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| Classification | |
| Parent Policy | |
| Framework Category | |
| Approving Authority | |
| Policy Owner | |
| Approval Date | |
| Review Date | |
| Last revised | |
| Supersedes | |

MISSING STUDENT PROCEDURES



PURPOSE

1. The Missing Student Procedures outlines the administrative processes and responsibilities of various university departments/officials as they relate to reporting, collecting information, investigating and the disseminating information to assist in locating a Student, who based on facts and circumstances known to the university, is deemed to be missing.

DEFINITIONS

2. “Complainant” means any individual contacting the university to report a missing person. This could be a friend, relative, instructor, university member etc.

“Response Team” means Deputy Provost, Director, Office of Campus Safety and Legal Counsel.

“Student” means any individual registered as a Student, in accordance with the academic regulations of the University.

“University Member” means any individual who is:

- Employed by the University (“Employee”);
- Faculty teaching at the University (“Faculty”);
- Registered as a Student (“Student”);
- Holding an appointment with the University, including paid, unpaid and/or honorific appointments; and/or
- Otherwise subject to University policies by virtue of the requirements of a specific policy (e.g. Booking and Use of University Space) and/or the terms of an agreement or contract.

SCOPE AND AUTHORITY

3. These Procedures apply to all University Members at the University.
4. The Provost and Vice President Academic, or successor thereof, is the Policy Owner and is responsible for overseeing the implementation, administration and interpretation of these Procedures.

PROCEDURES

5. Primary Response

- 5.1. If a University Member has reason to believe, or has received a report from a Complainant that a Student might be missing, the matter must immediately be reported to the Deputy Provost.

The following information about the Student should be requested and provided, if known, as part of the report:

- o Full legal name;
- o Date of birth;
- o Address;
- o Contact information;
- o Faculty, program and year of study;
- o The date, time and location the missing Student was last seen;
- o Any recent changes in behaviour, schedule or routine; and
- o Any involvement or participation in university clubs, societies, student union committees, athletic teams or other extra-curricular activities

The report should also include the Complainant's name, contact information, and relationship to the Student.

The Complainant should be encouraged to report the missing Student to the local police authorities if they have not already done so at the time of making the report.

- 5.2. The Deputy Provost will promptly notify the Provost and Vice-President Academic, the Dean of the Faculty in which the Student is registered, the Director, Office of Campus Safety (OCS) and the University Secretary and General Counsel who will appoint Legal Counsel.
- 5.3. The Deputy Provost will lead and coordinate the Response Team. The Response Team is responsible to investigate the missing person report by engaging with appropriate internal and external stakeholders who may have relevant information; and to coordinate the university's response to the missing persons report.
- 5.4. The Response Team will review the information contained in the Complainant's report, along with the circumstances surrounding the report with a view to assessing the credibility and veracity of the report and determining whether it merits further inquiry. If the report is considered credible on its face, or if more information is required, the Response Team will continue to perform its duties as outlined in this policy. A report that is not credible will not be investigated further.
- 5.5. The Response Team will identify a university member to acknowledge receipt of the report, commit to action and who will follow-up with the Complainant as appropriate.

Commented [MG1]: As a general comment, should we add a clause about time is of the essence?

Commented [MG2]: Should the decision be not to proceed with an investigation – how is this documented? Who should be notified (if anyone) of this decision?

5.6. The Director OCS, in consultation with the Registrar's Office, will complete an internal search and provide the Response Team with the following information from the Student's record:

- home address;
- contact information for family;
- current course schedule; and
- photo.

5.7. The Director, OCS will complete the following searches:

- the occurrence management system to gather information about the history of the Student on campus, identify associates and contact information;
- open source search of the Student name; and
- Campus Living Centres to determine whether the Student lives on or off campus.

5.8. The Deputy Provost or delegate will complete the following searches:

- Contact the Student's Academic Advisor to discuss last point of contact with the Student; and
- A search of Student Life scheduling systems to determine whether or not a therapeutic or circle of care relationship exists with a professional staff member in Student Life. If a relationship exists, that staff member may be asked for information on a "need to know" basis to inform whether observations or disclosures made in the context of current events could give rise to a reasonable apprehension of imminent harm to the Student or others.

5.9. If the Student is located at any time during the primary response, the Deputy Provost will notify the Provost and Vice-President Academic and the Dean of the Faculty in which the Student is registered that the Student has been located.

