

**An Exploratory Study:
Higher Education's Response to a Death Among Community Members**
by

Lisa Marie Devore

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Approved by

John C. Dagley, Chair, Associate Professor of Special Education, Rehabilitation, and Counseling
Suhyun Park Suh, Associate Professor of Special Education, Rehabilitation and Counseling
Scott A. Ketring, Associate Professor of Human Development and Family Studies

Abstract

The purpose of the current study was to conduct an exploratory assessment of how colleges and universities address a death among their community including existing practices, programs and training efforts. The Campus Death Response Questionnaire was developed and administered to obtain data on campuses' death response programs. In addition to demographic data, the Questionnaire was designed to identify campuses' recent experiences with death responses, the presence and make-up of a death response team, as well as data regarding the training of such a team. The study also examined in detail campuses' specific responses to a death in the campus community that was particularly noteworthy or "outstanding" in some kind of way. Also, the study sought to identify the original impetus for the development of a death notification and response program Presented were the qualitative data related to how campuses responded to a recent death; the results of universities' current training program(s); and the quantitative results, which consisted of an independent sample T-test for each hypothesis. Lastly, a campus death response program, specifically a student death response protocol, was created based on the results of the exploratory study.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Through the centuries, colleges and universities functioned as substitute parents, or “in loco parentis.” Universities and colleges project an image of an environment that fosters tranquil scholarly endeavors wherein young adults begin their journey of intellectual inquiry guided by wise, old professors. While these images may not be accurate today and possibly never have been accurate, these images have still endured. The campus environment, even today, is intended to be a place of security and safety that allows one to focus on learning and growing. When campuses are seen as a place of respite from adult life, these images are often and easily shattered, especially when death breaches the hallowed halls of a campus. Deaths among students, faculty, staff and others related to the campus community occur with discomfoting regularity. While it continues to be a bit unusual for adolescents to die at such young ages, nonetheless, death does occur from accident, injury, illnesses and diseases. According to Wrenn (1991b; 1999), the mortality rate of traditional age college students, ages 18-23 years old, is 4-15 deaths per 10,000. Thus, one can expect as many as 37 student deaths a year for a large campus of 25, 000 students, with more deaths occurring when staff is included as a part of the total campus community population.

A number of forces have emerged on modern campuses to create a need for a proactive, rather than reactive, death notification and response plan. When one thinks of campus community deaths, those deaths that are highly sensationalized with national media coverage often come to mind first. As tragic as these deaths are, these rare incidents comprise only a small

percentage of the total incidents of campus community deaths. It is more common for a campus community to experience a singular death, such as the death of a student, administrator, faculty member or staff member, rather than instances of multiple deaths, in this author's opinion.

Those times and incidents when multiple deaths have occurred are often remembered in greater clarity and poignancy because of the headline attention given by mass media coverage through multiple outlets such as television, newspaper and magazines. The highly publicized events have sharpened the awareness of all university administration to develop comprehensive action plans and protocol. With campuses planning for so many other types of crises, such as fire, bomb-threat, severe weather, health and inoculation issues and even terrorism, there is reason for a campus to be prepared to act when a death among its community transpires.

A Proactive Campus Response to Death

As a campus struggles with a death among its community, it is not the time to formulate how the university will be compassionate and caring. In an example given by Collier and Hollis (2007), the death of an international student brought multiple challenges and issues into the spotlight for the administration and for local law enforcement: police were not notified of the large number of international students living in the community and neither group knew what behaviors to expect from each other. "One officer summed up the sentiments of many...when he said, 'It is just such a personal regret of mine that we didn't anticipate the needs before the crisis. The death of this student was horrible, but the fear students had of the police really just made things so much worse'..." (2007, p. 24). Proactive planning by a university can ease unnecessary stress, which can accompany the response to a death. For example, something as simple as having a system to verify the credentials of mental health volunteers who show up to help in times of crisis can reduce stress for administration.

When responding to a death among the campus community, universities need to consider how to prepare proactively for a compassionate response. Careful planning and training can provide the fluid structure that a campus needs in order to respond to a death among the university community. Universities need to proactively prepare and plan for the death a single student, administrator, faculty member or staff member as well as for mass casualty incidents, which involve multiple persons and possibly multiple deaths. A death response team (DRT) provides an avenue to train staff in the areas of death notification, death education and crisis management. A DRT in the higher education setting would consist of a collaborative group of administrators, faculty members, and staff members of a college or university that respond to deaths related to the campus community A university's DRT would include students and nonstudent, such as administration, faculty, and staff. DRTs will be used interchangeably with community response team and crisis response team. A Death Response Protocol can provide a system for educating and responding to the campus community in the event of a death among its members. Team members would then be able to establish and foster relationships with such groups as police, coroner, hospital, local mental health agencies. Protocols provide a structured outline and standard operating procedures for dealing with a death.

Dated Literature

What is known and what remains unknown about the nature of specific campus plans and actions regarding death response? While death and dying are a part of life, there has been little written about how death impacts the college community, specifically the death of a student. What has been written about college student deaths is dated; the cited material is from the 1980's (Halberg, 1986; Jacobs & Towns, 1984; Lagrand, 1981; Rickgarn, 1987), with some from the 1990's (Janowiak, Mei-Tal & Drapkin, 1995; Swenson & Ginsberg, 1996; Thornton, Robertson

& Miecko, 1991; Wrenn, 1991a; Wrenn, 1991b; Wrenn, 1999) and the current decade (Attwood, 2007; Balk, 2001; Brown, 2001; Cintron, Weathers & Garlough, 2007; Hinds, 2007; Meilman & Hall, 2006; Servaty-Seib, Peterson & Spang, 2003; Streufert, 2004; Wrenn, 2002). Current publications seem to be driven by dated studies, as current research on college student deaths and how to appropriately manage this particular crisis is very limited. While there is a trend for colleges to develop crisis management systems, that may or may not cover death notification. Present protocols typically provide minimal attention to student deaths, and fail to adequately manage the crisis of a death among the university community (Iserson, 1999; Lerner, Volpe & Lindell, 2004).

Technology

Campuses are beginning to utilize more sophisticated emergency notification systems, many in the form of electronic notification (emails, telephone calls, and text messages), as a means of disseminating critical information. However, technology also poses challenges to universities, specifically in the area of death notification. Technology may provide a fast and effective way to warn students of a bomb-threat, severe weather, or campus closings; however, this may not be a preferred modality or the most compassionate way to notify students of a death among the university community. Technology is generally conceptualized with regards to its positive gains. A university's appropriate use of technological and sophisticated emergency notification system can potentially reach thousands of people in minutes, and can thereby save lives and/or reduce general stress levels.

In 1986, Halberg wrote of her struggle with technology "the decision was made to call the deceased student's family after we learned several students were on their way to her home to notify her mother" (p. 411). Later, Halberg commented that "... the gravest error we incurred was

in our not leaving for the deceased student's home sooner. This would have avoided our communicating word of the death to the family by telephone" (p. 412). Reliance on technologies in this case led to a less than optimal death notification by phone, instead of in person.

In another case, a young college student, while in class, received a text message from a friend back home. The message began along the line of "Is it your mother?" and continued as the student found out through text messages that her mother had been killed in a dramatic courtroom shooting. The student stumbled out of the classroom and broke down crying in the hallway. A passing faculty member approached her, sat with her and then brought her to a nearby office to await the father's arrival by car, as he was currently on his way to tell his daughter in person of the tragedy (J. Dagley, personal communications, April 1, 2009). In this situation, one can see how devastating the receipt of the news of a loved one's death by immediate electronic means can be for students. The use of today's technology is likely to be somewhat out of the control of university personnel, but its presence in the students' daily life adds immediacy to the need for planned community-wide responses.

Recently the University of Georgia, in response to a professor allegedly shooting several people, posted the following alert on University's homepage, and electronic notification system.

Campus alert-

UGA Professor George Zinkhan is a suspect in a shooting off campus.

George Zinkhan is a white male in his mid 50s with a goatee or beard.

Current information is that he was last seen wearing a polo shirt, blue shorts, and a backpack. He was last thought to be in a red car in the area of Prince Avenue.

Use extreme caution if contact is made.

Call 911 if you know his location. Please do not call 911 for information.

Please do not call UGA Police asking questions. Only call to provide information that you may have regarding this matter.

Having a suspect at-large, presents a threatening situation.

You are encouraged to use your best judgment in taking precautions during this time. (<http://uga.edu/>, accessed 4/25/2009).

The above alert is an example of how universities are utilizing technology to disseminate critical information in a short period of time. While this technology provides an effective means of notifying students, one runs the risk of over using the system. The potential abuse of over utilizing the emergency alert system can cause apathy on the part of those receiving the alert messages.

International Perspective

For one school in the United Kingdom, death is a part of its very fabric. In the past 14 years, 59 pupils have died, 45 of the deceased were from Treloar College (Hinds, 2007). Treloar is a special school for disabled children. Treloar School is for students age seven to sixteen years old and Treloar College is for students age sixteen years old and older (<http://www.treloar.org.uk/item/255>). Treloar has been dealing with death for over a century.

Treloar has procedures in place for when a pupil dies. The news is communicated in a sensitive manner; support systems are provided; rituals take place and memorials occur (Hinds, 2007). Treloar's director of education, Graham Trowett (as cited in Hinds, 2007), had this to say, "At Treloar, it's about the whole community grieving together. When we lose a pupil, we celebrate their life as a whole institution. All the staff and families are involved, and it is not a somber occasion-it is often very funny. Everybody contributes anecdotes and we celebrate the

good times.” (Hinds, 2007, p. not specified) While not a traditional university by American standards, Treloar’s preparation, procedures, follow-up, attitude and outlook regarding death is one that could, if adopted, serve American Universities positively.

Exploring Death Notification Practices

There is currently limited literature regarding death notification practices on college campuses. The current study addressed the need for an exploratory assessment of current campus death notification practices and experiences. Target areas explored included (1) a comprehensive evaluation of how campuses address a death among the college/university community including current practices, programs, and training (2) individual’s experience of a memorable death among the campus community (3) and relevant formative and summative evaluation data. The study explored the comprehensive death notification practices and experiences, in each of the aforementioned key areas, of institutions of higher education.

The Need for the Exploratory Study

The issues related to the student and campus community

Because of a student’s young age, a death that occurs amongst the campus community is often the first time students have experienced death (Balk, 1997). Jacobs and Towns (1984) point out that, “College and university students often feel that death is far removed from their lives... Therefore, when a death occurs, it can have a large impact on the student’s academic success and adjustment to college life” (p. 3 2). Death may challenge students’ worldviews, starting with the dissolution of the assumption that the university is a safe environment or that people their age do not die. Violence involved in an unexpected death may add even more pain to the campus community.

Ephraim (1998) found that students often have poor coping techniques. Students may use drugs, alcohol or even increase risky behaviors as they attempt to cope with death. When students grieve in the university environment, the bereavement is that much more complicating (Ephraim, 1998). Shelton and Sanders (1973) discussed how grief reactions were complicated by manner factors such as the media's presence and sensationalized reporting, increased security measures, parental reactions, and the fear of future attacks. Campus resources may be under-recognized and under-used by students. Students need to have this information readily available to them so they do not need to ask for help. Help should be waiting for all to use so it does not single out a student or group of students.

Once students are aware of campus resources, they may rely more heavily on them as they grieve. Campuses need to have a system in place to help students manage their psychosocial and behavioral grief reactions (Henschen & Heil, 1999). Depending on the severity and intensity of the experience, there may be little disruption to the ebb and flow of the campus environment. That is to say, classes will still continue, functions will happen as planned, exams may stay as scheduled. There may be special considerations that allow students to attend funerals, services or memorials, but by and large, the campus life continues on in a routine fashion. This can complicate grieving, as students have to continue to function as they did prior to the death(s).

Students will directly benefit from well-trained staff that can specifically address their concerns and needs related to a death that affects the campus community. Professors have reported being unsure of how to respond to student grief (Komar, 1994). Properly trained staff can help students through the grieving process.

According to the United States Center for Disease Control, National Vital Statistics Reports, (Table 9. Death Rates, 2008, accessed June 1, 2009) the top three causes of death, for people ages 15-24, from 1999-2005 were unintentional injuries or accidents followed second by homicide and third by suicide. The preliminary data for 2006 indicated the same top three deaths for this age range (Heron, Hoyert, Xu, Scott, & Tejada-Vera, 2008; National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, accessed June 1, 2009). For just the three leading causes of death, from 1999- 2006, one can expect 6-7 deaths per 10,000 for those age 15-24 years old (Kung, Hoyert, Xu, & Murphy, 2008; Heron et al., 2008; National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, accessed April 16, 2009). According to Wrenn, “the annual number of expected deaths per 10,000 student enrollments is about 4.5. A university with an enrollment of 30,000 students will normally have 10-20 student deaths a year and possibly several faculty and staff deaths” (2002, p. 5).

Within the student body, international students present a unique set of concerns, which need to be considered when a death occurs. International students often form sub-communities within the larger university community, similar to a campus organization or athletic team. These sub-communities serve as a familiar and safe environment for international students, thus this group should not be overlooked when a death occurs. Universities should consider and discuss the role it wants to play or has to play regarding death notification among the international student population. Consideration should be given to the issue of travel arrangements, such as cost that family may incur if traveling to the University or the cost of the body being shipped to the family; support of family remotely; possible request of local organizations that are a part of their culture. One must take into account the possibility of a language barrier when communicating with the deceased’s next-of-kin, as well as students on campus. While a

language barrier may be an immediate concern, due to the possible need for an interpreter to facilitate communications, the larger issue of cultural differences should also be considered and addressed. This may include specific requests regarding the handling of the deceased's body and specific religious customs. An open and established relationship with the University's International office serves as a valuable asset when dealing with deaths that affect the campus community.

The problem for administration

Death is a part of life, and campuses are not an exception. Deaths that affect the campus community create a state of crises and shock for those involved (Archer, 1992; Stephenson, 1985). Outsiders, such as the media and surrounding community, may act invasively. Campus resources may quickly become taxed and exhausted. It is imperative that counselors and administrators are prepared to assist the campus community and surrounding community as they mourn (Stephenson, 1985). Universities must be prepared to respond to a death of various members of the campus community, such as students, administrators, faculty members, staff members and possibly alumni. Each these groups poses a unique set of concerns and require specific responses to address those concerns adequately.

Administration should also consider and seek legal counsel on the following issues. It has been asserted that Section 504 of the American Rehabilitation Act (ARA) requires campuses to respond to campus death(s). Bernard and Bernard (1985) discussed that trauma caused by grief may qualify as a disability. Canada's Equality Rights section of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom echoes that of the ARA. Some states require this support to be available to elementary education schools and secondary education schools (Bernard & Bernard, 1985). This can be accomplished through updated postvention information, which is "what we do to help

survivors of a...death” (Wrenn, 1991b, p. 55), including death response teams. As of 1991, 62% of universities had not developed a written death response plan (Wrenn, 1991a). A College’s postvention information needs to be updated or there is the risk of losing alumni and surrounding community support if the response is inappropriate (Balk, 2001). Administration needs to have a campus wide comprehensive training program that addresses key areas supported by literature, such as death education, death notification procedures through standard protocols, common grief reactions, management of immediate grief reactions and long term of grief reactions.

As part of a university’s comprehensive death response practices, one can utilize specially trained teams. A Death Response Team (DRT) can aid administrators in meeting the many needs of their campus in response to death. Death Response Teams work within the hierarchical system of a college or university. The idea of a DRT as a postvention strategy has been discussed for over twenty years in various forms, such as “trauma response team” (Scott, Fukuyama, Dunkel, & Griffin, 1992, pp.230-231). DRTs are affordable, time efficient, beneficial and can usually be integrated into current crisis response plans (Rickgarn, 1987). DRTs need to be able to ascertain who is a good fit to become a member of the death response team and often counselors are sought out to begin the team’s development (Swenson & Ginsberg, 1996). However, counselors ideally should not chair a DRT as their primary function will be to deliver psychological first aid (Starling, 1995 as cited in Streufert, 2004). A DRT can assist the university in identifying what support systems the campus already has in place to manage affects of death in the campus community as well as the entire community as it mourns.

Streufert (2004) discussed the many aspects of a DRT: developing a team; pre-planning considerations; initial notification; psychological first aid; media releases; family and faculty postvention strategies; student postvention strategies; community postvention strategies; DRT

documentation; team debriefing; faculty and staff training. There seems to be a shift in recent literature that refers to death response teams as community response teams (CRT). There appears to be little if any differences between the two, other than a CRT may be less off-putting.

Significance of the Problem

Scant attention in literature may reflect a lack of attention on campuses to Death Response Protocols. Fewer than 35 articles in the literature, over the past 20 years, addressed death notification (Stewart, Lord, & Mercer, 2001). Only four studies since 1996 have empirically examined the death notification process and the importance of educating professionals in the area (Stewart et al., 2001). In the introduction of Cintron, Weathers and Garlough's 2007 book, Cintron discusses that there have been three books, including their own, written about college student death: *Death and the College Student* published in 1972 by Shneidman, *Coping with Death on Campus* published in 1985 by Zinner and *College Student Death: Guidance for a Caring Campus* published in 2007 by Cintron and colleagues. In addition to these books, this author found one closely related that was by Larson (1994), *When Crisis Strikes on Campus*. To my knowledge, there is no research on death education training among the college administration and staff.

With an increase in student deaths among college students, the process of death education has become an issue that universities and colleges must address. There is a lack of integration between mental health and higher education, to the detriment of college students. Based on the literature, counselors and psychologist are well trained to be a part of death response teams and with additional training are in a position to train members of death response teams.

Purposes of the Study

The main purpose of the current study was to explore how campuses address a death among the college/university community including current practices, programs, and training. The second purpose of the current study is to examine individual's experience of a memorable among the campus community. The final purpose of the current study was to examine university characteristics that may influence a university having a specific office assigned to administer a death notification and response program. As a result of exploring the aforementioned areas, a campus death response program was developed based on the results of the comprehensive exploratory assessment of current practices and training efforts, specifically a student death response protocol.

Research Questions

The current study has two main qualitative areas of research that will be explored. First was individual's response to a memorable death experience among the campus community. Second explored the various ways in which campuses address a death among the campus community.

The following beliefs serve as the basis for the quantitative research questions. Universities that have a large population of students, administration, faculty and staff have a greater need to be prepared for a death among the community because statistically large universities will face a higher number of deaths than universities with a smaller population. Universities that have residential housing understand the impact crises can have on the close-knit community fostered by community living. Therefore, these universities are more likely to be prepared for the impact crises will have on the campus community, specifically students and staff living in university housing. Due to the fact that four-year college systems have students

for a longer time than two-year systems, there is the increased likelihood that the university community will have to respond to a death. Religious officials are often instrumental in supporting those grieving and can act as a valuable resource when a death occurs. Universities with formal religious affiliation are more likely to be sensitive to issues and needs of those grieving and may even integrate issues related to death and dying into the curriculum. A mass casualty incident may force universities to respond to deaths among the university community, thus giving the university a greater understanding of the need for a coordinated prepared response to deaths among the campus community.

Five main quantitative research questions reflect the final purpose of the current study:

Question 1. Does the size of a university impact how the university responds to a death among its campus community?

Question 2. Does the type of housing a university campus offers, residential or commuter, impact how the university responds to a death among its campus community?

Question 3. Does the type of university system, four-year system or two-year system, impact how the university responds to a death among its campus community?

Question 4. Does having a formal religious affiliation impact how the university responds to a death among its campus community?

Question 5. Does a university's experience of a mass casualty incident impact how the university responds to a death among its campus community?

Research Hypotheses

The research questions above were the basis of developing the following research hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1. Campuses with more than 5,000 students are more likely to have a specific office assigned to administer a death notification and response program than campuses with fewer than 5,000.

Hypothesis 2. Residential campuses are more likely to have a specific office assigned to administer a death notification and response program than non-residential or commuter campuses.

Hypothesis 3. Four-year colleges and universities (and those with Graduate/Professional) are more likely to have a specific office assigned to administer a death notification and response program than other schools and colleges.

Hypothesis 4. Colleges and universities who have formal religious affiliations are more likely to have a specific office assigned to administer a death notification and response program than those without a religious affiliation.

Hypothesis 5. Colleges and universities who have experienced a “mass casualty” incident are more likely to have a specific office assigned to administer a death notification and response program than non-residential or commuter campuses.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Evolution of the Compassionate Campus

Death is a reality we all must face, universities are no exception. When a death among the campus community occurs, a university must be able to respond to the needs of its community in a compassionate, efficient and effective manner. This can be accomplished through a comprehensive university response that includes, death response plans, death response teams, grief issues and death education. A campus should also be prepared for the various types of deaths that may occur.

With many universities' originally functioning *in loco parentis* which means in place of parents, it seems that compassion should be a natural part of campuses. The idea of a compassionate campus in regards to dealing with a death among the campus community began with Zinner's 1985 edited book called *Coping with Death on Campus*.

