



Santa Fe College Rules Manual

Procedure 4.3P

Title: Degree and Certificate Requirements

Based On: Rule 4.3

Effective Date: September 23, 2026

Santa Fe College will confer degrees and certificates in accordance with College policies and as authorized by applicable State of Florida laws and regulations. The purpose of this procedure is to provide guidelines for degrees and certificates awarded posthumously or in memoriam to honor the memory of students who demonstrated progress toward their educational goals. The College may choose to honor other individuals in other special circumstances.

Posthumous Degree/Certificate

A Posthumous Degree or Certificate may be awarded at the discretion of the College to a Santa Fe College student who has passed away prior to completing their primary program of study (Certificate, Associate, or Bachelor). To be eligible for a Posthumous Degree/Certificate, the student must have met all of the following requirements at the time of their passing:

- Been currently enrolled at Santa Fe College in a Certificate, Associate, or Bachelor program as their primary program of study or been enrolled at Santa Fe College in the semester immediately preceding death; and
- Had a minimum 2.0 program GPA; and
- Must have completed at least 75% of the total credit hours required for their primary program of study (which may be through a combination of Santa Fe College courses, transfer credits, or other as applicable); and
- Completed at Santa Fe College at least 15% of the required credit hours for their primary program of study.

In Memoriam Certificate

An In Memoriam Certificate is a type of recognition given at the discretion of the College to a Santa Fe College degree-seeking student who has passed away prior to completing their primary program of study, but does not meet the eligible criteria for a Posthumous Degree/Certificate. To be eligible for an In Memoriam Certificate, the student must have met all of the following requirements at the time of their passing:

- Been currently enrolled at Santa Fe College or been enrolled at Santa Fe College in the semester immediately preceding death; and
- Had a minimum 2.0 program GPA; and
- Must have completed less than 75% of the total credit hours required for their primary program of study (which may be through a combination of Santa Fe College courses, transfer credits, or other as applicable); and

Nominations and Conferring Procedure

1. The process to be considered for a Posthumous Degree/Certificate or an In Memoriam Certificate may be initiated by a member of the student's family or a College employee. The College's Ombudsperson shall serve as the official point of contact between the College and the family of the deceased student.
 - a. Requests initiated by the family
 - i. The family member will submit the Posthumous Recognition Request form and supporting documentation to the Ombudsperson, such as a funeral program or obituary.
 - ii. The Ombudsperson will verify the student's passing and will forward the request to the Registrar.
 - b. Requests initiated by a Santa Fe College employee
 - i. The employee initiating the request must submit the Posthumous Recognition Request form to the Ombudsperson.
 - ii. The Ombudsperson will then contact the student's family to verify the student's passing, obtain supporting documentation (funeral program or obituary) and ensure they approve of the recognition.
 - iii. If student's family approves of the recognition, the Ombudsperson will forward the request to the Registrar.
2. If the Records Office confirms the student's eligibility for a posthumous or in memoriam recognition, the request and supporting documentation will be provided to the Office of the President.
3. The College President, with recommendation from the Provost, will provide the final approval.
4. Once the request is approved by the President, the Records Office will process the request as follows:
 - a. A comment will be added to the student's transcripts indicating: "*(Name of Degree/Certificate) awarded posthumously*" or "*In Memoriam Certificate.*"
 - b. For Posthumous degrees/certificates, a standard diploma for the appropriate degree/certificate will be printed. The diploma will **not** include a "Posthumous" notation. The date printed on the diploma or certificate will reflect the current semester in which the posthumous recognition is approved.
 - c. For In Memoriam Certificates, a certificate will be printed including a notation specifying the intended credential and will be signed by the

- President. The date printed on In Memoriam certificate will reflect the current semester in which the posthumous recognition is approved.
- d. The student will **not** be officially "Graduated" within the student information system and will not be included in any graduation report.
 - e. The student's record will be updated to reflect the deceased status.
5. The Ombudsperson will coordinate with the family to determine the most appropriate way to deliver the recognition (e.g., mail, in person or during the commencement ceremony). The following steps will apply if the family prefers a mention during the next commencement ceremony:
- a. The Ombudsperson will confirm the number of family members attending the ceremony, will secure the necessary tickets and reserve seats.
 - b. The Records Office will print the diploma/certificate and will forward it to the Ombudsperson so it can be framed and presented to the family during the ceremony.
 - c. If possible, the Records Office will include the name of the student on the commencement book.
 - d. The Ombudsperson will notify the Director of Presidential and Executive Communications, to include the presentation of the posthumous or in memoria recognition on the graduation script.
 - e. The Ombudsperson will coordinate to have a staff member meet the family upon arrival and escort them to their seats.