RESPONDING TO THE DEATH OF A STUDENT

University Policy No.: AC1215
Approval Authority: Vice-President Academic and Provost
Effective Date: May, 2012
Supersedes: August, 2004
Last Editorial Change:
Mandated Review: May, 2019

Associated Procedures:
Procedures for Responding to the Death of a Current Student
Appendix 'A' - Unit Activities after the Confirmed Death of a Current Student
Procedures for Responding to the Death of a Former Student

PURPOSE

1.00 The purpose of this policy is to:

- set out administrative responsibilities in the event of a death of a student;
- ensure rapid, effective communication and follow-up to a student death; and
- ensure that the response to a student-death is timely and sensitive to the circumstances.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy:

2.00 **Unit** includes the university's faculties, departments, divisions, schools, programs, institutes, offices, libraries and research centres.

SCOPE

3.00 This policy applies to the university's administrative response to the death of a student who is currently registered in any course or program offered by the university. Refer to the Procedures for Responding to the Death of a Former Student for guidance on the administrative response to the death of a non-active student.

3.01 This policy does not address the university's response to emergencies or provide emergency management practices.

POLICY

Guiding Values

4.00 The university is committed to responding to the death of a student member of the university community in a compassionate and respectful manner that is appropriate based on the circumstances of the student's death.

5.00 The university's response to the death of a student will be guided by the following:

(a) Respect, sensitivity and compassion - the university will act and respond in a highly sensitive manner out of respect for the deceased and in accordance with the wishes of the family or next-of-kin. Care will be extended to the family or next-of-kin, the students, faculty and staff members most closely involved with the student prior to the student's death and individuals who may have been with the student when the death occurred.

(b) Privacy - Notifications must be made to a number of Units to enable necessary administrative actions to be undertaken in a timely manner. Faculty and staff shall use discretion in the use, access and disclosure of information related to the student and the student's death. Any information provided will be verified for accuracy and considered carefully before being conveyed to the university community, media, family or next-of-kin. Use, access and disclosure of personal information shall be in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and the university's Protection of Privacy policy (GV0235).

(c) Clear and timely communication - the location, time, and circumstances of the death may influence communications and appropriate response processes. In order to minimize the amount of distress to the family or next-of-kin, efforts will be made to minimize the number of interactions and to obtain administrative closure in a timely and efficient manner.

(d) Cooperation - Units will work together and with external officials to obtain administrative closure in a timely and efficient manner.

6.00 When a university community member becomes aware of the death of a current student they shall immediately notify Campus Security Services and the Office of the Associate Vice-President Student Affairs.

7.00 The Associate Vice-President Student Affairs (or designate) is responsible for coordinating the university's administrative response to the death of a student including mobilizing and leading the Response Team as set out in the Procedures for Responding to the Death of a Current Student.

8.00 The administrative response to a student's death shall be conducted in accordance with the:

- Procedures for Responding to the Death of a Current Student;
- Appendix 'A' - Unit Activities after the Confirmed Death of a Current Student; and
- Procedures for Responding to the Death of a Former Student.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Coroners Act
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
Limitation Act

AUTHORITIES AND OFFICERS

i) Approving Authority: Vice-President Academic and Provost
ii) Designated Executive Officer: Vice-President Academic and Provost
iii) Procedural Authorities: Vice-President Academic and Provost
iv) Procedural Officer: Associate Vice-President Student Affairs

RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

Protection of Privacy Policy (GV0235)
Records Management Policy (IM7700)
Critical Incident Response Procedures (SS9115)
Flag Display Policy (AD2300)
Procedures for Responding to a Student Death
Appendix 'A' - Unit Activities after a Confirmed Student Death
Procedures for Responding to the Death of a Former Student
StudentAid BC Policy Manual

University of Victoria

PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO THE DEATH OF A CURRENT STUDENT

Procedural Authority: Vice-President Academic & Provost
Procedural Officer: Associate Vice-President Student Affairs
Parent Policy: Responding to the Death of a Student (AC1215)

Effective Date: May, 2012
Supersedes: New
Last Editorial Change: December 2020

PURPOSE

1.00 The purpose of this document is to set out procedures for the administrative response to the death of a current student.

DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of these procedures:

2.00 The definitions contained within the Responding to the Death of a Student (AC1215) policy apply to these procedures.

