

# Awarding of Posthumous Degrees

## Academic Affairs – Administration

### CWU Policy 504-01

**Effective:** June 23, 2021

**Policy Review Date:** YEAR

**Policy Executive:** Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs

**Responsible Office/Unit:** Registrar

#### Policy Statement:

#### Applicability:

---

#### Contents:

Policy

Appendix A – Awarding of Posthumous Degrees Procedure

---

- (1) When Central Washington University receives a request from the student's immediate family, authorized student support network, or from the student's major department within one year following the death of a student who has been enrolled in a program of study at CWU until the time of the onset of a terminal illness, an injury, or death, the university may award a degree posthumously if the following conditions are met:
  - A. For undergraduate students:
    1. The student had earned at least 30 credits towards graduation at CWU.
    2. In the case where the student had declared a major, the major department and dean endorse the request.
    3. In the case where the student had not declared a major, the Dean of Student Success, in collaboration with college deans, endorses the request and recommends an appropriate major and degree.
  - B. For graduate students:

1. The student had declared a specific degree program and had completed at least 15 credits towards graduation at CWU.
  2. In the case where the student had not declared a specific degree program and had completed at least 15 credits towards graduation at CWU, the Dean of the Graduate School, in collaboration with college deans, endorses the request and recommends an appropriate program and degree.
- C. Anyone may identify a candidate for a posthumous degree, but the formal request must come from the student's family or authorized student support network to the academic dean in which the student was enrolled as a major, or the Dean of the Student Success for those without a declared major.
- D. The dean will verify program/plan and progress toward degree completion. Upon verification, the dean will forward an official nomination for a posthumous degree to the provost.
- E. The provost reviews all posthumous degree requests and makes the final decision.
- F. Enrolled students who die before meeting the criteria listed above for a posthumous degree may be nominated for honorary degrees.
- G. The graduation application fee will be waived for the posthumous or honorary degree.
- H. Any outstanding debt incurred by the student to CWU will be waived.
- I. The statement "*awarded posthumously*" will be printed on the student's academic record, but not on the diploma.

### **History:**

PAC: 2/6/02; Reviewed/Endorsed by: Provost Council, 5/4/21; Cabinet/UPAC;  
Review/Effective Date: PAC 04/2002; 06/23/2021; Approved by: A. James Wohlpart, President  
*Reformatted and Assigned new Policy Number - Previous Policy CWUP 2-20-010, June 2025*  
*Procedure CWUR 2-60-020 attached as Appendix A, June 2025*

## Appendix A - Awarding of Posthumous Degrees Procedure

- (1) Anybody may identify a candidate for a posthumous degree, but the formal request must come from the student's family to the academic dean in which the student was enrolled.
  - A. The dean of the college in which the student was enrolled will obtain the student's degree audit from the Registrar to verify program/plan and progress toward degree completion.
  - B. The dean of the college in which the student was enrolled will recommend the candidate for a posthumous degree through a formal written request to the provost. The request must include the name and ID of the student, the degree/program/plan to be awarded, and the recommended quarter for degree conferral. The provost may choose to present the formal request to the college deans for review/discussion prior to a final decision.
  - C. For nominations the provost approves, the provost will notify:
    1. the president;
    2. the dean who will inform the immediate family or authorized student support network of the University's decision and desire to recognize their student with this honor (this process should be kept confidential until and unless approved at all levels). If the family or authorized student support network desires to represent the student and receive the diploma at a commencement ceremony, this must be relayed to the Registrar and the Director Executive Events and Planning for planning;
    3. the registrar who will waive the graduation fee, process the degree, notify student accounts if student had an outstanding balance and mail the diploma to the student's family if the student's family or authorized student support network plans not to receive the diploma at the commencement ceremony.
  - D. The statement "*awarded posthumously*" will be printed on the student's academic record, but not on the diploma.