

STUDENT DEATH PROTOCOL & PROCEDURE

CORNISH COLLEGE
OF THE ARTS

Developed, Updated & Approved by
President's Cabinet

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Student Death Protocol & Procedure

Custodian of Policy: VP for Enrollment Management & Student Affairs

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Next Review: TBD

I. Student Death Protocol & Procedure

When the death of a student occurs, it is the responsibility of the College to respond in a sensitive and appropriate manner, recognizing that individuals respond in different ways to different circumstances that may surround a death. The College recognizes that the death of a student affects the entire College community, as well as the family and friends of the deceased.

The purpose of this Policy is to establish procedures that will support an orderly, effective, and caring response in the unfortunate event of a student's death. Considering the very sensitive and unpredictable nature of the death, no policy or protocol can describe in complete detail all the steps that must be taken by the College.

This Policy sets forth procedures to support communications and notifications in the event of the death of a currently enrolled student. Those responsible for implementing this policy should be guided by the essential communication needs required in these situations, as well as by empathy, sensitivity, and support for the bereaved and the need to preserve important evidence in some instances.

II. Definitions

Medical examiner: An individual duly appointed and licensed in the State of Washington to conduct postmortem investigations, to determine the cause and manner of death in certain situations, and to perform other duties as set forth by state guidelines – Postmortem Investigation and Disposition, as that statute may be amended from time to time.

Postvention: The provision of systematic crisis intervention, support, and assistance for those affected by a crisis. Postvention strategies are designed to minimize significant traumatic reactions. Postvention services provide appropriate emotional support and information to those affected by a crisis.

Primary Contact: The VP for Enrollment Management & Student Affairs and/or a designee will appoint someone to serve as the single point of contact for family members who wish to speak with College faculty, staff, or students concerning the death of a student.

Student: An individual who is enrolled in an undergraduate or extensions program at the College at the time of death; or an individual who has completed the immediate preceding term at the College and is eligible for re-enrollment, in the event the death occurs during the recess period between fall and spring semesters or summer sessions.

College-sponsored travel: Travel, including field trips or international programs, that is led by a College employee or for which academic credit is awarded, or any other travel administered by, conducted under the direction of, or with financial support from, any College department, program, or office.

III. Applicability

While this Policy applies to currently enrolled, degree-seeking students, it is also appropriate to follow the procedures in this Policy in case of the death of a distance education student or a visiting exchange or international student.

IV. Procedures

A. Immediate Notifications – contact immediately upon being informed of a student death

The Office of the President

1. After official notification of a student's death has been given to the family by local law enforcement, the Office of the President, in coordination with the Dean of Student Affairs, will contact the family of the deceased student to:
 - Offer condolences; and,
 - Identify the Dean of Student Affairs, or designee, as the campus contact to work with the family to coordinate all campus business (financial aid, housing, etc.).
2. The Office of the President ensures that the Cabinet has been notified.
3. The Office of the President ensures that the Board of Trustees Chair has been notified.
4. The Office of the President ensures that Legal Counsel has been notified.

B. Primary Notifications – contact as soon as possible

The Office of the Dean of Student Affairs

(in conjunction with the Vice President for Enrollment and Student Affairs)

1. The Office of the Dean of Student Affairs verifies the student death through the Office of Campus Safety & Security or appropriate law enforcement agency.
2. The Office of the Dean of Student Affairs or designee verifies the enrollment and FERPA release status of the deceased student.
3. The Dean of Student Affairs office confirms that the family of the deceased student has been notified by the appropriate law enforcement agency.
4. Determine if the family has any immediate needs from the College (e.g. gathering items from the residence hall room, notifying other students, etc.).
5. Gather information about the funeral, visitation, and memorial arrangements.
6. The Office of the Dean of Student Affairs or designee confirms the following individuals have been notified:
 - President
 - Vice President for Enrollment and Student Affairs
 - President's Cabinet
 - Provost
 - Director of Housing & Residential Life
 - Director of the Counseling Center
 - Director of Campus Safety & Security
 - Department Chair or Program Director
7. The Dean of Student Affairs or designee notifies the following individuals/offices:
 - Academic Advisor
 - Office of Student Accounts
 - Counseling Services
 - Faculty for the student's courses
 - Information Technology
 - Library
 - Office of Equity
 - Office of Financial Aid
 - Registrar's Office
8. When appropriate, the Director of Counseling Services will assess if counseling or crisis intervention services are needed for students connected with the deceased.

9. The Dean of Student Affairs or designee will serve as the campus contact to assist the deceased student's family.
10. The Dean of Student Affairs or designee may attend the funeral on behalf of the College if approved by the family.
11. The Dean of Student Affairs will review student records with the following:
 - Student Accounts to identify student financial account status and any potential refunds;
 - Library to identify books that were checked out by the student;
 - Counseling Services to seal any counseling or health records.
12. The Dean of Student Affairs may consider calling a CARE Team meeting to assess other students of concern who may have been impacted by the student death.
13. The Dean of Student Affairs will coordinate potential postvention initiatives within 2-4 weeks after a student's death. These initiatives may include working with students, faculty, and staff who were connected to the student and may be coordinated with the CARE Team.