PROCEDURES

Notification of Death

3.00 When any university community member becomes aware of the death of a current student they shall immediately notify Campus Security Services and the Office of the Associate Vice-President Student Affairs.

3.01 The police, hospital or coroner will notify the deceased student`s family or next-of-kin.

4.00 The Associate Vice-President Student Affairs (or designate) is responsible for coordinating the university's administrative response to the death of a current student.

Formation of a Response Team

5.00 Upon being notified of a student death, the Associate Vice-President Student Affairs (or designate) will seek details regarding the circumstances of the death and attempt to confirm whether other members of the university community were present when the death occurred.

5.01 The Office of the Associate Vice-President Student Affairs will take steps to verify the student's:
(a) identity;
(b) student identification number;
(c) contact information;
(d) nationality (to determine whether or not the student is enrolled as an international visa student);

(e) current affiliation to the university (e.g., graduate, undergraduate, continuing studies, distant learning, international exchange, co-op, residence status, etc); and
(f) current affiliation with various student groups, clubs or communities.

5.02 The Associate Vice-President Student Affairs will form a Response Team that will organize, lead and provide advice and support on the university's administrative response to the student's death.

5.03 The composition of the Response Team will be established based on the nature of the death, student-type and the student's affiliation to the university. The Response Team may include the following individuals (or their designates):

(a) Associate Vice-President Student Affairs;
(b) the pertinent Dean, Chair of Director from the student's faculty or program;
(c) the Dean of Graduate Studies (in the case of a death of a graduate student);
(d) Associate Vice-President, Faculty Relations and Academic Administration or General Counsel;
(e) Executive Director, Student Services;
(f) Director of Health Services;
(g) Director of Counselling Services;
(h) Director of Communication Services;
(i) Director of Campus Security;
(j) Registrar;
(k) Director of Residence Services (in the case of a residence student);
(l) Director of Athletics and Recreation (in the case of a student athlete);
(m) Director of International Affairs (in the case of a death of an international student or a University of Victoria student studying outside of Canada).

6.00 The Response Team will:

6.01 designate an individual to liaise with the police, hospital, British Columbia Coroners Service, and other external parties as required;

6.02 as necessary, communicate with the university community in a timely manner to address any issues regarding safety or threat of harm to university community members;

6.03 identify an individual who will be the university's primary contact for the family or next-of-kin going forward on any outstanding communications or issues;

6.04 determine the appropriate manner for communicating with the student's immediate family or next-of-kin;

6.05 determine, in consultation with the family or next-of-kin, the individual(s) who will be the primary contact(s) on the family or next-of-kin's behalf;

6.06 identify an individual that will respond to media requests (as necessary) while ensuring that this individual liaises with University Communication Services and the family or next-of-kin prior to the release of information to the media;

6.07 ensure that any broad communication messaging has been vetted by the family or next-of-kin prior to release;

6.08 provide guidance to Units to perform administrative tasks that are appropriate to the circumstances of the death;

6.09 ensure that other Units are notified with current and accurate information and that the information being used or disclosed is in accordance with the university's Protection or Privacy policy (GV0235) and procedures;

6.10 provide advice and support to Units with regard to the performance of their responsibilities as set out in Appendix 'A';

6.11 determine if the student was an international visa student or if the student was studying outside of Canada at the time of death;

6.12 collect documentation on the administrative response to the student's death to retain in the Office of the Associate Vice-President Student Affairs for records management purposes;

6.13 determine if any memorial service arrangement is to be held on campus and any other arrangements that may be appropriate or meaningful to the family or next-of-kin;

6.14 facilitate arrangements for the provision of appropriate access to grief and crisis counselling services and supports for students, faculty and staff;

6.15 notify the heads of the Unit's set out in Appendix 'A', as appropriate on a need to know basis, in order to verify that necessary follow-up actions are being completed;

6.16 arrange for any billing processes or correspondence to be stopped with the deceased student;

6.17 in the case of a graduate student, determine a process for the notification of any external funding agency;

6.18 where appropriate, liaise with the family or next-of-kin and the President's office regarding any arrangements for the University of Victoria House Flag to be flown at half-mast in accordance with the university Flag Display policy (AD2300);

6.19 where applicable, liaise with the appropriate faculty to provide a recommendation to the Senate Committee on Academic Standards regarding the awarding of a posthumous degree in accordance with Senate's guidelines; and

6.20 conduct an evaluation of the administrative response to the student death and make recommendations as necessary to the pertinent areas related to the modification of policies, procedures or response processes.

