



California Institute of Integral Studies

PROTOCOL FOR RESPONDING TO STUDENT DEATH

INITIAL REACTION

In the event of a student's death the guiding principle is sensitivity to the family and friends of the deceased student by:

- recognizing the complexity and non-linear nature of the grieving process
- providing information in direct and clear communications
- providing a main contact person at CIIS

Some families and friends will desire extensive information and support while others will wish to maintain maximum privacy and have little communication.

UNDERLYING RATIONALE

CIIS is committed to providing a supportive environment for our university community. That we are active in doing this is especially important when a member of our community has died. In addition, there are official steps that must be taken to close out the student's records and affairs with the Institute. The intent of these procedures is to ensure that we can do both.

FIRST STEPS

The person with news of the student's death should alert the Dean of Students, or if the Dean is not available, any Institute official. By the time that the information is communicated to the Dean of Students the following information should be ascertained, if possible:

1. Student's name
2. Student's academic department/program
3. Student's contact information (local address, permanent address, phone numbers, email)
4. Name of person reporting the death and time of the notification
5. Contact information for the person reporting the death
6. Relationship of the reporter to the student
7. Determination of whether the death is confirmed or presumed, and any available details about the nature of the death

PRELIMINARY ACTIONS BY THE DEAN OF STUDENTS

1. Verify the identity of the student.
2. Verify that the family of the deceased student has been notified. The Coroner's Office usually makes notification or arranges for notification if family is out of the area.
3. As soon as possible, notify other CIIS officials:
 - President
 - Academic Vice President
 - Department/Program Chair or Director
 - Department/Program Coordinator
 - Director of Information Technology Services
 - Registrar
 - Director of Facilities & Operations
 - Director of Communications
 - Counseling Center (s) Director(s)
 - International Student Advisor (if applicable)
 - Any other Institute personnel who might have a need to know based on the identity of the deceased or the nature of the death
4. Check whether there are other students with the same or a similar name, and if so, notify them individually, in case news of the death results in a mistaken identity.
5. Work with the Program Director of the student's academic program to prepare and send a statement to the CIIS community sharing the news of the death and providing information on memorial services or other memorial event.
 - Ideally the message should come from the program director or some other faculty or staff member who knew the student well and can add compassionate personal details.
 - Information about the nature of the death should be concise and factual. It is likely that cause of death may not be known; if so, do not speculate. Be aware that initial information about the circumstances surrounding the death may be incorrect.
 - Collect, as appropriate, information about funeral services, memorials, donations, and preferred times and method of contact with family

- members. Communicate this information to students, faculty, staff, and other appropriate CIIS constituencies.
- Support the Program Director in creating a CIIS memorial service or community event.
6. Arrange for group and/or individual psychotherapy to be easily available to CIIS community members who need or desire grief counseling.
 7. Between 24-48 hours after the family has received notification of the death, contact them to officially express CIIS condolences, and establish yourself (or the Program Director, if more appropriate) as their Institute contact.

PRELIMINARY ACTIONS BY OTHERS

Registrar: Drop the student's current registered classes and notify the student's instructors and academic advisor.

Business Office Manager: Cancel student's outstanding balance and ensure that no communications regarding payments are scheduled to be delivered to student or family.

Financial Aid Office Director: Ensure that no communications regarding financial aid obligations are scheduled to be delivered to student or family.

Dean of Alumni: If the student was nearing program completion, ensure that no communications are scheduled to be delivered to student or family.

Information Technology Services Director: Work with the Dean of Students to provide family members with access to the student's email account (if appropriate).

President: Send a formal, written note of condolence to the family.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS

Once the death has been verified through the receipt of a death certificate copy or other official documentation:

Registrar: Notate and close the student's academic records.

Business Office Manager: Notate and close the student's financial account.

Financial Aid Office Director: Notate and close the student's Financial Aid records, and notify grant and loan agencies as appropriate.

Information Technology Services Director: Notate and close the student's electronic accounts.

Library Director: Notate and close the student's library account. Cancel any outstanding fees.

Human Resources Manager: If the student was a student worker, notate and close the student's employment account.

Program Coordinator of the student's academic program: Remove the student from departmental/program email lists.

Program Director of the student's academic program: If the family desires, arrange for collecting or shipping any personal belongings or documents that the student may have left behind at CIIS.

When the above described follow-up actions are completed, notify the Dean of Students, who in turn will communicate any remaining necessary or appropriate matters to the family.

Adopted March 2012