Posthumous Degree Policy

**Policy Statement:**Murray State University recognizes the impact a student's death can have on the family and University community. Murray State University seeks to provide comfort for those dear to the student and recognition for the student who did not complete the requirements for a degree while upholding the academic standards that the university maintains. The Posthumous Degree grants recognition of the student’s connection to family, friends, fellow students, faculty, and staff regardless of the student’s progress toward completion of the degree requirements. The student must have been in good academic standing and the death must not have occurred as a result of the student being charged with a felony.

**Procedure:**The university procedure for conferral of the Posthumous Degree is as follows:

* Upon notification from the family, the advisor or Chair of the student’s home department and the Dean are contacted. The Dean contacts the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs of the potential posthumous award. The Provost contacts the Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management as the family may also have contacted Student Affairs.
* The student is recommended for a Posthumous Degree by the Chair of the student’s major/area department. If the student has not declared a major/area, then the advisor will make the recommendation to the supervisor and then to the appropriate Vice President.
* The Dean (or Vice President aforementioned) then provides a written request to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs or designee. If there are particular activities the student was involved in or with, the written request should include such information.
* The Provost or designee will forward the request to the President, along with any documentation, for approval.
* Upon approval of the President, the student’s family will be contacted by either the Chair, Dean or Provost, as deemed appropriate by the Provost.
* Upon approval by the President, the student is listed as a candidate in the next Commencement program. Approval of the Posthumous degree is granted through the Board of Regents with other degree candidates at the appropriate Board meeting.

**Process for Commencement:**The Registrar’s Office will, with the approval of the Provost, select a liaison to assist the family prior to and through the Commencement ceremony. The student’s family will be asked to identify one or two representatives to receive the diploma during the Commencement ceremony. If the family is attending other graduation events (pinning, hooding, etc.), then the Provost and the Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management will be notified about the events.

The diploma will be provided by the Registrar’s Office. Framing of the diploma is a nice gesture and the home department or college of the student will attend to that detail.