To this author's knowledge, this is the first book that specifically addresses death on college campuses. "In the campus community, student services professionals must be keenly aware of the issues of student loss and student death. They shoulder the primary responsibility for responding with sincerity and compassion when death occurs on their campus." (Zinner, 1985, p.1). Prior to Zinner's edited book, only a few articles were published that dealt with deaths among the campus community (Donohue, 1977; Wilmer, 1978). The 1980s continued to produce several articles specific to the college population and death (Charles & Eddy, 1987;

Halberg, 1986; Jacobs & Towns, 1984; Knott & Crafts, 1980; Lagrand, 1981; Markwood, 1988; Rickgarn, 1987; Sorensen, 1989).

The 1990s steadily built on the literature of death and the college population. The literature revolved around three key areas. First was mental health counseling including grief and bereavement (Dunkel, Griffin & Probert, 1998; Gould, 1994; Janowiak, Mei-Tal & Drapkin, 1995; Thornton, Robertson, & Meicko, 1991; Wrenn, 1999). The second area of focus was death notification (Lord, 1996; Scott, 1999). The last area of focus was postvention strategies including a response team (Mitchell, Elmore & Fygetakis, 1996; Scott, Fukuyama, Dunkel & Griffin, 1992; Swenson & Ginsberg, 1996; Wrenn, 1991a; Wrenn, 1991b).

Perhaps the recent highly publicized mass casualty incidents have spurred a renewed interest in what campuses are doing to address a death among its family. Recent incidents include Virginia Tech where thirty-three were killed in a single incident in April 2007 (Smith, 2007). Oklahoma State University Plane Crash in January of 2001 which they “lost two student athletes, a student manager, the sports information coordinator, an athletic trainer, a basketball staff member, two media personnel and two pilots” (Smith, p. 177) for a total of ten individuals. Last, Texas A&M who in the fall of 1999 had 21 violent student deaths in a span of three months, twelve were from the Bonfire collapse (Lagrand, 1981; Welch, 2007).

While the current decade has produced almost as much literature related to college student deaths as the past three decades combined, the body of literature remains few in number. The literature revolves around the previous three areas of mental health counseling (American Psychology Association, 2004; Balk, 2001; Schnider, Elhai & Gray, 2007; Scott, Hirschinger & Cox, 2008; Servaty-Seib, Peterson, & Spang, 2003; Wrenn, 2002), death notification (Hart & DeBernardo, 2004; McGuire, 2004;) and postvention strategies (Meilman & Hall, 2006;

Streufert, 2004) with death notification being expanded to include death education (Stewart, Lord & Mercer, 2000; Stewart, et al., 2001; Wass, 2004) and postvention strategies being expanded to include crisis intervention and resources (Attwood, 2007; Brown, 2001; Collier & Hollis, 2007; Crisp, Laves, Manley, Mohon, Pierce, Francis, et al., 2008; Duncan & Miser, 2000; Epstein, 2004; Hinds, 2007; Kennedy, 2007; Mastrodicasa, 2008; U.S. Department of Education, ERCM Technical Assistance Center, 2007). However, despite the growing body of literature, there have been very few studies in the area of deaths among the university community (Attwood, 2007; Streufert, 2004; Wrenn, 1991a; Wrenn, 1991b; Wrenn, 1999; Wrenn, 2002).

Comprehensive University Response

A death among the campus community will occur and when it does universities need to have a coordinated comprehensive compassionate planned response already in place. A time of crisis and chaos is not the time to determine how the university can caringly address the issue of a death among its family. A comprehensive university response to a death among its family includes a proactive death response plan, as well as the postvention strategy of a death/community response team.

Death Response Plan. Crisis management plans are a part of many, if not all, universities. However, these plans vary greatly in their level of detail and topics covered. Lerner and colleagues (2004) as well as others (Callahan & Fox, 2008; Cusick, 2008; Donohue, 1977; Dwyer, 2009; Kelsay, 2007; Knott & Crafts, 1980; Markwood, 1988; McCauley & Powell, 2007; Meilman et al., 2006; Rickgarn, 1987; Scott et al., 1992; Streufert, 2004; Swenson et al., 1996) discuss crisis management and crisis management plans. However, one topic that may not be a part, or may be a small part, of a university's crisis management plan is how to respond to a death among the campus community. Wrenn (1991a) determined that only 38% of universities

had a written death response plan, leaving 62% of universities with no written plan. A death response plan (DRP) helps to organize and coordinate who, what, when, where and how of responding to a death, thus providing structure during a time of crisis, in hopes of avoiding problems.

Wrenn (1991b) stated the following, "...there is a tremendous need on our campuses to educate ourselves, each other, and our students, faculty, and administrators about how to listen, what to say and what to do when a death occurs" (p. 54). Many of these issues are addressed through a DRP. A DRP is an operational plan that focuses on how the university system as a whole responds. "A DRP identifies who does what, when and where so that a consistent and coordinated protocol for action is followed" (Cusick, 2008, p. 557).

First, a single office should be designated to coordinate activities related to a death among the campus community (Callahan & Fox, 2008; Cusick, 2008; Donohue, 1977; Knott & Crafts, 1980). For many universities this will be the student affairs office and the vice-president of student affairs that functions as the primary coordinator, with one other person named as a back-up coordinator (Callahan et al., 2008). Once this structure is in place, any office or individual that becomes aware of a death contact the university's coordinating office. It becomes the coordinator's job to maintain accurate records regarding a death and how it was handled.

In 1977, Donohue discussed the many considerations for dealing with a student death. The first consideration is family notification, which includes calling the next-of-kin several times to allow time to process the news and ask additional questions. The second consideration is news releases. One should first check to make sure there are no other persons with the same name at the university; if so have that person contact family before the news release. It may be in the university's interest to get a release from the family regarding personal information that will be

shared with the public. Third is available help such as a minister from the family's hometown or one to have available when the family is on campus. Legal counsel should also be sought regarding the institutions responsibilities. One such responsibility is what the institution's policy is on what information will be shared and with whom about deceased students, since the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) does not apply to deceased students (Callahan et al. 2008).

There are many considerations that a university must take into account when a death occurs. These considerations include where the deceased's body will be kept, death certificates and investigative agencies that may be involved. Universities should also consider what assistance would be provided for the family, for which information is usually the primary need. Donohue (1977) also recommends that a specific person be assigned to the family to escort them while on campus and as they make arrangements, such as viewing the deceased's body or meeting with investigative officials. Follow through is another important consideration which may include sending flowers, having a university representative at the funeral. Additionally a university may consider an on-campus memorial service, if appropriate. The university should consider other costs as well, such as travel and accommodations for family or representatives attending the funeral. Ideally the university should be able to clearly state what cost they will absorb and the institution's commitment to memorials. Lastly, student help should also be considered. Students may want assist with a memorial for example. This may be a way for students to help with their grief process. These same considerations should become part of a DRP.

Cusick (2008), in a very similar manner as Donohue, outlines that a DRP should contain the following parts: "planning, protection, having a "single desk" approach, controlled

communication, documentation and archiving, bereavement counseling and support, public recognition of death, work and study patterns, policies and delegations, academic awards and recognition, and financial management” (p.558).

DRP play an important part in preparing for a death among the campus community. DRPs are designed to provide campus-wide systematic coordinated efforts. Swenson & Ginsberg (1996) discuss six problems that are related to poor coordination of response effects:

1. Unclear lines of authority and responsibility may result in duplicate efforts or even conflicting goals; ...and inappropriate contacts with survivors by multiple interveners unaware of other's involvement...
2. Poor coordination and monitoring of assistance may produce delays in service delivery or may even cause at-risk groups to be overlooked....
3. Uninformed responders may make tactless errors. For example, financial statements might be sent to deceased students for the next term...
4. Without accurate and timely information, informal channels may promote rumoring...
5. Colleges may be liable for inappropriate action or inaction, or well-intentioned violations of client confidentiality...
6. Public relations problems can also emerge...unofficial, contradictory, or outdated information may be released, and unavailable information may be viewed as stonewalling. (pp. 544-545).

A DRP can help a university to avoid these and other problems. A DRP should take into account the needs of all stakeholders (all persons affected by the crisis) and their relationships. Stakeholders should include prospective students, current students and their families, faculty,

staff and alumni (Kelsay, 2007). Swenson et al. (1996) use an eco map and time-event flow chart as part of its postvention planning. The ecomap technique was adapted from family therapy and provides a visual summary of stakeholders. The time-event schedule allows the crisis to be tracked as it unfolds.

The following seven steps can be used to create the time –event chart (Swenson et al., 1996). The first step is to identify all stakeholders that are included in the postvention, second place them down the left side of the chart. Third, in the column to the right of stakeholders write the specific tasks of what needs to be accomplished at that time. The time line may be hourly at the beginning of the crisis and may later change to daily, weekly or evenly monthly to take into account memorials and anniversary reactions. Next, draw feedback loops between the boxes. Every stakeholder has a person or department that supplies information and a customer that the stakeholder has the responsibility to provide information. After these steps are completed, one should assess the chart for bottlenecks, such as the need for additional staff or a lack of a particular service. Dwyer (2009) discuss how one university, during a time of crisis, made scripted answers to anticipated questions available to call center staff so information being given out was factual and consistent. It is at this point that the chart becomes the master diagram for postvention activities. Lastly, markers are placed on the chart as checkpoints to allow for monitoring and designation of events.

Team Based Response. As part of a comprehensive university response, institutions may utilize team-based approaches. Crisis response teams, which may or may not be a part of a university’s crisis response plan, are trained to respond to campus crises both manmade and natural disasters. Crisis response teams are not necessarily trained to deliver death notifications and deal with the aftermath of a death among the campus community. For this specialized area,

DRTs have been created. DRTs may or may not be a part of a death response plan depending on the resources of the university. DRT teams have also been called community support meetings, trauma response teams and even crisis management teams (Meilman et al., 2006; McCauley et al., 2007; Rickgarn, 1987; Scott et al., 1992; Streufert, 2004). According to Streufert (2004), the phrase DRT was first used by Rickgarn in 1987. Rickgarn (1987) also discussed a team's objectives, composition, operational guidelines, and assessment and evaluation. These four areas, as well as how others have expanded upon them, will be discussed.

Rickgarn's (1987) DRT grew out of a counseling model comprised of trained counseling volunteers, all of which were acting within their scope of practice, that respond to individuals and groups that have been confronted with a death and wish to have an educational and therapeutic intervention. The DRT has the following three responsibilities: facilitating reactions to the death, follow-up that may include consultation or counseling and appropriate referrals for counseling. The composition of the team is both professionals and paraprofessional and the team is in charge of recruitment, development and training.

There are five operational guidelines outlined by Rickgarn (1987). First, create several contact points so the team can be reached at any time. Then thoroughly assess the situation and determine when the intervention needs to take place. Third is pre-intervention which allows the team to meet with other staff members, such as resident hall staff, and get acquainted. This is followed by the intervention that includes the team's purpose, dissemination of known facts, a discussion of grief and loss reactions and discussion of the group's emotional reactions. The team stays after to discuss individual and private issues. Post-Intervention is an assessment of the interventions that help to determine what follow-up services may be needed. The last area

covered is that of assessment and evaluation. Quarterly meetings, in which reports of interventions are given, are held by the DRT.

Since the work of Rickgarn (1987), others have expanded upon DRTs (Meilman et al., 2006; Scott et al., 1992; Streufert, 2004). Dunkel and colleagues (1998) discussed how to develop a DRT, preplanning considerations, initial death notification, postvention strategies that include family, faculty, students and the community, DRT documentation and faculty and staff training.

DRTs should include counselors from a university's counseling center(s) but the team should also include the following members: administrators such as the a member form the Dean of Students office, Residence Life Staff, police both university and local law enforcement, local fire department, off campus counselors and/ or crisis center, clergy from the community, admissions staff including the administrator, a representative from the international office and clergy and/or campus ministries (Meilman et al., 2006; Scott et al., 1992; Streufert, 2004). Dunkel and colleagues (1998) are concerned about how a large-scale crisis incident, mass casualty incident, may exhaust the university's trauma response team and its resources. This is why it is important to coordinate efforts with outside resources such as counselors and crisis centers before an incident occurs. This allows relationships to be initiated and built upon as well as time to familiarize outside agencies with the structure of the university and its plan on how to handle crises, including a death among the campus community.

Once team members are identified, they must be trained. Cornell University formed Community Support Meetings (CSMs) to address their campus's needs. The university was previously handling postvention issues on an ad hoc basis and now wanted to move to structured approach that included protocol and a free flowing model (Meilman et al., 2006). CSMs utilize

2-4 facilitators depending on the group size and the team members hold monthly training meetings. The following steps are part of CSMs (Meilman et al., 2006): opening; brief description of the death or event; purpose of CSMs; opening question; sharing stories; grieving process; the “what ifs...”; helpful suggestions; wrap-up; community resources; memorial gathering; staff availability. As the opening question to CSMs, Meilman and colleagues (2006) ask:

‘We feel sad about what has happened, but we did not know [name of the deceased], and we would like to understand what he or she was like in order to be helpful. Can you tell us about him or her so that we can share common understanding about him or her with you? (p. 383).

Dunkel et al. (1998) had team members trained by the American Red Cross in a 2-day 14-hour disaster-related mental health course for mental health professionals. Scott et al. (1992) invited members to a 2-hour workshop that utilized student death scenarios. Many (Dunkel et al., 1998; Scott et al., 1992; Streufert, 2004) suggest ongoing training and simulations as a part of training. Dunkel et al. list the following objectives for a simulation exercise: tests the effectiveness of networks involved, including how identified resources are contacted; assess who can respond and in what amount of time, evaluate how the scenario evolved. Keeping these objectives in mind during a simulation can assist one in creating a more effective DRP and DRT. Through the various models and types of response teams, one can see that there is no standardized method available to train DRT members; many are trained in crisis response and psychological first aid, which may not address how to deal with a death among the campus community, more specifically death notification and the process of grieving.

Death Notification. Death notification (DN) is rooted in the military's effort to inform family members when their loved one died during war. The nearest military chaplain and other clergy members were often relied on to deliver death notification as well as Casualty Assistance Officers. The American Red Cross also provided, and still provides, assistance in death notification to families in the military. More recently, the medical profession has begun to formalize how they notify families that their loved one has died in the hospital setting. This set of processes, as well as related training programs, has now expanded to first responders, typically consisting of police, fire and emergency medical technicians, who often are involved in the DN process. First responders, like the military, typically have protocol for notifying family members of a line-of-duty death. With DN expanding to various fields, universities are not exempt from having to respond to various types of deaths. DN procedures can be a part various emergency plans but are an ideal fit as part of a DRP.

A thorough DRP should not only include eco maps and time-event flow charts but also specific protocol for death notification. DN is the practice of informing any individual or group that a death has occurred, such as next-of-kin, the student body or faculty and staff. Throughout the literature there are many death notification protocols and training procedures manuals (Brooks, Conner, Egan, Egan, Joens, Seely, et al., 1992; California State University-Northridge (updated February 7, 2006); Hart & DeBernardo, 2004; Iserson, 1999; Janzen, Cadell, & Westhues, 2003-2004; Larson, 1994; Lerner et al., 2004; Lord, 1996; McGuire, 2004; Penn State, Division of Student Affairs, (Updated December 9, 2004a) Retrieved February 24, 2009; Penn State, Division of Student Affairs, (Updated December 9, 2004b) Retrieved February 24, 2009; Penn State, Division of Student Affairs, (Updated December 9, 2004c) Retrieved February 24, 2009; Scott, B. J., 1999; Servaty-Seib et al., D., 2003; Sorensen, J. R. , 1989, March; Stewart

et al., 2000; Stewart et al., 2001) and a few even address student DN (Hamilton, 2008; Iserson, 1999; Servaty-Seib et al., 2003). For the purpose of this research, a broad definition and overview of death notification will be discussed. DN, for the purpose of this research, refers to informing any individual or group that a death has occurred, not just the formal notification to the deceased's next-of-kin which would include, but is not be limited to, notification to the following person(s): deceased's next-of-kin, university administration, university faculty/staff, university student body, community surrounding the university. DN is only one component of a comprehensive university response to a death among the campus community, but as Hamilton (2008) points out, "How students and family members are notified of a death can have a long-standing impact on their grief and subsequent functioning, as well as potential ramifications for the institution" (p.77). With so much at stake, the need for death notification training becomes increasingly more apparent.

Whether notifying a student that a member of their family has died or notifying family members that their student has died, the death notification process remains the same. While others (Hamilton, 2008; Iserson, 1999; Lord, 1996) have also written procedures for DN, Brooks and colleagues (1992) conceptualize DN into the following six areas: in person; in time and with certainty; in pairs; in plain language; with compassion; follow-up. First make notifications in person, Iserson (1999) discusses how to make telephone notifications when it is not possible to notify next-of-kin in person. Second, provide the DN as soon as one can verify the deceased, the next-of-kin and circumstances of the death. Next is to deliver the notification in pairs. Brooks et al. recommend that one of the persons be a law enforcement officer and the other person a civilian, such as a clergy person. The most beneficial teams consist of male and female members

that drive in separate vehicles. Before arriving to deliver the DN be sure to decide who will convey what information. One is now ready to deliver the death notification to survivors.

When delivering the DN use plain language. When you arrive to deliver the DN, first identify oneself, verify the next-of-kin and ask to come in. Seat the survivor(s) and tell them what has occurred. Avoid phrases such as “passed away,” “gone home,” or “lost” instead use plain language such as “He was killed in a car accident this morning.” Iserson (1999) recommends using “D” words such as “Dead”, “Death” and “Died.” Allow the survivor(s) to ask questions and patiently answer the questions that you are able to; acknowledge when you do not know and answer and offer to follow-up with the survivor(s).

“Your presence and compassion are the most important resources you bring to death notification” (Brooks et al., 1992, p. 4). Remember to be compassionate. Make sure you allow ample time to provide support and direction. Some of the following phrases may be helpful to survivors: “I can’t imagine how difficult this is for you. It must be hard to accept. Tell me about (decedent’s name) and your life with him/her. Is there anyone I can call for you?” (Iserson, p.49). The following phrases should be avoided: “It was God’s will. You’ll get over this. I can’t tell you that. Things always work out for the best. Time heals all wounds.” (Iserson, pp. 50-51). Now is not the time to give survivors the victim’s personal items, these arrangements can be made later. Do not leave the survivor alone instead call a family member, friend or some other person identified by the survivor and wait until that person arrives before you leave. Upon leaving, one should leave contact information including name and phone number with survivors. Lastly, one should follow-up with survivors the next day.

These six points cover the basics of DN. DN procedures should be molded to a university’s unique needs. One should not only consider how the university will notify a

deceased next-of-kin but also how staff and the student body will be notified of a death as well. “When death notification is handled in an honest, caring and forthright way, families are often left with a feeling of great respect for the institution” (Hamilton, 2008, p.82).

Grief. When discussing issues of dying, one must discuss a name synonymous with it, Elisabeth Kubler-Ross. She published On death and dying in 1969 which was a groundbreaking book that later became famous for its stages of death and helping to shape the hospice movement. Kubler-Ross proposed that those that are dying go through the following stages: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. While these stages were originally intended as stages the dying go through, they have been adopted for those that are grieving as well. During the first stage of denial, the griever does not believe the deceased will no longer be a part of their life. Anger is the second stage in the grieving process. Anger can be directed at the deceased or directed inward. The third stage is bargaining, for those that are grieving, and may take the form of “if only...” and “what if...”. The fourth stage is depression; it is thought those that are grieving experience some level of depression after a death. The final stage is acceptance. It is in this stage that the grieving acknowledges that the deceased person is physically gone and this is permanent. Acceptance does not mean one is okay with the deceased’s death. The five stages of death are widely recognized by both professionals and laypersons.

Recently there have been studies and criticism of Kulber-Ross’s five stages of grief. In 2007, (Maciejewski, Zhang, Block, & Prigerson) results from the Yale Bereavement Study (YBS) were published. The YBS was a longitudinal study on a community population that assesses disbelief, yearning, anger, depression and acceptance of a recent natural death. When the results were readjusted to look at peak values, they coincided with the hypothesized sequence

of the five stages of grief. It should be noted that acceptance not disbelief was the dominant grief indicator. This study was based on stages of grief that have yet to be scientifically proven.

Friedman and James (2008) published an article about the myths related to the stages of grief. This article received much attention in the popular culture media. Friedman and James point out that the basis of the stages of grief are not scientifically based and have been morphed from stages of dying, both have caused a great deal of problems in helping those that are grieving. These authors based their myths on personal observation of those grieving over that past 30 years; unfortunately, their observations are not very sound research either. This leaves the idea of stages of grief no better or worse than before. Kubler-Ross (2005) stated it best

The stages have evolved since their introduction, and they have been very misunderstood over the past three decades. They were never meant to help tuck messy emotions into neat packages. They are responses to loss that many people have, but there is not a typical response to loss, as there is no typical loss. Our grief is as individual as our lives... Not everyone goes through all of them or goes in a prescribed order (p. 7).

Kubler-Ross may have one of the most widely known theories about the stages of grief; however, she is not the only one who has written on the subject of grief. When addressing grief issues and grief counseling as a component of a comprehensive university response one should research various models of grief and types of grief counseling to ascertain what is in line with the university's mission and values, as well as what will be most helpful in assisting campus community members through the process of grieving.

