

**PALO ALTO COLLEGE
COLLEGE PROCEDURES**

Procedure Number: S 31.0

Procedure Title: Awarding Posthumous Degrees

Relevant Board: N/A Policy: N/A

Originating Unit: Office of the President

Maintenance Unit: Division of Student Success

Purpose: To delineate requirements for the awarding of a Posthumous degree of a student in attendance at Palo Alto College. In extraordinary instances, such as when the student's death occurred during or as a result of participation in a College sponsored activity, (I) may be exercised. **(a posthumous degree cannot be posted in SHADEGR if graduation requirements are not fulfilled)**

- I. Procedure Statement: A posthumous degree/certificate of recognition may be awarded for a deceased student with the approval of the college president. A student who passes away while enrolled and pursuing a degree may be considered for a posthumous degree/certificate of recognition based on the following criteria:

If a student passes away prior to completing requirements for a degree at Palo Alto College, the College may recognize the student by the awarding of a posthumous degree or a certificate of recognition

Awarding of a posthumous degree or certificate of recognition

A deceased student is eligible to receive a Posthumous Degree, if the student:

1. As determined by the College, has completed a substantial portion or more of the required courses for the degree,
2. Was enrolled in classes at the time of death, and
3. Was in good academic and financial standing with the College.

If a deceased student does not qualify for a Posthumous Degree, the student may be awarded a Posthumous Certificate of Recognition for pursuing his/her education at Palo Alto College, if the student:

1. Has completed 6 credit hours at the College,
2. Was enrolled in classes at the time of death, and
3. Was in good academic and financial standing with the College.

II. Procedure for Granting Posthumous Awards

- a. Upon receiving notification of a student's death, the Director of Enrollment Management updates the student record in banner as per deceased student protocol. Given the sensitive nature of such requests, the student's family should not be notified until the award of the degree or certificate is approved (III. A).
- b. A Request for Posthumous Award form from a faculty member, college representative or family member is submitted with the Graduation Team.

If the student's eligibility is confirmed, the Office of the Vice President of Student Success sends a memo through the relevant chair or director, dean, and the Vice President of Academic Success to the Office of the President requesting approval for the award of a posthumous credential.

- c. Once approval has been confirmed by the Office of the President, the Director of Enrollment Management will notify the Director of Advising to complete a graduation application on behalf of student. Notification is done through a memo with an attached copy of the Request for Posthumous Award form.
- d. The Graduation Team receives a graduation application from Advising for the awarding of a Posthumous Degree or Certificate of Recognition.
- e. The Graduation Team verifies that the student has met the requirements to be awarded degree.

Once awarded, a notation recording the posthumous degree or certificate will be made in the student's Banner record in SPACMNT.

- f. Graduation Team will notify Center for Student Information to print credential that will be provided to the family.
- g. Center for Student Information will send the Posthumous Diploma or Certificate of Recognition to Palo Alto College.

III. Diploma Presentation

- a) The Office of the Vice President of Student Success will contact the family to determine either participation in the graduation ceremony or to arrange a time for the family to meet with the College President for a private presentation of the diploma.

Names of all recipients of a posthumous award will be listed, along with degree, major and an appropriate notation in the commencement program.

Date Created: December 1, 2021

Date Updated/ Approved: February 1, 2022

Approved:

(signed: Gilberto Becerra)

Vice President of Student Success

(signed: Dr. Robert Garza)

President