

Procedures

1. Student Death on University Property

Any person who becomes aware of the death of a Student on University property should immediately notify local law enforcement. University employees must also inform the Dean of Students (928-523-5181) as soon as possible. The Center for International Education must be contacted as soon as possible if the deceased is an international Student. Law enforcement will coordinate the notification of next of kin.

2. Student Death Off-Campus in the United States

Local law enforcement or emergency services will respond to a Student death occurring off campus. It is the responsibility of these agencies to notify the deceased's next of kin. If any University employee is informed of a Student's death by any outside entity, the employee should contact the Dean of Students (928-523-5181) as soon as possible to convey the information.

3. Student Death While Travelling on an Accompanied University Business or Activity

If a Student death occurs while the Student is travelling on authorized University business or as part of a University sponsored program or activity accompanied by University employees or other students, the accompanying University employee or student must immediately contact local emergency services. The accompanying University employee or student must contact the Dean of Students (928-523-5181) as soon as possible.

4. Student Death While Studying Abroad

If a Student death occurs while the Student is studying abroad, the program leader or host institution representative will contact the Center for International Education. The Vice Provost for the Center for International Education (or designee) will contact the Dean of Students (928-523-5181).

5. Verification and Campus Notifications

In the event of a current or former Student's death, the Dean of Students is responsible for verifying the death through confirmation with direct sources. Notifying the University community will occur as follows or otherwise may be necessary or appropriate given unique or special circumstances.

- a. Ongoing Safety Threat: The NAU Police Department is responsible for transmitting a timely Campus Safety Alert if it is determined that there is an ongoing safety threat to the campus community associated with the death of a Student.
- b. Non-Emergency University Community Notifications: The Vice President for Student Affairs, in collaboration with a team comprised of University Communications, the Dean of Students, and the Chief of Staff will determine as soon as practicable the timing and nature of information that will be shared, if at all, with the University community at large, as well as how such notifications and information will be communicated. If it is determined that a communication will be issued, the leadership of directly affected or impacted University units may be consulted.
- c. Student Verification and Administrative Notifications:
 1. Verification of a current Student's death includes confirming the decedent's status as a Student via student record-keeping platforms.
 2. The Dean of Students will issue a notification of the Student Death via email to University units responsible for handling Student records and process. The email will identify support resources for employees.
 3. If currently enrolled, the Dean of Students will issue an email communication to the Student's instructors, advisor, and academic leadership within the Student's major(s) notifying them of the Student death and identifying support resources for employees.
 4. If the Student has graduated or has been separated from the University for eighteen (18) months or more, the Dean of Students will confirm the death and transmit appropriate notification to all affected units.
- d. If the Student is listed as a prospective Student with University Admissions:
 1. The Dean of Students will notify University Admissions, which will immediately cease all recruitment-related contact.

6. Media Communications

All media requests for information regarding a Student death should be directed to NAU Communications, which is responsible for collecting and disseminating information about a Student death for or at the request of external media organizations. NAU Communications coordinates with the NAU Police Department, the Division of Student Affairs, and the Office of General Counsel regarding the release of information to the public. No person involved in the University's response to a Student death should publicly speculate as to the cause of a Student's death or make statements that may reasonably be interpreted or perceived as speculatively assigning responsibility for the cause of a Student's death.

7. Condolence Letters

The transmission of written condolences from University community members to the family of a deceased student will be coordinated through the Dean of Students. Accordingly, other than the President or the President's designee, all University officials, faculty, staff, and Students who may wish to do so are encouraged to submit their written condolences to the Dean of Students, who will transmit all such material to the family.

8. Vigils, Memorials, Remembrances, and Commemorations

The Vice President for Student Affairs, in consultation with the President or the President's designee, the Executive Team, and the leaders of affected University departments, colleges, schools, offices, athletic teams or programs, or any other unit or University entity or organization, is responsible for coordinating and responding to requests or suggestions to conduct any type of official University vigil, memorial, remembrance, or commemoration in response to the death of a Student. No other University official may authorize or approve such official University activities. Students or student clubs/organizations who wish to organize or conduct any type of public service on University grounds in response to the death of a Student peer are encouraged to do so in coordination with the Dean of Students and in accordance with the [Campus Use](#) policy.

9. Posthumous Degrees

Decisions regarding the awarding of posthumous degrees to deceased Students will be managed in accordance with the University's [Awarding Posthumous Degrees](#) policy by the Dean of Students in coordination with the Office of the Registrar.

10. Honorary Commencement

With their family's permission, deceased Students who are eligible for posthumous degrees will be recognized during the spring Honorary Commencement ceremony and included in the University [Student tributes](#) page.

11. Disclosure of Records or Information

All requests for information about a deceased Student from third parties should be referred to the Dean of Students with the exception of media requests, which should be directed to NAU Communications. Requests for NAUPD records will be forwarded to NAUPD and processed in accordance with NAUPD procedures.

12. Requests for University-Held Personal Data

Family members may request to obtain the contents of University-held data that pertains to a deceased Student by contacting the Dean of Students (928-523-5181).