Death Education. Thanatology, in its basic definition, is the study of death (Taber's cyclopedic medical dictionary, 2005). Thanatology originates from the Greek word "thanatos" meaning death. Kastenbaum (1993) proposes the alternative definition: "thanatology is the study

of life, with death left in” (p.76). The field of thanatology, an interdisciplinary approach, consists of various professionals from medicine, anthropology, mortuary sciences, counseling as well as other disciplines.

There are currently only two universities that offer a degree of study in thanatology. Hood University in Maryland offers a certificate and a master in art in thanatology. The University of La Laguna located in Spain also offers a master degree. While there are online degree programs, this author found none that were accredited. The Association of Death Education and Counseling (ADEC) offers a certificate program that leads to a certification exam and a designation of certified thanatologist (CT) can be place after ones credentials. According to ADEC website, they are “the oldest interdisciplinary organization in the field of dying, death and bereavement. ADEC’s primary goal is to enhance the ability of professionals and laypeople to be better able to meet the needs of those with whom they work in death education and grief counseling (accessed April 22, 2009).” ADEC in the past thirty-three years have had a strong influence on broadening this field through scientific research, theories and practice, this is primarily done through the organizations five journals.

Statistics

Death Rates

When Wrenn (1991a) asked colleges how they manage student death, two schools responded with “”student’s don’t die here” (p. 402). Unfortunately, 4.5 students per 10,000 student enrolled annually can be expected to die. This does not account for the possible deaths of faculty and staff (Wrenn, 1991b). The sad truth is that students do die; some students die on-campus, other students die off-campus and still other students die during university breaks. While students may die of natural causes, National Center for Injury prevention and Control an

office with the United States Center for Disease Control, (accessed June 1, 2009) reports the leading causes of death, for people ages 18-24, from 1999-2005 were: first unintentional injuries or accidents (44.6%), followed second by homicide (16.9%) and third by suicide (12.7%). The preliminary data for 2006 indicated the same top three deaths for this age range (Table 9. Death rates, 2008).

The same three causes of death account for the majority deaths for people ages 25-34 from 1999-2005. Unintentional injury is first (30.4%) followed by suicide (12.2%) and then homicide (11.0%) (2009). USA Today compiled statistics from a database of 786 incidents leading to the death of 857 students from 2000-2005 (Davis & DeBarros, January 25, 2006). Many of the statistics that specifically deal with college students are often collected from media sources, watchdog groups, and organizations, since there is no one database that tracks such data regarding college students, therefore the statistics may be under represented.

Incidents of deaths among the college community. While at Auburn University as a graduate student, from 2005-2010, there have been 1 student suicide, 1 student murdered, 3 unintentional deaths (2 of the deaths were motor vehicle accidents that involved alcohol), and 2 natural deaths of professor. These are just the deaths that were either personally read in the Auburn University's newspaper, The Auburn Plainsman; announced on Auburn's homepage; received television news coverage or were communicated directly from students or colleagues. That is to say, there may have been other deaths that occurred but were publicized and even still more deaths that were not publicized.

Freshmen are especially vulnerable. In one analysis of 620 college death among four-year institutions, freshman accounted for 33% of the deaths, even though they are only approximately a quarter of the undergraduates at those institutions (Davis et al., January 25,

2006). Freshman are “more likely to take their own lives; they account for 40% of undergraduate suicides.” (Davis et al., January 25, 2006). They also “die at higher rates from illness, accounting for 40% of undergraduate deaths from natural causes.” (Davis et al., January 25, 2006). The notion that all areas of the brain are not fully developed at age 18 may contribute to freshmen being a vulnerable population. Many of the areas of the brain that are involved in making judgments are not fully developed.

Death by unintentional injuries. As the leading cause of death of individuals aged 18-34, unintentional injuries can take many forms as a cause of death such as, motor vehicle accident, drug or alcohol related accident or even fire related accident (National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, accessed April 16, 2009). The Annual Review of Public Health reports that “unintentional fatal injuries related to alcohol increased from about 1,500 in 1998 to more than 1,700 in 2007 among U.S. college students aged 18-24.” (NIH News, 2005, paragraph 1). Colleges and Universities are addressing the issue of alcohol use by their students. Many colleges have alcohol awareness programs, such as Alcohol 101; these programs are often part of a university orientation course.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) estimates that during 2002 - 2005 there were seven deaths annually, for a total of 28 deaths, from structure fires in dormitories, fraternities, sororities, and barracks (Flynn, 2007). USA Today reported that between 2000-2006 there have been 62 fire related student deaths (Davis & DeBarros, August 21, 2007). Campus Firewatch is an online resource that tracks campus related deaths due to fires; the information is obtained from reviewing media sources and therefore may not represent all of the possible deaths that have occurred. Since January of 2000 through April 16, 2009, there have been 134 fire related deaths in both on-campus and off-campus housing (Campus Firewatch,

2009). Of the 134 deaths, 92% of these deaths were students the remaining ten deaths were visitors, relatives or friends (Campus Firewatch).

Death by the hand of another. According to the Chronicle of Higher Education (Smith, 2007) there have been eighty-eight shooting deaths on college campuses since 1966. While all events were tragic, several stand out due to the number of individuals killed. As of 2007 the largest incident, to date, was the shooting that took place on April 16, 2007 on the campus of Virginia Tech that killed 33 individuals, including the gunman (Smith). Prior to the incident at Virginia Tech, the University of Texas at Austin had a gunman kill fifteen individual and then himself (Smith). California State University at Fullerton lost seven individuals on July 12, 1976 when a university custodian shot the victims in the basement of the library (Smith). On November 1, 1991, a University of Iowa graduate student killed his advisor, co-advisor, his department head, the vice-president for academic affairs and a fellow student before killing himself (see Appendix A).

The previous incidents of multiple deaths, while heartbreaking and shocking, are less common than an incident of a single death at the hand of another person. The Security On Campus, Inc., is a non-profit organization that reports crimes related to colleges and universities and is a valuable resource. The U.S. Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education, Policy, Planning and Innovation (2001) reported that from 1997-1999 there were 53 criminal homicides that occurred on-campus, this does not include homicides that occurred off campus that may be among the college community. U.S. Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education reports that on-campus homicides for 2000-2003 total 51; while on-campus and off-campus total for 2000-2003 were 1,052 homicides (Accessed June 1, 2009).

In less than a twenty-four hour period, in March of 2008, the media reported that there were murders on two separate campuses in the Southern region of the United States. First, in Alabama, an Auburn University student was abducted from campus and murdered at a remote location, later it was reported that a University of North Carolina Chapel Hill student was also murdered. While these murders were not connected in anyway, they shocked not only the campuses that they occurred on but also campuses across the country.

Other universities have had recent incidents of homicide among the campus community as well. In 2009, a Gettysburg College sophomore female student was stabbed to death by her ex-boyfriend, also a student at the same college (James & Faulhefer, 2009). Gallaudet University in Washington who had a freshman beaten to death in 1999 and another freshman stabbed to death in 2000. In a double homicide of two professors (a married couple), Dartmouth lost two faculty in 2000. The University of Georgia-Athens had a first year law student stabbed to death in 2000. Within a one-month span of time in 2000, Benedict College in Columbia, South Carolina had two deaths both from shootings (Brown, 2001). These incidents highlight just a few incidents of homicides among campus communities in the past decade.

Death by one's own hand. Suicide is one of the top three leading causes of death in individuals aged 18-35 (National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, accessed April 16, 2009), college students are no exception. Within the first four months of 1997, Michigan State had 6 students commit suicide, all were male (Note book, 2007). One student threw himself in front of a train, two other students hung themselves and three students shot themselves (Note book). Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) has had 11 suicides in 11 years: of these 11 deaths, one student died while inhaling nitrous oxide; while another student ingested cyanide that was mail ordered to her residence hall (Just Ask, 2005). These highlight just a few of college

students that died by a self-inflicted act. Many colleges and universities have suicide prevention programs; some even have online courses for faculty and staff to assist them in functioning as gatekeepers. The following organizations can assist individuals and/or colleges in the area of suicide prevention, the Jed Foundation, National Strategy for Suicide Prevention, Suicide Prevention Resource Center, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Center for Disease Control and National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

Colleges unfortunately are not immune to deaths among their campus community. Death is a part of life and colleges need to be prepared to respond when a death occurs. While accidents, suicide and homicide are top three causes of death, one must also be mindful of others types of death such as natural causes, illness and disease. Each death that occurs is unique. Deaths should be handled in a compassionate, efficient and effective manner given the individual circumstances. Just as no two deaths are identical, no two responses to a death will be identical. A university's comprehensive death response plan offers a foundation and dynamic protocol for handling deaths among the campus community.

CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The current study originated from the researcher's past work experience as a first responder, specifically as an emergency medical technician and a firefighter. The researcher became aware that first responders' training was to prevent death not on what to do once a death occurs. Less than a decade ago, very few books addressed how first responders could assist the loved ones of a deceased patient. Once sparked, this interest was further enhanced by personal experience resulting in the development of a keen awareness of the need to educate the public on end-of-life issues and planning. Additional experience, as a student affairs professional, focused the growing personal awareness on the campus community where so many individuals can be impacted by a death in the university community. What were campuses around the country doing in response to such a tragedy? After an initial investigation into the different methods currently used within the general U.S. population, the researcher wanted to address the lack of such initiatives/services at universities. Thus, with a background of personal experience, and a foreground of knowledge about the relative absence of training, the researcher became focused on the lack of a training programs designed specifically to help campuses provide state-of-the-art death notification and death response. The present study was designed to explore the current issues campuses face in responding to a death among its community members. The primary goal

of the research was to evaluate how campuses address a death among the college/university community including current practices, programs, and training.

Sample

The sample consisted of one-hundred participants who volunteered to take part in the study. Participants were solicited largely through selected publicly posted electronic list-serves. In addition, the researcher sent invitations to campus personnel that, through casual conversations regarding the researcher's current interests and study, expressed a desire to the researcher to participate in the study. Due to the anonymous nature of the survey, the number of participants who personally requested to participate in the study and subsequently completed the survey were unknown. However, there would be no more than ten participants personally requested to participate in the study and as few as zero may have completed the survey. The population included individuals who worked within the area of Student Affairs at an institution of higher education. Student Affairs professionals were chosen based on the extant literature acknowledged their involvement in campus response teams (Callahan et al., 2008; Meilman et al., 2006; Rickgarn, 1987; Scott et al., 1992; Streufert, 2004). Although these individuals were targeted as participants, a single criterion was used to determine eligibility for participation in the study: a current employee of a university or college in the United States of America, irrespective of whether the university/college is a four-year system or two-year system, at the time of the survey, was deemed eligible to participate. As an incentive, a death response protocol (Administrative Procedures; Documentation; Contact Information; Follow-up) was offered to participants. Participation in this study gave informed consent and participation was both anonymous and voluntary.

Procedures

In an effort to identify university personnel to target for the study, the relatively small number of existing death response protocols reported in the professional literature were identified and analyzed. In addition, an electronic search of the internet was conducted using the search engine Google, www.google.com, and the following keywords: university + death+ protocol; university + death + plan; university + student death + plan; university + student death+ protocol; university + death + crisis plan. Also, a search of the above key words, with the addition of state names was completed. Protocols were categorized using the nine divisions (New England, Middle Atlantic, East North Central, West North Central, South Atlantic, East South Central, West South Central, Mountain, and Pacific) of the United States of American as designated by the U.S. Census Bureau, Geography Division (2001), with at least one university protocol obtained from each division of the U.S. Census Bureau (see Appendix B). The universities listed in Appendix B were part of a pre-survey informative sample that was utilized to establish who should be included in the target population. The universities listed in Appendix B were not directly solicited by the researcher to participate in the survey.

The researcher used the pre-survey information to target student affairs personnel through publicly accessed list-serves. Catalist, a catalog of list-serves developed by L-Soft, was used to search publically accessible list-serves (http://www.lsoft.com/lists/site_q.html, accessed August 2, 2009). The following keywords were used: counseling; university; college; student affairs; higher education. List-serves obtained from this search, as well as the American College Counseling Association; the American Psychological Association's Society of Counseling Psychology (Division 17) and individuals who contacted the researcher, in the aforementioned manner, were used to send an e-mail requesting permission to post on the list-serve, an

explanation of the survey and the link to the study. The researcher requested that list-serve members forward the request to colleagues who met the criterion of campus employment.

The Auburn University Institutional Review Board and the Office of Human Subjects reviewed and approved the researcher's study. The researcher used a secure online database, Zoomerang, as a vehicle for the survey. Volunteers completed the exploratory survey, and then were guided to a link that was separate from the original survey, thus keeping information anonymous, and allowing the participant the opportunity to enter their email address, if they wanted to receive the resulting death response protocol.

Instrumentation

The questionnaire for this study was developed from a brief survey of the Management of Student Death (Wrenn, 1991a). Wrenn used an Association for Death Education and Counseling membership directory to survey 141 members, through the directory, who were involved in higher education. He requested that the survey be sent on to someone on campus who would be able to respond. Wrenn received responses from 53 colleges and universities. He asked the following four questions (adapted from Table 1: Responses Regarding Management of Student Death from 53 Universities and Colleges in the United States (1991a)):

1. Do you have a written policy for dealing with a student death?

Yes; No; Don't Know (DK)

2. Do you offer training on campus in counseling survivors?

Yes; No; DK

3. Who notifies the family when a student dies?

Police; Counselor; Coroner; Dean of Students; Vice President; President; DK

4. Would you describe a recent death and how it was handled?

Specific deaths were then coded by cause of death; helpful; hindrance. (p. 396)

The present questionnaire was designed to investigate what institutes of higher education presently have in place to meet the needs of the campus community when there is a death among the university family. Information sought included demographics; protocols for managing student death(s), faculty/staff death(s), other deaths and current strategies, practices and/or services employed by the university in response to an incident of death. The questionnaire consisted of 44 questions that ranged from forced choice to exploratory multiple choice, and to open-ended queries. The questionnaire contained the following categories: demographics; outstanding death response experiences, including salient death experiences and features; specific responses of the volunteer's campus to a death, including a death response program; death response team; death response team training (see Appendix C). Demographic information collected from questions 1 -14 (Appendix C) was used to address the research questions. The outstanding death response experience (questions 15- 20 in Appendix C) provided quantitative and qualitative data regarding the volunteer's reactions to a memorable death among the campus community (Appendix D) and was rich in content. The specific responses of the how the volunteer's campus addresses a death of among the campus community (questions 21-44 in Appendix C) serves as the foundation for current prevention strategies and postvention strategies of universities. This data provided the background that served as a guide and enriched the death response program and protocol.

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested for the study:

Hypothesis 1. Campuses with more than 5,000 students are more likely to have a specific office assigned to administer a death notification and response program than campuses with fewer than 5,000.

Hypothesis 2. Residential campuses are more likely to have a specific office assigned to administer a death notification and response program than non-residential or commuter campuses.

Hypothesis 3. Four-year colleges and universities (and those with Graduate/Professional) are more likely to have a specific office assigned to administer a death notification and response program than other schools and colleges.

Hypothesis 4. Colleges and universities who have formal religious affiliations are more likely to have a specific office assigned to administer a death notification and response program than those without a religious affiliation.

Hypothesis 5. Colleges and universities who have experienced a mass casualty incident are more likely to have a specific office assigned to administer a death notification than those that have not experienced a mass casualty incident.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Presented in this chapter are the results of the data analysis. Descriptive statistics provide an overview of survey demographics. Second, the qualitative data related to individual's experience of a memorable death among the campus community is presented. Followed by the results of the comprehensive evaluation of how campuses address a death among the campus community. Last, for each hypothesis, the results of the independent sample T-test are provided.

Participants

The Campus Death Response Questionnaire survey was posted through Zoomerang, an online survey tool. To qualify for participation in this study, the participants had to describe themselves as currently employed at a college or university. It is assumed that nearly all of the respondents came from the invitation sent to the targeted listservs, because the number of respondents rose very quickly after initial posting. However, near the end of the data collection period, after the number of respondents had risen to approximately 90, it is possible that a few professionals, who were friends or colleagues, from around the country participated if they met the criteria. These friends and colleagues called or communicated through email, as a purely personal contact, and may have responded to the survey. Due to the anonymous nature of data collection, and the researcher's uncertainty of whether or not she had responded to inquiries about her personal/professional life with information about her study, there is no way to determine the identity respondents. One-of the respondents. Nonetheless, it is possible that

unintended personal communication will have resulted in a small number of participants. One-hundred participants (N=100) responded to the questionnaire (See Table 1).

Table 1. *Participant Demographics*

Main campus enrollment	N
1,001-5,000	25
10,001-20,000	23
20,001-30,000	21
5001-10,000	14
< 1,000	7
40,001-50,000	5
30,001-40,000	3
50,001 +	2
Community type	N
Small town/city	44
Urban	32
Rural	12
Suburban	11
Other	1
Campus type	N
Main	91
Branch	9

System type	N
4 year + Graduate/Professional School	73
4 year	17
2 year	10
Public/Private institution	N
Public	65
Private	35
Religiously affiliated	N
No	78
Yes	22
Residential housing	N
Yes	91
No	9

Two-thirds of the participants came from colleges/universities with more than 5,000 students enrolled on their main campus. Approximately one-thirds of participants were from private institutions, but only twenty-two percent reported religious affiliation. Over two-thirds of the respondents reported that either their institution had no identifiable written protocol for dealing with a death among their campus community (student, faculty, administration, or staff) or the respondent did not know if such a protocol existed on their campus.

Memorable Death Experience

As part of the Campus Death Response Questionnaire, participants were asked to identify and briefly write about an especially memorable experience with a death among the campus community (see Appendix D). When respondents were asked to identify the person who died in

their memorable death experience, almost three-quarters (72%) listed a student's death, 13% listed a faculty member's death, 6% listed an administrator's death, 2% listed a staff member's death and surprisingly, 7% reported that a death had not occurred.

When respondents were asked to identify the type of death that occurred, one-third (33%) of the deaths were accidental, followed by suicide (21%), and homicide, terminal illness and other (14% each), 2% did not know and there were no (0%) mass casualty incidents reported.

Respondents were asked to describe how they found out about a death. Responses were then coded and the results were analyzed (see Appendix D). The top three groups that notified respondents, not including unspecified responses (28%), were administrators (24%), colleagues (18%) and a college/university announcement (14%). The top responses to the type of medium used in the notification, outside of unspecified responses (35%), were news source (19%), phone (18%), email, listserv, text or page (15%) and personal communication (13%) respectively.

Respondents were asked to "Describe how the university addressed the death (What did the university do?)." The responses were then coded and the results analyzed (see Appendix D). Over two-thirds (68%) of the respondents did not specify addressing the campus community, while the remaining 32% addressed the campus community. Addressing the campus community included but was not limited to mass emails, contacting faculty, contacting those who knew the deceased, and contacting the student's department. The majority (69%) of respondents specified offering condolence and/or memorials for the deceased, which included but was not limited to mass, flowers, planting of trees, candlelight vigils and ceremonies honoring the deceased. Lastly, 63% of respondents specified some type of supportive services offered by the university. Of the supportive activities, 83% were activities that counselors and counseling services, have training and possibly experience in providing within their scope of practice. Counselors and

counseling services activities included but were not limited to support groups, grief counseling, crisis response teams, debriefings, counselor presence, and awareness of counseling services offered on campus.

Regarding their experiences with deaths among campus community members, respondents were asked the following forced choice (yes or no) question: Is there anything you would have liked to have seen done differently? Eighty-one percent responded that there was nothing they would have liked to have seen done differently and 19% responded that they would have liked to have seen something done differently.

Respondents then had an opportunity to answer the open-ended question of what they would have like to have seen done differently by the university. Approximately sixty-two percent of respondents discussed the need for institutional support and/or accommodations, which included but was not limited to time off work, reasonable accommodations for students, a death response protocol, and follow-up. The remaining 37.5% would like to have seen a different form of commemoration; responses included, but were not limited to, non-religious rituals, more sensitive form of notification- not a “cold email”, flowers, and memorial.

Evaluation of Campus Death Findings

Seventy-two percent of respondents reported the University office(s) that handles a death among the campus community (students, faculty, administration, staff), was the office of counseling services, while 65% utilize the office of Student Affairs, 65% utilize the office of the Dean of Students, 28% utilize an office other than those listed, 27% utilize the Provost Office, 19% utilize the office of Human Resources, and 19% utilize the office of Risk Management. Eight percent of respondents did not know which office is used.

When respondents were asked how the University tells the campus community about a death, over three-quarters (76%) reported their University notified the campus community by electronic-mail (e-mail). Other mediums used to communicate a death: a campus media spokesperson was utilized in 36% of death notifications to notify campus community, the campus newspaper was utilized in 35 % of death notifications; face-to-face communication (the preferred method of delivering a death notification) was utilized in only 34% of notifications, and off-campus new sources were utilized in 21% of death notifications.

All of the universities surveyed offered some type of outreach services or programs when a death occurred. The following outreach services or programs were reported most frequently: 88% offering individual counseling, 76% of the universities offered crisis intervention, 69% offering group counseling and 67% offered some type of university memorial.

