Student Bereavement Policy

**Custodian of Policy:** Dean of Students

**Relevant Minnesota State Policy**:

**Effective Date:** Fall 2018

**Last Review:** New Policy

**Next Review:**Fall 2025

Policy

Students who experience the death of a loved one must contact the Dean of Students Office if the student wishes to implement the Standard Bereavement Policy. The Dean of Students Office has the right to request documentation that verifies the death (e.g., a funeral program or death notice).

Typically, this death involves that of an immediate family member, as defined by the bereavement policy for faculty and staff. However, it is up to the discretion of the Dean of Students Office to determine if a death outside of the immediate family warrants implementation of the student bereavement policy.

**Standard Bereavement Procedure:** Upon approval from the Dean of Students Office, the student is allowed one week, commencing from the date of notification to the Dean of Students Office, of excused absence. Should the student feel that he/she needs additional days, these should be discussed with individual course instructors and/or the Dean of Students.

* The Dean of Students Office will work with the Academic Success Center to contact the student’s advisor, faculty and academic staff of the student’s courses.
* Faculty and staff will be advised that extensions must be granted to the student for the period of one week of excused absence.
* Extensions past the end of the semester may be negotiated with the instructor. For this purpose, a student should request an Incomplete from the instructor. A student may also request that the instructor assign a grade based on the work completed at the time of leave. The student may authorize the Dean of Students or other appropriate support personnel to request an Incomplete or grade assignment from the instructor on their behalf. Assignment of an Incomplete is at the instructor’s discretion. In the event the securing of an incomplete is unfeasible the Registrar’s Office will determine how best to provide a “placeholder” in lieu of a grade.

**Temporary Bereavement Leave Procedure:** Students may be allowed to take leave from the semester in which the death occurs. The temporary leave is for one semester only. Students who have opted to take the “Temporary Bereavement Leave” and have already attended classes for the semester of the leave will be allowed to re-enter the following semester without having to reapply for admission to the university. Current students are allowed to leave for two full semesters (not including summer term) before they are required to reapply to the university.

Students who are in good academic standing may, upon agreement with the instructor, be given the opportunity to successfully complete the credits for the semester by working directly with the instructors of their courses. Upon completion of the work, the instructor will complete a change of grade form and route to the Registrar’s Office.

Consideration for academic assistance and the opportunity to complete a course through alternate arrangements are at the discretion of the instructor are entirely at the discretion of the instructor. timeline and flexibility to make up missed work will be negotiated between instructor and student. Students will consult with the Academic Support Center, on a case-by-case basis, as to whether they should withdraw from their courses during this leave of absence or to request incompletes from the faculty member.

Given that there may be a potential impact on financial aid, students who receive financial aid and who take the “Temporary Bereavement Leave,” upon arrangement with the Dean of Students Office, will meet with a financial aid counselor prior to taking this option. Students will also be responsible for following all of the standard withdrawal and tuition appeal policies if the bereavement influences the student’s ability to finish the semester.

As an option, and in consultation with the Dean of Students Office, students make take the Temporary Bereavement Leave after the Standard Bereavement.

Rationale

To support students at a stressful time, with the ultimate goal of retaining the students and helping them stay on track toward graduation. In addition, a clear policy will support faculty and staff working with students impacted by death in their family.