

**Title:** In Memoriam (Posthumous) Degrees

**Category:** Academic Affairs

**Responsible Cabinet Member:** Provost

### **Purpose**

The University seeks to honor the families of deceased students who were unable to complete degree requirements by providing a meaningful acknowledgment of the student's achievements and legacy, while upholding academic and institutional integrity. This degree may be conferred posthumously following final approval by the Board of Trustees.

### **Scope**

The *in memoriam* degree recognizes a student's affiliation with the University, regardless of progress toward completion of degree requirements. Undergraduate, graduate and professional students who were formally enrolled in a degree program at the time of their death, but who did not complete the program, are eligible for consideration.

### **Process**

If a UK student has passed away during the course of their studies at UK, their college, in consultation with the Dean of Students, can request that the student be considered for an *in memoriam* honorary degree. The student's progress towards a degree is irrelevant.

Once the Office of the Dean of Students ([deanofstudents@uky.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@uky.edu)) has been notified of a student's passing, the Dean of Students will contact the student's family and assess their desire to receive an *in memoriam* degree. The Dean of Students will notify the student's college of the family's desire to receive the *in memoriam* degree.

Requests for *in memoriam* degrees for a student should then be sent by the dean or relevant associate dean of the student's affiliated college to the associate provost for academic operations in the Office of the Provost ([academicaffairsandoperations@uky.edu](mailto:academicaffairsandoperations@uky.edu)). The request should include the following:

- The student's name and UKID;
- Degree program the student was in at the time of their death;
- Requested date of conferral;
- Some personal information about the student, if appropriate (e.g., accomplishments while at UK or interactions with others);
- Number of credit hours the student completed; and
- How many credit hours (or requirements) the student lacked for completion of the degree.

Upon receipt of the request, the associate provost will confirm the student's status as degree seeking. The Dean of Students will confirm that the student was in good behavioral standing. Once the associate provost receives that confirmation, they will send the request to the Office of the Registrar.

The Office of the Registrar will send the information to the staff liaison to the Board of Trustees at the appropriate time, based on the requested date of the *in memoriam* degree. The Board of Trustees will vote to approve the degree at the next meeting.

Once approved by the Board of Trustees, the Office of the Provost will notify the University Registrar, Dean of Students and the University Commencement Committee Chair.

The Dean of Students will then reach out to the family to assess whether they will be able to accept the degree on the student's behalf. The Dean of Students will share the family's intentions for receiving the degree with the Commencement Committee.

The Commencement Committee will mail the family tickets to commencement and parking passes. Representatives from the Office of the Dean of Students will be in attendance at the commencement ceremony to provide support to the family.

Please note that if a student passes away but has completed all requirements for the degree they were seeking, the University may retroactively confer upon the student the degree which they had earned as opposed to an *in memoriam* degree.