When respondents were asked if their institution has an identifiable written protocol for dealing with a death among the campus community, 67% (59 of the 88 respondents) reported their institution did not have if an identifiable written protocol or a protocol was unknown. Forty-four respondents (50%) did not know whether or not their institution had an identifiable written protocol, as indicated by the data. The survey also asked, if the institution had an identified group of individuals who address the issue of a death among your campus community (e.g. Death Response Team). The data indicated that 43% of the 86 respondents had an identifiable group of individuals who addressed the issue of a death among their campus community. More than three-quarters (86%) of death response team members were university based mental health specialist(s) such as counselor, psychologist, or psychiatrist, according to the data. The majority (86%) of respondents also specified that student affairs personnel (for example V.P./Dean of Students, Residence Hall Staff) comprised death response team.

Chaplains comprised almost half (46%) of death response team members and 27% had faculty served as death response team members.

Institutions that had an identifiable group of individuals who addressed the issue of a death among the campus community were then asked about the training practices this group, the Death

Response Team. Almost half (49%) of team members were not offered training by the institution, while 30% were offered training and 22% did not know if training was offered. Of those offered training, the following introductory training (initial training of team members, which usually occurs when a team is initially formed) was offered to team members: 89% were trained in crisis intervention; 33% were trained in death notification and 33% were trained in grief work. Death response team members were offered continuing education and activities, which were defined as on-going education and practice that assist team members in learning the

most up to date interventions, of which 100% were offered crisis intervention continuing education, while only 25% were offered continuing education in the area of death notification.

The survey data suggests that when a university has death response teams in place, counseling professionals are utilized as team members 86% of the time. *Hypothesis Testing*

The results of the independent sample T-tests for the hypotheses are presented in the order of the research questions. An independent-sample t-test was performed for all five research hypotheses and all five null hypotheses failed to be rejected. The first hypothesis compared the likelihood of having a specific office assigned to administer a death notification and response program on campuses with less than 5,000 students and campuses with more than 5,000 students.

There was not a significant difference in the scores for campuses with less than 5,000 students ($M=1.16$, $SD=.369$) and campuses with more than 5,000 students ($M=1.19$, $SD=.396$); $t(98) = -.420$, $p=.675$). The second hypothesis compared the likelihood of having a specific office

assigned to administer a death notification and response program on campuses with residential

housing and campuses with no residential housing. There was not a significant difference in the scores for campuses with residential housing ($M=1.18$, $SD=.383$) and campuses with no residential housing ($M=1.22$, $SD=.441$); $t(98) = -.342$, $p=.733$). The third hypothesis compared the likelihood of having a specific office assigned to administer a death notification and response program on campuses with two-year college system and campuses with a 4-year college system (including those with Graduate/Professional schools). There was not a significant difference in the scores for campuses with four year college systems ($M=1.17$, $SD=.375$) and campuses with a two-year college system ($M=1.30$, $SD=.483$); $t(98) = 1.036$, $p=.303$). The fourth hypothesis compared the likelihood of having a specific office assigned to administer a death notification and response program on campuses with religious affiliation and colleges with no religious affiliation. There was not a significant difference in the scores for campuses with religious affiliation ($M=1.14$, $SD=.351$) and campuses with no religious affiliation ($M=1.19$, $SD=.397$); $t(98) = -.598$, $p=.551$). The final hypothesis compared the likelihood of having a specific office assigned to administer a death notification and response program on campuses that have experienced a mass casualty incident and campuses that have not experienced a mass casualty incident. There was not a significant difference in the scores for campuses who have experienced a mass casualty incident ($M=1.33$, $SD=.577$) and campuses that have not experienced a mass casualty incident ($M=1.18$, $SD=.382$); $t(98) = .697$, $p=.488$).

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS AND DISCUSSION

The primary purpose of this study was to explore how campuses address a death among the college/university community including current practices, programs, and training. The first step of the study was to develop a comprehensive campus death response questionnaire for colleges. This was accomplished by developing a questionnaire that consisted of 44 targeted but wide-ranging questions, offered in a variety of formats from forced choice, to exploratory multiple choice, and to open-ended. The second purpose of the study was to examine individual's experience of a memorable among the campus community. This was accomplished through the above questionnaire, specifically questions 16-20. The final purpose of this study was to examine university characteristics that may influence a university having a specific office assigned to administer a death notification and response program. This was examined through a set of research questions. Additionally, the study results of current colleges/universities practices, programs, and training related to addressing a death among the campus community influenced the development of a campus death response program that was rooted firmly in the salient literature. Thus, the data from the *Campus Death Response Questionnaire* was used to build a Compassionate Death Response Training Program and a Protocol Development Guide (see Appendix E),

Summary of the Findings

Findings related to the five quantitative research hypotheses tested are presented below as a summary. When examining the first hypothesis that campuses with more than 5,000 students

are more likely to have a specific office assigned to administer a death notification and response program than campuses with fewer than 5,000 students; the null hypothesis was not rejected. Therefore, as indicated by the data, the size of a university cannot be used as an indicator for having an office assigned to handle a death among the campus community. One reason there is no difference may be due to the fact that so few universities have death response programs in place. Therefore, the majority of universities would not have a specific office assigned to administer a death notification and response program because there are (apparently) no death response programs in place on an overwhelming percentage of campuses.

Hypothesis two, which stated that residential campuses are more likely to have a specific office assigned to administer a death notification and response program than non-residential or commuter campuses; the null hypothesis was not rejected. The data suggests that the type of housing offered to students by the university (residential or non-residential) cannot be used as an indicator for having an office assigned to handle a death among the campus community. However, a reason there is no difference may be that very few universities have death response programs in place.

When analyzing the results for hypothesis three, which states that, four-year colleges and universities including those with Graduate/Professional programs are more likely to have a specific office assigned to administer a death notification and response program than other schools and colleges (two-year systems), the null hypothesis could not be rejected. Considering the data, it would appear that, the type of college system (two-year or four year) utilized by a university cannot be used as an indicator for having an office assigned to handle a death among the campus community. Again, universities may not have a specific office assigned to administer a death notification and response program because it appears that the majority of universities do

not have death response programs in place to serve as a guide in responding to a death among the campus community.

Hypothesis four, which states that, colleges and universities who have formal religious affiliations are more likely to have a specific office assigned to administer a death notification and response program than those without a religious affiliation; the null hypothesis was not rejected. As suggested by the data, a university's religious affiliation cannot be used as an indicator for having an office assigned to handle a death among the campus community. It seems that the majority of universities, regardless of if there is any religious affiliation, still do not have death response programs in place and therefore do not have a specific office assigned to administer a death notification and response program.

Hypothesis five states that colleges and universities who have experienced a mass casualty incident are more likely to have a specific office assigned to administer a death notification than those that have not experienced a mass casualty incident; the null hypothesis was not rejected. When the data is considered, whether a university has had a mass casualty incident or not cannot be used as an indicator for having an office assigned to handle a death among the campus community. The majority of universities do not have death response programs in place to serve as a guide in responding to a death among the campus community thus universities do not have a specific office assigned to administer a death notification and response program.

Conclusions

It seems reasonable to conclude that there are few, if any, differences between institutions of higher education in regards to death response programs and protocols. Death notification and response programs do not differ, and moreover, apparently do not exist, at least in significant

numbers. It appears, from the data, that universities use some prevention and postvention strategies to address the campus community's needs regarding a death. Unfortunately these strategies do not appear to be part of the planned, coordinated, comprehensive response of a death response program, which includes a death response protocol and ideally a death response team. The lack of such a program leaves a university vulnerable, at best, when a death occurs. It seems fair to conclude that the absence of a death response program can have far-reaching negative effects on the university and the community. It seems reasonable to conclude that universities have not prepared themselves to respond compassionately and comprehensively to the complex and multifaceted aftermath typically associated with a death among the campus community.

Implications

Higher Education

Proactive Planning. Almost twenty years after Wrenn's (1991a) discovered that 62% of universities had not developed a written death response plan, it appears from the current data that institutions of higher education have not changed much in this area. Today, 67% of institutions represented in the current study still do not have an identifiable written protocol for dealing with a death among the campus community. It should be noted that this number may not fully represent the number of institutions of higher education that have an identifiable written protocol for responding to a death due to the fact that, as indicated by the data, half (50%) of the eighty-eight responses did not know whether or not their institution even had an identifiable written protocol. However, not knowing if a protocol exists on one's campus leads one to surmise that the initial activation of a death response protocol is only as effective as the extent of the knowledge of such a plan in the members of the campus community who may become involved

in a response to a death. If the death response protocol is not known by university community members, typically involved as primary service providers in existing programs, then there is a critically significant weak-link in the chain of response to death among the campus community. Every chain is only as strong as its weakest link. The data of the present study supports the conclusion that the majority of institutions of higher education need to develop and implement an identifiable written protocol for dealing with a death among the campus community. An identifiable written protocol with specifically outlined responsibilities and actions, and a “known” chain of command for operationalizing the plan is an important first step in proactively planning for a death among the campus community.

Another proactive response, identified in the literature, is to name a single office as a designated coordination home for activities related to a death among the campus community (Callahan & Fox, 2008; Cusick, 2008; Donohue, 1977; Knott & Crafts, 1980). Zinner (1985) and Callahan et al. (2008) suggest that student services professionals should be primarily responsible for responding to a death among the campus community. As suggested by the data, when handling a death that has occurred among the campus community, 72 % of universities utilize the office of counseling services in delivering at least part of a comprehensive response; while 65% of universities utilize the office of Student Affairs; 65% utilize the office of the Dean of Students; 28% utilize an office not listed; 27% utilize the Provost Office; 19% utilize the office of Human Resources and 19% utilize the office of Risk Management. Eight percent of respondents did not know which office is used. The data supports that the top three offices involved in handling a death are student service professionals, which is in line with recommendations from the literature, thus showing that institutes of higher education are utilizing individuals who are professionally trained and best suited for dealing with a death

among the campus community. Universities are able to see the payoff of their planning when a death notification needs to be delivered in a timely, efficient, and compassionate manner. It is sometimes harder to see the long-term gains of having a death response plan in place. Hamilton (2008) stated that “When death notification is handled in an honest, caring and forthright way, families are often left with a feeling of great respect for the institution (p.82).” This point is further supported by the following survey response: “Notably, the younger sibling has since chosen to come to our school largely based on our response to her sibling's death.” A university’s response to a death among the campus community can have far-reaching effects, both positive and negative.

Postvention Strategies. Postvention strategies are any actions or activities that support survivors of a death. Postvention activities can include a compassionate death notification, death response team interventions, psychological first-aid, individual and group counseling, memorial planning, and various follow-up services. One postvention strategy is the development of a death response team. The data suggests that 43% of the 86 respondents reported that their institution had an identifiable group of individuals who addressed the issue of a death among their campus community. Unfortunately, this leaves the possibility open that institutions have response teams functioning without a written protocol. Other postvention strategies offered by universities were a university memorial (67%) and death education (22%).

The majority (86%) of respondents specified that both student affairs personnel (for example V.P./Dean of Students, Residence Hall Staff) and university based mental health specialist (counselors, psychologists, and psychiatrists) are members of a death response team. The high number of student affairs personnel may be due to the list-serves to whom the survey was sent, as those list-serves were mainly student affairs personnel. Chaplains comprise almost

half (46%) of death response team members and 27% have faculty as death response team members.

Shockingly, the data indicate, almost half (49%) of team members were not trained in any measurable way to handle such delicate and difficult matters; 30% were offered training and 22% did not know if training was offered. It is clear from the data that universities have not taken advantage of existing literature in regards to development and training of death response teams. The data suggests that in the area of death notification only 33% of death response team members have introductory training, which was defined as initial training of team members, usually occurring when a team is initially formed. Only 25% percent of death response team members were offered continuing education and activities, which were defined as on-going education and practice that assist team members in learning the most up to date interventions, in the area of death notification.

Student Affairs Personnel are often the first line of communication in relaying that a death has occurred, thus it is important for student affairs personnel to be trained in death notification. Because such personnel are often charged with notifying staff and the campus community that a death has occurred, it is easy to see how important training is of the utmost importance. The following complaints, which were quoted from the participants comments in the present study, highlight the importance of handling a death notification more sensitively: “More "humane" and sensitive mass notification (email) to the entire community. Email was sent, but it was quite cold.” and “... more respectable then a mass text message and email.”

Prior studies have (Brooks et al., 1992; Hamilton, 2008; Iserson, 1999; Lord, 1996) addressed how to deliver a death notification in person and over the phone. To date, there is no literature available on how to deliver a death notification, sensitively or otherwise, through

electronic means such as e-mails, text messages or webpage postings. The importance of a compassionate electronic death notification is further supported by the survey data, which indicates, that over three-quarters (76%) of the Universities surveyed reported that the campus community is notified by e-mail. This researcher found no targeted recommendation in the professional literature on how to deliver an electronic death notification. It is clear that further research needs to be conducted to better understand how one can effectively and compassionately deliver a death notification by electronic means. The following were some of the other mediums used to communicate a death: a campus media spokesperson was utilized in 36% of death notifications to notify campus community, the campus newspaper was utilized in 35 % of death notifications; face-to-face communication (the preferred method of delivering a death notification) was utilized in only 34% of notifications, and off-campus new sources were utilized in 21% of death notifications.

Counseling Professionals

Wrenn (1991b) stressed the importance of educating the campus community about ways to listen, what to say and what to do when a death occurs that may impact the campus community. Cusick (2008) described such a death response plan. The literature supports (Dunkel et al., 1998; Meilman et al., 2006; Scott et al., 1992; Stephenson, 1985; Streufert, 2004; Swenson & Ginsberg, 1996) counselors serving as integral parts of a response plan. The survey data suggests that when a university has death response teams in place, counseling professionals are utilized as team members 86% of the time.

Counselors acquire education, training and supervision that can aid them in responding to a death among the campus community. The background of counselors also offers a unique set of skills that can support a university with outreach services that should be provided after a death

among the campus community. Counselors may be particularly skilled in the areas of death response teams, crisis intervention and grief counseling. It may be because of a counselor's unique skill that administration often asks counselors to chair the university's death response team. However, the professional counseling staff is likely providing much of the direct service, so their choice as administrators of such a program seems unwise. Because delivering psychological first aid should be the primary function of counselors, ideally they should not chair a death response team (Starling, 1995 as cited in Streufert, 2004).

According to the data of the present study, over three-quarters (76%) of the universities surveyed reported crisis intervention as an outreach service offered, but only 30% of the death response teams offer crisis intervention training. The data indicates that most universities surveyed utilize counseling services as part of the university's outreach services provided, with 88% offering individual counseling and 69% offering group counseling.

More than three-quarters (86%) of the institutions that have a death response team utilize university based mental health specialist(s) such as counselor, psychologist, or psychiatrist, according to the data. The data suggests that death response teams are not currently being trained in crisis response. The survey did not ask what the qualifications and training were of individuals who provided crisis response services to the university. According to The American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress's webpage, the "Academy in collaboration with the National Center for Crisis Management aims to identify expertise among professionals, across disciplines, and provide standards for those who provide intervention to survivors of traumatic events" (accessed February 25, 2010). This leaves the possibility open that crisis intervention was offered by counselors, as well as other professionals, who may or may not be trained in crisis intervention.

Limitations

Sample

While the survey was sent through list-serves that were targeted as having a high population fit, the survey could only be posted by the researcher if a list-serve coordinator gave permission. Therefore, it is possible that due to the somewhat limited number of listservs providing permission to post the survey, the resulting sample may not fully represent universities throughout the United States of America (U.S.A.). Additionally, a specific person/office within a university was not identified to send the survey to. Future research would be advised to pursue additional data collection strategies to bring about a more representative sample of Universities in all fifty states in the U.S.A., such as sending the survey to an identified office (i.e. student affairs, vice president) or person within the university that would be a good fit for overseeing a death when it occurs.

Another limitation to the research was the lack of control for multiple responses from the same university. Future research could control for this problem. One way of controlling for multiple responses from the same university may be to ask respondents to list the name of the university/college that currently employs the participant. This data could become part of the demographic section of the questionnaire and should be recorded in an anonymous manner. In this case, the information of the university's name would be publically available information, which is data that is available to the public without additional permission. It is vital for the researcher to gain an understanding of what information is publicly available/public information. Knowledge of what is considered public information can assist the researcher in overcoming barriers that may arise, such as collecting identifying information from respondents. It is also important for the researcher to gain the trust, confidence and approval of their institutional

review board, if applicable, in order to be able to collect the needed data in an anonymous and confidential manner. The researcher's ability to work within current data collection constraints while still maintaining anonymous and confidential data presents a delicate balance and when successful this balance can reap a wealth of information.

Measurement

The survey may not have accurately measured the dependent variable (a specific office assigned to administer a death notification and response program). The survey asked the forced choice multiple answer question of: Which University office(s) handle a death among the campus community (students, faculty, administration, and staff)? Check all that apply, with the following answers to choose from: Student Affairs; Risk Management; Provost Office; Dean of Students; Human Resources; Counseling Services; Don't Know; Other, please specify. This may be involved in handling a death among the campus community, the question of having one identifiable office was not specifically addressed in the questionnaire. The survey question may have implied an office was a physical structure/location, which may not be applicable in all situations, and did not include the possibility of virtual or cultural office(s). Additionally, the use of the word "handle" may have need clarification, supported by the following survey response, "what do you mean by "handle"?"

In future research an explanation of what an office entails and an operational definition of handle is needed. For example, an office may include a physical location where an individual is housed or may be a virtual/cultural structure that is run by a specific person. The following operational definition of handle, to administer a death notification and a response program to that death notification, could be provided or the following Yes/No/Don't Know questions could be asked instead: 1.a.) Is there one specific office at your university that is assigned to administer a

death notification and a response program to a death notification? If yes- specify the office; 1.b.)
If no- What offices administers a death notification and/or a response program to a death
notification. Check all that apply: Student Affairs; Risk Management; Provost Office; Dean of
Students; Human Resources; Counseling Services; Don't Know; Other, please specify. 2.a.)
Does the specific single office that provides a death notification and a response program to a
death notification coordinate with other university offices? If yes-check all that apply: Student
Affairs; Risk Management; Provost Office; Dean of Students; Human Resources; Counseling
Services; Don't Know; Other, please specify.

Comprehensive Training Program Protocol

Student Death Response Protocol

A compassionate and inclusive Death Response Protocol was developed on the basis of
existing literature and on the results from the present study's responses to the exploratory
assessment questionnaire. The Death Response Protocol (Appendix E and Appendix F) is
offered as a "best practice" working document for developing a comprehensive Compassionate
Death Response Training Program. The seven main components of A Compassionate Death
Response Training Program are: 1) Preparation 2) Compassionate and Effective Death Response
Plans and Protocols (including the Death Response Protocol,) 3) A Team Based Response Unit
4) Death Notification 5) Grief Issues 6) Death Education 7) Postvention Strategies. A brief
description of the training is discussed below.

Preparation. Adequately preparing for how the university will address a death among its
family helps to ensure a comprehensive caring response to the situation. Strategic planning lays
the foundation for the work that is ahead and offers an outline of how the training will take place.
A key first step is to identify a single office that is designated to coordinate all activities related

to all death among the campus community, including students, administration, faculty and staff (Callahan & Fox, 2008; Cusick, 2008; Donohue, 1977; Knott & Crafts, 1980). For many universities this will be the student affairs office and the vice-president of student affairs that functions as the primary coordinator, with at least one other person named as a back-up coordinator (Callahan et al., 2008). Once this structure is in place, any office or individual that becomes aware of a death will contact the university's coordinating office. It becomes the coordinator's job to maintain accurate records regarding a death and its handling.

As tempting as it may be to appoint university administration of mental health services, such as the director of the University counseling center, this should be avoided with good reason. The counseling center staff will likely be coordinating the team based response unit, as well as postvention activities such as providing individual and group counseling, grief counseling and providing various other support to the university community. The counseling center staff needs to be able to focus their time and energy on providing support that will assist in stabilizing the university community, after all that is where their training and resources best utilized in a crisis.

Identification of campus personnel that are qualified to train others in key areas of a death response program can be cost effective to a university. Outsourcing training is also an option. The main objective is to provide well-researched sound current training in key areas to identified personnel. Identifying, already implemented and needed, campus programming and resources that are proactive in prevention or responding to issues related to death can open the conversational door with the university community.

Death Response Plan. Crisis management plans are a part of many, if not all, universities. However, these plans vary greatly in their level of detail and topics covered. Wrenn (1991b) stated the following, "...there is a tremendous need on our campuses to educate ourselves, each

other, and our students, faculty, and administrators about how to listen, what to say and what to do when a death occurs” (p. 54). Many of these issues are addressed through a Death Response Plan (DRP). A DRP helps to organize and coordinate who, what, when, where and how of responding to a death, thus providing structure during a time of crisis, in hopes of avoiding problems. A DRP is an operational plan that focuses on how the university system as a whole responds. “A DRP identifies who does what, when and where so that a consistent and coordinated protocol for action is followed” (Cusick, 2008, p. 557).

