AMERICAN BOARD
of
FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION
and the
COMMITTEE ON ACCREDITATION

ACCREDITATION and POLICY MANUAL

Revisions
October 2013
(language corrections April 2014)
(language corrected October 2014)
April 2016
October 2017
April 2019
INTRODUCTION

The **Manual on Accreditation** was reviewed in its entirety by the Committee on Accreditation at two meetings (October 1999 and April 2000) and final revisions of the Manual were approved by the COA at their October 2000 meeting in Baltimore, Maryland. Specific revisions were approved by the COA (March and April 2007, March and October 2008, April 2009, April and October 2010, April and October 2011, and April 2012) and the ABFSE (April 2007, and April 2009, 2010, and 2011).

The Accreditation and Policy Manual is reviewed formally every five years as indicated in Section F of Chapter X (See Appendix H for the specific schedule and steps). the most recent formal review was conducted in 2012-2013. The next formal review will begin in April 2016. Unscheduled revisions and editorial changes occur as appropriate. Revision dates are indicated on the bottom of each page of the Manual.

The **Accreditation Manual** is available on-line and may be downloaded without charges from the ABFSE website (www.abfse.org; click on "Committee on Accreditation" on the right middle of the page and then scroll down to the bottom of the linked page).

Questions about any aspect of the Manual and/or suggestions for correcting any errors identified in the text are welcomed.

NOTE: At present, the COA only accredits institutions and programs in the United States. However, the COA is interested in considering applications for accreditation from institutions and programs in other countries. Accordingly, references to "state" throughout the manual are properly viewed as inclusive of other appropriate governmental entities. Similarly, language throughout referring to degrees, semesters, terms, governance, etc., may be considered as implicitly including reasonable equivalencies as determined by the COA.

>>> Please direct inquiries and comments to <<<

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CHAPTER I

THE AMERICAN BOARD OF FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION

BRIEF HISTORY

The predecessor of the American Board of Funeral Service Education was established in 1946 as the Joint Committee on Mortuary Education (Joint Committee) by joint resolutions of the National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA), the Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards of the United States (renamed the International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards in 1998 - ICFSEB) and with the concurrence of the several associations of school and colleges concerned with funeral service education.

The Joint Committee was composed of three representatives appointed by NFDA, three representatives appointed by the Conference and designated as that association’s accreditation committee, and three representatives of the schools and colleges.

As stated in Article II of the original constitution, the Joint Committee "shall make and enforce its rules and regulations governing its procedure and conduct, and [it] shall formulate and promulgate and enforce rules and regulations setting up standards concerning the schools and colleges teaching mortuary science."

Article V of the same constitution stated, "the power to accredit schools and colleges of mortuary science shall be vested in the Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards of the United States, Inc.," with the further provision that "schools and colleges of mortuary science shall have the right of appeal from decisions of the accreditation committee of the Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards of the United States, Inc. to the appellate board of the Joint Committee on Mortuary Education. Rules and procedures for the appellate board shall be promulgated by the Joint Committee on Mortuary Education."

In 1959, the name of the Joint Committee on Mortuary Education was changed to the American Board of Funeral Service Education.

In 1962, authority for accreditation of funeral service institutions/programs was transferred from the Conference to the American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE). The ABFSE has continued that function since then, serving as the sole accrediting agency in the United States in the field of funeral service education.

In keeping with the principle of accreditation by peers, the ABFSE amended its constitution and by-laws in 1970 to provide for the establishment of a Commission on Schools within the framework of a restructured American Board of Funeral Service Education.

As a result thereof, Article VI of the Constitution of the American Board provide, "the function of the Commission shall be:

1. to prepare for and certify to the American Board criteria and procedures for accreditation;
2. to receive reports of the Standards and Criteria committee and to certify to the American Board those schools that meet such criteria and are to be accredited; and
3. to establish, in cooperation with the American Board, appellate procedures on accreditation certifications of the Commission.

The American Board shall accept the certifications of the Commission and make official statements of accreditation."

In 1978, in reaction and response to recommendations made by the U.S. Office of Education, an ad hoc committee of the American Board of Funeral Service Education was appointed for the purpose of restructuring the Board in accordance with such recommendations. At that time, the Commission on Schools was changed to an autonomous and self-perpetuating standing committee of the Board and renamed the Committee on Accreditation (COA).
The American Board of Funeral Service Education has been recognized by the U.S. Dept. of Education (formerly the U.S. Office of Education) as the sole accrediting agency in funeral service education since 1972 and the American Board was accepted into the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation (COPA) in 1988 as a member of its Assembly of Specialized Accrediting Bodies. In 1993, COPA became the Council on Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation (CORPA) which continued recognition of the ABFSE. Since 1997, ABFSE has been recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), which replaced CORPA.