Memorial Service

7.00 Upon request from the student's family or next-of-kin, a memorial service will be held at the university free of charge.

Records

8.00 Records related to the administrative response to the student's death shall be marked as confidential and managed in accordance with applicable legislation and the university's Protection of Privacy (GV0235) and Records Management (IM7800) policies and their associated procedures.

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APPENDIX 'A' - UNIT ACTIVITIES AFTER THE CONFIRMED DEATH OF A CURRENT STUDENT

PURPOSE

1.00 The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of the administrative responsibilities and activities of university Units after being notified of the death of a current student.

2.00 Upon being notified by the Response Team, Units shall refer to the following chart in order to determine their administrative responsibilities following the confirmed death of a student. The following chart is intended to provide general guidance and is not intended to be an exhaustive list of administrative activities that may be required in the event of a student's death. The Response Team, in consultation with Units, may modify this list in response to the circumstances related to a student's death.

Unit	Unit Activities after Confirmed Student Death
Accounting Services (Payroll)	If the student was also a university employee, process payment of wages and remit to the beneficiary on file or to the estate. Forward the record of employment, final paycheque, tax information and any other employment related materials to the family or next-of-kin in consultation with the Response Team.
Accounting Services (Student Tuition)	Liaise with the Office of the Registrar regarding any applicable refund of tuition or fees. Provide the Office of the Associate Vice-President Student Affairs with a cheque for a refund of tuition or fees as applicable made payable to the deceased student's estate. Arrange for any tuition billing processes or correspondence to be stopped with the deceased student.
Alumni and Development	Liaise with the deceased student's family or next-of-kin to establish memorial scholarships or bursaries as appropriate. Remove the deceased student from any mailing or contact lists as necessary.
Athletics and Recreation	Remove student from contact lists and close student's files.

Unit	Unit Activities after Confirmed Student Death
	Arrange for any correspondence to be stopped with the deceased student. In the case of the death of a student athlete, arrange other necessary support services for affected teams and students as directed by the Response Team.
Associate Vice-President Student Affairs Office	Mobilize the Response Team as set out in the Procedures for Responding to the Death of a Student. Notify the President and Vice-President Academic and Provost as soon as possible and provide them with related information regarding the death (e.g., name of deceased, date of death, contact information for the family or next-of-kin, date of memorial service, etc). Request a copy of the Death Certificate from the family. Review the circumstances related to the student's death to determine if additional resources may be required for an appropriate response. Prepare and distribute notification of student death memos to appropriate Units. Coordinate supports for the student community as required. Write a letter of condolence as appropriate and coordinate other condolence letters from the President's Office and/or the student's faculty. Forward any refund cheques to the family or next-of-kin. Consult with Residence Services (if the student lived on campus) to outline a plan to: (a) work with the family or next-of-kin in removing the student's possessions from their own room/apartment; (b) contact roommates, and other individuals in residence; and (c) evaluate the need for support services for those affected by the death within residence. Maintain the original and/or official version of case files related to the university's administrative response to the death of a student and carry out the disposition of such records.

Unit	Unit Activities after Confirmed Student Death
	Brief the university's executive as required.
Campus Security	Liaise with the police, British Columbia Coroners Service, and other external officials as required. Cancel any parking tickets or fines; refund parking fees as appropriate. Arrange for any billing processes or correspondence to be stopped with the deceased student. Display flags in accordance with the university Flag Display Policy (AD2300). Secure the personal property of the deceased student for disposition to the estate. Return any university property that was in the student`s possession to the appropriate Unit.
Co-operative Education and Career Services	Close any employment records. Liaise with the Response Team regarding notification of the student's employer if the deceased student was employed through the Co-operative Education and Career Services department in a work-term, work experience, internship or other position on campus. Remove student from mailing or contact lists.
Communication Services	Coordinate any news release, statements or release of information regarding the individual and circumstances surrounding the death in collaboration with the Response Team as appropriate.
Counselling Services	Liaise with the Response Team in order to: (a) determine the need for counselling and other supports. (b) contact students, faculty and staff who may be affected by the student`s death and offer appropriate support services. Close any records on file related to the student.
Faculty Dean	In the case of the death of an undergraduate student:

