UCLA Procedure 160.2: Student Death Response and Reporting

Issuing Officer: Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs
Responsible Dept: Student Affairs
Effective Date: July 1, 1998 (updated 9/25/02)
Supersedes: New

I. REFERENCES

II. PURPOSE

The death of a UCLA Student is a tragedy for the family and friends of the deceased and a special loss for the University community as well. The Planning Subcommittee of the Task Force for Student Mental Health Emergencies developed this procedure to ensure that proper notifications are made by University staff in the event of a student death. This procedure establishes an ad hoc Student Death Emergency Response Team comprised of the Assistant Vice Chancellor Student & Campus Life, Assistant Vice Chancellor University Communications, UCLA PD Chief of Police, and the Campus Counsel. The team is headed by the Assistant Vice Chancellor Student & Campus Life who functions as the Student Death Emergency Response Coordinator.

A student death may set in motion a range of responses by campus police, medical professionals and others depending on the circumstances of the death, whether it occurred from natural causes, an accident, a suicide or a homicide, and whether it is related to a more general campus emergency. This procedure is not intended to specify the response of campus police, health care professionals or other campus emergency response personnel in carrying out their responsibilities, but only to set forth the notifications that should occur subsequent to or in connection with such responses. See UCLA Policy 160 for overarching campus policy statement.

III. DEFINITIONS

UCLA Student: for purpose of this procedure, a UCLA Student is defined as one who is currently enrolled at UCLA or, during the recess period between quarters/semesters or the summer period, one who has completed the immediately preceding term and is eligible for re-enrollment.

On-Campus Student Death: the death of a UCLA 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 Assistant Vice Chancellor Student & Campus Life, Assistant Vice Chancellor University Communications, UCLA PD Chief of Police, and the Campus Counsel. The team is headed by the Assistant Vice Chancellor Student & Campus Life who functions as the Student Death Emergency Response (SDER) Coordinator.

**SDER Coordinator:** the Assistant Vice Chancellor Student & Campus Life, as designated by this procedure, who heads 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.

### IV. PROCEDURES

#### A. When a UCLA Student Death Occurs On Campus

In the event of an On-Campus Student Death responded to by the UCLA Police Department (UCLA PD), the UCLA PD should attempt to notify the SDER Coordinator (Assistant Vice Chancellor Student & Campus Life) as soon as practical. If the Assistant Vice Chancellor Student & Campus Life is not available, the notification will be made next in order to the Director of Student Psychological Services, and then to the Senior Associate Dean of Students. In the event the death occurs while the student is undergoing medical care at the UCLA Medical Center, the notifications in the order above should be made by Medical Center staff or the staff of the Student Health Services.

#### B. When a UCLA Student Death Occurs Off-Campus

In the event of the death of a UCLA Student occurring off-campus, the Dean of Students Office should be notified as soon as information about the death is received by campus staff. In cases where the death is recent or may be expected to have a significant adverse impact on the campus community, the Senior Associate Dean of Students shall refer the matter to the Assistant Vice Chancellor Student & Campus Life for coordination.

#### C. Notifications and Other Responses

Upon receiving notification of a student death, the Coordinator takes the following steps appropriate to the circumstances:

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<tr>
<th>RESPONSIBILITY</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SDER Coordinator</td>
<td>With assistance from the Dean of Students Office, verifies that the deceased was a UCLA Student and checks to see if the student has family or relatives in the campus community.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDER Coordinator</td>
<td>Informs the other team members or their specific designees of the nature of the death, the name of the student and other identifying information. Notifies the Chancellor’s Office and the Vice Chancellor Student Affairs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDER Team</td>
<td>Members gather additional, pertinent information, particularly if the Coordinator regards the death to constitute an emergency for the campus community.</td>
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### RESPONSIBILITY | ACTION
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**SDER Team (cont’d)** | Considers need to immediately inform the following campus offices:
- Dean of Students Office – Senior Associate Dean of Students or Office Manager (x53871)
- Center for Student Programming – Fraternity and Sorority Relations (if a resident or officially recognized fraternity or sorority Director (x68814) or Associate Director (x56322))
  - Office of Residential Life (if on campus resident) – Director (x53066)
  - Student Psychological Services – Director (x50768)
- University Apartments (if resident in University owned, off-campus housing) – Director (x54941)

