

TORONTO METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY POLICY OF SENATE

APPROVAL AND PRESENTATION OF POSTHUMOUS DEGREES, CERTIFICATES AND DIPLOMAS

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Responsible Office:	Provost and Vice-President Academic; and Registrar

1 INTRODUCTION

Toronto Metropolitan University recognizes that there may be circumstances where it is deemed appropriate to award degrees, certificates or diplomas to students who have died while studying at the University even when the academic requirements for graduation have not all been fulfilled.

2 DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 **Posthumous Graduation** – Where the student did not complete academic requirements for graduation prior to their death but are deemed eligible to graduate posthumously.
- 2.2 **Next of kin** – The family member or significant other deemed responsible by the family, including the executor of the student's estate, for advising the University on issues related to a possible posthumous graduation.
- 2.3 **Award Document** - The physical representation (parchment) of the achievement of graduation.
- 2.4 **Conferral/Conferred** – Formal acknowledgement and bestowment of the achievement of graduation at Convocation ceremonies by the University Chancellor. This is followed by the presentation of the award document.

3 AWARDING OF POSTHUMOUS ACADEMIC AWARDS

3.1 **Request** - Anyone may request the University Registrar's consideration for the approval of a posthumous graduation with a degree, certificate or diploma for a Toronto Metropolitan University student who is deceased.

3.1.1 If the request is made by the next of kin, the University Registrar will assess the student's academic record to determine if the student is eligible and advise the Program Department Director/Chair of the student's eligibility status. The Provost will have the final approval of the graduation and the Vice Provost, Students will communicate the decision to the next of kin.

3.1.2 If the request is made by someone other than the next of kin, the University Registrar will assess the student's academic record and advise the student's Program Department Director/Chair of the student's eligibility status. The Provost will have final approval of the graduation and the Vice Provost, Students, will contact the next of kin to determine if they wish to have graduation granted/conferred and the award document presented.

3.1.3 The permission of the next of kin must be secured for the posthumous graduation to be granted.

3.2 **Guidelines for the Award of Posthumous Master's and PhD Degree**

Unfulfilled requirements shall be waived, and a posthumous Master's or PhD degree awarded if a student, at the time of death:

3.2.1 was registered with a Clear academic standing; and

3.2.2 had completed 75% of a course-based program (e.g. eight out of ten courses); or

3.2.3 had completed 75% of a course-plus project program (e.g. may have finished the courses and not the project); or

3.2.4 had made significant progress on a thesis or dissertation for a thesis-based Masters or PhD program (all coursework has been successfully completed).

3.3 **Guidelines for the Award of Posthumous Undergraduate Bachelor's Degree**

Unfulfilled requirements shall be waived, and a posthumous Bachelor's degree awarded if a student, at the time of death:

3.3.1 was registered with a Clear academic standing; and

3.3.2 had completed 75% of the curriculum; or had completed 50% of the curriculum of a Direct Entry or a two-year degree program.

3.4 Guidelines for the Award of Posthumous Continuing Education Certificate

Unfulfilled requirements shall be waived, and a posthumous Continuing Education Certificate awarded if a student, at the time of death:

3.4.1 was registered with a cumulative GPA of 1.67; and

3.4.2 had completed two thirds of the curriculum leading to the certificate.

4 PROCESS

- 4.1 Upon receipt of proof that a student is deceased, the Registrar's Office updates the student academic record (Undergraduate, Law, Continuing Education and Yeates School of Graduate Studies students).
- 4.2 Upon receipt of information that an undergraduate or continuing education certificate student is deceased, the Registrar's Office will assess the student academic record to determine the percentage of the in-progress program curriculum successfully completed.
- 4.3 Upon receipt of information that a graduate student is deceased, Yeates School of Graduate Studies will assess the student's academic record and determine the percentage of the in-progress program curriculum successfully completed.
- 4.4 The assessment to determine eligibility will include the application of Grade Variations and Academic Standing Variations.
- 4.5 Achievement of high academic standing, with Distinction etc. (3.50 minimum CGPA) will be noted on the award document and transcript.
- 4.6 Students with 'Service Indicators'/'Holds' on their student record will be reviewed on a case by case basis.
- 4.7 The final assessment information will then be communicated to the Vice Provost, Students by either the University Registrar (undergraduate and continuing education certificate students) or the Yeates School of Graduate Studies (graduate students).
- 4.8 No action regarding consideration for posthumous graduation is required if a student has submitted an application to graduate and is eligible for graduation, but dies prior to formal approval of graduation, or after conferral of the degree, certificate or diploma.

5 TIMING AND PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

- 5.1 Normally, the award document will be dated and presented at the next Convocation for the student's program, however, if requested by the next of kin and approved by the Provost, the award document can be issued in advance of the usual convocation ceremony at a location that is most appropriate for the situation. If a posthumous degree, certificate or diploma is approved and the award document is presented prior to the appropriate

Convocation ceremony, the date on the award document will be the month of approval of the posthumous award.

- 5.2 The student's next of kin (or designate) may participate in the Convocation ceremony to receive the student's award document at the same time the student's classmates receive their awards.
- 5.3 The student's name will be listed as usual in the program book of the next appropriate Convocation ceremony. No 'posthumous' notation/indicator will be placed beside the student's name in the program, on the award document, or on the official academic transcript.
- 5.4 The name of the student receiving a posthumous degree, certificate or diploma will be read as usual at the next appropriate Convocation ceremony. If the next of kin (or designate) is in attendance and receiving the award document on stage, it will be mentioned that they are receiving the award document on the student's behalf. If the next of kin have chosen not to participate at the ceremony, the student's name will still be read out (with mention that it is a posthumous graduation/award).

RELATED UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND PROTOCOLS

Ryerson University Senate Policy #161, Student Awards Policy

Office of the Vice Provost, Students, Death of a Student Protocol