

Student Policy – Missing Student Policy

Policy:

As required by the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008, this policy applies to students living in campus housing. This policy assists with procedures based on facts and circumstances known to Bismarck State College that a student has been determined to be missing.

Definition:

Bismarck State College defines a missing student as a person enrolled at BSC, living on campus, whose whereabouts have not been accounted for by local law enforcement, and the absence is contrary to the usual pattern of behavior of the student and/or unusual circumstances may have caused the absence of the student. Circumstances may include, but are not limited to the following: a report or suspicion that the missing person may be the victim of foul play, a report the missing student has expressed suicidal thoughts, a report the missing student is drug dependent, a report the missing student is in a life threatening situation, or a report the missing student has been with or is in the company of persons who may endanger the student's welfare.

Procedures:

A. Emergency Contact Information Designation

1. Students have the opportunity during each semester to designate an individual or individuals to be contacted by BSC Campus Safety and Security or appropriate local law enforcement in the event the student is determined missing. Notification will be made no more than 24 hours after the time the student is determined to be missing in accordance with procedures in this policy. A contact designation is registered and confidential and will remain in effect until changed or revoked by the student.
2. If a student is under the age of 18 and is not an emancipated adult, the College is required to notify a custodial parent or guardian no more than 24 hours after the student is determined to be missing.

B. Official Notification Procedures for Missing Persons

1. Any individual on campus who has information that a residential student may be a missing person must notify Bismarck State College Campus Safety and Security (224-2700) or the Student and Residence Life Office/Staff (224-5464 or 224-5465).
2. The BSC Campus Safety and Security Department will gather all essential information about the residential student from the reporting person and from the student's acquaintances (description, clothes last worn, where student might be, who student might be with, vehicle description, information about the physical and mental well-being of the student, an up-to-date photograph, class schedule, etc.) Appropriate campus staff will be notified to aid in the search for the student.
3. If the above actions are unsuccessful in locating the student or it is apparent immediately that the student is missing (i.e. a witnessed abduction), the BSC Campus Safety and Security Department will contact the appropriate local law enforcement agency to report the student as missing and the local law enforcement agency will take charge of the investigation.
4. No more than 24 hours after determining that a residential student is missing, contact will be made by the BSC Campus Safety and Security Department or local law enforcement to the designated contact

C. Campus Communication Regarding Missing Students

1. In cases involving missing persons, law enforcement personnel are best situated to provide information to the media that is designed to elicit public assistance in the search for a missing person. Therefore, all communications regarding missing students will be handled by outside law enforcement authorities, who may consult with the College Relations Office. All inquiries to the college regarding missing students, or information provided to any individual at the college about a missing student, shall be referred to the BSC Campus Safety and Security Department, who shall refer inquiries and information to law enforcement authorities.
2. Prior to providing the Bismarck-Mandan community with any information about a missing student, the College Relations Office shall consult with the BSC Campus Safety and Security Department and with local law enforcement authorities to ensure that communications do not hinder the investigation.

Reference:

Portions of this policy are drawn from the policy developed by Goucher College and Farleigh Dickinson University.

History of This Policy:

First policy draft reviewed by the Operations Council on August 4, 2009 and approved by the Executive Council on August 5, 2009.

Revisions – Reviewed by the Operations Council on January 22, 2014 and approved by the Executive Council on March 6, 2014; September 17, 2014; December 7, 2015.