Student Death On Campus

1. If a student's death occurs on campus or in the residence hall, The Security Office (206-726-5038 or Ext. 5038) should be notified immediately. The Office of Campus Safety & Security will contact the appropriate emergency medical provider to attend to the body. Police and Campus Security will assist local law enforcement to investigate all deaths on campus to determine whether the death was the result of foul play.
2. As soon as possible after a student's death on campus, and in order to avoid possible miscommunication of facts by third parties to the student's family, Police and The Office of Campus Safety & Security will contact the next of kin or emergency contact on file as identified by the student with the Registrar's Office to provide notification of the death and shall indicate whether the death is being investigated by local law enforcement. Campus Safety & Security will provide the next of kin with the name and telephone number of the Primary Contact with whom the family can speak. This notification may happen in coordination with or separate from notification by the local law enforcement agency in the jurisdiction where the death occurred. In some circumstances, local law enforcement will take on the full authority of notification to the next of kin.
3. If the deceased is an international student, the Dean of Student Affairs or designee shall contact the VP of Enrollment & Student Affairs as soon as possible to determine the appropriate method of family notification.

Student Death Off-Campus

1. Response to any student death occurring off-campus will be handled initially by the local law enforcement agency in the jurisdiction where the death occurred, the medical examiner, and/or the hospital where the student was taken. It is the responsibility of one or more of these agencies to notify the next of kin.
2. If a student's death occurs in the City of Seattle or King County, Police and Public Safety may be notified by the corresponding law enforcement agency. In the event another campus official is informed of the student's death, that official must contact the Police and Office of Campus Safety & Security or the Dean of Student Affairs as soon as possible to convey the information.
3. If a student's death occurs during College-sponsored travel in the United States, the College staff member accompanying the trip should immediately contact local emergency services and the local law enforcement agency. As soon as possible once the situation is secured, the College staff member must contact the Police and Office of Campus Safety & Security or the Dean of Student Affairs.
4. If a student death occurs while the student is studying abroad:
 - a. The program leader or representative of the host institution should contact local emergency services, local law enforcement, and the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate before contacting the Office of the Provost.
 - b. The Office of the Provost must notify Police and Campus Safety & Security and the Dean of Student Affairs.
 - c. The Office of the Provost should work to obtain official confirmation of a student death from the U.S. Department of State.
 - d. Campus Safety & Security will assist the Office of the Provost in obtaining official confirmation of a student death in the event that confirmation is not immediately forthcoming.
 - e. It is the responsibility of the U.S. Department of State to notify the student's next of kin of the student's death.
 - f. The Office of the Provost will work with the College's international insurance provider to begin the process of repatriation of the student's remains.
 - g. The Dean of Student Affairs will coordinate with the Office of the Provost to activate the Student Postvention Response Team as needed.
 - h. The program leader or faculty director should follow the procedures outlined in this Policy and any other applicable policies or procedures of the Office of the Provost.
5. If the deceased is an international student, the Dean of Student Affairs or designee shall contact the VP for Enrollment Management & Student Affairs as soon as possible to determine the appropriate method of family notification.

Campus Safety & Security

1. The Director of Campus Safety & Security or designee will consider gathering the Emergency Management Team for the purposes of coordinating a response to the student death.
2. The Director of Campus Safety & Security or designee will contact and notify the local law enforcement agency of the student's death.
3. The Director of Campus Safety & Security or designee will assume the role of liaison between the College and the local law enforcement agency.
4. If necessary, The Director of Campus Safety & Security or designee will notify the President and the Dean of Student Affairs.
5. The Director of Campus Safety & Security or designee will determine if an emergency notification and/or timely warning should be sent.
6. The Director of Campus Safety & Security or designee will deactivate the deceased student's identification card and key card access.
7. The Director of Campus Safety & Security or designee will notify the Information Technology Department to deactivate the student email account and secure digital access.
8. The Director of Campus Safety & Security or designee will notify the Office of Student Accounts to determine whether to remove any charges such as parking tickets, keys, etc.
9. The Director of Campus Safety & Security or designee will suspend all notifications and outstanding tickets.

Marketing & Communications

1. The Chief Marketing Officer will coordinate and disseminate all campus wide communication of the student's death.
2. The Chief Marketing Officer will coordinate with the Dean of Student Affairs about campus notification regarding visitation, funeral arrangements, etc.
3. If a student death is likely to generate media inquiries, the Chief Marketing Officer, in collaboration with the President or appropriate Vice President will designate an appropriate spokesperson(s) to serve as media contact(s).
4. As necessary, the Chief Marketing Officer will brief and prepare the designated spokesperson.
5. The Chief Marketing Officer will consult with the Dean of Student Affairs regarding the status of a FERPA release for the deceased student.

