Monroe Community College
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

6.3 Posthumous Degree Policy

Category: Students

Name of Responsible Office: Registration & Records

Title of Responsible Executive: Provost and Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs

Date Established: October 5, 2026

Date Last Approved:

Policy Statement

Monroe Community College (MCC) recognizes the dedication and academic achievements of enrolled students whose untimely passing prevents them from completing their degree requirements. This policy establishes clear criteria and a process for awarding degrees posthumously, ensuring meaningful recognition for the families and loved ones of the deceased.

Policy

In alignment with the State University of New York (SUNY) guidance, the Trustees of Monroe Community College shall consider the posthumous awarding of a degree under the following conditions:

Eligibility: Degrees may be awarded posthumously to students who were matriculated in a degree or certificate program and in good academic and conduct standing at the time of their passing.

Academic Progress: Students must have completed at least 30 credits toward an associate degree or made equivalent progress for a certificate program.

Process: A family member, designated representative, or member of the MCC faculty or staff must submit a written request to the Office of Registration & Records; the College will verify the student's passing before proceeding with degree consideration.

Following confirmation and submission of a request, the Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs will confirm the student's eligibility based on academic records and ensure the student's records are updated. The Provost and Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, in consultation with the Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Registrar, will review and recommend the award. Final approval will be granted by the President or their designee. The Registrar processes the diploma and adds a transcript notation indicating that the degree was awarded posthumously. Please refer to MCC's Posthumous Degree Protocol for the exact steps in the process.

Limitations and Exceptions: Posthumous degrees will not include Latin honors[1]. Exceptions to these criteria may be considered and approved by the President or Provost in extraordinary circumstances.

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[1] Latin honors are distinctions awarded at graduation to recognize a student's academic excellence, typically based on cumulative grade point average.

Alternate Honors: For students who do not meet the eligibility criteria or for whom exceptions are not approved, MCC may offer alternative recognitions, such as a Certificate of Achievement, to honor their academic efforts.

Background

This policy supports the intent of "Mel's Law" that requires that each SUNY and City University of New York institutions' boards of trustees establish a policy for the awarding of posthumous degrees. MCC's policy aligns with SUNY guidelines, which seek to eliminate unnecessary barriers and provide consistent recognition across campuses. Awarding posthumous degrees honors the student's commitment to their education and acknowledges the loss experienced by their loved ones.

Applicability

This policy applies for deceased students who did not complete degree requirements.

Definitions

Good Academic Standing: Good academic standing is defined as having a cumulative grade point average of 2.0.

Related Information

College Documents

Posthumous Degree Protocol

Other Related Documents

SUNY Policy Title: Honorary Degrees, Awarding of (document number 1200; effective date 6/14/2018).