



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY CHANNEL ISLANDS  
DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

**Area:**  
Vice President for Student Affairs

**Effective Date:** August 28, 2006

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**Procedure on Death of a Student**

**Intent:** In the event of a student death, the University community must respond with compassion, thoroughness, and most importantly, with a measure of dignity toward the student and his/her family and friends. The purpose of this policy is to establish certain responsibilities concerning the notifications that need to be made to the various campus administrative and service departments in the event of the death of a student and to coordinate such actions expeditiously and sensitively with regard to the feelings of the family, relatives, and friends of the deceased.

This document is intended to assist University personnel who gain first knowledge of such situations and those who by title or by delegation of responsibility become involved in the numerous and necessary University activities borne of such unfortunate events. Such a process also shall ease the administrative burden of other University offices and address the needs of the student and his/her family in a timely manner.

**Accountability:** Vice President for Student Affairs.

**Applicability:** All current CSUCI students.

**Definition(s):**

**CSUCI Student:** for purpose of this procedure, a CSUCI Student is defined as one who is currently enrolled at CSUCI or, during the recess period between semesters or the summer period, one who has completed the immediately preceding term and is eligible for re-enrollment. This also includes non-matriculating students (i.e. Open University students).

**On-Campus Student Death:** the death of a CSUCI student shall be regarded as having occurred on campus if it occurs on University property, including any University owned, University operated or University maintained property; on the premises of an organization or group officially recognized by the University; or in connection with an official University function.

**Student Death Emergency Response (SDER) Team:** a campus administrative group consisting of the Vice President for Student Affairs, the CSUCI Police Chief, Special Assistant to the President, Executive Director of Communications & Marketing, Dean of Student Life, Dean of Enrollment Services, University Registrar, and the Special Assistant to the Vice President for Student Affairs. The team will be led by the Vice President for Student Affairs who functions as the Student Death Emergency Response Coordinator (SDERC).

**SDER Coordinator:** the Vice President for Student Affairs as designated by this procedure, who will head the Student Death Emergency Response Team and is designated responsible for coordinating the notifications and other actions that may be necessary in response to a student death.

**Procedure:**

**I. RESPONDING TO A STUDENT DEATH**

**A. When a CSUCI Student Death Occurs On Campus**

In the event of an On-Campus Student Death responded to by the CSUCI Police Department, the CSUCI Police Department should attempt to notify the SDER Coordinator. If the SDER Coordinator is not available, notification shall be made in the following order:

1. Special Assistant to the Vice President for Student Affairs
2. Dean of Student Life
3. Dean of Enrollment Services
4. Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs
5. University Registrar

In the event the death occurs while the student is undergoing medical care at the CSUCI Student Health Center, the staff of the Student Health Center should immediately contact the CSUCI Police Department and the SDER Coordinator. Should the SDER Coordinator not be available, notification shall be made as outlined above.

**B. When a CSUCI Student Death Occurs Off-Campus**

In the event of the death of a CSUCI student occurring off-campus, the SDER Coordinator (Vice President for Student Affairs) should be notified as soon as campus staff receives information about the death. In cases where the death is recent or may be expected to have a significant adverse impact on the campus community, all matters concerning the death shall be referred to the SDERC (or designee) for coordination.

In all cases, when a member of the University community learns of a student's death, he/she should contact the Vice President for Student Affairs via email or by telephone at (805) 437-8536 or (805) 437-8546. If after hours, CSUCI Police should be contacted at (805) 437-8888. CSUCI Police should immediately notify the SDERC (or designee).

If possible, the following information should be provided by email or fax (437-8549) to the SDERC:

1. Name of deceased student
2. Student's ID number (if known)
3. Date and time of death;
4. Circumstances surrounding the death;
5. Source of notification of the student's death (friend, call from family, media, etc.)

6. Whether the deceased student was a resident on campus
7. Whether the death occurred at Campus Housing
8. Copy of obituary or article related to death (if available).

