



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

Responding to Student Death: A Caring Campus Approach

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Strategy

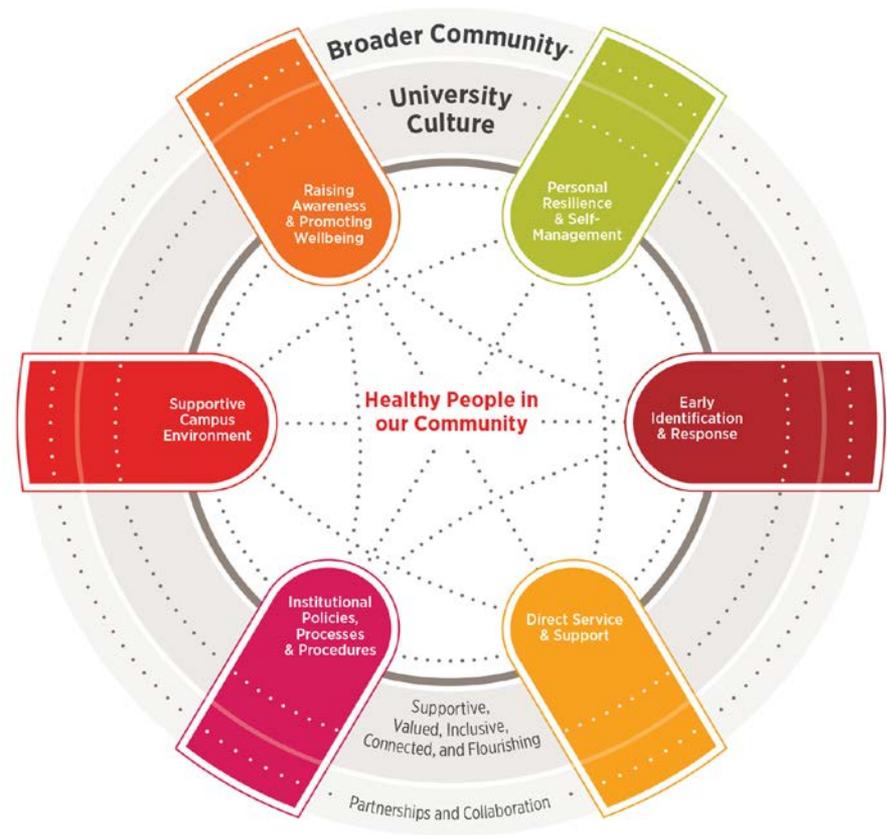
Dr. Susan Barker, Vice Provost (Student Experience)

Dr. Ann Laverty, Senior Counsellor

CACUSS June 2019

- Andrew Szeto:
 - Context for receiving news of a student death
- Susan Barker
 - Policy and Process
 - Communication
- Debbie Bruckner
 - Clinical response
- Panel and Audience Discussion
- Audience Questions

- Supporting Entire Campus Community
 - UCalgary Campus Mental Health Strategy
- What is the Context on Your Campus?



Why Go There?

- Respecting wishes of family
- Consideration of financial aspects and deceased students belongings etc.
- Managing communications
- Ensuring support for those affected
- Honouring the deceased student

Without a policy or process there are risks for the institution that could lead to perceptions of lack of response and/or care.

- All we know officially is that someone died on campus.
- So are we just going to pretend nothing happened on Friday?
- Shouldn't the university address this somehow?
- Correct me if I'm wrong but it seems like they are trying their absolute best to sweep this under the rug which I find pretty strange.
- Whether it was suicide or not I think the student body is entitled to at least a bit more information.
- I'm not saying we need to publish the student's name or anything, the family's privacy is obviously important but it isn't right that we just act like nothing happened

- Grounded in care and compassion for family and friends and respect of families wishes
- University statement if death occurred on campus.
- Responding to criticisms of lack of communications?
- Different communications when the death is reported in the media
- Institutional communications must be managed and approved

- Curriculum development for psychological postvention support considered:
 - Nature of relationship to deceased
 - Current context of bereaved
 - Loss history
 - Individual responses
 - Developmental considerations
 - Cultural sensitivity

- Peripheral
- Affiliated



Outside Level of Impact Protocols



(Photo Credit: prescott.erau.edu/)

Panel and Audience Discussion

- What conditions enable your institution to support the community following a student death?
- What road blocks have you encountered?
- How do you handle social media?
- How do you take care of care givers?
- What are doing that you think is innovative?

There is no grief like the grief
that does not speak.

~ Henry Wadsworth Longfellow



(Photo Credit: wlpapers.com)

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- Zinner, E. (1985). Group survivorship: A model and case application. In E.S. Zinner (Ed.), *New directions for student services: Coping with death on campus*. Vol 31, pp. 51-68. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc.