



## Death of an International Student or Scholar

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The death of an international student or scholar can have a broad impact across the international and university community. Each institution should have emergency plans and set protocols in place for such an incident. The international student and scholar services office can utilize this checklist to enhance established emergency procedures and contacts to fit the distinctive needs of the international population.

For additional guidance and resources for the university, office, and international community in dealing with the death of a student or scholar, read “Death of an International Student or Scholar” in *Crisis Management in a Cross-Cultural Setting*, which can be purchased online from the [NAFSA bookstore](#).

# CRISIS MANAGEMENT IN A CROSS-CULTURAL SETTING

International Student and Scholar Services

NAFSA

Association of  
International Educators

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### CONDENSED CHECKLIST

#### Precrisis Considerations:

- Know established emergency plans and set protocols.
- Have a preformatted checklist.
- Keep contacts up-to-date.

#### Responding to the Death of an International Student or Scholar:

- Gather relevant information and create a case file.
- Notifications:
  - Direct supervisor
  - Family or emergency contact
  - Institutional representatives and offices
  - External representatives/offices
- Identify current and potential issues and when action must be taken:
  - Are family members coming to the United States (travel, accommodations, and support)?
  - Religion and/or family wishes for the remains (autopsy, cremation, organ donor).

- Insurance issues—will insurance cover cause of death and repatriation of remains?
- Settling affairs—personal effects, accounts, housing, and refunds.
- Legal ramifications—referrals, liability issues, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).
- Immigration—required Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) reporting.
- Forward family the request for posthumous degree conferment to the appropriate department, if applicable.
- If other students and scholars are affected, provide the appropriate resources.

#### Postcrisis Considerations:

- Self-care: take care of the mental health of yourself and your staff.
- Conduct a postcrisis review and evaluation.
- Follow up with staff and international students and scholars who were affected.