

UT - Martin Policy: BT0005-M Policy on Awarding Honorary Degrees	
Version: 2	Effective Date: 04/22/2022

UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE AT MARTIN  
PROCEDURE ON AWARDING OF DEGREES AND  
CERTIFICATES IN MEMORIAM

PURPOSE

The procedure states the process for nominating and awarding honorary degree recipients, posthumous degrees and certificates in memoriam consistent with System-Wide Policy BT0005 – Policy on Awarding of Degrees and Certificates in Memoriam. The procedure shall be subject to the maximum awards, eligibility criteria, and other considerations stated in BT0005. This procedure is applicable to The University of Tennessee at Martin (“UTM”) campus.

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PROCEDURE FOR NOMINATING AND AWARDING DEGREES

1. **Honorary Degrees** – Subject to and incorporating the minimum requirements stated in BT0005, the process for considering and nominating honorary degree recipients shall be as follows:

1.1 The Honorary Degree Nominating Committee (hereafter referred to as Nominating Committee) shall consist of the Provost, the Chief Development Officer, the Chief Diversity Officer, and the UTM Faculty Senate President, and three tenured faculty members selected as needed by the Executive Committee of the UTM Faculty Senate.

- The faculty members of the Nominating Committee will be appointed for a term of one year. The faculty members should be selected such that the Nominating Committee is comprised of individuals with different backgrounds, perspectives and expertise.
- The Provost shall serve as the Chair of the Nominating Committee.

1.2 The Nominating Committee will consider individuals of outstanding accomplishment. Typically candidates will have connections to the University of Tennessee at Martin or to Tennessee and will have achievements of national or international significance, or outstanding and sustained service to our state or community. Financial contributions to UTM, or prior service as an elected official, shall not be the sole deciding factor in the nominations process. Extraordinary candidates without these connections will also be considered.

<b>UT - Martin Policy: BT0005-M Policy on Awarding Honorary Degrees</b>	
<b>Version: 2</b>	<b>Effective Date: 04/22/2022</b>

1.3 The process for nominating candidates will be available through the Academic Affairs website. Nominations must be submitted in writing to the Provost’s office and addressed to the Chair of the Honorary Degree Nominating Committee. Nominations must be received by the “classes end” date of the preceding semester, according to the academic calendar published through the UTM website. For example, a nominator must submit a complete nomination by the Fall 2021 “classes end” date for an honorary degree to be awarded in the Spring 2022. All complete nominations must include:

- A letter from the nominator, including the honorary degree title they wish to obtain, and supporting documentation detailing why the candidate is worthy of an honorary degree from UTM;
- The candidate’s CV or a biographical statement;
- At least three names and contact information of individuals who may be solicited for letters of recommendation;
- The nominator’s relationship with the candidate, including any potential or perceived conflicts of interest;
- The Nominating Committee shall consider all complete nomination packets.

1.4 A candidate nominated to receive an honorary degree from UTM must be supported by a simple majority of the members of the Nominating Committee.

- The Chair of the Nominating Committee will send a letter to the nominator of any candidate not recommended. Candidates may be reconsidered upon re-nomination.
- All members of the committee are required to function in a confidential manner, respecting the privacy of all candidates, including those recommended and those not recommended.

1.5 Upon approval, the Chancellor will submit the candidate to the President for consideration.

1.6 The Chancellor, provided s/he approves the candidate, shall notify the candidate to ascertain their willingness to accept the honorary degree and their availability to attend commencement exercises.

