

September 14, 2017

Subject: Back to School

With September came back to school and **hurricanes** in 2017.

Most of you started a new class in August/September, but several faced the additional challenges of hurricanes.

Hurricane Harvey wreaked havoc in Houston. Commonwealth was temporarily shut down due to the storm and was also forced to cancel a site visit. Delgado dealt with high water in New Orleans, but in the overall scheme of things both programs avoided major damage.

Then along came Irma and everyone's attention shifted to Florida. None of the 3 programs report any catastrophic problems, but clean-up and loss of power are on-going significant issues. Robert Dean reports that the area where we held our 2015 Annual Conference was swamped. Miami-Dade, St. Petersburg and Jacksonville will not likely be in position to resume classes until next week at the earliest. On a more positive note, the ABFSE **Survey for Review of Accreditation Standards** had good response. A brief summary follows. COA will initiate the standards review process in October. The plan is to present ideas for updates of the Standards for additional comments. Discussion by the ABFSE membership is planned for April 2018.

Our Review of Standards survey concluded with 81 responses (21 were received during the last review in 2012)

Characteristics of the respondents are as follows:

- 45% licensees
- 27% educators
- 10% students
- 4% employed in funeral service but not as a licensee
- 11% other

78% of respondents were graduates of an accredited program. 49% were age 41-60; 56% male.

The majority of responses indicated that no change to the Standards was needed.

However, suggestions for change were received for each of the 15 Standards. For example, Standard 3 - Aims and Objectives, 11% said change was necessary; Standard 6 – Curriculum, 24% said change was necessary; Standard 7 – Facilities 13%, said change was necessary and Standard 11 – Program Planning and Assessment – 19%, recommended change.

All comments received were anonymous, no names were attached to individual responses. All suggestions for change will be reviewed by COA in October.

Also in October, ABFSE will hold a **Strategic Planning** session in Boston. If you cannot attend, but have ideas to share regarding the future of ABFSE, please send them to the office or to one of the ABFSE officers.

The long-awaited process of **copyright** on our ABFSE Curriculum Outlines has been completed. When you review curriculum outlines on the ABFSE website (for Educators/curriculum) you will note the © emblem on each page.

September 30 is the end of the ABFSE fiscal year and 3 programs are delinquent in the submission of **accreditation renewal fees**.

One final reminder, with the start of a new class many of your colleagues have found it practical to begin **cohort tracking** in order to avoid an end of year scramble to collect the info.

Our door (along with phones and e-mail) are always open for your thoughts.

Best wishes,

Robb