

# ICCTA

Illinois Community College Trustees Association

## **QUICK SURVEY RESULTS** **Condolence Letters**

February 21, 2023

*A total of 20 colleges/districts responded to ICCTA's Quick Survey on CONDOLENCE LETTERS.*

### HIGHLIGHTS:

- ❖ More than half (60%) of responding colleges send a condolence letter to the families of current students who have passed away.
- ❖ The condolence letters are prepared by the President's office or an administrator affiliated with student services.
- ❖ Several colleges also send a donation or floral arrangements to the student's memorial service.

### **DOES YOUR COLLEGE SEND OUT CONDOLENCE LETTERS TO FAMILIES OF STUDENTS WHO HAVE PASSED AWAY? IF YES, WHAT INFORMATION IS INCLUDED IN THE LETTER?**

#### **YES -- 12**

- DuPage: The Office of the President will send a condolence letter to the family of a passing student.
- Elgin
- Harper
- Illinois Central: Yes, we send letters. However, there isn't a template, as one of the Vice Presidents personally hand-writes a message to the family on a branded sympathy card.
- Illinois Valley
- Joliet: JJC sends a condolence card from the President and a dish garden on behalf of the college to the service.
- Lake Land: Lake Land College sends a college memorial, or a donation as mentioned in the obituary, to the services along with a card of sympathy from the Lake Land College Board of Trustees and President Bullock.
- Oakton: Oakton sends two letters: One from Student Affairs with a tuition refund check, and one from the President.
- Rock Valley: The Dean of Students office at Rock Valley College sends condolence letters. We do not have a template.
- Spoon River: Spoon River College doesn't have a template for condolence letters. The letters are personalized and specific to the family of the student.

Triton: Yes, but there is no template as this is handled on an individual basis.

Wright: Wright does send out condolence letters but we don't have a template.

### **NO -- 8**

Danville: The president's office has sent condolence cards, though, that are similar to the ones we send to families of deceased employees and alumni.

Highland: If it is a current student, we send a plant to the funeral or a donation to the memorial, depending on the family's preference.

Kankakee

Kaskaskia: We usually send arrangements to services.

Morton

Shawnee

South Suburban: No, however, I think it is a great idea and something we will consider at SSC.

Southeastern

---

## **SAMPLE CONDOLENCE LETTERS**

### **DuPage**

*Dear \_\_\_\_\_*

*Please accept our deepest sympathies upon the recent death of \_\_\_\_\_. His passing is a great loss to our college community and we mourn with you.*

*Please know the thoughts and prayers of the College of DuPage faculty and staff are with your family during this very difficult time.*

*Sincerely,  
Brian W. Caputo, Ph.D., C.P.A. President*

### **Elgin**

The Dean of Students will follow the [Death of a Student/Former Student Admin Procedure](#) in these situations.

The communication to the family is in the form of a handwritten note on ECC Dean of Students office stationary, and is fairly simple.

The note contains the following information:

- Expressing condolences for the family's loss on behalf of Dean of Students and the College
- Assurance that the student's record at the College will be closed and current term tuition refunded (if applicable)
- Provide Dean of Student contact information and offer to answer any question or concern the family may have regarding the College procedure in these situations

If we learn of the student's passing prior to the service being held, we request Student Life to send flowers to the service on behalf of ECC and the Dean will attend the service.

### **Harper**

For current students who have passed away, a letter is sent from the president to their next of kin.

Sample body of letter here:

*Dear \_\_\_\_\_ (parents or spouse of student),*

The Harper College community would like to express its deepest sympathy in the loss of your son/daughter, \_\_\_\_\_ (name). Please extend our condolences to your entire family and know that you are in our thoughts during this difficult time.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Illinois Valley**

Family of XXXXX

To the Family of XXXXX,

On behalf of Illinois Valley Community College, I would like to offer your family our most sincere condolences on your loss. Because XXXXX was a registered student at IVCC for the XXXXX semester, we have removed her from her current classes and will be returning to you the tuition and fees paid for this term.

If there is anything additional you need from us, please contact me at (815) 224-0393. Again, accept our most sincere sympathy on behalf of the college.

Sincerely,  
Mark Grzybowski  
Vice President for Student Services  
Illinois Valley Community College

### **Oakton**

A couple of examples from the President:

Dear NAME family,

On behalf of Oakton College, I extend our deepest sympathy to you and your family on the sudden loss of STUDENT'S NAME. Although I did not have the privilege of knowing NAME personally, he was an engaged student at Oakton who was well liked and respected by everyone who had the pleasure of getting to know him. His presence was such a big part of our PROGRAM OF STUDY.

I hope that your family finds comfort and support from family and friends during your time of grief, knowing how many lives NAME touched.

Sincerely,  
Joianne L. Smith  
President

---

To the family of STUDENT'S NAME,

On behalf of Oakton College, I extend our deepest sympathy to you and your family on the sudden loss of NAME. Although Rosemarie was only a part of the Oakton community for a short period of time, I wanted to extend condolences on behalf of the College community.

NAME clearly had a lifetime of opportunity ahead of her and we are so sorry for the tragic nature of her loss. I hope that your family finds comfort and support from family and friends during your time of grief.

Sincerely,  
Joianne L. Smith  
President

--

And from Student Affairs:

*Dear NAME Family,*

*On behalf of Oakton College, I extend our deepest sympathy to you and your family on the passing of NAME. She will be missed by his friends, classmates and all who knew her. During this time of grief, I hope that your family finds comfort and support from all who loved NAME and will celebrate the cherished memories of her life.*

*As the Oakton community mourns, NAME has been withdrawn from her SEMESTER classes, and the amount of \$AMOUNT has been refunded to the credit card that was utilized for tuition payment (or a check is enclosed).*

*Please feel free to contact me at (847) 635-1739 if I can be of support or assistance to you during this difficult time.*

*Sincerely,  
Karl Brooks  
Vice President for Student Affairs*

---

*For more information, please contact:*

**Illinois Community College Trustees Association**

401 E. Capitol Avenue, Suite 200 • Springfield, IL 62701 • 217-528-2858 • [www.communitycolleges.org](http://www.communitycolleges.org)