6.0 Secondary Response

If the Primary Response yields negative results and the Student is not located, the Response Team will perform the following acts as part of the Secondary Response:

- 6.1 The Office of the University Secretary and General Counsel may engage with Information Technology Services to perform searches on the Student's university email and other accounts as deemed reasonably necessary to support the primary response.
- 6.2 The Director, OCS will follow up with any potential witnesses or leads that may arise in the context of the initial query.
- 6.3 Once all of the supporting information is collected and documented, the Response Team will reconvene to determine next steps.
- 6.4 If the Student has not been located, and the Complainant has not filed a missing persons report, the Response Team will review and consider whether or not there is sufficient evidence to file a missing persons report with Durham Region Police Services.

- 6.5 The Deputy Provost will notify the President, Provost and Vice-President Academic, Vice-President External Relations, the University Secretary and General Counsel and the Dean of the Faculty in which the Student is registered that the Student is deemed to be missing based on the facts and circumstances known to the university. Once notified, a member of the Response Team will file a police report.
- 6.6 The Executive Director, Communications and Marketing (or delegate) will serve as the official spokesperson to engage with the news media and to address queries from the external community on behalf of the university; which will also include disseminating appropriate information relating to the Student's disappearance to the university community.
- 6.7 The Student's personal information will be treated in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, and any disclosure of information relating to the Student and its disappearance will take into account the wishes of the Student's family. No information regarding the circumstances of the case shall be released to third parties except as authorized by Deputy Provost, in consultation with the Response Team, and only then by the Executive Director, Communications and Marketing (or its delegate).

7. Roles and Responsibilities

- 7.1 The Deputy Provost will work with the following groups to develop and implement a comprehensive and co-ordinated university response.
 - 7.1.1 **The Office of Campus Safety** to actively participate with membership on the Response Team and take the lead on the initial fact finding and on-campus investigation in support of the university's co-ordinated response.
 - 7.1.2 **The Office of the University Secretary and General Counsel** will appoint legal counsel to provide privacy advice related to disclosures to authorities, internal stakeholders and relatives in support of the university's co-ordinated response.
 - 7.1.3 **Dean's office** to serve as the single point of contact for incoming and outgoing communications with the Student's family or next of kin contacting the Student's family, both verbally and in writing to notify them of the Student's disappearance and consulting with the family on the release of information to the campus community and media (if requested) and assisting with any concerns the family may have.
 - 7.1.4 **Dean's office** to contact relevant University Members (e.g. academic advisors and deans in other faculties where the Student may be taking courses, and instructors and Teaching Assistants for the courses the Student is enrolled in) to relay general information about the disappearance of the Student and to provide special messaging for them to relay to students, and address any concerns or need for support University Members may have.
 - 7.1.5 **Office of the Registrar** to provide information from Student records to assist in the response, including contact information for the family, course schedule and photo where available.

Commented [MG3]: I'm not sure this responsibility should rest with the Dean. Perhaps reconsider assigning to Deputy Provost or requiring Deputy Provost/Response Team approval; and limit to those individuals who have a need to know.

7.1.6 Student Mental Health services to provide professional support and counselling to students, work with academic advisors to reach out to students who may be affected by the disappearance (whether individually or in groups where appropriate), and liaise with faculty to arrange accommodations for students who may be profoundly affected and provide referrals to outside agencies as necessary.

7.1.7 Human Resources to arrange for on-site counselling for faculty and staff and/or referrals to the University Employee Assistance Plan.

7.1.8 IT services to co-ordinate the identification of the Student's information, including information relating to the use of university networks and accounts.

7.1.9 Residence Director (when applicable), to contact roommates and floor mates, arrange for on-site counselling support where needed.

8. Media Relations

8.1 The Executive Director, Communications and Marketing (or its delegate) will be the main point of contact for inquiries from news media and the external community concerning the Student's disappearance. Unless there is a compelling reason not to do so, and after the Dean has consulted with the family, the Director will co-ordinate the circulation of an announcement about the Student's disappearance to the University community through campus email, which may also include Durham College.

Commented [MG4]: Does this require approval from Cheryl or Sue? Any coordination with police required?

MONITORING AND REVIEW

9. These procedures will be reviewed as necessary and at least every three years. The Deputy Provost, or successor thereof, is responsible to monitor and review these procedures.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

10. Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES & DOCUMENTS

11. N/A