

MEMORANDUM

Senate Document SD 22-10
Approved, 12/12/2022

TO: Fort Wayne Senate
FROM: Student Affairs Committee
DATE: Oct. 14, 2022
SUBJECT: Public Sharing Information about Deaths of Students at PFW

WHEREAS, SD 21-35, “Public Sharing Information about Deaths of Faculty and Staff at PFW,” passed by the Fort Wayne Senate on April 11, 2022, directed SAC to develop a set of recommendations for the campus regarding how to best handle the process for student deaths,

WHEREAS the current policy surrounding student deaths is the “Protocol for Response to the Death of a Student” (attached below) and the Committee reviewed the policy, and

WHEREAS, the university does not always receive timely notification of student deaths; and,

WHEREAS the current policy was judged sound by Committee members, who believe it appropriately balances potential legal issues, the community’s need to be informed about deaths of its members, the rights of the deceased’s loved ones to privacy, their ability to make autonomous decisions about how to recognize the deceased, and the need to ensure that those most impacted by the death receive appropriate support; and

WHEREAS the current policy refers to the “Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and the “Dean of Students,”

BE IT RESOLVED that Student Affairs Committee recommends that the university continue to follow the “Protocol for Response to the Death of a Student” unchanged unless otherwise directed by the Purdue University President, Purdue Board, PFW Chancellor, or the PFW Policy Committee; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that where the policy document refers to the “Dean of Students,” the Committee suggests this refers to the Director of the Office of Student Conduct and Care and where the document refers to the “Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs,” this refers to the “Vice Chancellor of Enrollment Management and the Student Experience.”

**Purdue Fort Wayne Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
Protocol for Response to the Death of a Student**

While this protocol provides a guide response to word of the death of a student, it is recognized that each situation is unique and may require slight variations in order to assure sensitive, supportive, and thorough institutional action.

1. Information regarding the death of a student should be reported to the Office of the Registrar. That office will then implement their Procedures for Handling Deceased Students Files.
2. University Police has procedures in place for responding to and reporting incidents involving students. Those procedures supersede this protocol when the University Police is the law enforcement agency responding to situation involving the death of a student.
3. The Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs will make the initial contact with the student's family on behalf of the institution. Others should hold off being in touch with the family until they are sure that the VCSA has made the initial contact.
4. The Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs will notify the following:
 - a. Chancellor
 - b. Dean of Students
 - c. Communications & Marketing
 - d. International Education (if an international student)
 - e. Athletics (if a student athlete)
 - f. Dean of the student's major college
 - g. Registrar
 - h. Financial Aid
 - i. Bursar
 - j. Chief of Police
 - k. Academic Ceremonies
5. Dean of Students will inform the following of the death of the student and offer information on how students affected by the student's death can access support:
 - a. Faculty teaching courses in which the student was currently enrolled
 - b. Chair of the student's major department
 - c. Student Assistance Program
 - d. University Housing (if the student was a resident)
5. The Dean of Students will work with the Student Assistance Program and other appropriate campus partners to help assure that counseling support is available to students affected by the death.
6. Decisions regarding whether or not to pursue a posthumous degree are handled in accordance with the Posthumous Degree Policy.

Approved: 12/10

Updates made: