

## ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

### UNIVERSITY POLICY REGARDING THE AWARDING OF POSTHUMOUS DEGREES

Policy Statement. It shall be the policy of the University to award posthumous academic degrees for students who have successfully completed a substantial portion of their academic programs with diplomas to specifically indicate a posthumous degree. In situations in which the President of the University determines that a particular situation warrants the granting of a posthumous degree, the President shall recommend such action to the Board of Trustees.

Qualifications of Candidate for a Posthumous Degree. To be eligible for a posthumous degree, a deceased student must have been actively enrolled in a degree program and in good standing at the University at the time of his or her death, or was actively enrolled in a degree program and in good standing at the time the medical condition leading to his or her death was diagnosed. More specifically, to be considered for a posthumous degree, the deceased student shall have complied with the above requirements and in addition shall have completed the following requirements for the following degrees:

- (A) Posthumous Bachelor's Degree. The deceased student must have achieved a grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.0; successfully completed at least 20 credits of course work in a major; completed substantially all of the University core curriculum requirements and service learning requirement; and at least have standing as a second semester junior.
- (B) Posthumous Law Degree. The posthumous law degree will be awarded by the Board of Trustees upon the affirmative recommendation of the Dean of the Law School, the President of the University and the Board of Directors of the Law School. The deceased student must have achieved a grade point (GPA) average of at least 2.5 and successfully completed at least 75% of the required coursework, required hours and other requirements for the degree.
- (C) Posthumous Graduate Degree. The deceased student must have achieved a grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.5; successfully completed at least 75% of the program's coursework, required hours and other requirements for the degree; and if a thesis is required for the program, approval of the his or her thesis proposal.

Non-Degree Academic Programs. The University will not award posthumous certificates to deceased persons enrolled in non-degree programs at the time of death.

Procedure – Undergraduate and Graduate Programs Other than The Law School. In most cases initiation of the awarding of a posthumous degree will come from the academic department in which the deceased student has declared her or his major; however, initiation may come from any interested party, including but

not limited to the family of the deceased student, a member of the faculty or administration, the Dean of the School of College from which the deceased student would have received her or his degree had she or he lived, the Provost or the President of the University. The qualifications (see above) shall be determined jointly by the Registrar and the Dean of the School or College. All recommendations for a posthumous degree shall be channeled through the Provost who shall consider the determination of qualifications made by the Registrar and the Dean, and make his or her recommendation to the President, who in turn may make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees for action.

Procedure – Law School. In the case of the Law School, in most cases the initiation of the awarding of a posthumous Juris Doctor degree will come from the faculty of the Law School; however, initiation may come from any interested party, including but not limited to the family of the deceased student, the Dean of the Law School or the President of the University. The qualifications (see above) shall be determined jointly by the Registrar and the Dean of the Law School. If it is determined that the deceased student meets the qualifications, the Dean of the Law School shall make his or her recommendation to the Board of Directors of the Law School. If approved by the Board of Directors, the recommendation shall be delivered to the President of the University, who in turn may make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees for action.

Consent of Deceased Student’s Family Required. Under no circumstances shall a posthumous degree be awarded to a deceased student, even if he or she has met all qualifications and is recommended for a posthumous degree, unless and until approval has been received by the President of the University from parents, spouse or life partner of the deceased student.

Coursework Undertaken at the Time of Death. If, at the time of death or incapacity leading to death, a student is enrolled in a course or courses, and the student has completed a sufficient amount of the coursework so that the instructor reasonably concludes that a final passing grade is appropriate, the coursework shall be considered completed for the purposes of satisfying the qualifications for a posthumous degree. If the deceased student was in her or his final term, and the instructors are able to conclude that final passing grades are appropriate, and if the final grades are sufficient to award a degree, the degree will be awarded as earned, and shall not be designated a posthumous degree.

Ceremony. With the consent of the deceased student’s family, the President of the University will present the diploma to the family in a private gathering of interested persons. If the family (parents and/or spouse) prefers not to have a private gathering, the diploma will be sent by the President of the University to the parents of the deceased student.

APPROVED BY RESOLUTION OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES OCTOBER 17, 2014