Straight 'A's' for the roommates of students who commit suicide? [1]

Dear Alice,

Is it true that if your roommate commits suicide that the university automatically gives you straight A's for the semester?

Answer

Dear Reader,

The sudden loss of someone as close as a roommate can be an incredibly taxing emotional experience, and suicide as a cause may add even more distress for those left behind. While a person's grades will not automatically be changed, most colleges and universities provide some type of emotional and academic support to roommates, including extensions on due dates, make-up exams, and time off without penalty. The death of a roommate, hall mate, friend, relative, and anyone else close to you? for whatever reason? can make it difficult, if not impossible, to focus on schoolwork, jobs, and other "regular" activities. Your dean (or the equivalent) needs to be able to tell you what's available in the way of help when a tragedy such as this happens. Professors also need to know that students may need extended deadlines for assignments and exams after major life event? at least temporarily.

Don't know if you're just curious about this myth, or if you, or a friend, are in this situation... if it's the latter, your most important assignment is to take care of yourself with the help of family, friends, residence hall staff, counselors, and academic advisors. It's crucial to deal with loss and all the difficult emotions that can accompany it. This is one reason why many schools have a lot of resources for help? usually more than are known by their students. Your advisor can sort out the accommodations you need from your professors; a good place to start would be your school's student advising office. You may also want to talk to a counselor. S/he can help you navigate the immediate steps you should take academically while also working with you longer-term to cope with the loss.

The related Q&As talk more about suicide, coping, and support from communities, including higher ed. ones. Remember, too, that many of these resources can be used before a crisis occurs. If you or a friend is contemplating suicide or self-harm, taking advantage of available services may help prevent such a tragedy.

Alice!

Category:
Emotional Health [2]
Suicide [3]

Related questions

Will I be hospitalized for being depressed? [4]
How long does mourning last? [5]
Feeling suicidal... Help! [6]

Resources

Counseling and Psychological Services (CPS) (Morningside) [8]
Mental Health Service (CUMC) [9]
Published date: Dec 21, 2001
Last reviewed on: Jul 27, 2015

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