

***Policies and Procedures***

**Date: August 6, 2015**

**Subject: Awarding Posthumous Degrees**

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**1. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish the college’s standards and procedures for awarding posthumous degrees.

**2. Policy**

Tidewater Community College shall award a posthumous degree for a deceased student based upon the recommendation of the Program/Discipline Head, the Academic Dean/Director, the Campus Provost, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Chief Academic Officer, with final approval by the President.

The following criteria must be met:

- Official enrollment status was “active student” at the time of death.
- At least 75% of all course requirements for the degree must have been completed.
- Cumulative grade point average earned for all courses included in the degree program must be 2.50 or higher.

**3. Responsibilities**

The Vice President for Academic Affairs & Chief Academic Officer (“Vice President”) shall be responsible for developing and maintaining procedures that are consistent with this policy and that comply with the policies and principles of the VCCS, SACSCOC, and SCHEV.

#### 4. Procedures

The procedures outlined in this policy are to be followed when awarding posthumous degrees.

**4.1** The Program/Discipline Head and the Academic Dean/Director who oversees the degree program in which the deceased student was enrolled shall initiate the process by requesting in writing that the College Registrar conduct a posthumous degree review. The process must be initiated within two academic terms (includes summer) following a student's death.

A request to award a posthumous degree may be submitted to the Program/Discipline Head and/or the Academic Dean/Director by a family member, former instructor, or classmate of a deceased student. If a request is not initiated by a family member, the Program/Discipline Head or the Academic Dean/Director shall consult with the family before requesting a review by the College Registrar.

**4.2** The College Registrar shall review the request to determine if the student is eligible for consideration and notify the Campus Provost. If the student is not eligible, the Campus Provost will respond in writing to the Program/Discipline Head and the Academic Dean/Director who submitted the request specifying the reason(s) why the request for a posthumous degree is denied. If the student is eligible, the Campus Provost will notify the Vice President.

**4.3** The Vice President, upon notification from a Campus Provost of an eligible candidate for a posthumous degree, shall review the recommendation and forward her/his recommendation to the President.

**4.4** The President will review the recommendation from the Vice President and make a final decision on the posthumous degree request.

**4.5** If approved by the President, the student's name will appear in the commencement program with an appropriate notation. The student's family will receive an invitation to the commencement ceremony from the President's office. At the appropriate point in the ceremony, the degree will be announced and the family will be asked to stand and be recognized.

**4.6** The College Registrar shall ensure the diploma bears the notation: "Awarded Posthumously."

#### 5. Definition

**Active Student:** A student who was enrolled at the college at the time of her/his death.

**Posthumous Degree:** A degree awarded to a deceased student who was actively pursuing her/his degree at the time of death, and who meets the college's criteria for the awarding of the degree posthumously.

#### 6. References

[Virginia Community College System Policy Manual Section 5.1.7](#)

**7. Review Periodicity and Responsibility**

The Vice President for Academic Affairs & Chief Academic Officer shall review this policy at the anniversary of its approval and, if necessary, recommend revisions.

**8. Effective Date and Approval**

This policy is effective upon its approval by the College President on August 6, 2015.

Policy Approved:

Procedure Developed:

Edna V. Baehre-Kolovani, Ph.D.  
President

Daniel T. DeMarte, Ed.D.  
Vice President for Academic Affairs &  
Chief Academic Officer

**9. Review and Revision History**

This is the first version of this policy.