The Registrar's Office

1. The Registrar places a "deceased" indicator on the deceased student's academic record.

2. The Registrar initiates procedures that close the student's academic records. As noted by AACRAO (American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers) and FERPA the privacy interests of the individual are no longer in effect with the student's death. FERPA rights and the rights of privacy regarding the student's academic record end at death. As a matter of institutional policy, the following are the procedures regulating under what conditions the student's academic information should be disclosed to survivors or other third parties.
3. Records of the deceased student may be released to members of the family or other persons with the written approval of the family or representatives of the estate. The request for education records must be accompanied by a copy of the death certificate or obituary. Absent written approval from the family or representative of the estate, only directory information will be disclosed to persons upon request.
4. Pertinent information on the student's academic record is updated, such as: a deceased date and end date with admission status, advisor, major and minor. If a student is currently enrolled, the Registrar's Office will drop and back date the current courses.
5. The Registrar will coordinate with the Dean of Student Affairs to address any questions or concerns from the family regarding the deceased student's records.

The Office of Housing & Residential Life

1. If a deceased person is discovered in the residence hall, staff should call 911 to notify local law enforcement of the student's death and immediately vacate the room and leave the site untouched.
2. The Residence Hall Staff will notify the Director of Campus Safety & Security, the Director and Associate Director of Housing and Residential Life of the student's death.
3. If necessary the Hall Staff will take appropriate measures to assist in ensuring that other residents, students, and passersby are not viewing the body or disturbing the site in any way.
4. The Director of Housing and Residential Life will immediately notify the Vice President for Enrollment and Student Affairs and/or the Dean of Student Affairs.
5. The Director of Housing and Residential Life and Staff should assist the local law enforcement agency if requested.
6. The Staff will complete and submit an incident report.
7. The Director of Housing and Residential Life or designee will consult with the Dean of Student Affairs with regard to packing the deceased resident's possessions at a time determined appropriate. Family members, and/or staff may pack the deceased resident's possessions. If it is determined that staff will pack the deceased student's possessions, they must develop an itemized list of the

student's belongings. The Director of Housing and Residential Life or designee, will be responsible for arranging pick up or delivery of items with the student's family.

8. The Director of Housing and Residential Life will determine if room charges should be adjusted, and will work with Business Services to update the student's account.
9. If the student had a meal plan, the Director of Housing and Residential Life will coordinate any billing adjustments or refunds, as appropriate.
10. If the death involves a currently enrolled student living on campus, the Director of Housing and Residential Life or designee will inform the Dean of Student Affairs. The Dean of Student Affairs will coordinate communication to Cornish students, faculty, and staff.

The Office of Financial Aid

1. The Director will coordinate the suspension of future disbursement of financial aid.
2. The Director will coordinate the return of financial aid funds to their appropriate sources after Student Accounts calculates the refund.
3. The Director will coordinate the suspension of future financial aid communication and this includes current and future years.
4. If necessary, end dates of the financial aid holds to the withdrawal date (date of death).
5. If the student incurred student loan debt, the Director will work with the Dean of Student Affairs to pass along information regarding the loans and procedures to discharge the loan debt due to the death of the borrower to the deceased's family.

Business Services

1. The Controller & Director of Student Accounts will be informed of the student's death. The student's account balance will be provided to the Dean of Student Affairs along with whether the student is in the student payroll system.
2. The College President or designee, on a case-by-case basis, may waive tuition and fee charges for the term. Business Services will process the tuition and fee charges waiver, if approved.
3. Once the Dean of Student Affairs has notified the Controller that all other department charges have been reviewed, Business Services will mail the final student account bill or refund to the student's permanent address on file.

International Student Services

1. In coordination with the Dean of Student Affairs, the VP of Enrollment & Student Affairs or designee will contact a representative at the appropriate embassy to notify the spouse if the student is married. If a student is not married, the College will contact the named parent or guardian. If information is absent, we can notify law enforcement that we do not have a next of kin on file. The Dean of Student Affairs or designee will assist family members throughout the repatriation process.

Office of the Registrar, International Students

1. Upon notification of the death of a student who was studying abroad, the Registrar or designee will contact the Dean of Student Affairs office.
2. In coordination with the Dean of Student Affairs, the Registrar or designee will contact a representative at the appropriate embassy to notify the next of kin of the student's death.
3. The Registrar or designee will assist family members throughout the repatriation process.

Postvention Considerations

1. The Director of Campus Safety & Security will assist the Dean of Student Life in calling a meeting of the Emergency Management Team for consideration of postvention activities.
2. The Dean of Student Life may coordinate support services for students and employees who were connected to the deceased student in the weeks following the death.