1.7 Upon approval, the President will submit the candidate to the Board of Trustees for consideration.

1.8 The Board of Trustees will make the final decision to award an honorary degree.

UT - Martin Policy: BT0005-M Policy on Awarding Honorary Degrees	
Version: 2	Effective Date: 04/22/2022

- 1.9 UTM expects honorary degree recipients to participate fully in commencement exercises, but exceptions will be made for extenuating circumstances.
2. **Posthumous Degrees and Certificates in Memoriam** – Subject to and incorporating the minimum requirements stated in BT0005, the process for considering and nominating recipients of a posthumous degree or Certification in Memoriam shall be as follows:
- 2.1 A recommendation for the award of a posthumous degree or Certificate in Memoriam should be submitted in writing through the Department Chair of the student’s major department who will submit the recommendation to the Dean of the appropriate college.
- 2.2 The Dean of the appropriate college shall submit the attached request form to the Provost for verification by the Registrar that the minimum eligibility requirements are met.
- 2.3 Upon approval by the Provost, a request for a posthumous degree will be submitted for approval by the Chancellor and President, consecutively.
- 2.4 Requests for Certificates in Memoriam shall be submitted to the Provost on the same form. Any student who at the time of his or her death met the eligibility requirements for the conferral of a posthumous degree except for the condition of “nearing completion” will automatically be considered for a Certificate in Memoriam. Awarding of a Certificate in Memoriam does not require the approval of the Chancellor or President.

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## Related Documents

Request for Award of a Posthumous Degree – Attached

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UT - Martin Policy: BT0005-M Policy on Awarding Honorary Degrees	
Version: 2	Effective Date: 04/22/2022

**REQUEST FOR AWARD OF A POSTHUMOUS DEGREE**

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_ UTM ID: \_\_\_\_\_

College: \_\_\_\_\_

Degree to be Awarded: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Award: \_\_\_\_\_

**Rationale (include remaining requirements, Institutional Cumulative and Major GPAs, projected graduation date):**

**Approvals:**

Department Chair: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dean of College: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Provost: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Chancellor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\*President: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\* signature not required if a Certificate in Memoriam is awarded in lieu of a posthumous degree

UT - Martin Policy: BT0005-M Policy on Awarding Honorary Degrees	
Version: 2	Effective Date: 04/22/2022

### **GUIDELINES FOR AWARDING A POSTHUMOUS DEGREE:**

In accordance with UT Board Policy BT0005, a posthumous degree may be awarded to a student who dies before the projected graduation date. The award of posthumous degrees is generally limited to those individuals who have completed all academic requirements for the degree. However, students who were nearing completion of degree requirements at the time of their death may be considered on an individual basis.

Requests for a posthumous degree are submitted by the Department Chair, through the Dean of the appropriate college to the Provost and Chancellor for their approval. Approved requests are sent to the President of the UT System for his or her approval.

Although awarding a posthumous degree is not automatic, to be considered, a student must meet these minimum requirements:

- Enrolled at UTM or on an approved leave of absence
- Good standing
- Near completion of degree requirements
- Minimum Institutional Cumulative and Major GPA graduation requirements

A student not meeting these minimum standards may be considered for such an award under extraordinary circumstances. A student who at the time of his or her death meets the eligibility requirements for the conferral of a posthumous degree except for the condition of "nearing completion" will automatically be considered for a Certificate in Memoriam.

#### **Checklist for completion of the posthumous degree process: Routed by the Registrar's Office**

1. Confirmation of student's death
2. Registrar's Office notified of death
3. Request submitted by Department Chair, through Dean to Provost
4. Registrar's Office verifies requirements met for
  - a. Posthumous degree
  - b. Certificate in Memoriam

UT - Martin Policy: BT0005-M Policy on Awarding Honorary Degrees	
Version: 2	Effective Date: 04/22/2022

5. Provost's approval
6. Chancellor's approval (not required for Certificate in Memoriam)
7. Submitted to President (not required for Certificate in Memoriam)
8. Registrar's Office notified of approval for degree
9. Family notification and approval (by Registrar's Office in conjunction with the Academic Unit and Chancellor's Office)
10. Name for diploma verified by family
11. Commencement plans confirmed with family (by Registrar's Office in conjunction with the Academic Unit and Chancellor's Office)