Unit	Unit Activities after Confirmed Student Death
(or Department Chair)	(a) Notify the deceased student's instructors and other faculty and staff as appropriate. (b) Contact instructors of highly impacted students within their faculty, if deemed necessary, to make any appropriate academic arrangements. (c) Write a letter of condolence to the family or next-of-kin on behalf of the faculty/department as appropriate. (d) Notify the academic advising centre as appropriate. (e) Ensure that any academic integrity and/or disciplinary proceedings are discontinued. (f) Review any proposal to award a posthumous degree and make a recommendation to the Senate Committee on Academic Standards as appropriate. In the case of the death of a graduate student, liaise with the Dean of Graduate Studies to ensure that necessary follow-up arrangements are completed.
Faculty of Graduate Studies	In the case of the death of a graduate student: (a) contact the deceased student's academic supervisor and any instructors of highly impacted students, if deemed necessary, to make any appropriate academic arrangements. (b) determine if the student was receiving financial aid and coordinate the closing of any related financial administrative matters and arrange for termination of any financial aid. (c) determine a process in consultation with the Response Team for the notification of any external funding agency. (d) review any proposal to award a posthumous graduate degree and make a recommendation to the Senate Committee on Academic Standards as appropriate.

Unit	Unit Activities after Confirmed Student Death
	(e) ensure that any academic integrity and/or disciplinary proceedings are discontinued.
Health Services	Liaise with the hospital, British Columbia Coroners Service and any external agencies as directed by the Response Team. Liaise with the Response Team and Counselling Services regarding any appropriate professional supports for the students, faculty and staff who may be affected by the student's death. Retain any health records related to the deceased student in accordance with the British Columbia *Limitation Act*.
Human Resources	If the student was also a university employee, cancel any active benefit plans and arrange for payment of any applicable life insurance. Liaise with referrals to the Employee and Family Assistance Program for critical incident counselling/debriefing support for staff and faculty members as required.
Library	Arrange for any billing processes or correspondence to be stopped with the deceased student. Cancel any outstanding fines and arrange with the designated contact from the Response Team to have any resources the student borrowed from the university's libraries returned. Close the student's records.
Multifaith Services	Provide support to the family, next-of-kin, and members of the university community as required. Assist in the preparation of a memorial service as requested by the Response Team.
Occupational Health, Safety and Environment	Assess any risk or danger related to the death as necessary if the death occurred on campus or university property.
Office of International Affairs	Confirm the relationship between the university and the deceased student, whether international exchange, co-operative education or other affiliation.

Unit	Unit Activities after Confirmed Student Death
	Arrange for an interpreter as necessary to communicate with the family or next-of-kin. Notify the appropriate embassy/consulate from the deceased student's home country. In the case of a death of a Canadian Student studying outside of Canada, notify the Canadian embassy/consulate in the host country. When appropriate, assist with arrangements to return: (a) the deceased student's body to the country of origin; and (b) any immediate family members to the country of origin. Assist any immediate family or next-of-kin with arrangements regarding the personal effects of the deceased student. Notify any appropriate local community associations of which the deceased student was a known member.
Office of the Registrar (including the Support and Transfer Services, Undergraduate Records and Graduate Records Units)	Withdraw the student from the university and all courses and update the students' academic records in Banner. Arrange for any official correspondence being issued from the Office of the Registrar to be stopped with the deceased student. Advise the Response Team regarding the status of the student's graduation eligibility, including posthumous degree eligibility. If an application for current graduation is on file, or a posthumous degree may be appropriate, liaise with the University Secretary's Office, Ceremonies and Events Office and the pertinent faculty as required. Coordinate the posthumous degree consideration and granting process. Coordinate the notification of the family or next-of-kin where the awarding of a posthumous degree has been approved. Advise the Response Team regarding notification of the Ceremonies and Events' Office where the Student is pending graduation or a posthumous degree has been awarded.

