**Approving University Official(s):** President and Vice Chancellor
**Responsible Office:** Student Experience
**Original Effective Date:** April 14, 2022
**Date of this version:** May 11, 2026
**Version Code:** 1.1

# Student Death Response Policy

## Purpose

This policy establishes a clear and consistent framework for Student Death Response the "Policy" at Yorkville University ("Yorkville"). It provides guidance to ensure alignment with the institution's operational, academic, and regulatory obligations, and supports the university's commitment to a coordinated university response when a student dies, ensuring actions are compassionate, timely, procedurally consistent, and compliant with institutional and legal obligations. It provides guidance to ensure alignment with the institution's operational, academic, and regulatory obligations, and supports the university's commitment to facilitate a coordinated, and timely response guided by the foundation of our Core Values - that students are at the center of all we do - and demonstrated in an approach of compassion, respect, privacy, safety and dignity.

The purposes of this policy are:

- To outline Yorkville University/Toronto Film School's administrative response to the death of a student.
- To ensure the university's response is compassionate, timely, efficient and respectful to the student's family, friends and members of the Yorkville/TFS community.

## Scope

This policy applies to all members of the Yorkville/TFS community. All members of the Yorkville/TFS community are responsible for notifying the Senior Vice President, Student Experience or the Senior Vice President, Student Experience's successor and assigns if they become aware of the death of a student.

## Definitions

***"Member(s) of the Yorkville/TFS community" –*** means one or more employees/faculty, students, agents, and board members of Yorkville University, Toronto Film School, and/or Yorkville Education LP.

***"Next of kin" –*** means a person's closest living relative(s), whether by blood, marriage, adoption, common law, or other legal bond.

***"Student" –*** means any person who is: registered in one or more courses (whether in-person or remotely) as full time, part-time, or special student status in a Yorkville University or Toronto Film School course of study; and/or engaged in any academic work that leads to the assigning of a mark, grade, or statement of performance by the appropriate authority within Yorkville University or the Toronto Film School; and/or is between sessions or on an approved leave of absence from study.

**Policy Statement**

The death of a student is a tragedy for the family and friends of the student and a significant loss to all members of the Yorkville University/TFS community. It is important that the Yorkville/TFS respond appropriately and supportively and in a manner consistent with the essential tenet of our Core Values – that students are at the centre of all we do. Thus, response to the death of a student will be guided by the following principles:

1. All members of the Yorkville/TFS community will act compassionately, respectfully, and with sensitivity, taking into account, as appropriate, the wishes of the family or next of kin when responding to the death of a student. Yorkville's response will be culturally sensitive, ensuring responses are inclusive, trauma-informed, and respectful of cultural and spiritual differences.
2. Yorkville/TFS will support the wellbeing of current students, faculty, and staff affected by the death of a student.
3. Academic, academic support, and administrative units of Yorkville and TFS will work cooperatively and respectfully with one another and with external groups to facilitate the **timely and effective completion of administrative responsibilities** arising from the death of a student. These responsibilities include, but are not limited to: withdrawing or closing the student's record in the Student Information System; notifying instructors of the student's enrolment status; clearing outstanding student finance accounts; communicating with provincial or federal funding agencies (e.g., OSAP); and, where appropriate, considering eligibility for a posthumous credential in consultation with the family. Eligibility for a posthumous credential or posthumous recognition would be assessed on parameters established and approved by the Provost. The family would be consulted as to their involvement in the awarding of that credential/recognition.
4. All members of the Yorkville/TFS community will comply with all applicable Yorkville/Toronto Film School policies concerning the disclosure of personal and confidential information, comply with all applicable privacy legislation and adhere to any other legal requirements as the case may be.

1. Response to the death of a student: See *Response to the Death of a Student – Procedures* for detailed responsibilities and protocols.
    a. Initial/immediate response:
        i. On Campus: In the event that a student death occurs at a Yorkville University or Toronto Film School campus in Ontario or British Columbia, the most senior staff member on site will call emergency services and the Director of Safety and Security.
        Any member of the Yorkville/TFS community who becomes aware of the death of a student must notify the Senior Vice President, Student Experience immediately.

ii. The Senior Vice President, Student Experience will notify the Provost, President and Vice Chancellor, the CEO, and, where legal or reputational considerations exist, the VP Legal and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
iii. The Senior Vice President, Student Experience will initiate the appropriate response as outlined in the *Response to the Death of a Student – Procedures.*
iv. The Senior Vice President, Student Experience will convene a Response Team to facilitate immediate and short-term actions.
v. The Director of Communications will develop and implement a plan to manage internal and external communication related to the student's death.
vi. The Senior Vice President, Student Experience will facilitate support for next of kin and the Yorkville/TFS community.

b. Secondary Response: When the initial steps in responding to the student's death have been carried out, the Senior Vice President, Student Experience will:
    i. Communicate with academic and academic support units to ensure an orderly closure and deactivation of the student's files.
    ii. Ensure that faculty, staff, and students affected by the student's death have access to continuing support which includes but is not limited to counselling services.

**Implementation and authority to publish procedures and protocols**

- Procedures for the implementation of this policy may be approved by the President and Vice Chancellor and CEO.
- Protocols and guidelines related to the Procedures for the implementation of this policy may be developed and approved by the Senior Vice President, Student Experience.

**Related Information**

- *Student Death Response Procedures*

**Contacts**

For questions regarding this policy, please contact:

**Department/Office Name:** Academic Governance Office
**Email:** academicgovernance@yorkvilleu.ca

***Note:*** *Names and structures of Yorkville offices or governing bodies may change over time. Such changes do not affect the validity of this policy. To confirm the current responsible office or body, contact the* Governance, Regulatory, and Government Affairs *at academicgovernance@yorkvilleu.ca.*

**Revision History**

| Version Code | Date | Summary of Changes | Authorized by (Title) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1.0 | April 14, 2022 | New policy. | President and Vice Chancellor |
| 1.1 | May 11, 2026 | Major revision. | President and Vice Chancellor |