NORTHWEST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY | POLICY

Policy Name:	Awarding Posthumous Degrees
Effective Date:	October 30, 2026
Last Revision Date:	May 31, 2026
Last Review Date:	September 22, 2026
Approving Authority:	Board of Regents
Responsible Office:	Office of the Provost
Category:	Enrollment & Academics

I. Purpose

The University recognizes that academic achievements are a significant part of a student's legacy. This policy establishes criteria for awarding degrees posthumously to acknowledge a student's academic progress and to provide their family and the university community a way to honor their memory.

II. Eligibility Criteria

A degree may be awarded posthumously if the student was making satisfactory progress toward their degree at the time of death and met the following conditions:

- **Academic Standing:** The student must have been in good academic standing (not on probation or suspension) at the time of death.
- **Progress Toward Degree:**
  - **Undergraduate:** The student must be of Senior standing, having completed approximately **75%** of the required coursework (typically 90+ credit hours).
  - **Graduate (Coursework-based):** The student must have completed approximately **70%** of their graduate program.
- **Enrollment:** The student must have been enrolled at the university within the **12 months** preceding their death.

III. Nomination and Approval Process

1. **Initiation:** Any member of the university community (administrator, faculty, staff, or student) may suggest a student for a posthumous degree. Formal nominations usually start with the vice president of Student Affairs or the school chair of the student's major.
2. **Verification:** The Registrar's Office audits the student's record to verify they meet the

academic and credit-hour requirements.

3. **Academic Approval:** The school chair and the dean of the student's college must recommend the award.

Final Conferral: The recommendation is forwarded to the provost and vice president for Academic Affairs for a final recommendation to the university president.

IV. Awarding and Recognition

- **Diploma:** The diploma is prepared in the same manner as a regular degree
- **Commencement:** The family is invited to participate in the commencement ceremony by the Office of the President. The student's name is listed in the program, if possible, with the notation *"Degree Awarded Posthumously."*
- **Certificate of "In Memoriam":** If a student does not meet the threshold in the eligibility Criteria section, and was a valued member of the community, the university may instead award an "In Memoriam" Certificate and be designated as an honorary alumnus.

V. Exceptions

In extraordinary circumstances (such as a student nearing completion who dies while on active military duty or during a university-sponsored event), the president may waive specific credit-hour requirements upon recommendation by the provost.