Sample Protocol. The sample Death Response Protocol had the following three components: Administrative Procedures, Documentation and Contact Information. First, the Administrative Protocol identifies a single office in charge of a death among the campus community; describes each position and corresponding responsibilities; other constituents involved in a death among the campus community, and several other critical response systems and personnel responsibilities. Second, the Documentation section contains templates that can be utilized during a response to a death among the campus community. There are several forms in the Documentation section. The Initial Student Information and Verification Form is used to collect pertinent information about a death that has occurred; the Internal Notification of a Student Death Form (part 1); Student Death Notification/Initial Contact of Next of Kin; Student Death Notification Procedures Checklist which is a comprehensive list of actions and responsibilities to be taken by departments and individuals. The Contact Information section contains a list of potential contact including name, title, office, contact numbers, and e-mail address. The Death Response Student Protocol is designed to become an integral part of a comprehensive University based Compassionate Death Response Training Program and should not be used as a standalone document

Team Based Response Unit. As part of a comprehensive university response, institutions may utilize team-based approaches. One such team, that is trained to respond to campus crises both human-made disasters and natural disasters, is a crisis response team. While virtually every university will have a crisis response plan, unfortunately crisis response teams are not always a part of such a plan. Furthermore, crisis response teams are not necessarily trained to deliver death notifications or to deal with the aftermath of a death among the campus community. For this specialized area, death response teams have been created. Most DRT will develop objectives, composition, recommendations, operational guidelines, assessment procedures and evaluative measures (Rickgarn, 1987).

Rickgarn's (1987) DRT grew out of a counseling model comprised of trained counseling volunteers, each of whom was acting within his or her scope of practice, as they responded to individuals and groups confronted with a death and wishing for or requesting to have an educational and therapeutic intervention. The DRT has the following three responsibilities: facilitating reactions to the death, follow-up, which may include consultation or counseling and a process for appropriately arranging for referrals to professional counselors. The composition of the team may be both professionals and paraprofessional and the team is in charge of recruitment, development and training.

DRTs should include counselors from a university's counseling center(s) but the team should also include the following members: administrators such as the a member form the Dean of Students office, Residence Life Staff, police both university and local law enforcement, local fire department, off campus counselors and/ or crisis center, clergy from the community, admissions staff including the administrator, a representative from the international office and clergy and/or campus ministries (Meilman et al., 2006; Scott et al., 1992; Streufert, 2004).

Dunkel and colleagues (1998) are concerned about how a large-scale crisis incident (mass casualty incident) may exhaust the university's trauma response team and its resources. This is why it is important to coordinate efforts with outside resources such as counselors and crisis centers before an incident occurs. This allows for relationships to be initiated and built upon. It also allows time to familiarize outside agencies with the structure of the university and its plan on how to handle crises, including a death among the campus community.

Once team members are identified, they must be trained. Dunkel et al. (1998) had team members trained by the American Red Cross in a 2-day 14-hour disaster-related mental health course for mental health professionals. Scott et al. (1992) invited members to a 2-hour workshop that utilized student death scenarios. There are various models, types of response teams, and training available but there is no standardized method available to train DRT members; many are trained in crisis response and psychological first aid, which may not address how to deal with a death among the campus community, more specifically death notification and the process of grieving. A Compassionate Death Response Training Program offers standardized training that is rooted in the literature and based of the current results of the comprehensive exploratory assessment, *Campus Death Response Questionnaire*, of colleges and universities.

Death Notification. Death Notification (DN) is the practice of informing any individual or group that a death has occurred, such as next-of-kin, the student body or faculty and staff. With DN expanding to various fields, universities are not exempt from having to respond to various types of deaths. Whether notifying a student that a member of their family has died or notifying family members that their student has died, the death notification process remains the same. DN procedures can be a part various emergency plans but are an ideal fit as part of a DRP. DN is only one component of a comprehensive university response to a death among the

campus community, but as Hamilton (2008) points out, “How students and family members are notified of a death can have a long-standing impact on their grief and subsequent functioning, as well as potential ramifications for the institution” (p.77). With so much at stake, the need for death notification training becomes increasingly more apparent.

Grief Issues. Kubler-Ross (2005) stated it best:

The stages have evolved since their introduction, and they have been very misunderstood over the past three decades. They were never meant to help tuck messy emotions into neat packages. They are responses to loss that many people have, but there is not a typical response to loss, as there is no typical loss. Our grief is as individual as our lives... Not everyone goes through all of them or goes in a prescribed order (p. 7).

Kubler-Ross may have one of the most widely known theories about the stages of grief; however she is not the only one who has written on the subject of grief. When addressing grief issues and grief counseling as a component of a comprehensive university response one should research various models of grief and types of grief counseling to ascertain what is in line with the university’s mission and values, as well as what will be most helpful in assisting campus community members through the process of grieving.

Death Education. Thanatology, in its basic definition, is the study of death (Taber’s cyclopedic medical dictionary, 2005). Kastenbaum (1993) proposes the alternative definition: “thanatology is the study of life, with death left in” (p.76). The field of thanatology, an interdisciplinary approach, consists of various professionals from medicine, anthropology, mortuary sciences, counseling as well as other disciplines. Death Education classes may become part of a university’s available courses as a way of opening the conversational door about death.

Postvention Strategies. Postvention strategies are actions and activities that are done to help survivors of a death; this includes, but is not limited to, a compassionate death notification, a death response team, crisis response/intervention, counseling services provided, memorials, and other services including follow-up services.

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Appendix A

Major Shootings on American College Campuses

Major shootings incidents where two or more persons were killed on American college and university campuses, are identified in Table A1 below. While the list may not be fully inclusive, it does include incidents listed in the professional literature (Smith, 2007).

Table A1. *Major shootings on American college campuses*

Higher Education Institution	Date	Number Killed
University of Alabama in Huntsville	February 12, 2010	3
Northern Illinois University	February 14, 2008	6, including the shooter
Louisiana Technical College (Baton Rouge)	February 8, 2008	3 , including the shooter
Virginia Tech	April 16, 2007	33, including the shooter
Shepherd University	September 2, 2006	3, including the shooter
University of Arizona (Nursing College)	October 28, 2002	4, including the shooter
Appalachian School of Law	January 16, 2002	3
University of Arkansas(Fayetteville)	August 28, 2000	2, including the shooter
San Diego State University	August 15, 1996	3
Simon’s Rock College of Bard	December 14, 1992	2
University of Iowa	November 1, 1991	6
California State University(Fullerton)	July 12, 1976	7
Jackson State University	May 14, 1970	2
Kent State University	May 4, 1970	4
South Carolina State University	February 8, 1968	3
University of Texas (Austin)	August 1, 1966	16, including the shooter

Appendix B

Sampling of College's/University's Death Response Protocol

Table B1 contains the pre-survey internet sampling of universities that currently have their death response protocol accessible on the World Wide Web. The purpose of the pre-survey was to gain a greater understanding of what office/person functions as the initial contact in a death response protocol. Universities or colleges were categorized according to the most recent U.S. Census Region Map.

Table B1. *Sampling of college's/university's initial contact person from the death response plan*

University/College	State	Initial Contact Office/Person	U.S. Census Region
Ball State University	IN	Associate Dean for Student Affairs	East North Central
Central Michigan University	MI	Crisis Core Group	East North Central
Huntington University	AL	President	East South Central
Rutgers-Camden Campus	NJ	Dean on Duty/Law Dean of Students	Middle Atlantic
Villanova University	PA	Division of Student Affairs	Middle Atlantic
Cornell University	NY	VP for Student & Academic Services	Middle Atlantic
Arizona State University	AZ	Public Safety	Mountain
University of Arizona	AZ	Public Safety	Mountain
Colorado State University- (College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences)	CO	Deans Office	Mountain

University/College	State	Initial Contact Office/Person	U.S. Census Region
Western New Mexico University	NM	Campus Police will initiate the emergency call list: The Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, the Vice President of Student Affairs and the Vice President for Academic Affairs	Mountain
The University of Vermont	VT	Assistant Vice President for Campus and Student Life	New England
University of California-Davis	CA	Vice Chancellor--Student Affairs	Pacific
University of California-San Diego	CA	Office of Student Policies and Judicial Affairs (SPJA)	Pacific
Puget Sound	WA	Student Affairs	Pacific
Spelman	GA	Executive Council member/designee	South Atlantic
Virginia Tech	VA	Student Life(Students)/Employee Dept & HR (employee)	South Atlantic
Clemson University	SC	Dean of Students	South Atlantic

University/College	State	Initial Contact Office/Person	U.S. Census Region
Dakota State University	SD	Faculty Death-Vice President for Academic Affairs; Staff Death-Director of Human Resources; Student Death-Dean of Student Affairs	West North Central
Fort Hays State University	KS	Vice President for Student Affairs or designee	West North Central
Texas Tech University	TX	Student Affairs & enrollment management	West South Central
Texas A&M International University (TAMIU)	TX	Associate Vice President for Student Affairs	West South Central

Appendix C
Campus Death Response Questionnaire



Needs Assessment Questionnaire

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Campus Death Response Questionnaire

Page 1 - Heading

Thank you for taking 15 minutes to respond to questions about what your college or university does (or has done) in response to deaths among the campus community. The questions are divided into three brief parts: 1. Demographic information about your campus. 2. A specific death response experience 3. Specific responses of your campus to a death among students, faculty, or staff members.

Page 1 - Heading

Demographic Questionnaire

Page 1 - Question 1 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets)

[Mandatory]

Size of College/University main campus (Number of Students enrolled)

- < 1,000
- 1,001-5,000
- 5001-10,000
- 10,001-20,000
- 20,001-30,000
- 30,001-40,000
- 40,001-50,000
- 50,001 +

Page 1 - Question 2 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets)

[Mandatory]

Your College /University Community?

- Rural
- Urban
- Suburban
- Small town/city
- Other

Page 1 - Question 3 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets)

[Mandatory]

Your campus

- Main
- Branch

Page 1 - Question 4 - Choice - Multiple Answers (Bullets)

[Mandatory]

Your College/University system:

- 2 year
- 4 year
- 4 year + Graduate/Professional School

Page 1 - Question 5 - Open Ended - One Line

[Mandatory]

In which state or region is your institution located?

Page 1 - Question 6 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets)

[Mandatory]

Is your university a public or private institution?

- Public
- Private

Page 1 - Question 7 - Yes or No

[Mandatory]

Does your college/university have a religious affiliation?

- Yes
- No

Page 1 - Question 8 - Yes or No

[Mandatory]

Does your institution have on-campus student housing?

- Yes
- No

Page 1 - Heading

Students Death(s)

Page 1 - Question 9 - Open Ended - One Line

[Mandatory]

Estimate the number of student deaths in the previous academic year (Fall/Winter 2008, Spring 2009 & Summer 2009)?

Indicate the types of student deaths (check all that apply):

- Mass Casualty Incident
 - Suicide
 - Homicide
 - Accident
 - Terminal Illness
 - Not Applicable
 - Don't Know
 - Other, please specify
-

Estimate the number of student deaths in the previous five academic years (Fall/Winter 2004 through Summer 2009)?

Faculty, Administration and Staff Death(s)

Estimate the number of faculty, administration and staff deaths in the previous academic year (Fall/Winter 2008, Spring 2009 & Summer 2009)?

Indicate the types of faculty, administration and staff deaths (check all that apply):

- Mass Casualty Incident
 - Suicide
 - Homicide
 - Accident
 - Terminal Illness
 - Not Applicable
 - Don't Know
 - Other, please specify
-

Estimate the number of faculty, administration and staff deaths in the previous five academic years (Fall/Winter 2004 through Summer 2009)?

Page 2 - Heading

Outstanding Death Response Experience

Page 2 - Heading

Please respond in terms of your experience of an especially memorable death among the campus community.

Page 2 - Question 15 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets)

[Mandatory]

Person who died:

- Student [Skip to 3]
- Faculty [Skip to 3]
- Administration [Skip to 3]
- Staff [Skip to 3]
- Other [Skip to 3]
- A death has not occurred [Skip to 4]

Page 3 - Heading

Outstanding Death Response Experience

Page 3 - Heading

Please respond in terms of your experience of an especially memorable death among the campus community.

Page 3 - Question 16 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets)

[Mandatory]

Indicate the type of death:

- Mass Casualty Incident
- Suicide
- Homicide
- Accident
- Terminal Illness
- Don't Know
- Other, please specify

Page 3 - Question 17 - Open Ended - Comments Box

How did you find out about the death?

Describe how the university addressed the death (What did the university do?):

Is there anything you would have liked to have seen done differently?

- Yes
- No

Describe what you would have liked to have seen done differently by the university:

Specific Responses of Your Campus

Which University office(s) handle a death among the campus community (students, faculty, administration, staff)?
Check all that apply.

- Student Affairs
- Risk Management
- Provost Office
- Dean of Students
- Human Resources
- Counseling Services
- Don't Know
- Other, please specify

How does the University tell the campus community about a death? Check all that apply.

- Campus newspaper
 - Email
 - Telephone
 - Off-campus news source
 - Campus media spokesperson
 - Announcement on university homepage
 - Text message
 - Face-to-face communication
 - Signs/Posters
 - Campus does not address the issue
 - Don't know
 - Other, please specify
-

How does your university notify the campus community about campus memorials or commemorations of death(s)?
Check all that apply.

- Campus newspaper
 - Email
 - Telephone
 - Off-campus news source
 - Campus media spokesperson
 - Announcement on university homepage
 - Text message
 - Face-to-face communication
 - Signs/Posters
 - Campus does not address the issue
 - Don't know
 - Other, please specify
-

How does your university decide which deaths to recognize?

Check all types of outreach services or programs offered by the university when a death occurs:

- Death Education
 - Crisis Intervention
 - Individual Counseling
 - Group Counseling
 - University Memorial
 - None Offered
 - Other, describe all other services
-

Death Response Program

Does your institution have an identifiable written protocol for dealing with a death among your campus community (student, faculty, administration, staff)?

- Yes [Skip to 6]
- No [Skip to 9]
- Don't know [Skip to 9]

Death Response Program

In what year was your written protocol last revised?

For whom does the protocol apply? Place a check mark next to all that apply:

- Student's death
 - Faculty member's death
 - Administrator's death
 - Staff member's death
 - Other person's death, please specify:
-

Place a check mark next to each item specifically addressed in your institution's Death Response Plan:
Death Response Plan: Administrative structure

- Structured chain of command
- Identified leader (person in charge)
- Established policies for executing the death response plan (time line & responsibilities)
- Process for receiving initial death information in a central office
- Process for verifying relationship of deceased to campus community
- Verify next of kin notification of death
- Process for gathering pertinent information and facts
- Process for deciding which death(s) are recognized
- Process for sharing pertinent information and facts with the public/community
- Access for the public/community to verify information and facts

Place a check mark next to each item specifically addressed in your institution's Death Response Plan:

Death Response Plan: Notification

- Written protocol for delivering a death notification
- Internal administration communication system
- Decision structure for assessing campus safety
- Decision structure for assessing academic issues and procedures (delays, cancellations, closing, rescheduling)
- Verification that kin has been notified of the death
- Process for deciding what information is made public (academic major, picture, hometown)
- Identified media spokesperson
- Contact tree
- The protocol includes an Emergency Alert System. If checked, identify specific system component below:
 - Email Emergency Alert System
 - Telephone Emergency Alert System
 - Text Emergency Alert System
 - Face-to-Face communication
 - University's homepage
 - Signs/Posters

Place a check mark next to each item specifically addressed in your institution's Death Response Plan:

Death response Plan: Follow-up

- Provides outreach/education
- System for documentation and archiving a death
- Provides bereavement counseling and support
- Campus memorial/commemoration of death(s)
- Police and procedure for posthumous academic awards and recognition

Page 7 - Heading

Death Response Program

Page 7 - Question 32 - Yes or No

[Mandatory]

Does the protocol address who notifies the deceased's next of kin?

- Yes [Skip to 8]
- No [Skip to 9]

Page 8 - Heading

Death Response Program

Page 8 - Question 33 - Choice - Multiple Answers (Bullets)

Identify the person(s) who notify the deceased's next of kin.
Check all that apply:

- Campus President
- Campus Vice President
- Dean of Students
- Campus Mental Health Counselor
- On-campus Law Enforcement
- Death Response Team Coordinator
- Off-campus Agency

Page 8 - Question 34 - Choice - Multiple Answers (Bullets)

Who typically notifies the deceased's next of kin?
Check all that apply:

- Campus President
- Campus Vice President
- Dean of Students
- Campus Mental Health Counselor
- On-campus Law Enforcement
- Death Response Team Coordinator
- Off-campus Mental Health Counselor
- Off-campus Law Enforcement
- Fire Department
- Hospital Staff Member
- Medical Examiner's/Coroner's Office
- Other, specify the individual's title:
.....

Page 9 - Heading

Death Response Team

Page 9 - Question 35 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets)

[Mandatory]

Does your institution have an identified group of individuals who address the issue of a death among your campus community (e.g. Death Response Team)?

- Yes [Skip to 10]
- No [Skip to 15]
- Don't Know [Skip to 15]

Page 10 - Heading

Death Response Team

Page 10 - Question 36 - Choice - Multiple Answers (Bullets)

[Mandatory]

Who comprises this team? Check all that apply.

- University based mental health specialist (Counselor/Psychologist, Psychiatrist, etc.)
 - Student Affairs Personnel (V.P./Dean of Students, Residence Hall Staff and other)
 - Faculty
 - Chaplain
 - Don't Know
 - Other(s), Identify position
-

Page 10 - Question 37 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets)

[Mandatory]

Does your institution offer training to team members?

- Yes [Skip to 11]
- No [Skip to 15]
- Don't Know [Skip to 15]

Death Response Team Training

Please check all types of training that are offered to team members:

Introductory training (initial training of team members, which usually occurs when a team is initially formed):

- Death Notification
 - Crisis Intervention
 - Grief Work
 - Other, specify
-

Please check all types of training and activities that are offered to team members:

Continuing Education and Activities (On-going education and practice that assist team members in learning the most up to date practices):

- Death Notification
 - Crisis Intervention
 - Grief Work
 - Review and update of interventions by team members after a death
 - Feedback from individuals who utilized services provided by the team
 - Review and update protocol as needed
 - Other, specify
-

Death Response Team

[Mandatory]

Are you a member of your institution's death response team?

- Yes [Skip to 13]
- No [Skip to 15]

Page 13 - Heading

Death Response Team

Page 13 - Question 41 - Open Ended - One Line

How long, in years, have you been a member of your institution's death response team?

Page 13 - Question 42 - Yes or No

[Mandatory]

Have you ever delivered an initial death notification(s), regarding a death among the campus community?

- Yes [Skip to 14]
- No [Skip to 15]

Page 14 - Heading

Death Response Team

Page 14 - Question 43 - Open Ended - One Line

How many death notifications have you delivered during your career in higher education?

Page 14 - Question 44 - Open Ended - One Line

How long have you been employed in higher education(total years)?

Page 15 - Heading

Thank You for Your Participation

Page 15 - Heading

If you would you like to be emailed a comprehensive protocol that can help your campus address a death among the campus community, click the link below.
The protocol will based off of the literature and the results of the current survey.

Page 15 - Heading

Please click on the below link to enter your e-mail address. This will be forwarded in a secure form, not linked to your data.

<http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/?p=WEB229AEHAMB96>

Your information will only be used to send you a copy of the protocol unless you indicate otherwise.

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Thank you for your participation. Please close your browser.

Thank You Page

(Standard - Zoomerang branding)

Appendix D

Outstanding Death Experience

The outstanding death response experience was the center of focus in a series of questions (15- 20 in Appendix C) that were a part of the Campus Death Response Questionnaire. Responses provided quantitative and qualitative data regarding the volunteer’s reactions to a memorable death among the campus community. Each box contains the volunteer’s responses in bold type. Spelling errors in volunteer’s responses were corrected for ease of reading. An asterisk (*) indicates that information was removed to protect the volunteer’s anonymity.

