



Posthumous Degree FAQs*

What is a Posthumous Degree?

A Posthumous Degree may be awarded to students who, at the time of their death, had completed a "substantial portion" of the degree requirements.

What qualifies as a "substantial portion" of the degree requirements?

For bachelor's degrees, a "substantial portion" means that at the time of death, the student:

1. was actively matriculated or eligible to be matriculated at the California State University, Bakersfield;
2. was within 30 units of completing their degree;
3. had satisfactorily completed at least 20 semester units of coursework at the University;
4. had a grade-point average of 2.0 or higher for all units used in calculating the student's grade-point average.

For master's and doctoral degrees, a "substantial portion" means that at the time of death, the student:

1. was actively matriculated or eligible to be matriculated at the California State University, Bakersfield;
2. had completed at least 75% of the required units for the formal program;
3. had a grade-point average of 3.0 or higher in all courses attempted to satisfy requirements for the degree.

How do I request that a posthumous degree be awarded?

In the case of a student's death, the request for consideration of the posthumous degree can be made by the faculty of the student's program or the family of the student. Requests should be submitted to the Office of Academic Programs by email, academicprograms@csub.edu, or in person, Education Building, Room 242.

After confirming the student's eligibility, the Office of Academic Programs shall submit requests to the Associate Dean, Department Chair, and, if applicable, Graduate Program Coordinator of the student's program. Once approved, the Office of Academic Programs notifies the President's Office of the approval. If the President also approves, the Office of Academic Programs notifies Enrollment Management and requests the awarding of the degree.

In exceptional circumstances including when normal processing of requests has been denied, the President may confer a posthumous degree regardless of whether the student met the "substantial portion" of the degree requirements.

When are posthumous degrees presented?

At the President's discretion, the posthumous bachelor's, master's or doctoral degree will be awarded either at a private ceremony or at the appropriate commencement exercise. If the student was eligible to graduate with honors (e.g., Helen Louise Hawk Honors program, cum laude, etc.), such honors may also be recognized.

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