

Salisbury University Bereavement Policy Draft 3/6/17

Purpose:

Salisbury University recognizes that students may experience the death of a loved one during the course of an academic term. To promote the general mental health of students, this policy establishes formal guidelines for grieving students to be excused from classes and to make-up work so they can be with their loved ones in times of death and grief. Grieving a loved ones' passing should not be an impediment to academic progress.

Definitions and Directions:

Bereavement Policy Request Application: The student must complete the Bereavement Policy Request Application and submit it to the Academic Dean of the student's respective school. The student will not receive excused academic days through the Bereavement Policy unless the Bereavement Policy Request Application is completed, submitted, and approved.

Proof of Death: The Bereavement Policy requires proof of the death of the individual(s) who is/are being mourned. Proof of the death of the individual must be submitted to the Academic Dean of the student's respective school upon return, no later than two weeks after the student's return to school. Documentation could include, but is not limited to: an obituary, copy of the death certificate, funeral service program, or funeral home signed letter. Failure to submit the materials required for proof of death will nullify the Bereavement Policy.

Excused Academic Bereavement Days- All students who apply for and are approved for the Bereavement Policy are allotted three (3) excused academic days from campus to mourn the loss of an individual with the designated relationships listed below. Excused absences already granted in the course syllabus are not counted toward these three (3) bereavement days. Academic days are weekdays: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, excluding Saturday and Sunday.

Bereavement Travel Days- All students who apply for and receive Bereavement Policy benefits are allotted another one (1) to five (5) travel days, in addition to the three (3) bereavement days, for a total of four (4) to eight (8) excused academic days away from campus. These travel days allow the student essential time to fly or drive to funeral services, burial sites, and grieving locations. Travel distance and days are as follows:

- Within 150 miles of campus - 1 academic day.
- Between 150-300 miles from campus - 2 academic days.
- Between 300-1000 miles from campus - 3 academic days.
- Over 1000 miles from the campus - 4 academic days.
- Outside of the United States - 5 academic days.

Grieving Locations- Locations the student travels to in order to mourn the passing of a loved one may include the funeral home, cemetery, sites to scatter remains. Memorial sites, home of the deceased or relatives, and other meaningful locations.

Academic Make-up Work – Grieving students must receive a reasonable amount of time to complete the assignments and exams they may have missed while away. The allowance of days given to complete missed academic work is equal to the number of days excused from class via the Bereavement Policy. For instance,

a student who missed three (3) excused academic days would be allowed three (3) additional academic days to complete the assignment.

- The assignments missed are not subject to deduction in scoring due to the delayed submission, so long as they are completed in the time allotted for assignment make-up.
- If the teacher or student believe that the days allotted are inappropriate due to the nature of the assignment, the student and teacher must discuss this first with each other, then with the Department Chair (if needed), and then the school's Academic Dean (if needed).
- A replacement assignment may be given to the student if the original assignment cannot be completed by the student due to class logistics.
- If the student is unable to complete the prescribed assignments by the end of the semester, he or she may take an "Incomplete" for the class(es) so that, at a later date, the class(es) may be properly completed. The student and the professor must discuss with each other the option of taking an Incomplete, as stated on page 60 in the Salisbury University Academic Catalog.

Relative- A student can apply to use the Bereavement Policy for a relative, a designated connection who has one of the legal titles listed below:

- Parent(s) or Legal Guardian(s)
- Sibling(s)
- Uncle(s) or Aunt(s)
- Cousin(s)
- Niece(s) or Nephew(s)
- Legal In-Law(s)
- Grandparent(s)
- Step-Relation(s)
- Child(ren) or Individual(s) in which the mourner has legal guardianship
- Spouse or Legal Civil Union Partner

Close Friend- A student can apply to use the Bereavement Policy for a close friend, an individual who is a family-like connection, but who does not have one of the legal titles listed above. Close friendship for purpose of the Bereavement Policy can be demonstrated by family members or a third party who attests to the closeness of the relationship between the student and the deceased.

Counseling Services: Once the student's Bereavement Policy Request Application has been submitted and approved the student is encouraged to utilize the resources offered in the Counseling Service center.

This SU bereavement policy proposal is based on bereavement policies at the following institutions: University of Maryland, College Park. Towson University, University of Baltimore, McDaniel College, and Illinois State University.