Table D1. *Memorable death experience among the volunteer’s campus community*

<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Homicide Death Notification Medium: News Description of what the university did to address the death: Unknown Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: Less sensationalize. More respectable then a mass text message and email.</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Suicide Death Notification Medium: Director of Counseling contacted me to help with immediate response Description of what the university did to address the death: Student life administrators met immediately to coordinate response. Identified affected students and student groups. Contacted family. Coordinated on-campus and city police efforts. Received family and hosted them. Provided outreach, education, and death notification to students close with decedent. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: More "humane" and sensitive mass notification (email) to the entire community. Email was sent, but it was quite cold.</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Suicide Death Notification Medium: Best friend of the *friend of the student contacted personal counseling for help Description of what the university did to address the death: Advertised counseling services, higher administration attended funeral services for student on behalf of school, offered excused absences for other students who wanted to attend funeral Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: It would have been nice to have brought in a professional speaker to address the issue of suicide and mental health disorders to help raise awareness</p>

<p>Deceased: Staff Type of death: Terminal Illness Death Notification Medium: The loss is of my boss, the Director of the Counseling Center. The assistant director called my cell phone the night he found out. Description of what the university did to address the death: I am quite disappointed that Human Resources and the President of the College have not reached out to our office. However, the Dean of Student Affairs and our office notified the community via email, and our office called all his clients personally to check in. There is a plan for a memorial service to be held at the college later this month. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: Support to the staff/department where the loss happened. It was challenging as the death happened on [*Date]. Thankfully all our staff agreed to come in to be with one another on [*Date]. I was told though that had it happened during the school year, there would've been more response from administrators and the community honoring this individual right away.</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Accident Death Notification Medium: Administration, media Description of what the university did to address the death: Sent condolences to family, establish a condolences webpage, provide students, faculty, and staff with resources on grief and loss, coping when bad things happen, Counseling Center staff met with interested students and particular groups of students (brief structured support group). Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: Allow for time to pass, and service students interested in supportive services, versus bombard uninterested or not ready students with information or unwanted support groups (which were requested by administration).</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Suicide Death Notification Medium: from the news Description of what the university did to address the death: Provided Counseling Services for the faculty, students, participated in memorial and follow-up with faculty and students Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: more institutional support: as a sole counselor, I appreciate my colleagues from the community, but would have appreciated another counselor from the institution</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: suspected drug overdose Death Notification Medium: supervisor called Description of what the university did to address the death: student was found deceased in campus *[building]. council met to filter info to media. campus wide e-mail sent. deceased student's family invited to campus to debrief/connect. bookshelf donated and maintained in memory of student. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>

<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Accident Death Notification Medium: I serve on the crisis response team for the Dean of Students. I was paged by the University Police Description of what the university did to address the death: We followed our standard student death protocol. We support the student's family, friends, classmates, faculty and greater community. Things such as facilitating housing for family that came to town for the student who died and the other student that was critically injured. Notification of the student's faculty and the crisis response contact person for that student's academic college. Connected the families with the students' academic department. An honorary degree was given to the student who died. The student who was injured was given some academic considerations and accommodations until she was able to return to classes. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Suicide Death Notification Medium: Campus Police Description of what the university did to address the death: Student Development staff were on the scene and available to students and family. Counseling Center did extensive outreach to students immediately involved (eg: roommates) and to classes and other campus groups in which the student was involved. A campus-wide memorial service was held early the following semester. Notably, the younger sibling has since chosen to come to our school largely based on our response to a* sibling's death. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: Initial request was for counseling center staff to be available for family. While I saw it as appropriate to offer this, to make counseling center responsible for primary services to the family implied expectation of a pathological response unless it was requested. Other student development staff could give more helpful services and could provide this in an equally professional manner.</p>
<p>Deceased: Administration Type of death: Terminal Illness Death Notification Medium: Husband of the deceased Description of what the university did to address the death: Put out an e-mail. Held a memorial service. Dedicate a space on campus in her name. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: Given staff members closest to the person bereavement time off.</p>
<p>Deceased: Faculty Type of death: Suicide Death Notification Medium: Newspaper Description of what the university did to address the death: University representatives and students of the deceased attended the service. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: There should have been a memorial held on campus.</p>

<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Homicide Death Notification Medium: Police report Description of what the university did to address the death: Immediate response to roommates and close associates of the student by residential life, counseling center, and campus ministries staff. Held an impromptu mass for roommates and close associates and campus wide services during the days following the tragedy. Supported roommates throughout the aftermath of the death, materially (provided meals and housing for their parents), academically (worked with faculty to provide accommodations for class attendance, assignments, and final exams), psychologically (counselors were available to help them in each stage of the investigation, news reports, services, through their return to campus this fall), spiritually. Arranged for transportation for students to attend the out of town funeral services, accompanied by college administrators. Continued to address the issue for the campus throughout the semester that it occurred, honored the student at graduation. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: Some faculty were not sensitive to the degree of trauma for the roommates and would not make reasonable accommodations.</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Suicide Death Notification Medium: University VP Description of what the university did to address the death: Immediately removed students from the floor, began group support in another location as we reached out to the family, dealt with inability to get in touch for 12 hours while questions began to arise about the cause of death, finally met with the family and took them to see their child, took students to the funeral and later did a dedication on campus of a tree. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: It was the first suicide to occur in residence, and we were not as well prepared as we are now. I don't believe that we would have learned the lessons we learned without having a "first" experience.</p>
<p>Deceased: Faculty Type of death: Terminal Illness Death Notification Medium: at a meeting Description of what the university did to address the death: started a lecture series in his memory Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Faculty Type of death: Suicide Death Notification Medium: Faculty Description of what the university did to address the death: Counseling visited the faculty and the classes. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: Nothing differently by the college, but I wish the faculty member had not done this to herself nor to her students and family.</p>

Deceased: **Student**

Type of death: **Suicide**

Death Notification Medium: **Dean of students**

Description of what the university did to address the death: **We have a long protocol! Dean and chaplain informed family, counseling went to the scene to work with students, meetings were held the next day and following week for faculty, students, residence life staff, letter was sent out to parents of first year students, counseling added walk-in hours, dean dealt with registrar about grades and all administrative details, school held a 'celebration of' her life, etc.**

Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]

Deceased: **Faculty**

Type of death: **Fell down stairs at home, but autopsy indicated he was dead before he hit the bottom - heart attack.**

Death Notification Medium: **From another staff member who knew him well.**

I literally fell to my knees in her office when I heard it, as it was totally unexpected and I knew him well.

Description of what the university did to address the death: **We have 30 employees trained in CISM. Our team has not gone through the formalities to become an official CISM team, but we meet and review skills twice a year. Counselors are generally the ones who respond, as the Team comes out of the Counseling Office. I knew the deceased very well (he was an auto teach instructor for 25 years) and had many memories to share with students and staff, so I met with students on several occasions (entire class) and also with staff members individually. The students will do a memorial dedication to him in the * building this Spring. Used CISM procedures and handouts to facilitate the classroom discussions.**

Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable:

Nothing. Things went very well, MANY graduates of the program attended the visitation and funeral, as did all the currently enrolled students, faculty, administrators and staff. For a group of young men only, with no females in the class, I anticipated very little interaction, but they surprised me and were the most sharing group of students I've met with to date. Our applied science and technology program students are with each other for most of 2 years, and get to know each other very well.

Deceased: **Student**

Type of death: **Homicide**

Death Notification Medium: **School Emergency Alert System**

Description of what the university did to address the death: **Alert everyone and add patrol forces**

Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable:

Nothing can be done.

Deceased: **Student**
Type of death: **Accident**
Death Notification Medium: **Mass email/Prayer request**
Description of what the university did to address the death: **Offered counseling to the friends and housemates. Student Development (via Resident Assistant and Director) were very involved.**
Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: **The student's *[person's relationship] was driving the car that wrecked and consequently killed the * student. I think more follow up with him was needed. He was practically abandoned by his family and several students carried the weight of this burden in supporting him. Several years after the accident, he was still having * issues but never came in for counseling. It seems like Student Dev. could have been more proactive in his emotional health. He moved off campus the semester after the accident.**

Deceased: **Student**
Type of death: **Don't Know**
Death Notification Medium: **Student passed away in her room on campus. I was notified by Public Safety as a student affairs administrator.**
Description of what the university did to address the death: **provided addtl. professional, staffing and support in the student's residence hall, had drop in support center in campus center, created a memory book for students to write in, had extended hours in religious life center, had college point person to work directly with the student's family, had all campus memorial service planned by religious life, student's friends, and faculty members, provided support for staff who had been impacted,**
Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: **[N/A]**

Deceased: **Student**
Type of death: **suicide occurred fall * [added to suicide]**
Death Notification Medium: **in my role as campus mental health provider**
Description of what the university did to address the death: **-vp of student affairs, dean of students, director of residence life, campus ministry and counseling center came to campus**
-debriefing held with resident assistants, contact with students involved with this suicide, family contact, prayer service that evening, moved involved students to other residence hall if desired, etc.
Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: **non-religious rituals offered to facilitate students' grieving**

Deceased: **Administration**
Type of death: **Terminal Illness**
Death Notification Medium: **mass email announcement**
Description of what the university did to address the death: **letter of sympathy and mass**
Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: **There is no protocol for student death. Presently working on one.**

<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: heart attack of student Death Notification Medium: I am the college counselor Description of what the university did to address the death: Offered counseling to student's friends, and support and consultation with family Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Accident Death Notification Medium: Receive a call from after hours crisis team. I am a counseling center director Description of what the university did to address the death: Many things were done. Counseling services offered to students and faculty, standard condolences offered to family along with a note/flowers from our president. This was a popular student leader so a candlelight vigil was held. A scholarship was set up. Every year we hold a tree planting ceremony for all the students who have died the past academic year. Family and friends are invited back for the planting, a small ritual is held, we do have a campus minister who offers a prayer (to date no objections to that since we are a state school). Our president is *so he usually says a word about various faiths and common traditions. Much less is done when it is an unknown student. The response varies greatly depending on many factors (type of death, how many students were connected to the student and therefore impacted, the location of the death-on campus/back home, Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Accident Death Notification Medium: He was a neighbor Description of what the university did to address the death: Mass emails and announcements with condolences, moment of silence. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Homicide Death Notification Medium: email Description of what the university did to address the death: service of memory and candle vigil Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Complications from a surgery Death Notification Medium: Student's family contacted our office Description of what the university did to address the death: The University held a memorial service at the end of the term and this student was included among others. Very nice service recognizing the students who had passed in that term. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>

<p>Deceased: Faculty Type of death: Terminal Illness Death Notification Medium: Email Description of what the university did to address the death: Provided death notification; provided information about funeral arrangements Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Administration Type of death: Terminal Illness Death Notification Medium: Her department VP Description of what the university did to address the death: Sent an email to our faculty/staff listserve. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: Send flowers or make a contribution to the cancer society.</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Accident Death Notification Medium: other students Description of what the university did to address the death: counselors in classes, affiliated groups, memorial service Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: University handled it very well.</p>
<p>Deceased: A death has not occurred Type of death: [No response given] Death Notification Medium: [No response given] Description of what the university did to address the death: [No response given] Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Staff Type of death: Terminal Illness Death Notification Medium: From other staff members Description of what the university did to address the death: established an award in her name to honor her Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Faculty Type of death: [No response given] Death Notification Medium: [No response given] Description of what the university did to address the death: [No response given] Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Homicide Death Notification Medium: Campus website Description of what the university did to address the death: shut down the university and met with students most closely associated with student Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>

<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: heroin overdose Death Notification Medium: I was contacted through the crisis committee network by a housing staff member Description of what the university did to address the death: psychological counseling to friends and family, process group with residence life staff. In all campus related deaths the university chaplain offers to make a pastoral announcement to inform the community and memorial services in the university chapel if family wishes including pastoral announcement memorial Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Accident Death Notification Medium: From staff in student's department of study. Description of what the university did to address the death: Counseling staff responded to the student's department immediately. Soon after a bus trip was organized to go to her funeral. A year later, at would have been her commencement, she was memorialized briefly. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Faculty Type of death: [No response given] Death Notification Medium: [No response given] Description of what the university did to address the death: [No response given] Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Suicide Death Notification Medium: Phone call from Campus Life on call professional Description of what the university did to address the death: Provide support to students who knew the deceased via offering informational and supportive debriefing. Meetings lead by combination of Res. Life, Counseling Center and Religious Life professionals. Support provided to family of the deceased mostly via Religious Life in concert with Counseling professionals. Memorial service held on campus following the funeral which was off campus. Family, friends invited to attend, plan and participate. Help with planning provided by Religious Life. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: car accident Death Notification Medium: Residence Life Staff Description of what the university did to address the death: Student was high profile (was an * the previous year). Provided support groups to the students and staff; reached out to the parents; attended funeral service; helped parents establish a memorial fund Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>

<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Accident Death Notification Medium: staff member Description of what the university did to address the death: have campus psychologists host debrief with groups student was associated with; memorial event later in year Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: memorial event for any student death</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: congenital heart condition Death Notification Medium: notified by Medical and Admin Description of what the university did to address the death: Employed the services of chaplains and counseling center Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Accident Death Notification Medium: Students in my class found out and shared the information with me Description of what the university did to address the death: Support for the students through staff availability and counseling. There is a special ceremony once a month called Silver Taps at which any student who dies through the month previous is honored. 100s of students attend and families are invited. The ceremony is a long standing tradition and very moving. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Suicide Death Notification Medium: Phone call from Dean of Students Office Description of what the university did to address the death: Counseling center and staff from Dean of Students Office went to the department to talk with classmates in first class after the death. Counseling center and EAP met with faculty in the department to talk about the death. Counseling center, Dean of Students Office and department chair set up a large group meeting where anyone from the department could come and talk with counseling center staff. They could talk about reactions, ask questions, etc. Dean of Students Office and chair of department met with students' parents. Department had a memorial service on campus for student. Faculty from department and staff from counseling center and Dean of Students Office attended student's funeral. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Accident Death Notification Medium: Student went missing after leaving a party and we were notified by Public Safety the next morning Description of what the university did to address the death: First there was a massive search that lasted for 4 weeks. The student's body was finally recovered and a memorial service was held with ongoing counseling, outreach and consultation available from our office Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>

<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Suicide Death Notification Medium: Notified by the Dean of Students Description of what the university did to address the death: Held meetings/talking sessions for those who knew the student/lived on the same floor as the student. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Accident Death Notification Medium: called by faculty member student was missing from class, notified by police that an accident had occurred Description of what the university did to address the death: A memorial service, support groups for fellow student, individual for those directly affected, class release time to attend support options Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Terminal Illness Death Notification Medium: campus media person puts out an email to campus. If the deceased is a faculty or staff that goes only to that group. Student deaths go to everyone. Description of what the university did to address the death: email. on occasion there has been a memorial service Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Homicide Death Notification Medium: From student's department chair. Description of what the university did to address the death: The murder happened over the summer and the student was in his home state of *. The student's friends were contacted by faculty and staff in his department and a memorial was held. The student, a * major, was further memorialized in * productions throughout the subsequent year. Counselors also offered counseling (coming in during their off months in the summer) to help students process. When students returned in the fall, an additional student organized memorial was organized. Counselors offered group support. At the end of the year the student was awarded *[the] degree posthumously. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Accident Death Notification Medium: E-mail sent by Dean of Students to campus community Description of what the university did to address the death: Memorial service, memorial book and flowers placed in the student union for students and others to sign, attendance at funeral, support for affected others on campus Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>

<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Suicide Death Notification Medium: As Director of Counseling I was notified by a senior administrator Description of what the university did to address the death: On site support services for students at time of death disclosure, notification to university of death, on campus memorial service, university personnel attended funeral Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: [No response given] Death Notification Medium: [No response given] Description of what the university did to address the death: [No response given] Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Accident Death Notification Medium: Phone call from the Dean of Students. Although I heard it on the local news in the area where I live which is in a different state than the school. Description of what the university did to address the death: Had a gathering for the community. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Accident Death Notification Medium: Counseling Center Director Description of what the university did to address the death: The Vice President for Student Affairs and her staff worked with the student body to develop appropriate memorial services and other ways of honoring the dead student. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: The university handled the situation very well.</p>
<p>Deceased: Faculty Type of death: Terminal Illness Death Notification Medium: Email to campus community Description of what the university did to address the death: Prayer service, memorial gathering Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Accident Death Notification Medium: Administrator called me after the police contacted him Description of what the university did to address the death: Assembled response team then called students together and made the announcement. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>

<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Suicide Death Notification Medium: phone call during the week of Thanksgiving Description of what the university did to address the death: - email to all students, faculty and staff - memorial service followed by candlelight service Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Suicide Death Notification Medium: faculty called me Description of what the university did to address the death: faculty met with the students, gave time to discuss, students discussed over time, called caps, student seeking caps services increased Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: nothing</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Accident Death Notification Medium: crisis management team was called into session Description of what the university did to address the death: provided counseling in a residence hall as well as in the counseling center, chaplain was involved, memorial service Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Accident Death Notification Medium: Crisis response Description of what the university did to address the death: Crisis response, debriefings, etc. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Administration Type of death: Heart attack Death Notification Medium: From my supervisor Description of what the university did to address the death: Immediate contact with family; later on-campus memorial service Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Administration Type of death: Heart attack Death Notification Medium: Campus announcement Description of what the university did to address the death: held a memorial service for students, faculty and staff. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Faculty Type of death: Accident Death Notification Medium: Campus safety Description of what the university did to address the death: Press conference, student support services Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>

<p>Deceased: Faculty Type of death: sudden heart attack Death Notification Medium: word of mouth Description of what the university did to address the death: memorial service on campus, leniency in attending funeral Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Accident Death Notification Medium: The Office of Student Affairs Description of what the university did to address the death: Sent a message via e-mail to all in Student Affairs, members attended the funeral in the student's home town and we had a Memorial Service on campus Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Homicide Death Notification Medium: Phone call from colleague[,]followed by emails[,]followed by news reports Description of what the university did to address the death: Held very moving memorial service sponsored by Greek Life organizations and the Dean of Students Office, supported by Student Counseling Services (a Division of Educational Support Services in the Office of Undergraduate Studies) Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: A death has not occurred Type of death: [Did not respond] Death Notification Medium: [Did not respond] Description of what the university did to address the death: [Did not respond] Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Homicide Death Notification Medium: Word of mouth. Description of what the university did to address the death: Vigils, support groups, publicized counseling. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: [Did not respond] Death Notification Medium: [Did not respond] Description of what the university did to address the death: [Did not respond] Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: A death has not occurred Type of death: [Did not respond] Death Notification Medium: [Did not respond] Description of what the university did to address the death: [Did not respond] Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>

<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: [Did not respond] Death Notification Medium: [Did not respond] Description of what the university did to address the death: [Did not respond] Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Administration Type of death: Don't Know Death Notification Medium: mass announcement on email Description of what the university did to address the death: a memorial Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: unknown</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Homicide Death Notification Medium: on-campus news Description of what the university did to address the death: addressed campus through campus news outlets Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Homicide Death Notification Medium: news media Description of what the university did to address the death: Increased awareness, grief counselors, precautionary measures. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: na</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Homicide Death Notification Medium: news/TV Description of what the university did to address the death: memorial ceremony Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Accident Death Notification Medium: Campus email Description of what the university did to address the death: The university held a vigil and provided counseling Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: Nothing</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Accident Death Notification Medium: The counseling center was contacted. Description of what the university did to address the death: I know only of the counseling center response. On call staff were called to come to an academic building and debrief / provide support for students who knew the deceased student. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>

<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: [Did not respond] Death Notification Medium: [Did not respond] Description of what the university did to address the death: [Did not respond] Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: aneurism Death Notification Medium: phone call Description of what the university did to address the death: offered support groups, awarded a posthumous degree Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Accident Death Notification Medium: Call at home from the VP of Student Life. Description of what the university did to address the death: Convened the [*] team on Sunday morning (the student was a [*] player) with the coaches, VP Student Life, Dean of Students, campus minister and me (Director of Counseling). Prayer and talk with them about reactions and available services. The president was in touch with his family throughout the week. Later in the week, held a campus-wide memorial service. * team name removed to protect anonymity Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Terminal Illness Death Notification Medium: Parent called. Description of what the university did to address the death: Faculty and classroom notifications by Academic Dean and Director of Counseling Services. Student record frozen in database to prevent inappropriate mailing. No other action taken because the student was not known to his peers. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Accident Death Notification Medium: supervisor (director of counseling) Description of what the university did to address the death: helped students' friends create campus wide memorial service Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: drug overdoes Death Notification Medium: The student's parent Description of what the university did to address the death: sent card with condolences; the counseling and health center where student was a client sent flowers to family; athletic department where student was athlete sent appropriate sympathies Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: not sure</p>

<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Suicide Death Notification Medium: Call from the Dean of Students Office. Description of what the university did to address the death: Dean of Students Office contacted the parents. Members of the university community attended the funeral. The counseling center worked with the departmental faculty and with the students in the department. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: [Did not respond] Death Notification Medium: [Did not respond] Description of what the university did to address the death: [Did not respond] Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Homicide Death Notification Medium: News Description of what the university did to address the death: Support groups for students, increased counselor presence, increased contact with fraternities and sororities Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: A death has not occurred Type of death: [N/A] Death Notification Medium: [N/A] Description of what the university did to address the death: [N/A] Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: A death has not occurred Type of death: [N/A] Death Notification Medium: [N/A] Description of what the university did to address the death: [N/A] Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Faculty Type of death: Heart attack Death Notification Medium: School newsletter Description of what the university did to address the death: Offer counseling, prayer walk, honored his life with a get together Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Accident Death Notification Medium: An email from the Chancellor Description of what the university did to address the death: A formal email was sent from the Chancellor, counselors were available for students on campus, a ceremony was held in the chapel in her memory. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: Nothing.</p>

<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Accident Death Notification Medium: text Description of what the university did to address the death: email, memorial Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Accident Death Notification Medium: Newspaper Description of what the university did to address the death: statements Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Faculty Type of death: Terminal Illness Death Notification Medium: School website Description of what the university did to address the death: Informed faculty and student body Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Accident Death Notification Medium: While listening to his headphones, he walked out in front of an oncoming commuter train. Description of what the university did to address the death: Emergency personnel cordoned off the area (it was a high traffic spot). President sent out an email to all students, faculty, staff with reminders about being attentive on campus. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Faculty Type of death: Terminal Illness Death Notification Medium: University website Description of what the university did to address the death: A notice on the University website and a letter from the Chancellor Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: [No response given] Death Notification Medium: [No response given] Description of what the university did to address the death: [No response given] Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Suicide Death Notification Medium: Faculty listserv Description of what the university did to address the death: Offered resources counseling services to study body. Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>

<p>Deceased: Student Type of death: Suicide Death Notification Medium: The News Description of what the university did to address the death: The University held a candlelight ceremony Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: A death has not occurred Type of death: [N/A] Death Notification Medium: [N/A] Description of what the university did to address the death: [N/A] Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: A death has not occurred Type of death: [No response given] Death Notification Medium: [No response given] Description of what the university did to address the death: [No response given] Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>
<p>Deceased: [No response given] Type of death: [No response given] Death Notification Medium: [No response given] Description of what the university did to address the death: [No response given] Description of what you would have liked the university to do differently, if applicable: [N/A]</p>

A

Compassionate

Death Response Training Program ©

By Lisa M. Devore, Ph.D.
Counseling Psychology
Dept. of Special Education,
Rehabilitation, Counseling
3084 Haley Center
Auburn University

Email:
deathresponsetraining@gmail.com
devorelm@gmail.com

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A COMPASSIONATE DEATH RESPONSE TRAINING PROGRAM

Introduction

Death is a reality we all must face, and universities are no exception. When a death among the campus community occurs, a university must be able to respond to the needs of its community in a compassionate, efficient and effective manner.

