

Policy 1315

Notification Regarding Death

Date of Current Revision: December 2020

Responsible Officer: Executive Advisor to the President

1. PURPOSE

This policy provides for the proper notification to the university community regarding the death of a member of the university community. It will facilitate an appropriate response and record the information in university databases.

2. AUTHORITY

The Board of Visitors has been authorized by the Commonwealth of Virginia to govern James Madison University. See Code of Virginia § 23.1-1600; § 23.1-1301. The Board has delegated the authority to manage the university to the president.

3. DEFINITIONS

Member of the University Community:

For the purposes of this policy, a faculty member, staff member, student, alumnus, parent, donor, or other individual affiliated with the university.

4. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all members of the university community.

5. POLICY

The university wishes to respond appropriately when it is notified of the death of a member of the university community. When a vice president or the executive advisor to the president is notified that a member of the James Madison University community has died, the university will follow a specific set of procedures for the appropriate response.

6. PROCEDURES

A member of the university community who learns of the death of a faculty member, staff member, current student, alumnus, parent, donor, or other individual affiliated with the university should notify the following office according to the connection between the university and the decedent:

- Current or former faculty member: Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Current student: JMU Public Safety
- Current or former staff member: Appropriate senior vice president, vice president, or the executive advisor to the president
- Current or former parent, donor, alumnus/a, former student, or other external affiliation: Vice President for University Advancement

The vice president or executive advisor to the president will verify the information, as appropriate. Notification will be forwarded to the President's Office, University Communications and Marketing, and the other vice presidents and the executive advisor to the president. Each vice president shall be responsible

for notifying areas within their division that need to have this information to maintain the accuracy of the university's internal records:

- Current Students: University Registrar; Dean of Students; Academic Unit Head; Academic Advisor; Current Instructors
- Current Faculty or Staff: Human Resources; Advancement Gifts & Records; College Dean, if appropriate
- Parent, donor, alumnus/a or other external affiliation: Advancement Gifts & Records
- Former students (non-graduate): Dean of Students; Advancement Gifts & Records

To facilitate the university's response to the death, the respective vice president will coordinate with the president's office and communicate with units and departments, as appropriate, for attendance at the funeral or memorial service, correspondence with the family, contribution/donation (i.e., a memorial or scholarship fund), or floral arrangement. The respective vice president or executive advisor to the president may also be involved in the coordination of a campus memorial service based on request from members of the student community. Individual divisions, departments and offices will coordinate their individual responses and participation as appropriate and will follow university policies.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of all members of the university community to notify the appropriate persons as soon as possible in the event of the death of a member of the university community.

It is the responsibility of the appropriate vice president or executive assistant to the president to coordinate the university's response with the president's office and to notify university communications and marketing.

It is the responsibility of individual units or departments to contact the office of the appropriate person before responding to the news of the death.

All departments, offices, and employees that generate, receive, or maintain public records under the terms of this policy are also responsible for compliance with [Policy 1109](#) - Records Management.

8. SANCTIONS

None.

9. EXCLUSIONS

None.

10. INTERPRETATION

The authority to interpret this policy rests with the president and is generally delegated to the executive advisor to the president.

Previous version: November 2013
Approved by the President: August 2003

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