

Procedure Number:	5050p
Procedure Title:	Death of a Student Procedure
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The death of a Student is a time of grief. It is important for the well-being of our community members, and the friends and families of the deceased, to respond with professionalism and empathy. This procedure has been developed for the immediate aftermath of a death, providing direction at a time that can be chaotic. While the unique circumstances of a student death will influence the response, this procedure is intended to ensure a consistent, respectful, and compassionate approach.

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to establish responsibilities and actions for the administrative response to the death of a current University Canada West (UCW) student.

This procedure ensures that upon the death of a student, all communications with the student’s family/next of kin, as well as the UCW’s Community and general public, are handled appropriately; the student’s contributions to UCW and community at large are acknowledged; and all dealings with the student’s records and fees are handled in a timely and professional manner.

2. IMMEDIATE RESPONSE

- 2.1. Response to the death of a Student off campus will normally be handled initially by the local police agency and/or hospital involved. In accordance with the *BC Coroner’s Act*, these authorities will notify the next of kin. UCW will not release information in advance of the authority’s notification, asks that witnesses be respectful of the process, and refrain from posting information on their social media accounts ahead of an official announcement by the University.
- 2.2. Response to the death of a Student at UCW campuses, Vancouver House and Pender, will be managed by the administrator responsible for the location.
- 2.3. Any member of the UCW Community aware that a death has occurred on campus shall:
 - a) Immediately notify: Campus Security (604-757-0476).
- 2.4. Campus Security will:
 - a) Notify the police authorities;

- b) Temporarily close the building/area to public access;
 - c) Notify the Vice-President Academic, Student Affairs; and
 - d) Notify the VP, Operations.
- 2.5. Vice President Academic (or designate) will:
- a) 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;
 - b) Appoint a person to act as the “Lead” (Dean/Director or above), as the primary person responsible for organizing UCW’s response;
 - c) Liaise with the GuardMe Counselling Services, to determine if counsellors are warranted
- 2.6. In situations of the death of a Student occurs either on campus or off-campus, the following apply:
- a) Vice President Academic (or designate) will notify:
 - Executive Team;
 - Chair of the student’s program;
 - Director, Student Affairs;
 - Coordinator, Occupational Health & Safety and Emergency Preparedness;
 - Director, People & Culture;
 - Director, Marketing & Communications; and
 - Registrar.
3. RESPONSE WITHIN FIRST 48 HOURS
- 3.1. Once the scene has been contained, or in the event the death occurred off campus, the following will occur in as timely a way as possible:
- a) Vice President Academic (or Lead) will convene relevant employees who may have knowledge or information about the circumstances of the Student death to provide them with information about available supports and will gather relevant information that may help guide the University response.
 - b) Vice President Academic (or Lead) will reconvene this group as necessary throughout the process.
- 3.2. Based on the nature of the death, student- type, and affiliation with UCW, the Vice President Academic (or Lead) will convene a Response Team, of which the following positions (or designates) will be core members:
- a) Chair, from the student’s program;
 - b) Director, Student Affairs;
 - c) Director, Marketing & Communications; and
 - d) Registrar.
- 3.3. The Response Team will:
- a) Collect and maintain documentation on the administrative response to the student’s death to retain in the Office or the Registrar for records management purposes.
 - b) 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/next of kin.
- 3.4. The Registrar (or Lead) will take steps to verify the student’s credentials, including:
- a) Identity;
 - b) Student identification number;

- c) Contact information;
 - d) Nationality;
 - e) Current affiliation with UCW (e.g. undergraduate, graduate, visiting, online);
 - f) Program of study; and
 - g) Current affiliation with various student groups, clubs, or committees.
- 3.5. Vice President Academic (or Lead) will notify the student's relevant instructors; GuardMe Services to provide priority counselling for affected students and/or employ external counselling specialists; and Human Resources to arrange for priority counselling for affected employees.
- 3.6. If the death occurred on campus, the Coordinator, Occupational Health & Safety and Emergency Preparedness will assess any risk or danger related to the death; report the incident to the health and safety authorities as required, and Work with Security, Operations and the police authorities to release any area/building that has been secured.
4. SECONDARY RESPONSE – AFTER OFFICIAL NOTIFICATION HAS BEEN MADE
- 4.1. Once UCW has been officially notified of a student's death, by either the authorities or the next-of kin, the Vice President Academic (or Lead) will authorize and verify that the following activities take place:
- 4.2. The Vice President Academic (or Lead) will:
- a) Contact the family/next of kin within 24 to 48 hours to express condolences and establish a link as being the official "contact person" for UCW and offer whatever assistance is appropriate.
 - b) The Vice President Academic (or Lead) should determine the appropriate manner for communicating with the student's family/next of kin, and determine, in consultation with the family/next of kin, the individual(s) who will be the primary contact(s) on the family/next of kin's behalf;
 - c) If appropriate, and subject to the wishes of the family/next of kin, notify the UCW Community of the occurrence of the death;
 - d) Work with the Director, Marketing & Communications to draft formal letters or cards of condolence to be signed by an appropriate member of the Executive Team, normally the President and the Department Chair of the Program;
 - e) Coordinate with the Director, Marketing & Communications to assemble all appropriate signatures for the formal letters or cards of condolence and arrange sending them to the family/next of kin
 - f) Initiate a second contact with the family/next of kin within 24 to 48 hours of the initial contact to determine the memorial service arrangements and their wishes;
 - g) Request a copy of the Death Certificate from the family/next of kin if necessary;
 - h) Ensure that any regular mailings from UCW to the Student and/or family are stopped;
 - i) Ensure the Director, Marketing & Communications has received approval from the family/next of kin prior to any release of information to the media;
 - j) Provide ongoing information to the Executive Team and other designated administrators regarding the death, the wishes of the family/next of kin;

- k) Provide information to the Director, Marketing & Communications to assist in the preparation of press releases, if required and as appropriate.
- l) Arrange a meeting with the Response Team at the conclusion of the response to de-brief on the process.