A death will occur among the university community, and when it does a university needs to have a coordinated comprehensive compassionate planned response already in place. A time of crisis and chaos is not the time to “figure out” how the university can caringly address the issue of a death among its family. A comprehensive university response to a death among its family includes preparation, death response plans, death response teams that are fully prepared to execute specific responsibilities, death notification, grief issues, death education and postvention strategies. A campus needs to be prepared for the various types of deaths that may occur.

Components of A Compassionate Death Response Training Program:

1. Preparation
 - a. Strategic Planning
 - b. Trainings
 - c. Proactive measures to assist the campus community
2. Compassionate & Effective Death Response Plans & Protocols
 - a. Student
 - b. Administration
 - c. Faculty
 - d. Staff
 - e. Program Evaluation & Modification

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3. A Team Based Response Unit
 - a. Training
 - b. Protocol
 - c. Continuing Education
 - d. Program Evaluation & Modification
4. Death Notification (May be a function of the Team Based Response Unit)
 - a. Awareness Training provided for Administration, Faculty & Staff
 - b. In depth Training for Team Based Response Unit
 - c. Death Notification Protocol
 - d. Program Evaluation & Modification
5. Grief Issues
 - a. Resources/Programs provided through campus mental health services
 - i. Grief Specific Training Provided to mental health services staff
 - ii. Awareness Training provided for Administration, Faculty & Staff
 - iii. Grief Groups
 - iv. Workshops provided for students
 - b. Program Evaluation & Modification
6. Death Education
 - a. Workshops provided for students
 - b. Awareness Training provided for Administration, Faculty & Staff
 - c. Thanatology courses offered
 - i. Basic
 - ii. Advanced
 - d. Program Evaluation & Modification
7. Postvention Strategies
 - a. Team Based Response Unit
 - b. Programming
 - c. Resources
 - d. Referral Network
 - e. Program Evaluation & Modification

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Preparation

Adequately preparing for how the university will address a death among its family helps to ensure a comprehensive caring response to the situation. Strategic planning lays the foundation for the work that is ahead and offers an outline of how the training will take place. A key first step is to identify a single office that is designated to coordinate all activities related to all death among the campus community, including students, administration, faculty and staff (Callahan & Fox, 2008; Cusick, 2008; Donohue, 1977; Knott & Crafts, 1980). For many universities this will be the student affairs office and the vice-president of student affairs that functions as the primary coordinator, with at least one other person named as a back-up coordinator (Callahan et al., 2008). Once this structure is in place, any office or individual that becomes aware of a death will contact the university's coordinating office. It becomes the coordinator's job to maintain accurate records regarding a death and its handling.

As tempting as it may be to appoint university administration of mental health services, such as the director of the University counseling center, this should be avoided with good reason. The counseling center staff will likely be coordinating the team based response unit, as well as postvention activities such as providing individual and group counseling, grief counseling and providing various other support to the university community. The counseling center staff needs to be able to focus their time and energy on providing support that will assist in stabilizing the university community, after all that is where their training and resources best utilized in a crisis.

Identification of campus personnel that are qualified to train others in key areas of a death response program can be cost effective to a university. Outsourcing training is also an option. The main objective is to provide well-researched sound current training in key areas to identified personnel.

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Identifying, already implemented and needed, campus programming and resources that are proactive in prevention or responding to issues related to death can open the conversational door with the university community.

Death Response Plan

Crisis management plans are a part of many, if not all, universities. However, these plans vary greatly in their level of detail and topics covered. Wrenn (1991b) stated the following, “...there is a tremendous need on our campuses to educate ourselves, each other, and our students, faculty, and administrators about how to listen, what to say and what to do when a death occurs” (p. 54). Many of these issues are addressed through a Death Response Plan (DRP). A DRP helps to organize and coordinate who, what, when, where and how of responding to a death, thus providing structure during a time of crisis, in hopes of avoiding problems. A DRP is an operational plan that focuses on how the university system as a whole responds. “A DRP identifies who does what, when and where so that a consistent and coordinated protocol for action is followed” (Cusick, 2008, p. 557).

Team Based Response Unit

As part of a comprehensive university response, institutions may utilize team-based approaches. One such team, that is trained to respond to campus crises both human-made disasters and natural disasters, is a crisis response team. While virtually every university will have a crisis response plan, unfortunately crisis response teams are not always a part of such a plan. Furthermore, crisis response teams are not necessarily trained to deliver death notifications or to deal with the aftermath of a death among the campus community. For this specialized area, death response teams have been created. Most DRT will develop objectives, composition,

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recommendations, operational guidelines, assessment procedures and evaluative measures (Rickgarn, 1987).

Rickgarn's (1987) DRT grew out of a counseling model comprised of trained counseling volunteers, each of whom was acting within his or her scope of practice, as they responded to individuals and groups confronted with a death and wishing for or requesting to have an educational and therapeutic intervention. The DRT has the following three responsibilities: facilitating reactions to the death, follow-up, which may include consultation or counseling and a process for appropriately arranging for referrals to professional counselors. The composition of the team may be both professionals and paraprofessional and the team is in charge of recruitment, development and training.

DRTs should include counselors from a university's counseling center(s) but the team should also include the following members: administrators such as the a member form the Dean of Students office, Residence Life Staff, police both university and local law enforcement, local fire department, off campus counselors and/ or crisis center, clergy from the community, admissions staff including the administrator, a representative from the international office and clergy and/or campus ministries (Meilman et al., 2006; Scott et al., 1992; Streufert, 2004).

Dunkel and colleagues (1998) are concerned about how a large-scale crisis incident (mass casualty incident) may exhaust the university's trauma response team and its resources. This is why it is important to coordinate efforts with outside resources such as counselors and crisis centers before an incident occurs. This allows for relationships to be initiated and built upon. It also allows time to familiarize outside agencies with the structure of the university and its plan on how to handle crises, including a death among the campus community.

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Once team members are identified, they must be trained. Dunkel et al. (1998) had team members trained by the American Red Cross in a 2-day 14-hour disaster-related mental health course for mental health professionals. Scott et al. (1992) invited members to a 2-hour workshop that utilized student death scenarios. There are various models, types of response teams, and training available but there is no standardized method available to train DRT members; many are trained in crisis response and psychological first aid, which may not address how to deal with a death among the campus community, more specifically death notification and the process of grieving. A Compassionate Death Response Training Program offers standardized training that is rooted in the literature and based of the current results of the comprehensive exploratory assessment, *Campus Death Response Questionnaire*, of colleges and universities.

Death Notification

Death Notification (DN) is the practice of informing any individual or group that a death has occurred, such as next-of-kin, the student body or faculty and staff. With DN expanding to various fields, universities are not exempt from having to respond to various types of deaths. Whether notifying a student that a member of their family has died or notifying family members that their student has died, the death notification process remains the same. DN procedures can be a part various emergency plans but are an ideal fit as part of a DRP. DN is only one component of a comprehensive university response to a death among the campus community, but as Hamilton (2008) points out, “How students and family members are notified of a death can have a long-standing impact on their grief and subsequent functioning, as well as potential ramifications for the institution” (p.77). With so much at stake, the need for death notification training becomes increasingly more apparent.

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Grief Issues

Kubler-Ross (2005) stated it best:

The stages have evolved since their introduction, and they have been very misunderstood over the past three decades. They were never meant to help tuck messy emotions into neat packages. They are responses to loss that many people have, but there is not a typical response to loss, as there is no typical loss. Our grief is as individual as our lives... Not everyone goes through all of them or goes in a prescribed order (p. 7).

Kubler-Ross may have one of the most widely known theories about the stages of grief; however she is not the only one who has written on the subject of grief. When addressing grief issues and grief counseling as a component of a comprehensive university response one should research various models of grief and types of grief counseling to ascertain what is in line with the university's mission and values, as well as what will be most helpful in assisting campus community members through the process of grieving.

Death Education

Thanatology, in its basic definition, is the study of death (Taber's cyclopedic medical dictionary, 2005). Kastenbaum (1993) proposes the alternative definition: "thanatology is the study of life, with death left in" (p.76). The field of thanatology, an interdisciplinary approach, consists of various professionals from medicine, anthropology, mortuary sciences, counseling as well as other disciplines. Death Education classes may become part of a university's available courses as a way of opening the conversational door about death.

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(Sample of Training Program- for the complete program contact Lisa Devore:
deathresponsetraining@gmail.com or devorelm@gmail.com)

Postvention Strategies

Postvention strategies are actions and activities that are done to help survivors of a death; this includes, but is not limited to, a compassionate death notification, a death response team, crisis response/intervention, counseling services provided, memorials, and other services including follow-up services.

A Compassionate Death Response Training Program ©

(Sample of Training Program- for the complete program contact Lisa Devore:
deathresponsetraining@gmail.com or devorelm@gmail.com)

COMPASSIONATE & EFFECTIVE DEATH RESPONSE PROTOCOL GUIDE

Is _____ University Prepared to Respond to?

- A student dies in a motor vehicle accident.
- A faculty member murdered during a home robbery.
- A semi-truck on the highway strikes an athletic team's bus. There are multiple injuries to those involved and several deaths, including students and the assistant coach.
- A staff member, who was terminally ill, dies over the weekend.
- An administrator rushed to the hospital after collapsing during a meeting and is pronounced dead at the hospital.
- A student commits suicide over winter break.

These highlight a few incidents that _____ University may need to address. It is not a matter of if _____ University will need to address a death among its community but a matter of when our essential task is to determine if _____ University is prepared to comprehensively and compassionately address a death among its community. Through A Compassionate Death Response Training Program, © _____ University is prepared.

A Compassionate Death Response Training Program ©

(Sample of Training Program- for the complete program contact Lisa Devore:

deathresponsetraining@gmail.com or devorelm@gmail.com)

Designated Office to Respond to ALL Deaths

The office of _____ will be the point of contact for matters relating to a _____ (student, administration, faculty, staff) death among the (University name) community.

Primary Death Response Team Coordinator:

(Person Name's), (Title) will be in charge of coordinating a death among the campus community.

Duties:

Respond to all incidents of a (student, administration, faculty, staff) death. Establish working relationships with identified entities prior to a death (see working relationships below). Coordinate the response to a (student, administration, faculty, staff) death, including postvention, follow-up and record keeping.

1. Complete *Initial Student Death Information & Verification Form*
2. Verify identity of the deceased
3. Send *Internal Notification of a Student Death Form (Part 1)* to identified departments
4. Activate Death Response Team- Notify next of kin using *Student Death Notification/Initial Contact of Next of Kin*
5. Coordinate Death Notification Procedures, Actions & Responsibilities- Utilize *Student Death Notification Procedures Checklist (Part 2)*
6. Copy of Death Certificate or Obituary

Back-up Coordinator 1:

(Person's Name), (Title)

In the event that the Primary Coordinator is unavailable, the Back-up Coordinator 1 will be responsible for all of the Primary Coordinator's duties.

Back-up Coordinator 2:

(Person's Name), (Title)

In the event that the Primary Coordinator is unavailable and the Back-up Coordinator 1, the Back-up Coordinator 2 will be responsible for all of the Primary Coordinator's duties.

Head of Death Response Team:

(Person's Name), (Title) will be in charge of coordinating the university's death response team, including death notifications and outreach, accomplished through the Death Response Team Protocol. (Person's Name) is responsible for recruiting and training Death Response Team Members, or appointing someone to do so.

A Compassionate Death Response Training Program ©

(Sample of Training Program- for the complete program contact Lisa Devore:

deathresponsetraining@gmail.com or devorelm@gmail.com)

Death Response Team Resources for the University Community:

1. Responding to a Death Information Package:
 - Death Response Team contact information
 - What to expect-Common questions, concerns & reactions to a death
 - Signs and Signals of Persons in Distress
 - What Can You Do
 - Referrals- When & Where to Refer
2. Counseling Center Hours & Services Offered Flyer
3. Ways to Manage Stress

The following Working Relationships have been established with the (designated office):

Head of the Death Response Team

Death Response Team Members

University President

University Vice-President

Media Relations

University Liaison

Student's Academic Records

Student's Medical Records

Student's Finances

Student Activities & Organizations

Legal Counsel

Human Resources

Campus Ministries

Crisis Center

Local Mental Health Providers

Residence Life

International Office

Call Center

University Outreach

Alumni Relations

Recruiting Office

Law Enforcement(Local & State)

Fire Department/Services (Local & State)

Local Hospitals

Local Religious Persons

Coroner/Medical Examiner

Local Morgue

Local Funeral Homes

Stakeholders of the Deceased

Other Stakeholders: _____

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(Sample of Training Program- for the complete program contact Lisa Devore:
deathresponsetraining@gmail.com or devorelm@gmail.com)

Death Response Plan Contact Information

Contact Information for all offices or agencies that are involved in the Death Response Plan, including contacts outside of the university.

*Denotes the preferred form of initial contact.

Coordinator:

(Person Name), (Title)

(University Office)

Address:

E-mail*:

Office Phone*:

Cell Phone*-after hours:

Other Phone:

Pager Number:

Fax Number:

Back-up Coordinator 1:

Back-up Coordinator 2:

Head of the Death Response Team:

(Person Name), (Title)

(University Office)

Contact information

Death Response Team Members:

Lead Team Member

License #

Team Members

License #

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deathresponsetraining@gmail.com or devorelm@gmail.com)

All Persons listed under Working Relationships will have their contact information listed below, using the manner above. Additional information indicated below:

University President

University Vice-President

Media Relations

University Liaison

Student's Academic Records

Student's Medical Records

Student's Finances

Student Activities & Organizations

Legal Counsel

Human Resources

Crisis Center

Campus Ministries

Crisis Center

Local Mental Health Providers

License #

Residence Life:

International Office:

Call Center:

University Outreach:

Alumni Relations

Recruiting Office

Law Enforcement(Local & State)

Fire Department/Services (Local & State)

Local Hospitals

Emergency Room Information

Local Religious Persons

Coroner/Medical Examiner

Local Morgue

Local Funeral Homes

Stakeholders of the Deceased

Other stakeholders: _____

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Sample of Training Program- for the complete program contact Lisa Devore:
deathresponsetraining@gmail.com or devorelm@gmail.com)

Initial Student Death Information & Verification Form

Date of Information Received _____

Name of Person Reporting the Death: _____

Contact Information- Phone Number: _____

E-Mail: _____

How death was learned: _____

- The next of kin already been notified of the death by (police, hospital, etc): Police
- Check if a Mass Casualty Incident (Identify Incident): _____
 - Activate Crisis Response Protocol for a Mass Casualty

Deceased Information

Full Name (First Middle Last Name): _____

Age: years old Sex: Male Female

- Consent for Photo of Deceased (consult with next of kin prior to releasing)

Identification Number: _____

- Other students with the same name as deceased, verified through Registrar Office:

- Contact same name student and their family.

Enrollment Status (last enrolled): _____

College, Major & Class: _____

Contact Person for College & Major: _____

Date of Death: _____

Suspected Cause of Death: _____

Local Address of Deceased: On-Campus Off-Campus

- Verified identity of the deceased

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Sample of Training Program- for the complete program contact Lisa Devore:
deathresponsetraining@gmail.com or devorelm@gmail.com)

Initial (Administration/Faculty/Staff) Death Information & Verification Form

Date of Information Received _____

Name of Person Reporting the Death: _____

Contact Information- Phone Number: _____

E-Mail: _____

How death was learned: _____

- The next of kin already been notified of the death by (police, hospital, etc): Police
- Check if a Mass Casualty Incident (Identify Incident): _____
 - Activate Crisis Response Protocol for a Mass Casualty

Deceased Information

Full Name (First Middle Last Name): _____

Age: _____ years old Sex: Male Female

- Consent for Photo of Deceased (consult with next of kin prior to releasing)

Identification Number: _____

- Other (Administration/Faculty/Staff) with the same name as deceased, verified through Human Resource Office:

- Contact same name (Administration/Faculty/Staff)

Department Employed Through: _____

Contact Person for Deceased Department: _____

Date of Death: _____

Suspected Cause of Death: _____

Address of deceased: On-Campus Off-Campus

- Verified identity of the deceased

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(Student, Administration/Faculty/Staff) Death Notification/Initial Contact of Next of Kin

Legal Sequence: Spouse, Parent, Child over 18 years of age, Sibling, Other Relative

(Legal sequence varies by state & should be verified by University Legal Counsel)

Name (& Relationship) of Next of Kin: _____

* Used to denote designated family member(s) to which information will be communicated and a relationship established

Next of Kin Address:

Next of Kin Phone Numbers:

Name (Relationship):

Type: Home Cell Work Other:_____

Number: () -

Type: Home Cell Work Other:_____

Number: () -

Name (Relationship):

Type: Home Cell Work Other:_____

Number: () -

Type: Home Cell Work Other:_____

Number: () -

- Next of Kin already notified of the death, contact & establish a relationship with primary contact person. DATE CONTACTED & BY WHOM: _____
- Next of Kin NOT notified of the death, notify Next of Kin following Death Notification Protocol & establish a relationship with primary contact person

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Additional Stakeholders of the Deceased Student

Additional Next-of-Kin: **Person's Name** (Relationship to the Deceased) additional information

Roommates/Floormates/Friends:

On-campus Affiliations:

Classmates:

Teammates:

Off-Campus Affiliations, such as an employer:

Other: _____

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Additional Stakeholders of the Deceased (Administration/Faculty/Staff)

Additional Next-of-Kin: **Person's Name** (Relationship to the Deceased) additional information

Colleagues:

Advisees/Student Workers:

On-campus Affiliations with Student Organizations:

On-campus Affiliations with Non-Student Organizations/Boards/Committees:

Other:

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Internal Notification of a Student Death

(Part 1)

Full Name (First Middle Last Name): _____

Age: years old Sex: Male Female

Photo of Deceased (consult with next of kin prior to releasing)

Identification Number: _____

Enrollment Status (last enrolled): _____

College, Major & Class: _____

Contact Person: _____

Date of Death: _____

Suspected Cause of Death: _____

Enrollment Status: _____

Local Address of Deceased: On-Campus Off-Campus

Next-of-Kin that are able to access deceased information:

Name & Relationship:

Name & Relationship:

Death Certificate/Obituary Included

Special Concerns: _____

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**Internal Notification of a (Administration/Faculty/Staff) Death
(Part 1)**

Full Name (First Middle Last Name): _____

Age: years old Sex: Male Female

Photo of Deceased (consult with next of kin prior to releasing)

Identification Number: _____

Department Employed Through: _____

 Contact Person for Deceased Department: _____

Date of Death: _____

Suspected Cause of Death: _____

Address of Deceased: On-Campus Off-Campus

Next-of-Kin that are able to access deceased information:

 Name & Relationship:

 Name & Relationship:

Death Certificate/Obituary Included (Obtained from family)

Special Concerns: _____

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Student Death Notification Procedures Checklist
(Part 2)

Actions and responsibilities taken by specified departments:

Office of the President:

- Send condolences in accordance to university policy
- Send university representatives to attend funeral/memorial of deceased in accordance to university policy
- University's policy regarding tuition reimbursement & withdrawal for deceased students
- University's policy on what costs they will absorb, such as travel and lodging of next-of-kin, and the institution's commitment to memorials.
- When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary (Student, Faculty, Administration, or Staff) Death Response Coordinator

University Liaison to the deceased family (may be a representative from Student Affairs Office):

- Work with next-of-kin to help make arrangements for deceased belongings
- When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary (Student, Faculty, Administration, or Staff) Death Response Coordinator

Counseling/Psychological Services:

- Activation of Death Response Team
- Assist with outreach to impacted populations
- When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary (Student, Faculty, Administration, or Staff) Death Response Coordinator

Bursar's Office:

