Procedure Title: Student Death Protocol and Procedure

Purpose Statement:
The procedures outlined here delineate the roles and responsibilities that should be assumed by individual administrators, staff, faculty, students and various campus departments following the death of a currently enrolled Minnesota State Community and Technical College student.

Associated M State Policy:
M State Tuition and Fees

Definitions:
None

Procedure:
The Office of the President

1. After official notification of a student’s death has been given to the family by local law enforcement, designee of the Office of the President, in coordination with the Office of the Vice President for Academic and Students Affairs, will contact the family of the deceased student to:
   • Offer condolences;
   • Determine if the family has any immediate needs from the College (e.g. gathering items from the residence hall room, notifying other students, etc.);
   • Gather information about funeral, visitation, and memorial arrangements.

2. The Office of the President will notify Cabinet members with pertinent information regarding cause of death, time of death, memorial arrangements, student involvement on campus etc.

3. Once appropriate, the President will work with Communications and Marketing and the System Office staff to coordinate emails to faculty, students and staff regarding visitation and funeral arrangements.

Once notified, Cabinet members will assume the following roles:

The Office of the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs

1. The Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs office or designee verifies the enrollment status of the deceased student.
2. The Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs office or designee immediately notifies the following individuals:
   - Director for Communications & Marketing
   - Academic and Student Affairs Leadership Team
   - Director of Housing & Residential Life (Fergus Falls Campus)
   - Counselors

3. When appropriate, counseling or crisis intervention services are offered to classmates enrolled in the same courses as the deceased student and to any campus groups or students organizations who are affected by the loss.

4. The Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs will designate a staff member to serve as the campus contact to assist the deceased student’s family. If possible, this should be the same staff member who initially contacted the family.

5. The Dean of Student Success will serve as the designee in the event of an international student’s death.

6. The appropriate Academic Dean will serve as the designee in the event of a study abroad student’s death.

7. The Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs or designee will provide the family members with information and guidance on the process to return textbooks, library books, etc.

Communications and Marketing

1. Communications and Marketing will work with the President and System Office to coordinate and disseminate all campus wide communication of the student’s death.

2. If the student death is likely to generate media inquiries, Communications and Marketing, in collaboration with the President or designee will determine an appropriate spokesperson(s) to serve as media contact(s).

3. As necessary, Communications and Marketing will brief and prepare the designated spokesperson.

The Registrar’s Office

1. The Registrar places a “deceased” indicator on the deceased student’s academic record. (this indicator will populate at the core data level and other Minnesota State institutions will see the indicator on the student’s record)

2. The Registrar initiates procedures that close the student’s academic records. As noted by AACRAO (American Associate of Collegiate Registrar and Admissions Officers) and FERPA the privacy interests of the individual are no longer in effect with the student’s death. FERPA rights and the rights of privacy regarding the student’s academic record end at death. As a matter of institutional policy, the following are the procedures
regulating under what conditions the student’s academic information should be disclosed to survivors or other third parties.

3. Minnesota State Community and Technical College continues to treat the academic records of the deceased student the same as a living student in that only directory information may be released to third parties. Minnesota State Community and Technical College requires documents that certify power of attorney or executor/executrix authorization to allow disclosure of information (other than directory) to survivors or other third parties. Either the parents or next of kin, with proper documentation, are considered the owner of the student’s academic records.

4. Unless authorized by the executor/executrix, parent, or next of kin the College does not permit release of the deceased student’s educational record information for a period of 10 years after death.

5. Pertinent information on the student’s academic record is updated, such as: a deceased indicator, addresses will be updated to prevent inadvertent or additional mailings, and enrollment and matriculation, will be updated to reflect the reason for the closure of the academic records.

Housing and Residential Life

1. If a deceased person is discovered in residence hall, staff should call 911 to notify local law enforcement of the student’s death and immediately vacate the room and leave the site untouched.

2. The Director of Housing and Residential Life will notify the President of the student’s death.

3. If necessary the Director of Housing and Residential Life will take appropriate measures to assist in ensuring that other residents, students, and passersby are not viewing the body or disturbing the site in any way, until law enforcement arrives on site.

4. The Director of Housing and Residential Life should assist the local law enforcement agency in identifying individuals who might have knowledge of the circumstances surrounding the death. In addition, the Director of Housing and Residential Life should attempt to identify those individuals who will be most affected by the death (family members, significant others, roommates, work supervisors, close friends, etc.). The Director of Housing and Residential Life and a Counselor will take appropriate action to console and support the victim’s roommate and other impacted students.

5. The Director of Housing and Residential Life will create an incident report to be reviewed by the Director of Student Development Services.

6. Housing and Residential Life staff may not release information about the death of a student to any non-staff person. Media (radio, television, newspaper) representatives should be referred to the Communication and Marketing.

7. If a resident student death occurs off campus, staff should notify the Director of Student Development Services immediately, who will immediately notify the Director of Housing and Residential Life or designee, who will immediately notify and verify pertinent details
surrounding the death to the local law enforcement agency, and the Dean of Student Success.

8. The Director of Housing and Residential Life or designee will consult with the Director of Student Development Services and the counselor to determine whether psychological assistance is necessary for the residents in the environment where the student resided. This assistance could be extended to residents in other residential facilities as well.

9. The Director of Housing and Residential Life or designee will work with the Director of Student Development Services regarding the packing the deceased resident’s possessions at a time determined appropriate. Family members, roommate(s), and/or staff may pack the deceased resident’s possessions. If it is determined that the roommate and/or staff will pack the deceased student’s possessions, they must develop an itemized list of the student’s belongings. The Director of Housing and Residential Life or designee, will be responsible to arrange pick up or delivery of the items with the student’s family.

The Office Financial Aid

1. The Director will coordinate the suspension of future disbursement of financial aid.
2. The Director will coordinate the return of financial aid funds to their appropriate sources after Business Services calculates the refund.
3. The Director will coordinate the suspension of future financial aid communication and this includes current and future year.
4. If necessary, end dates of the financial aid holds to the withdrawal date (date of death).
5. If the student incurred student loan debt, the Director or designee will inform the family member and/or next of kin of the type and amount of loan(s); name and contact information of the loan holder; and procedure to discharge the loan debt due to the death of the borrower.

Business Services

1. Business services will deactivate the deceased student’s key card access (Fergus Falls Residential Life).
2. Business services will notify the Business Office to remove any charges such as parking tickets, keys, etc.
3. Business Services will calculate financial aid refunds in adherence with federal and state financial aid returns of funds regulations.
4. If the student’s withdrawal state (date of death) is prior to the end of the drop/add period, a full refund of tuition and fees is processed; room and board charges are prorated for the days the students resided in the residence hall.
5. If the withdrawal date (date of death) is after the end of the add/drop period but prior to the 60th percent of the term and the student is a financial aid recipient, a Title IV prorated refund is calculated.
6. Refunds may be processed for a withdrawal (date of death) after the 60th percent of the term if approved by senior administration and financial aid funds are repaid to the source.
7. The College on a case-by-case basis may waive tuition and fee charges for the term.
8. If the student was a financial aid recipient, funds will be repaid to the sources (federal, state or private lender).
9. Housing, meal plan and flex dollars charges are refunded on a prorated basis.

International Student Deaths

1. The Dean of Student Success or designee will contact a representative at the appropriate embassy to notify next of kin of the student’s death.
2. The Principle Designated School Official (PDSO) or designee will serve as the campus contact to assist family members throughout the repatriation process.
3. The PDSO will follow all aforementioned procedures outlined in the event of an international student’s death.

Associated M State Forms/Documents:
M State Tuition and Fees Policy

Procedure History:
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