

Honorary Posthumous Degrees

When the university learns of the passing of an enrolled TCU student who is within 30 registered credits of graduating, and, thus, is unable to complete remaining academic requirements, said student may be awarded an honorary posthumous degree by TCU.

1. The Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs will notify the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Affairs (APUA) once a deceased student's record has been verified by the Registrar that said student was registered for courses, within 30 credit hours of completion, and in good academic standing relative to university and program requirements.
2. Upon certification of the deceased student's academic status, the APUA will consult the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs to determine if initiating a process for review meets an evidence-based standard for awarding an honorary degree of this type commensurate with the academic integrity and rigor of the TCU degree. Upon a determination that initiating an approval process is warranted, the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Affairs will notify the Dean of the appropriate college.
3. The college Dean will solicit a written recommendation from the appropriate department chair, attesting that departmental faculty support and approve awarding the honorary degree to the deceased student pursuant to all academic standards and qualifications.
4. The Department chair will forward the faculty's recommendation to the Dean for endorsement.
5. The Dean will endorse the recommendation on college letterhead and electronically provide the necessary supporting materials from the department to the APUA.
6. The APUA will review the materials and forward a recommendation to the Vice Provost for the Provost's consideration.
7. Upon receiving the Provost's decision, the APUA will notify the College Dean in writing, ensuring the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs and the Registrar receive courtesy copy notifications as well.
8. The Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs shall contact the family of the deceased student, notifying them of the university's decision to award an honorary posthumous degree and explaining the institution's protocols and procedures for doing so. These protocols include sending the diploma by mail accompanied with a signed letter from the Chancellor. Honorary posthumous degrees will not be acknowledged at commencement exercises or in the program. Colleges and/or departments may offer to present these awards to family representatives at receptions planned by faculty within their respective units.

Earned Degrees Awarded Posthumously

Unlike the awarding of honorary posthumous degrees described above, a different process governs the managing of instances when deceased students have earned a TCU degree and merit receiving it posthumously.

When TCU students become deceased within the last semester of graduating with no more than 18 credits remaining, they may be considered by the Registrar as eligible for having earned a TCU degree if the final coursework is able to be graded with what has been completed and the courses complete degree requirements. The following steps shall govern the certification and award process:

1. The Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs will notify the APUA and Registrar of a student's passing by email.
2. The Registrar, will certify the deceased student's earned credit status and degree standing with the APUA and dually confirm with the appropriate college(s) and department(s) if the deceased has completed satisfactorily all course work for the final semester in addition to meeting all gpa requirements.
3. Upon confirming eligibility requirements, the Registrar will notify appropriate college deans, department chairs, the APUA, and the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.
4. The Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs will notify the family of the deceased student, apprising them of the earned degree status and explaining our protocols for managing the process. These protocols include:
 - a. Learning if the family wishes to attend pinning ceremonies and/or commencement exercises and determining the selected venue where they wish to receive the earned degree.
 - b. If the family plans on attending either or both activities, they may do so. The degree may be presented at a separate pinning ceremony or at commencement. Should the family attend commencement, they may sit in the front row to the left of the stage as guests of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. At the time of degree conferral, a family representative may (i) walk up and receive the deceased student's diploma at the appropriate time, or (ii) remain seated as the student's name is acknowledged publicly "*in absentia*." A family representative may not accept the award in regalia.
 - c. If the family does not wish to attend either or both activities, the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs will coordinate with the Registrar, the mailing of the diploma,

which will be accompanied with a letter signed by the Chancellor.