Considers other possible additional actions:
- a) As appropriate, confirms the reliability of the information that a student has died.
- b) Consults with additional campus experts (e.g., Ombuds, Professor of Thanatology, staff at the University Religious Conference).
- c) Identifies the next of kin, significant others, or the person the student had designated to be contacted in case of emergency.
- d) Identifies the most appropriate person to notify the next of kin or others. Ordinarily, initial notification will be performed in person by specially trained personnel at UCPD or the Medical Center. If the next of kin reside in another police jurisdiction, UCPD will notify the local police department which, in turn, will notify the next of kin. Others close to the deceased, such as spouse, roommates and classmates, will be notified as soon as possible by appropriate campus staff.
- e) Assists, supports and protects survivors and/or other victims, and determines which offices will be responsible for these steps.
- f) Assesses any special circumstances that may adversely impact the campus community.
- g) Coordinates response to media requests.

As appropriate, consults with the Director of Student Psychological Services, campus Ombuds, staff at the University Religious Conference, Professor of Thanatology, etc.

**Office of Residential Life** | If the death involves an on campus resident, the Office of Residential Life will take steps to secure the deceased’s personal effects until transfer arrangements are made.

**Dean of Students’ Office** | Upon receipt of written verification of a UCLA Student Death, provides written notification of the death, as appropriate, to the campus offices listed in Attachment A, hereto. The nature of the death is not revealed in the notification.

**Chancellor** | Coordinating with the Dean of Students’ Office, sends a letter of condolence on behalf of UCLA to the next of kin or other appropriate person(s) within a reasonable period of time.

### D. Periodic Review
A periodic review shall be conducted to determine the effectiveness of campus response mechanisms and the coordination among campus administrative offices in cases of student deaths.

### V. ATTACHMENTS

A. Written Notifications in the Event of a Student Death
Issuing Officer

/s/ Winston C. Doby

Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs

Questions concerning this policy or procedure should be referred to the Responsible Department listed at the top of this document.
ATTACHMENT A

Written Notifications in the Event of a Student Death

A. Standard Notifications

1. College or School and/or Department Chair:
   a) If Undergraduate Student:
      • Letters and Science, Assistant Director, Counseling Services
      • School of Engineering and Applied Science, Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs
      • School of Nursing, Associate Dean
      • School of the Arts & Architecture, Director of Student Services
      • School of Theater, Film and Television, Director of Student Services
   b) If Graduate Student:
      • Department or Professional School, Chair or Dean
      • Graduate Division, Director of Student and Academic Affairs

2. Other Offices:
   • ASUCLA Human Resources, Benefits Manager
   • Student Accounting and Cashiering
   • Cultural & Recreational Affairs
   • Financial Aid Office, Assistant Director
   • Library Support Services, Associate University Librarian
   • Parking & Commuter Services, Assistant Manager
   • Office of Media Relations, Director
   • Residence Telephone Service, Coordinator
   • Registrar’s Office, Associate Registrar
   • Student Development and Health, Assistant Vice Chancellor
   • Student Loan Services, Assistant Director
   • Student Psychological Services, Director
   • Student Services Accounting, Operations Manager
   • Undergraduate Admissions and Relations with Schools, Coordinator

B. Additional Notifications Where Appropriate

• Academic Advancement Program, Director
• Center for Student Programming, Assistant Director
• Housing Administration, Director
• Housing Assignment Office, Manager
• Office of International Students and Scholars, Director
• Office of Residential Life, Director
• Office for Students with Disabilities, Director
• Office of Summer Sessions, Director
• Student Psychological Services, Associate Director
• University Apartments, Administrator