

Policy Number:	5050
Policy Title:	Responding to the Death of a UCW Student or Employee
Approved by:	President
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Review date:	May 2021
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### 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy, and its associated procedures, is to provide guidance to those responding to the death of a current UCW student or employee. Recognizing that the loss of a colleague or student is a stressful time for both community members and next of kin, this policy establishes responsibilities concerning the notifications that need to be made to the various campus, academic, administrative and service departments when a death occurs. This will ease the burden on those tasked with these responsibilities.

The purpose is also to ensure coordination of actions in a timely manner, displaying sensitivity to the feelings of family, friends, classmates and/or coworkers of the deceased student or employee.

### 2. DEFINITIONS

Employee	means any person employed by the University.
Executive Team	includes the President and members of the Senior Executive Team.
UCW Community	any person or persons formally or informally affiliated with University Canada West
Next of kin	means a person related by blood, adoption, marriage, or common-law marriage including same sex relationships, or a person with whom an individual has, or had, a personal relationship.
Student	means an individual enrolled in any course (credit or non-credit) at the University.

### 3. SCOPE

This policy applies to University Canada West students and employees.

This policy does not address the University's response to emergencies or provide emergency management practices.

### 4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

UCW is committed to responding to the death of a student or employee in a compassionate and respectful manner that is appropriate based on the circumstances of the death.

While the nature of a death may vary, the University's response will be guided by the following principles:

**Respect, sensitivity and compassion:** UCW will act and respond in a highly sensitive manner out of respect for the deceased and in accordance with the wishes of the family or next of kin.

**Privacy:** employees shall use discretion in the use, access and disclosure of information related to the deceased and their death. Any information provided will be verified for accuracy and considered carefully before being conveyed to the University Community, media, family or next of kin, as the case may be. Use, access and disclosure of personal information shall be in accordance with the *BC Personal Information Protection Act*.

**Clear and timely communication:** UCW is responsible for making reasonable, appropriate and timely notification to the University Community upon the death of an employee or a student, except in instances where the immediate family requests privacy.

The Director of Marketing & Communications will respond to all inquiries from the media or external community in accordance with this policy and associated procedures. Employees should refrain from speaking on behalf of UCW without the proper authorization. Any inquiries from the media received by an employee should be directed to the Director of Marketing & Communications.

**Cooperation:** UCW staff will work together and with immediate family, next of kin, or external officials in a respectful, timely and efficient manner.

UCW will assist students and employees to deal with grief in a timely and sensitive manner by providing resources such as those offered by employee assistance programs, student insurances, and other resources deemed applicable. UCW will provide as much support as reasonably required.

When a member of UCW's community becomes aware of the death of a current student or employee, they shall immediately notify the Vice-President Academics (in the case of a student) or the Director, People & Culture (in the case of an employee).

Vice-President Academics is responsible for coordinating the University's administrative response to the death of a student as set out in the Procedure #5050p, Responding to the Death of a Student.

The Director, People & Culture is responsible for coordinating the University's administrative response to the death of an employee as set out in the procedure #8012p, Responding to the Death of an Employee.