

## Posthumous Degree Request Form

The University of New Mexico recognizes that an academic degree is a matter of legitimate pride in achievement for not only students, but for the family and friends who support and encourage them. UNM also recognizes that significant progress in an academic program is, under certain circumstances, an achievement which warrants special recognition.

Accordingly, UNM has made available opportunities to bestow upon a student who dies before the completion of their program either a *Posthumous* or *In Memoriam* degree.

Posthumous Degrees may be granted under the following circumstances and terms:

- Requests may be initiated by the student's family, faculty of the department/college, or a UNM administrator.
- The student must have been in a degree status and either currently enrolled or enrolled in the academic year prior to their passing.
- The student must have completed a minimum of half of the credits required for the degree.
- The department, college, and Faculty Senate must approve requests. In addition, the Senate Graduate Committee must review and approve all graduate level posthumous degrees.
- Degrees awarded will be noted as "posthumous" on both the diploma and transcript.

### In Memoriam Degrees

In the instance that a request does not fulfill the requirements of a Posthumous Degree, a "Degree in Memoriam" may be awarded. The degree will be noted as "in memoriam" on the diploma and transcript.

### Instructions for Request

Prior to completing this form, we encourage you to review the [Posthumous Degree Policy](#). Please include a letter of support along with this completed form.

**Initiator of Request:** Jason Smith, Dept. Chair

**Date of Request:** 2/17/2026

**Email:** jssmith@unm.edu

**Phone:** (505) 277-2451

**Student's Name:** Marie von Haas

**Student ID:** 101838946

**College:** Arts & Sciences

**Major(s):** HISTORY

**Concentration(s):** AMERICAN WEST

**Minor(s):**

**Degree:** PhD In History

**Number of Completed Credit Hours:** 59

**Would you like the Dean of Students to contact the family regarding this request?** Yes  No

**Degree Requested:** Posthumous  In Memoriam  **Letter of Support Attached?** Yes  No

Thank you for your submission. For questions or to return this form, contact Lisa Lindquist, LoboRESPECT Director, at [aldelgado@unm.edu](mailto:aldelgado@unm.edu).

### For Use in the Office of the University Secretary

Approval	Approver Name	Date
Department:	Jason Smith	
College:	<i>Anna M. Lopez</i>	26 February 2026
Grad Committee: (If Applicable)	Patrick Manning	03/06/2026
Faculty Senate:		
Registrar Request:		



February 16, 2026

Re: Request for Posthumous Award of the PhD in History for Marie von Haas

Dear Colleagues,

I write as Chair of the Department of History at the University of New Mexico to request approval for the posthumous conferral of the PhD in History for our doctoral student, Marie von Haas. Marie was an advanced PhD candidate in good standing whose scholarly work and professional engagement reflected the highest standards of our graduate program. In light of her death, and consistent with University policy permitting posthumous degrees when the academic unit affirms that degree requirements were substantially completed, the Department of History respectfully asks that the University award Marie her doctorate posthumously.

Marie von Haas had completed a full draft of her dissertation, “Made in Japan: Babies Born During the American and Allied Military Occupation of Japan, 1946–1952.” In this project, she set out to explore the trans-Pacific lives, migrations, and challenges faced by so-called “Occupation Babies”—the children of U.S. soldiers who occupied Japan in the immediate postwar era—and their Japanese “war brides.” She approached this subject in part from the vantage point of her own history as an Occupation Baby, seeking through archival sources and oral histories to paint a larger portrait of this generation of Japanese-American migrants. She built on prior expertise as a public historian of Japanese Americans in the U.S. West, developed in part through her MA work at the University of Colorado, Denver, and sought above all to make her work accessible to other surviving Occupation Babies like herself and to their families.

Her dissertation began with marriages between Japanese women and U.S. servicemen from 1945 to 1952 (when Japanese wives were first allowed to follow their husbands to the United States without special consideration), and it situated their unions and children in a larger trans-Pacific context. This context—shaped by international law, military and diplomatic relationships, and racial ideologies—made the incorporation (and assimilation) of these mixed families anything but straightforward. In some cases, Occupation Babies came to the United States with their mothers; in others, they arrived as orphans. Von Haas sought to carefully sort out these varied crossings, with attention to different places of origin (Japan, but also Southeast Asia), while also fitting Occupation Babies into generational models of Japanese American history that have, to date, overlooked and created little space for these key historical actors. The full draft of the dissertation is rich with personal stories and archival depth; it simply awaited the final work of reorganizing materials within and between chapters as needed and honing the larger arguments. We fully anticipated completing this work with an eye to a Spring 2026 graduation.

On behalf of the Department of History, and with the unanimous support of those faculty who oversaw Marie’s progress in the program, I respectfully request that the University grant Marie von Haas a posthumous PhD in History. Doing so would appropriately recognize the substantial body of original



scholarship she completed and honor her contributions to our intellectual community. Please do not hesitate to contact me if any additional documentation would be helpful in support of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jason Scott Smith'. The signature is written in a cursive style.

Jason Scott Smith  
Professor of History and Chair  
Department of History  
Regents' Professor in Arts and Sciences