4.3. Chair of the faculty will:

- a) Contact instructors of highly impacted students within their faculty, if deemed necessary, to make any appropriate academic arrangements;
- b) Coordinate with the Director, Marketing & Communications to send a signed letter or card of condolence to the family/next of kin on behalf of the faculty/department, as appropriate;
- c) Appoint an employee, either staff or faculty, to survey the student's instructors to determine if any course materials need to be returned to the next of kin and discuss this information to the Vice President Academic (or Lead); and
- d) Ensure that any academic integrity and/or disciplinary proceedings are discontinued.

4.4. Academic Affairs will:

- a) Close any existing files for the student;
- b) Make arrangements for priority counselling for colleagues of the student.

4.5. Human Resources will:

- a) Ensure affected employees are provided support and resources as needed; and
- b) If the Student was also a University employee, ensure adherence to the Death of an Employee Procedure.

4.6. Vice President Operations will:

- a) Ensure that repairs to facilities which may be required resulting from any incident surrounding the death, are promptly arranged.

4.7. The Registrar will:

- a) Withdraw the Student from the University and all courses and update the student's academic records in myUCW.
- b) The Registrar's Office should consult with the student's current instructors prior to closing accounts to ensure other students' work is not impacted (e.g. group projects);
- c) Arrange for any official correspondence being issued to the Student from the Registrar's office to be stopped;
- d) Liaise with the Response Team and Academic Council, as necessary, regarding the status of the student's graduation eligibility.
- e) Make decisions about refunding fees, outstanding balances, and notify the appropriate offices;
- f) Obtain a certified copy of the Death Certificate from the Vice President Academic or Lead if the Student has been receiving Financial Aid and make appropriate notations in any pertinent financial aid and awards files; and notify both the Ministry and the appropriate bank(s).

4.8. The Library will review the student's library record and delete any outstanding fines or fees.

4.9. IT Services will close the student's computer account and remove access to secured rooms.

5. WHEN THE STUDENT IS AN INTERNATIONAL, EXCHANGE, OR STUDYING ABROAD STUDENT

- 5.1. At all times, the University will seek to accommodate the cultural and religious customs of the student's family/next of kin. Where possible, the University will arrange for the student's family/next of kin to come to the University to make plans. If the family/next of kin is out of country, communications will be considerate of international time zones.
- 5.2. In addition to the above and as appropriate, the Vice President Academic (or Lead) will:
 - a) Verify the student's identity and home country;
 - b) Review student's file for relevant information;
 - c) Confirm the location of the death;
 - d) Obtain emergency contact information submitted by the Student from the home or host institution, and/or the student's health insurance company;
 - e) Ensure that the designated contact at the home or host institution is notified;
 - f) Remove the Student from any mailing lists;
 - g) Notify any appropriate local community associations of which the Student was a known member, if agreed by the family/next of kin.
 - h) Contact the student's accommodation provider or housemate(s);
 - i) Ensure the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) or Canada Immigration is notified;
- 5.3. If the Student from abroad is studying at the University:
 - a) Notify the appropriate embassy/consulate from the student's home country as foreign embassies can provide direct support;
 - b) Maintain communications with the consulate or embassy; and
 - c) Notify and maintain communications with the student's sponsor, agent, and/or home institution.
- 5.4. If the individual is a UCW Student whose death occurred while abroad:
 - a) Notify the nearest Canadian embassy/consulate in the host country; and
 - b) Maintain contact with the host institution who will be supporting the process.
- 5.5. The Vice President Academic (or Lead) when contacting the family/next of kin, will offer condolences and determine the degree of assistance they wish to receive from UCW such as:
 - a) Whether they will come to Canada and how UCW can assist (e.g. airport reception, arrange accommodations, etc.);
 - b) Arranging interpreters;
 - c) Assisting in obtaining a death certificate or related documents;
 - d) Arranging access to legal advice;
 - e) Assisting in obtaining access to the student's accommodation;
 - f) Arranging for packing of personal effects;
 - g) Discussing funeral arrangements; and
 - h) Assisting with claims to Student health plans, health services provider or health insurance matters.
- 5.6. UCW will assist the family in making arrangements for:
 - a) Burial;
 - b) Cremation in Canada of the remains; or
 - c) Funeral or memorial Services (in Canada) if desired.

- 5.7. UCW will provide ongoing support and monitoring of students and staff in UCW's international Student community in order to assess the need for additional or ongoing responses.
- 5.8. UCW will keep detailed documentation of the departmental response and prepare reports for internal and external (as appropriate) review.