Unit	Unit Activities after Confirmed Student Death
Office of the Registrar - Student Awards and Financial Aid	Determine if the deceased student was receiving financial aid or participating in the Workstudy Program and arrange for termination of any financial aid. If the student was receiving financial aid, ensure that the deceased borrowers' family or next-of-kin is advised to: (a) forward an original copy of the death certificate to Student Aid BC or the appropriate government loan provider; and (b) contact the service providers holding the student's student loan accounts and forward a copy of the death certificate to service providers. Make arrangements to forward any applicable tuition-fee refund to the appropriate student loan service provider. Arrange for any billing processes or correspondence to be stopped with the deceased student.
Ombudsperson	Close out any ongoing matters or records pertaining to the deceased student.
Photo Identification Centre	Cancel student identification card.
President's Office	Write a letter of condolence to the family or next-of-kin. Provide direction on the lowering of flags in accordance with the university Flag Display policy (AD2300).
Residence Services	If the deceased student lived in residence, ensure that the student's roommates are aware of the death and inform them of the appropriate support services available. Liaise with Campus Security and the Office of the Associate Vice-President Student Affairs to determine who will collect the student's personal belongings and arrange for disposition. Relocate any roommates as necessary. Cancel any outstanding account charges and provide a refund, as applicable, made payable to the deceased student's estate. Close the student's records.

Unit	Unit Activities after Confirmed Student Death
Resource Centre for Students with a Disability (RCSD)	If the student was registered with the RCSD, close any ongoing matters related to the student's accommodation and assist with cancelling supports or services related to an accommodation plan that were provided to the student.
University Food Services	If the deceased student lived in residence, coordinate any applicable refund with Residence Services. If the deceased student did not live in residence, cancel any food cards and notify the Response Team of any applicable refund. Close the student's records.
University Systems	Determine what data is currently associated with the student's primary NetLink-ID on central file, web, and e-mail services. (a) If the student was also an employee, contact the department to determine if any of this data is work-related and provide it to the employee's immediate supervisor upon request. (b) If the student used a secondary NetLink-ID, reset the password and notify the unit that owns the secondary NetLink-ID. Archive all data to central backup services. Cancel the student's primary NetLink-ID. Verify that e-mail is bouncing and that websites are no longer reachable.
UVSS or GSS Health Plan Administrator	Notify the extended health plan administrator and determine if the family or next-of-kin is eligible for any death benefits. Arrange for any billing processes or correspondence to be stopped with the deceased student. Provide a refund of any health or dental plan payments made payable to the deceased student's estate.

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PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO THE DEATH OF A FORMER STUDENT

Procedural Authority: Vice-President Academic & Provost
Procedural Officer: Associate Vice-President Student Affairs
Parent Policy: Responding to the Death of a Student (AC1215)

Effective Date: May, 2012
Supersedes: New
Last Editorial Change:

PURPOSE

1.00 The purpose of this document is to set out procedures for the administrative response to the death of a Former Student.

DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of these procedures:

2.00 The definitions contained within the Responding to the Death of a Student (AC1215) policy apply to these procedures.

3.00 **Former Student** means a former, non-active, student who was not registered or enrolled in any courses or programs at the University of Victoria at the time of death.

PROCEDURES

Notification

4.00 When university faculty or staff are advised or become aware of the death of a Former Student they shall notify the Alumni and Development department.

5.00 In the case of a death of a Former Student, families or next of kin are encouraged to initially notify the Alumni and Development department.

Response

6.00 The Alumni and Development department will take steps to verify:
(a) the Former Student's identity;
(b) the Former Student's identification number;
(c) the Former Student's contact information;
(d) any current affiliation the Former Student has with the university; and
(e) any current affiliation the Former Student has with various student groups, clubs or communities.

7.00 Upon receiving notice of a Former Student's death, the Alumni and Development department will notify the Office of the Associate Vice-President Student Affairs about the death.

8.00 The Associate Vice-President Student Affairs (or designate) shall consider any ongoing affiliation the Former Student may have had with the university and determine whether it is necessary to form a Response Team.

9.00 The Office of the Associate Vice-President Student Affairs shall notify the Office of the Registrar which is responsible for updating the Former Student's academic records in Banner.

9.01 The Office of the Associate Vice-President Student Affairs will notify the Former Student's faculty or department and any other affected Units who are likely to have records related to the Former Student or any ongoing correspondence with the Former Student.

10.00 Notified Units shall review Appendix 'A' and verify if there are any appropriate activities that are applicable to respond to the Former Student's death.

11.00 The Alumni and Development department shall remove the Former Student's name from mailing and contact lists.

Records

12.00 Records related to the administrative response to a Former Student's death shall be marked as confidential and managed in accordance with applicable legislation and the university's Protection of Privacy (GV0235) and Records Management (IM7800) policies and their associated procedures.