

# Crafton Hills College Response to Student Death

## 1 COORDINATING OFFICE FOR COLLEGE RESPONSE TO STUDENT DEATH

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Information about a student's death may come to the attention of any member of the college community, and may come from a variety of sources, such as a phone call or visit from the family, friend, or roommate of the student, an obituary, a police officer, or a report in the media. The person receiving such information should immediately notify the Vice President of Student Services (VPSS) who will act as the coordinator for all college responses.

**INITIAL NOTIFICATION:** The individual receiving notification of the death of a student should immediately notify the Vice President of Student Services (VPSS). The VPSS will immediately notify the following persons:

- President (The President will notify the Chancellor.)
- Vice President of Administrative Services
- Vice President of Instruction
- Director of Marketing and Public Information
- Dean of Student Services/Student Support
- Dean of Student Services/ Student Success
- Coordinator, Health and Wellness Center
- Director, Financial Aid

In instances in which a report of a death is not verified, the VPSS will indicate to these individuals that efforts are being taken to verify the death and that verification will be provided as soon as possible. The VPSS will coordinate with the Director of Marketing and Public Information on the release of any information.

The following information is helpful to properly identify the student and to ensure the correct information is disseminated:

- Student's full name
- Student identification number
- Name and address of parents or spouse
- Date and cause of death
- Major, Campus Employment Status, or Organizations
- Enrollment Status
- Address of Student

**VERIFICATION OF DEATH:** Before initiating any further actions or communications, the VPSS must be certain of the validity of a report of a student's death. The VPSS will use his/her judgment as to whether documentation verifying a student's death is necessary. When documentation is deemed necessary, sensitivity to the grieving family is paramount so verification must be gained as tactfully as possible. Verification can be established by obtaining documents such as an obituary, death certificate, a coroner's office report, official military correspondence, or a US Consulate or ambassadorial office (if

outside of the US). ***In no cases will the campus community or the media be informed of the student's death until the death has been verified and primary family members have been notified.***

## 2 COMMUNICATION WITH THE FAMILY OF THE STUDENT

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**CONDOLENCE TO THE FAMILY:** The VPSS will draft a formal letter of condolence from the College President to the family on behalf of the college community. The letter will be written in/translated to the family's primary language.

A separate letter of condolence will be sent by the Vice President of Student Services on behalf of Student Services. This letter will outline the official procedures taken by the college to close the student's accounts and other services and support offered by the college.

**REPRESENTATION AT THE FUNERAL, MEMORIAL SERVICE, CELEBRATION OF LIFE, ETC.** When possible, a college representative will attend funeral services. The attendance will be coordinated by the Vice President of Student Services.

## 3 NOTIFICATION OF COLLEGE COMMUNITY

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**NOTIFICATION OF STAFF AND FACULTY:** The VPSS will review the particular circumstances of the student's death and determine whether an announcement should be made to all members of the college community and if so, an appropriate manner and time to make the announcement. Instructors in whose classes the deceased was enrolled will receive a personal phone call or email from the VPSS or VPI.

**NOTIFICATION OF STUDENTS:** The VPSS will notify either selected students or all students, depending on the circumstances.

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF FUNERAL, MEMORIAL SERVICE, CELEBRATION OF LIFE, ETC.** As soon as possible the President or VPSS will announce the final arrangements to the campus via email, if the information was not available for the initial notification.

**MEMORIAL GATHERINGS, RECOGNITION AT COLLEGE EVENTS:** The deceased may be remembered at a specially coordinated event, at commencement (if graduating), Scholars Convocation (if a scholarship winner) or other campus events. The VPSS or designee will invite the family of the deceased student to attend.

## 4 ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION

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Once notified, college personnel will take the actions described below. All offices should remove the student's name from any paper or electronic mailing lists.

- **Admissions and Records:**
  - Make a notation on the student's record indicating the student is deceased.
  - Withdraw the student from all courses enrolled in for the current term, if the student had not completed at least 60% of the course(s). If the student had remained enrolled past census date, work with faculty to determine whether it is appropriate for a grade to be assigned.
  - Seal the records by the Dean of Student Services/Student Support or the Coordinator of Admissions and Records to be no longer accessible through Datatel/Ellucian.
  - If the student had an outstanding incomplete grade from a previous term, contact the instructor to obtain a change of grade for the course (it is anticipated that most often the grade would be changed to a "W").
  - If the student had applied for graduation, contact the dean of the student's college to ask if he/she would like to request awarding a posthumous degree (see section on Posthumous Degrees and Certificates below); if not, cancel the application.
- **Bursar's Office.** Billing will immediately stop. All refund policies will be followed, and any refund due the student will be processed to the student's estate.
- **Counseling Center/Mental Health Services/Employee Assistance Program:** Emergency counseling services will be made available to students, faculty, and staff impacted by the student's death.
- **Financial Aid:** The Financial Aid Office will verify any aid received, notify the appropriate agencies of the student's death, pull any disbursements that may have been transmitted, and, as applicable, request the official death certificate to follow procedures if the student has a loan.
- **Library:** Update any library records accordingly and determine action to be taken if the student has any outstanding library obligations or items checked out.
- **Information Technology Services:** The Dean of Students/Student Support will notify IT and provide the following information so that ITS can create an auto-reply message and ensure that no new email is accepted: student's username or ID number, name, and date of death. IT will set the account for auto-reply and do-not-save-messages to the student's account. The standard message (subject to change by the Dean of Student Services/Student Support) is: "This is an automated message. This account is no longer available." ITS will also clear the password. As of the date of death, the account enters the "grace period;" at the end of the grace period, the account is deleted.
- **International Student Services:** Update student's immigration record as appropriate if the student was an international student.
- **Payroll:** The VPSS will contact the Payroll department regarding disbursement of the final payment(s), if the student is employed by the district. Final pay warrant will be issued to the student's estate.
- **Resource Development:** The student's name is removed from any alumni mailing lists.
- **Scholarships:** The VPSS will verify any scholarship received by the student and notify the Foundation or donor of the student's death.
- **Student Employment:** The VPSS will verify student's employment and notify the campus employer directly, if s/he has not yet been notified.

## 5 Scholarship Creation

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Individuals wishing to fund a scholarship in memory of the student will contact the Director of Resource Development to discuss selection criteria and funding amount.

## 6 Posthumous Degree or Certificate

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Any academic member of the college community may request that the degree(s) or certificate(s) is awarded posthumously. The decision to award a degree or certificate posthumously will be made on a case-by-case basis depending on the completion of degree or certificate requirements, the total number of units earned and the number of units earned at Crafton Hills College.

The Vice President of Instruction will convene a group comprised of two faculty members appointed by the Academic Senate representing Counseling and Instruction, and an evaluator to review the recommendation. If approved, the VPI will notify Admissions and Records to ensure appropriate arrangements are made, such as ordering a diploma for the student, and making a notation on the student's transcript that the degree was awarded posthumously.

Admissions and Records will coordinate with the Director of Student Life to ensure appropriate information is included in the Commencement program.