

SUBJECT: University Guidelines Governing the Awarding of Posthumous Degrees

Please Note: Faculty and staff should immediately notify the Dean of Students of any student deaths. The Dean of Students provides the official notification to the campus and is the liaison to the family of the deceased and works with the deceased's family, friends and deceased student's College to plan a campus memorial service if appropriate. Please call 352-392-1261 during business hours or evenings/weekends 352-392-1111 (and ask the Police to be connected to the Dean on call).

The Awarding of a Posthumous Degree:

The University of Florida seeks to assist the families of currently enrolled students who pass away by providing posthumous degrees. To respond to these situations in a sensitive and consistent manner, the following University guidelines are hereby established.

It is recommended that the posthumous degree type to be awarded be dependent on earned hours:

- (1) A bachelor's degree student having earned 60 or less credit hours be awarded either an Associate in Arts degree or Bachelor's degree at the discretion of the deceased student's College
- (2) A bachelor's degree student having earned 61 or more credit hours be awarded the Bachelor's degree
- (3) For graduate or professional students, the degree program will determine if the posthumous degree is appropriate
- (4) If the posthumous degree is not appropriate, a Certification of University of Florida Enrollment may be given to the family of the deceased student. The Certification of Enrollment will include a University seal and notation of the student's enrollment.

Conferring of Posthumous Degrees:

Undergraduate Degree:

- The College's Dean's Office in consultation with the degree program will initiate the posthumous degree process.
- The college Dean should address a letter to the Provost requesting permission to grant a posthumous degree.
- The college Dean's letter should include the degree and the term for which the student should be awarded the degree posthumously.
- If the Provost approves the request, the college Dean will be notified in writing, with a copy sent to the Office of the University Registrar and the Dean of Students.

Graduate Degree:

- The College's Dean's Office in consultation with the degree program and the Graduate School will initiate the posthumous degree process.
- The Dean's letter should include the degree and the term for which the student should be awarded the degree posthumously.
- If the Provost approves the request, the Dean will be notified in writing, with copies sent to the University Registrar, the Graduate School, and the Dean of Students.

Professional Degree:

- These include Dentistry, Law, Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Physical Therapy and Veterinary Medicine.
- A college desiring to award a degree posthumously should address a letter from the Dean to the Provost requesting permission to grant a posthumous degree.
- The Dean's letter should include the degree and the term for which the student should be awarded the degree posthumously.
- If the Provost approves the request, the college Dean will be notified in writing, with a copy sent to the Office of the University Registrar and the Dean of Students.

Diploma/Transcripts/Commencement Program:

Undergraduate, Graduate and Professional Degrees:

- Upon receiving notice of the approval, the Office of the University Registrar will order a diploma and will apply the appropriate degree remarks to the student's transcript.
- The Office of the University Registrar will release the diploma to the college's Dean's Office.
- Depending on the time of the approval, the name of the posthumous recipient may be included in the printed commencement program with the appropriate annotation.

Family Notification:

Undergraduate, Graduate and Professional Degrees:

- No formal notification to the family should occur until the award of the degree is officially approved by the Provost.
- The college Dean should request a letter from the Provost or president that will officially confer the degree posthumously and express sympathy on behalf of the university community. This letter can either be mailed with the

diploma to the family or presented to the family with the diploma in a ceremony organized by the college or major, as determined by the college.

- The letter from the Provost or president does not preclude the student's department, college or the Graduate School from writing a letter to the student's family expressing sympathy with, perhaps, a personal note regarding the student's academic performance and/or contributions to the university community.

Template Letter from the Dean to the Provost:

Provost Joseph Glover
Tigert Hall

Dear Provost Glover:

Our college is requesting that a posthumous degree be granted to Albert Gator, UF ID#1111-1111. Albert was a third year student majoring in _____ in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Albert passed away on October 1, 2011 while enrolled in 12 credit hours. Albert had completed 64 hours and carried a 3.1 GPA. Albert began UF as a freshman in the fall of 2009.

I have consulted with the Chair of the Department of History and *[name other personnel who knew Albert]* and believe that granting the Bachelors of Arts posthumous degree to Albert Gator is appropriate. *[If possible, add a brief description of his positive engagement on campus. For example, "He was active not only in the classroom but he also made a positive impact on his fellow students and instructors through his engagement in the 2010 History Honors Conference, in which he presented a paper on the multi-ethnic origins of Florida. He also played the saxophone in the Gator Pep Band.]*

If I can provide any more information, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Dean, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