- Tuition reimbursement & withdrawal for deceased students
- Student Loans
- Stop billing on deceased student's account
- Policy regarding fines & fees, such parking tickets, library materials, printing charges
- When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary (Student, Faculty, Administration, or Staff) Death Response Coordinator

Registrar's Office (if applicable):

- Notation made on transcripts that the student is deceased
- Student Records sealed and no longer accessible through student database
- Consider changing deceased address to Registrar Office Address with the purpose of preventing unfortunate University correspondence from being sent to the deceased home.
- When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary (Student, Faculty, Administration, or Staff) Death Response Coordinator

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Parking Services:

- Policy regarding unpaid parking tickets
- Policy regarding refund for parking permit
- Information regarding vehicles registered to the deceased, such as a motor vehicle, bicycle or scooter.
- When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary (Student, Faculty, Administration, or Staff) Death Response Coordinator

Library Services:

- Policy regarding materials checked out to the deceased
- When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary (Student, Faculty, Administration, or Staff) Death Response Coordinator

Office of Internet & Technology:

- Notation made on E-mail account student is deceased
- Follow university policy on what message is send to indicate that the student's email has been stopped
- Follow university policy on who can access the deceased student's email account
- When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary (Student, Faculty, Administration, or Staff) Death Response Coordinator

Student Activities/Student Life Office:

- Verify (Student, Faculty, Administration, or Staff) involvement is deceased
- Provide outreach to impacted populations, consider ***Responding to a Death Information Package***
- Work with student organizations & department of the deceased to coordinate memorials if appropriate
- When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary (Student, Faculty, Administration, or Staff) Death Response Coordinator

Department Chair:

- Notify deceased academic advisor (if applicable)
- Notify deceased current professors/colleagues or contact appropriate department chair to notify current professors/colleagues, include ***Responding to a Death Information Package***
- Work with student organizations & department of the deceased to coordinate memorials if appropriate
- University policy for Posthumous Degree (if applicable)
- When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary (Student, Faculty, Administration, or Staff) Death Response Coordinator

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deathresponsetraining@gmail.com or devorelm@gmail.com)

University Housing (if deceased lived in campus housing):

- Notify staff of deceased person, include *Responding to a Death Information Package*
- Secured personal belongings, use *Personal Belonging Inventory*
- Locks changed, keys secured
- Arrangements made for maintenance- University Policy regarding who pays for such work
- Arrangements made clean-up, including hazardous materials (blood)- University Policy regarding who pays for such work
- Provide outreach to impacted populations
 - Arrange for Death Response Team to assist with crisis response for residents, including those closest to the deceased such as roommates, significant others, friends, teammates, those involved in the same organizations and classmates.
- Follow university policy on what message is send to indicate that the student's email has been stopped
- Follow university policy on who can access the deceased student's email account
 - When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary (Student, Faculty, Administration, or Staff) Death Response Coordinator

Media Relations:

- Verify next of kin has been notified prior to releasing deceased information, if at all possible
- Handle all media announcements
- Contact person for all incoming inquiries regarding the deceased
- Follow university policy on how the death notification will be made to the campus community
 - When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary (Student, Faculty, Administration, or Staff) Death Response Coordinator

Risk Management:

- Address safety concerns
- Consultation provided as needed
 - When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary (Student, Faculty, Administration, or Staff) Death Response Coordinator

Public Safety:

- Address safety concerns
- Consultation provided as needed
 - When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary (Student, Faculty, Administration, or Staff) Death Response Coordinator

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deathresponsetraining@gmail.com or devorelm@gmail.com)

International Office:

- Assist with contact with next of kin, provide interpreters if needed
- Immigration concerns
- Consultation provided as needed
 - When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary (Student, Faculty, Administration, or Staff) Death Response Coordinator

Legal Counsel:

- What information will be shared and with whom about the deceased , since the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) may not apply to deceased students
- Section 504 of the American Rehabilitation Act (ARA) may require campuses to respond to campus death(s). Bernard and Bernard (1985) discussed that trauma caused by grief may qualify as a disability.
- Consultation provided as needed
 - When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary (Student, Faculty, Administration, or Staff) Death Response Coordinator

Human Resources:

- If deceased was a university employee, unpaid earnings sent to estate
- Consultation provided as needed
 - When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary (Student, Faculty, Administration, or Staff) Death Response Coordinator

Health Services:

- Achieve deceased medical records
- If on University insurance policy, check eligibility for accidental death coverage
- Consultation provided as needed
 - When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary (Student, Faculty, Administration, or Staff) Death Response Coordinator

Alumni Relations:

- Remove deceased from contact list.
- Consider a condolence letter from Alumni Association.
 - When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary (Student, Faculty, Administration, or Staff) Death Response Coordinator

Fund Raising:

- Remove deceased from contact list.
 - When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary (Student, Faculty, Administration, or Staff) Death Response Coordinator

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Compassionate

Death Response Training Program ©

SAMPLE

By Lisa M. Devore, Ph.D.
Counseling Psychology
Dept. of Special Education,
Rehabilitation, Counseling
3084 Haley Center
Auburn University

Email:
deathresponsetraining@gmail.com
devorelm@gmail.com

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deathresponsetraining@gmail.com or devorelm@gmail.com)

Sample Student Death Response Protocol

The following document is a sample student death response protocol from *A Compassionate Death Response Training Program*. The sample document was completed using fictitious information and serves as an example of what the document may look like once completed. In the sample student death protocol italicized wording represents the material that has been completed. A Compassionate Death Response Training Program© material is copy written, however permission is given to use the sample student death response protocol, in part or fully, as long as the author is given credit for its creation.

Progressive University

Student Death Response Protocol© 2010 Lisa M. Devore

Is *Progressive University* Prepared to Respond to?

- A student dies in a motor vehicle accident.
- A faculty member murdered during a home robbery.
- A semi-truck on the highway strikes an athletic team's bus. There are multiple injuries to those involved and several deaths, including students and the assistant coach.
- A staff member, who was terminally ill, dies over the weekend.
- An administrator rushed to the hospital after collapsing during a meeting and is pronounced dead at the hospital.
- A student commits suicide over winter break.

These highlight a few incidents that *Progressive University* may need to address. It is not a matter of if *Progressive University* will need to address a death among its community but a matter of when our essential task is to determine if *Progressive University* is prepared to comprehensively and compassionately address a death among its community. Through A Compassionate Death Response Training Program, © *Progressive University* is prepared.

Progressive University

Student Death Response Protocol© 2010 Lisa M. Devore

Designated Office to Respond to ALL Deaths

The office of *Student Affairs* will be the point of contact for matters relating to a *student* death among the *Progressive University* community.

Primary Death Response Team Coordinator:

Dr. Reese Ponsible, VP of Student Affairs will be in charge of coordinating a death among the campus community.

Duties:

Respond to all incidents of a student death. Establish working relationships with identified entities prior to a death (see working relationships below). Coordinate the response to a student death, including postvention, follow-up and record keeping.

1. Complete *Initial Student Death Information & Verification Form*
2. Verify identity of the deceased
3. Send *Internal Notification of a Student Death Form (Part 1)* to identified departments
4. Activate Death Response Team- Notify next of kin using *Student Death Notification/Initial Contact of Next of Kin*
5. Coordinate Death Notification Procedures, Actions & Responsibilities- Utilize *Student Death Notification Procedures Checklist (Part 2)*
6. Copy of Death Certificate or Obituary

Back-up Coordinator 1:

Dr. Sek Cond, (Executive Director of Student Life)

In the event that the Primary Coordinator is unavailable, the Back-up Coordinator 1 will be responsible for all of the Primary Coordinator's duties.

Back-up Coordinator 2:

Dr. Iam Therd, (Executive Director of Student Services)

In the event that the Primary Coordinator is unavailable and the Back-up Coordinator 1, the Back-up Coordinator 2 will be responsible for all of the Primary Coordinator's duties.

Head of Death Response Team:

Dr. Phil Good, University Health Center Director will be in charge of coordinating the university's death response team, including death notifications and outreach, accomplished through the Death Response Team Protocol. Dr. Phil Good is responsible for recruiting and training Death Response Team Members, or appointing someone to do so.

Progressive University

Student Death Response Protocol© 2010 Lisa M. Devore

Death Response Team Resources for the University Community:

1. Responding to a Death Information Package:
 - Death Response Team contact information
 - What to expect-Common questions, concerns & reactions to a death
 - Signs and Signals of Persons in Distress
 - What Can You Do
 - Referrals- When & Where to Refer
2. Counseling Center Hours & Services Offered Flyer
3. Ways to Manage Stress

The following Working Relationships have been established with the Student Affairs Office:

University President: *Dr Imtha Man*

University Vice-President

Media Relations

University Liaison

Head of the Death Response Team

Death Response Team Members

Student's Academic Records

Student's Medical Records

Student's Finances

Student Activities & Organizations

Legal Counsel

Human Resources

University Law Enforcement

State Law Enforcement

Local Fire Department/Services

State Fire Marshal's Office

Progressive Town Hospital

Local Religious Persons

Coroner/Medical Examiner

Crisis Center

Local Mental Health Providers

Local Morgue

Local Funeral Homes

Stakeholders of the Deceased

Other stakeholders: _____

Progressive University

Student Death Response Protocol© 2010 Lisa M. Devore

Death Response Plan Contact Information

Contact Information for all offices or agencies that are involved in the Death Response Plan, including contacts outside of the university.

*Denotes the preferred form of initial contact.

Coordinator:

Dr. Reese Ponsible, VP of Student Affairs

Student Affairs Office

Address: 123 University Place

E-mail*: ReesePonsible@progressive.edu

Office Phone*: (123) 456-7890

Cell Phone*-after hours: (123) 222-3465

Other Phone: (123) 456-7000

Fax Number: (123) 456-7999

Back-up Coordinator 1:

Dr. Sek Cond, Executive Director of Student Life

Student Affairs Office

Address: 123 University Place

E-mail*: SekCond@progressive.edu

Office Phone*: (123) 456-7891

Cell Phone*-after hours: (123) 222-3466

Other Phone: (123) 456-7000

Fax Number: (123) 456-7999

Back-up Coordinator 2:

Dr. Iam Therd, Executive Director of Student Services

Student Affairs Office

Address: 123 University Place

E-mail*: IamTherd@progressive.edu

Office Phone*: (123) 456-7892

Cell Phone*-after hours: (123) 222-3467

Other Phone: (123) 456-7000

Fax Number: (123) 456-7999

Progressive University

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Head of the Death Response Team:

Dr. Phil Good, University Health Center Director

University Medical Center

Address: 555 University Medical Place

E-mail*: PhilGood@progressive.edu

Office Phone*: (123) 456-1222

Cell Phone*-after hours: (123) 222-3765

Other Phone: (123) 456-9000

Fax Number: (123) 456-8999

Death Response Team Members:

Frank Smith, Ph.D. - Lead Team Member

License #: *One13*

University Counseling Center Director

Address: 555 University Medical Place

E-mail*: PhilGood@progressive.edu

Office Phone*: (123) 456-1222

Cell Phone*-after hours: (123) 222-3765

Other Phone: (123) 456-9000

Fax Number: (123) 456-8999

Joe Frank, LPCC- **Team Member**

License #: *One435*

(listed in the same manner as above contact information)

All Persons listed under Working Relationships will have their contact information listed below, using the manner above. Additional information indicated below:

University President

Media Relations

Student's Academic Records

Student's Finances

Legal Counsel

Crisis Center

Crisis Center

Local Mental Health Providers

License #

University Outreach

Recruiting Office

Fire Department/Services (Local & State)

Local Hospitals

Emergency Room Information

Local Funeral Homes

Other stakeholders: _____

University Vice-President

University Liaison

Student's Medical Records

Student Activities & Organizations

Human Resources

Campus Ministries

International Office

Residence Life

Call Center

Alumni Relations

Law Enforcement(Local & State)

Local Religious Persons

Coroner/Medical Examiner

Local Morgue

Stakeholders of the Deceased

Progressive University

Student Death Response Protocol© 2010 Lisa M. Devore

Initial Student Death Information & Verification Form

Date of Information Received: *May 1, 2010*

Name of Person Reporting the Death: *Progressive Town Chief of Police, Chief B. Williams*

Contact Information- Phone Number: *(123) 333-3333*

E-Mail: *ChiefWilliams@ProgressivePolice.gov*

How death was learned: *We responded to a motor vehicle accident at 2:30 AM this morning. Passengers were under the influence of alcohol, 2 are students. We'll know more after the coroner gives us the report.*

- The next of kin already been notified of the death by (police, hospital, etc)
- Check if a Mass Casualty Incident (Identify Incident): _____
- Activate Crisis Response Protocol for a Mass Casualty

Deceased Information

Full Name (First Middle Last Name): *Joe M. Smith*

Age: *19 years old* Sex: **Male** Female

- Consent for Photo of Deceased (consult with next of kin prior to releasing)

Identification Number: *123456789*

- Other students with the same name as deceased, verified through Registrar Office:

Joe S. Smith Jr., Joe K Smith

- Contact same name student and their family.

Enrollment Status (last enrolled): *Enrolled Spring Semester 2010*

College, Major & Class: *College of Education- Secondary Education- Sophomore*

Contact Person: *Dr. Jones Pages*

Date of Death: *May 1, 2010*

Suspected Cause of Death: *Motor Vehicle Accident, possible involvement of alcohol. Waiting for Coroner's Report*

Local Address of Deceased: **On-Campus** Off-Campus

Upper Classman Dorm 1st Floor, Room 111

- Verified identity of the deceased

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Student Death Notification/Initial Contact of Next of Kin

Legal Sequence: Spouse, Parent, Child over 18 years of age, Sibling, Other Relative

Name (& Relationship) of Next of Kin: *Mr. Frank Smith (Father)* & Mrs. Anna Smith (Mother)*

* Used to denote designated family member(s) to which information will be communicated and a relationship established

Next of Kin Address:

456 Peaceful Lane

Somewhere, ST 44444

Next of Kin Phone Numbers:

Name (Relationship): *Mr. Frank Smith (Father)**

Type: **Home** Cell Work Other: _____

Number: *(222) 345-0000*

Type: Home **Cell** Work Other: _____

Number: *(222) 717-1234*

Name (Relationship): *Mrs. Anna Smith (Mother)*

Type: **Home** Cell Work Other: _____

Number: *(222) 345-0000*

Type: Home **Cell** Work Other: _____

Number: *(222) 717-6578*

Next of Kin already notified of the death, contact & establish a relationship with primary contact person. DATE CONTACTED & BY WHOM: *May 1, 2010 by Dr. Phil Good Head of Death Response Team*

Next of Kin NOT notified of the death, notify Next of Kin following Death Notification Protocol & establish a relationship with primary contact person

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Additional Stakeholders of the Deceased Student

Additional Next-of-Kin: **Person's Name** (Relationship to the Deceased) additional information

Brother: Sam Smith 17 years old

Roommates/Floormates/Friends: *Drew Jones (Roommate); Jane Johnson (Girlfriend); Sam Gillman (Friend)*

On-campus Affiliations: *VP of Student Senate, Future Teachers Helping Students Succeed*

Classmates: *HIST 101 sect 1; MATH 400, sect 7; SEDU 312, sect 2; PHIL 101, Sect 4*

Teammates: *Not applicable*

Off-Campus Affiliations, such as an employer: *None known at this time.*

Other: *Other Progressive University student involved in motor vehicle accident*

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Sample Protocol- for the complete training program contact Lisa Devore:
deathresponsetraining@gmail.com or devorelm@gmail.com)

Internal Notification of a Student Death

(Part 1)

Full Name (First Middle Last Name): *Joe M. Smith*

Age: *19 years old* Sex: **Male** Female

Consent for Photo of Deceased (consult with next of kin prior to releasing)

Identification Number: *123456789*

Enrollment Status (last enrolled): *Enrolled Spring Semester 2010*

College, Major & Class: *College of Education- Secondary Education- Sophomore*

Contact Person: *Dr. Jones Pages*

Date of Death: *May 1, 2010*

Suspected Cause of Death: *Motor Vehicle Accident, possible involvement of alcohol. Waiting for Coroner's Report*

Local Address of Deceased: **On-Campus** Off-Campus

Upper Classman Dorm

1st Floor, Room 111

Next-of-Kin that are able to access deceased information:

Name & Relationship: *Mr. Frank Smith (Father)*

Name & Relationship: *Mrs. Anna Smith (Mother)*

Death Certificate/Obituary Included

Special Concerns: Possible alcohol related death & its impact on the campus community

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Student Death Notification and Procedure Checklist

(Part 2)

Actions and responsibilities taken by specified departments:

Office of the President:

- Send condolences in accordance to university policy
- Send university representatives to attend funeral/memorial of deceased in accordance to university policy
- University's policy regarding tuition reimbursement & withdrawal for deceased students
- University's policy on what costs they will absorb, such as travel and lodging of next-of-kin, and the institution's commitment to memorials.
- When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary Student Death Response Coordinator

University Liaison to the deceased family (may be a representative from Student Affairs Office):

- Work with next-of-kin to help make arrangements for deceased belongings
- When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary Student Death Response Coordinator

Counseling/Psychological Services:

- Activation of Death Response Team
- Assist with outreach to impacted populations
- When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary Student Death Response Coordinator

Bursar's Office:

- Tuition reimbursement & withdrawal for deceased students
- Student Loans
- Stop billing on deceased student's account
- Policy regarding fines & fees, such parking tickets, library materials, printing charges
- When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary Student Death Response Coordinator

Registrar's Office:

- Notation made on transcripts that the student is deceased
- Student Records sealed and no longer accessible through student database
- Consider changing deceased address to Registrar Office Address with the purpose of preventing unfortunate University correspondence from being sent to the deceased home.
- When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary Student Death Response Coordinator

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Parking Services:

- Policy regarding unpaid parking tickets
- Policy regarding refund for parking permit
- Information regarding vehicles registered to the deceased, such as a motor vehicle, bicycle or scooter.
- When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary Student Death Response Coordinator

Library Services:

- Policy regarding materials checked out to the deceased
- When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary Student Death Response Coordinator

Office of Internet & Technology:

- Notation made on E-mail account student is deceased
- Follow university policy on what message is send to indicate that the student's email has been stopped
- Follow university policy on who can access the deceased student's email account
- When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary Student Death Response Coordinator

Student Activities/Student Life Office:

- Verify student involvement is deceased
- Provide outreach to impacted populations, consider *Responding to a Death Information Package*
- Work with student organizations & department of the deceased to coordinate memorials if appropriate
- When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary Student Death Response Coordinator

Department Chair:

- Notify deceased academic advisor
- Notify deceased current professors or contact appropriate department chair to notify current professors, include *Responding to a Death Information Package*
- Work with student organizations & department of the deceased to coordinate memorials if appropriate
- University policy for Posthumous Degree
- When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary Student Death Response Coordinator

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University Housing (if deceased lived in campus housing):

- Notify staff of deceased person, include *Responding to a Death Information Package*
- Secured personal belongings, use *Personal Belonging Inventory*
- Locks changed, keys secured
- Arrangements made for maintenance- University Policy regarding who pays for such work
- Arrangements made clean-up, including hazardous materials (blood)- University Policy regarding who pays for such work
- Provide outreach to impacted populations
 - Arrange for Death Response Team to assist with crisis response for residents, including those closest to the deceased such as roommates, significant others, friends, teammates, those involved in the same organizations and classmates.
- Follow university policy on what message is send to indicate that the student's email has been stopped
- Follow university policy on who can access the deceased student's email account
 - When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary Student Death Response Coordinator

Media Relations:

- Verify next of kin has been notified prior to releasing deceased information, if at all possible
- Handle all media announcements
- Contact person for all incoming inquiries regarding the deceased
- Follow university policy on how the death notification will be made to the campus community
 - When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary Student Death Response Coordinator

Risk Management:

- Address safety concerns
- Consultation provided as needed
 - When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary Student Death Response Coordinator

Public Safety:

- Address safety concerns
- Consultation provided as needed
 - When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary Student Death Response Coordinator

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International Office:

- Assist with contact with next of kin, provide interpreters if needed
- Immigration concerns
- Consultation provided as needed
 - When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary Student Death Response Coordinator

Legal Counsel:

- What information will be shared and with whom about the deceased , since the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) may not apply to deceased students
- Section 504 of the American Rehabilitation Act (ARA) may require campuses to respond to campus death(s). Bernard and Bernard (1985) discussed that trauma caused by grief may qualify as a disability.
- Consultation provided as needed
 - When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary Student Death Response Coordinator

Human Resources:

- If deceased was a university employee, unpaid earnings sent to estate
- Consultation provided as needed
 - When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary Student Death Response Coordinator

Health Services:

- Achieve deceased medical records
- If on University insurance policy, check eligibility for accidental death coverage
- Consultation provided as needed
 - When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary Student Death Response Coordinator

Alumni Relations:

- Remove deceased from contact list.
- Consider a condolence letter from Alumni Association.
 - When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary Student Death Response Coordinator

Fund Raising:

- Remove deceased from contact list.
- When completed a verification is to be sent to the Primary Student Death Response Coordinator

