

## **RESPONSE TO THE DEATH OF A STUDENT**

**EFFECTIVE DATE**     February 9, 1994

**RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION**   Vice-President-Academics and Research

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### **POLICY STATEMENT**

Grande Prairie Regional College strives to provide a safe and comfortable environment for all students. In the unfortunate event of a student's death, this institution has guidelines that will attempt to minimize the trauma of the loss in a sensitive and empathetic manner.

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### **PURPOSE**

It is essential that all staff and faculty work together to provide order to what can be a chaotic situation. These guidelines have been established to provide a caring, responsible and effective response.

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### **SCOPE**

This policy applies to all students on any campus.

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### **PROCEDURES/GUIDELINES**

#### **1.0     Death of a Student Alert**

1.1     In the event that a student or staff member learns of a student's death that has occurred off campus, she/he should contact the Vice President Academics and Research if the student is registered on the Grande Prairie campus or the Vice President FCC if the student is registered on the Fairview College campus. The Vice President notified will inform the Vice President FCC or the Vice President Academics and Research as appropriate.

1.1.1   The Vice President Academics and Research (or Vice President Fairview), will brief the Registrar or Director of Workforce Development if necessary.

1.2 In the event that a student or staff member becomes aware of a death of a student on campus, she/he will immediately contact Campus Security, the Vice President Academics and Research (or Vice President Fairview).

1.2.1 Refer to 2.6 if death of the student occurred in Residence.

## 2.0 Checklist of Actions in the Event of the Death of a Current Student

2.1 Notification of appropriate College personnel will be handled as follows:

The Vice President Academics and Research (or Vice President Fairview) -will notify:

- President of the College
- Vice President Administration
- Executive Director, Community Relations
- Other Executive Team members as appropriate
- Registrar / Director of Workforce Development as appropriate
- Deans
- Director of Financial Services
- President of Students' Association

The President of the College will notify:

- The Board of Governors

The Vice President Administration will notify:

- Campus Operations

Campus Operations will notify (if necessary):

- Campus Security

The Registrar will notify:

- Library Chairperson
- Housing Manager (if the student lived on campus)

The Deans will notify appropriate Chairperson

The Chairperson will notify appropriate faculty

2.2 The President of the College shall prepare and forward a sympathy letter or card to the family on behalf of the College Community.

2.3 The Registrar and/or Director of Workforce Development will:

- 2.3.1 Contact the family of the deceased student, offer support to the family on behalf of the College and liaise with other College personnel involved.
- 2.3.2 Address the needs of surviving students by
  - 2.3.2.1 contacting and arranging for an emergency crisis intervention team to address the immediate needs
  - 2.3.2.2 ensuring that students who wish to attend memorial services are excused from classes
  - 2.3.2.3 creating access to Student Services Advising Team for consultation and/or grief counselling referral
- 2.3.3 On behalf of the deceased student:
  - 2.3.3.1 manage student records appropriately
  - 2.3.3.2 seal the student file and terminate the record on computer so no further correspondence is sent to the student's home
  - 2.3.3.3 notify financial services to refund any applicable fees or deposits
  - 2.3.3.4 contact Campus Operations and have flag at half mast up to and including day of funeral
  - 2.3.3.5 send an email to all staff of the applicable campus plus Executive that the College flag has been lowered to half-mast due to the death of a student.

2.4 The Director of Finance will:

- 2.4.1 compile a list of any outstanding balances, library materials, etc. that might be billed against the deceased student's account;
- 2.4.2 prepare any refunds, tuition tax receipts, notice of outstanding accounts, etc.;
- 2.4.3 secure the student's account so no further correspondence regarding the account will be sent out;
- 2.4.4 Forward all mail to the office of the Vice President, *Academics* and Research (or Vice President Fairview) for mail out to next of kin.

- 2.5 The Executive Director, Community Relations will:
  - 2.5.1 Consult with family members before releasing any information.
  - 2.5.2 Be responsible for any media involvement including dissemination of information and responding to media inquiries.
- 2.6 The Housing Manager will:
  - 2.6.1 Upon receiving notice of a student's death, the Housing Manager shall immediately secure the student's personal space (bedroom and/or unit).
    - 2.6.1.1 In the event of a student death in Residence, the Housing Manager, Campus Security and/or RCMP are to be notified as soon as possible and will meet at the Residence to ensure that access is restricted and that the proper precautions are taken not to disturb the scene.
  - 2.6.2 Secure the personal effects and bedroom of the deceased.
  - 2.6.3 Locate and notify roommates and all other residence students not aware of the situation.
  - 2.6.3 Arrange for alternative accommodation for roommates if necessary.
  - 2.6.4 Arrange for counselling for roommates if necessary.
  - 2.6.5 Remove, ship or storage the personal belongings of the deceased in consultation with authorities, family, and roommates.
  - 2.6.6 Reconcile the student's account as it applies to residence only and forward details to financial services.
- 3.0 Checklist of Actions in the Event of the Death of a Former Student
  - 3.1 Members of the College Community will review the checklists above and take the necessary actions relative to the death of a student not currently enrolled at the College.
  - 3.2 Campus Operations will not normally lower flags in the event of the death of a former student.