

Submitted by: Julie H. Miller, Secretary to the Board of Governors

**RATIFICATION OF ELECTRONIC VOTE**  
Authorization to Award Posthumous Degree

**Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Board of Governors ratify the action adopted by the Board of Governors by electronic vote on April 17, with a vote of 8-0, approving the award of a Baccalaureate Degree to Darrin Adams, posthumously.

**Background**

The background on this request was distributed to the Board under separate cover, a copy of which is attached to this summary. Action prior to May 1<sup>st</sup> was taken to allow the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to recognize Mr. Darrin Adams at the virtual commencement program held on April 29<sup>th</sup>, prior to this meeting.

## **REQUEST TO AWARD A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE TO A DECEASED STUDENT**

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Board of Governors approve a request for an exception to statute 2.43.62.040, and award the Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Arts and Sciences, with a Major in Sociology, to a deceased student, effective Winter term, 2020.

### **Applicable Code**

2.43.62.020 It may be requested of the University occasionally that academic recognition be bestowed posthumously to a deceased student who did not complete degree requirements and who did not meet the prescribed criteria for an honorary degree. In such a circumstance, the University may, upon request of the family of the subject student and upon approval of the appropriate faculty, confer a degree, if the deceased student had met the requirements as set forth below.

2.43.62.040 BACCALAUREATE STUDENTS: To be eligible for these University recognitions, a deceased or critically ill student who, at the time of termination of study, was pursuing a Bachelor Degree, shall have met a minimum of 90 percent of the requirements in each published category: general education, departmental, collegiate, University.

### **Background**

Darrin Adams was a WSU student from Wayne, MI. He had been working on his degree requirements at Wayne State University since Winter 2016 and successfully completed 100 semester hours. Despite having earned less than 120 degree credits, he completed 84% of his degree requirements, including an overall GPA above 2.0 (3.64), completion of all general education and college group requirements (100%), and 21 out of 30 credits (70%) required by his major department. He was actively working to complete his remaining major requirements but recently passed away due to complications caused by COVID-19. Mr. Adams will not have an opportunity to complete the remaining credits required by the major.

By requiring a 90% completion threshold in department requirements, the statute effectively limits the possibility of awarding the degree under the statute to students who have completed the vast majority of their degree requirements and have department-level support for the awarding of a degree. While Mr. Adams has not yet met the requirement of statute 2.43.62.040, it should be noted that he worked diligently to complete his degree requirements in the time he had and should be recognized for his achievements at this university.

### **Approvals**

This request is supported by the Chair of the Department of Sociology, the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the Provost.