC Feb. 27, 2017

GC Jan. 20, 2017

Policy on the Posthumous Awarding of Degrees and Certificates of Attendance

Purpose

The University of California, Merced seeks to extend sympathy and compassion to the families of students who pass away and who have completed their degree requirements or are near the completion of their degree requirements. In addition, the University of California, Merced seeks to recognize the academic achievement of students who pass away without having fulfilled all the requirements of the degree. These actions must also be balanced with attention to academic and institutional integrity.

Criteria

Normally, the posthumous degree is conferred on students currently enrolled or on leave at the time of death. To be eligible for a posthumous bachelor's degree, the deceased student must have earned at least 90 semester units (senior class standing) and have a 2.0 GPA. For students who pass away after achieving at least 30 semester units (sophomore class standing) and the requisite 2.0 GPA but who would not be eligible for the award of the posthumous degree, the University of California, Merced will offer a Certificate of Attendance.

To be eligible for a posthumous master's degree, the deceased student must have been in the final term of coursework, thesis or enrolled in courses, which upon successful completion would have culminated in the awarding of the degree.

To be eligible for a posthumous doctoral degree, the deceased student must have advanced to candidacy. In addition, awarding of the posthumous degree will require the approval of the student's dissertation committee. All exceptions to this policy will require written consent from the Dean of the Graduate Division.

Procedures

The procedures for identifying and considering candidates for the awarding of posthumous degrees or certificates of attendance shall be:

1. A formal request may be initiated by any of the following: a family member, a faculty member, a dean, or a fellow student. If a family member does not make the request, the family should be contacted for their support of the possible award.
2. The Division of Student Affairs will review the student's academic record, confirming with the Registrar whether the specified criteria are met, and forwarding the request to the appropriate Dean who will then instruct the Registrar to issue the designated degree or certificate.
3. Degrees awarded posthumously will be noted in the Commencement program unless requested not to by the family. The student's diploma or certificate will be released or mailed to the person legally authorized to manage the deceased student's affairs. The posthumous nature of the award will be indicated on the diploma and the student's official transcript. Any fees associated with the administration of the posthumous degree or certificate of attendance will be waived.