### **C. Notifications and Other Responses**

Upon receiving notification of a student death, the SDERC should ask the CSUCI Police Chief to verify the information. The SDERC then takes the following steps to notify the following offices or individuals:

- President
- Vice President for Academic Affairs/Provost
- Vice President for Finance and Administration
- Vice President for University Advancement
- Chief Information Officer
- Executive Director of Communications and Marketing
- Dean of the Faculty
- Dean of Enrollment Services
- University Registrar
- Dean of Student Life including areas within Student Life which may have had on-going contact with the student, i.e. Student Leadership and Community, Career Counseling, EOP, Disability Accommodations, Student Health, Personal Counseling, or Recreation and Leisure Services.
- Housing and Residential Education (if student was living on-campus)
- Associate Vice President, Human Resources Programs (if student was employed on campus)

If appropriate in student deaths off campus and in all cases of a student death on campus, the President or designee and the Chief of Police will comply with the CSU Chancellor's Office Coded Memorandum HR 2002-14, Major Incident Reporting Requirements

In order to remain sensitive to the dignity and memory of the student and his/her family, the following University areas shall be responsible for ensuring that the actions listed below are completed within seven (7) business days upon notification by the SDERC:

- CSUCI Police Department – the Chief of the CSUCI Police Department or designee, is the focal point for verifying a death on or off campus, determining the time, place, and circumstances of the death; and immediately notifying the SDER Coordinator (Vice President for Student Affairs).
- Vice President for Student Affairs – begins the notification process outlined above and contacts the family/next-of-kin via telephone as soon as possible to offer condolences and to seek information concerning funeral arrangements or services. The Office of the Vice President will coordinate arrangements to return the student's personal effects to the family or next-of-kin and coordinates with the campus bookstore the return or refund of monies to the family for books or supplies

- Dean of the Faculty – notifies the student’s instructors, academic advisor(s), and appropriate library staff regarding outstanding books or materials.
- President’s Office – drafts and sends a letter of condolence to the family.
- Communications and Marketing – acts as liaison with outside media for the release of any information regarding the student complying with FERPA guidelines. Develops plan to notify campus community of the death via the Vice President for Student Affairs and monitors and shares media coverage with the campus community.
- University Registrar (Records and Registration) – provides to Information Technology student identification and completes necessary processes to formally withdraw student from the University and codes the student’s records as “deceased,” so that no further communication is sent to the student, student’s parents, or spouse.
- Financial Aid – completes necessary forms to formally withdraw student from financial aid and/or federal loans and notifies third parties on outstanding student or parent loans.
- University Advancement – completes necessary forms to withdraw student from receiving scholarship payments/monies and codes student’s records in Raiser’s Edge or alumni records as “deceased” so that no further communication is sent to the student. In addition, codes the parents, spouse or family members accordingly so that further communication is not sent to these individuals unless otherwise requested by said individuals.
- Information Technology – completes necessary steps to close access to PeopleSoft, Blackboard, and immediate removal of the student’s Dolphin email address.
- Cashier’s Office – processes a refund due from fees to the family/next-of-kin. Sends the refund check(s) to the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs where an appropriate letter will be drafted and mailed to the family/next-of-kin.
- Human Resources – should the student be employed by the University as a student assistant, upon receipt of the Separation and Clearance Form from the employing department, Payroll will process payment of wages and remit to the beneficiary on file. Human Resources Programs will coordinate with beneficiary regarding refund of retirement contributions paid on behalf of the student during the course of employment.
- Parking Services – removal of student’s contact information from mailing lists for parking permits and/or forgiveness of outstanding vehicle citations.
- Student Life
  - Counseling Services – is made aware of the death and circumstances surrounding the death as soon as possible. With this information, staff can best maintain accurate records and provide support to friends and acquaintances that may be affected by the student’s death. The Vice President for Student Affairs office will work with Counseling Services and appropriate individuals to

evaluate the situation and to determine if an emergency intervention team or standard counseling is required.

- Interfaith Council – contacts the council to provide support for the campus community.
- Student Health Services – provides support and/or counseling as may be necessary; close out medical records and finalize payment on outstanding medical claims, if appropriate.

#### **D. Release of Information on Deceased Students**

It is the institutional policy of CSU Channel Islands and the office of the University Registrar that non-directory information pertaining to deceased students will only be released to the executor/executrix of the estate, or to next-of-kin, for a period of five years commencing with the date of death. During this five year period, the executor/executrix, or next-of-kin, may also authorize the release of non-directory education information on the deceased student to other parties if a written release is signed. After the five-year period, access to education information on the deceased is permitted to anyone without permission.

Author: \_\_\_\_Nancy C. Gill\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_August 15, 2006\_\_\_\_

Approved: \_\_\_\_N/A\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_  
Director/Associate Dean

Approved: \_\_\_\_N/A\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_  
Dean/Assistant Vice President

Approved: \_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_  
Vice President for Student Affairs