In 1987, the curriculum of the American Board of Funeral Service Education received a complete review and a new policy was instituted implementing annual reviews to ensure that each course outline is updated at least every 5 years.

In 1988 and again in 1995, the Manual on Accreditation was extensively rewritten and updated to incorporate many necessary changes in policies as recommended by USDE, CORPA, and ABFSE members. Additional revisions and editorial changes have occurred on an annual basis since then.

In 1995, all Standards of Accreditation were reviewed and updated by the Committee on Accreditation and provisions were instituted for regular future reviews. The most recent review was 2007-2008. The next comprehensive review will occur 2012-2013.

By 1995, ABFSE membership included 42 accredited college and university programs in Funeral Service Education and Mortuary Science, with four additional programs in the process of applying for accreditation. In 2010, there were 57 accredited programs, 2 programs in candidacy, and 2 in the process of developing candidacy applications.

In May 2006, the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) renewed the recognition of the Committee on Accreditation. CHEA interim recognition was renewed in 2012 and 2015. In April 2002, at their annual meeting in Dallas, Texas, the members of the American Board of Funeral Service Education approved a new Constitution and By-Laws which, among other revisions, approved an option of ABFSE membership for additional funeral service organizations. The National Funeral Directors and Morticians Association was admitted to full membership in September, 2002. In 2009, the International Cemetery, Cremation and Funeral Association (ICCFA) also became a member.

At its meeting in June, 2008, the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI) of the U.S. Department of Education recommended that the Secretary of Education grant continued recognition to ABFSE for the full period of five years. After several delays due to changes at The Department of Education, ABFSE recognition was re-affirmed in 2012. ABFSE appears before NACIQI in December 2016 for the next recognition renewal.

In April, 2005, the Committee on Accreditation (COA) expanded its voting membership from 10 to 11 members when it welcomed a representative from the National Funeral Directors and Morticians Association. In 2012, a representative from ICCFA began service on the COA.
CHAPTER II

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF THE
AMERICAN BOARD OF FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION

CONSTITUTION

[The terms funeral service/mortuary science are used interchangeably by the ABFSE and its committees]

PREAMBLE

The American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE) is organized for educational purposes in the interests of the public and of the funeral service profession. Its purpose is to cooperate with all groups and agencies having an interest in advancement of the principles and standards of funeral service education and to ensure funeral service/mortuary science education is of high quality and meets the needs of society.

ARTICLE I - NAME

This organization shall be known as the American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE).

ARTICLE II - OBJECT

The particular business and objectives of the ABFSE shall be to further education in the field of funeral service and other related fields; to formulate standards of funeral service education, to grant accreditation to qualified programs and institutions of funeral service education, and to do all things incidental to the foregoing.

The ABFSE shall accredit the institutions or programs of funeral service education in accordance with regulations and procedures as set forth in its Accreditation and Policy Manual. Such accreditation shall be recognized by member associations, the International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards, and the accredited institutions.

ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP

A. Criteria for Membership

1. An educational institution is eligible for membership in ABFSE if it

   a. offers a degree program accredited by the Committee on Accreditation of ABFSE;
   b. meets the annual requirements for membership as stated in the Accreditation and Policy Manual; and
   c. has paid its annual renewal of accreditation.

2. A funeral service association is eligible for membership in ABFSE if it

   a. is national in scope;
   b. is non-profit;
   c. has membership consisting of funeral service licensees or regulators of those licensees;
   d. has a direct interest in funeral service education; and
   e. has paid its dues and commits to a renewable three-year membership.

B. Membership of the ABFSE

1. Accredited institutions or programs. One representative from each of the institutions or programs of funeral service education whose curricula in funeral service education are accredited by the ABFSE Committee on Accreditation.
2. Funeral Service Associations. One representative appointed by each of the funeral service associations that have fulfilled the necessary requirements for membership.

3. Public members. Two representatives of the public appointed by the ABFSE Committee on Accreditation.

ARTICLE IV - VOTING

Each accredited institution of funeral service education which has designated a representative to the ABFSE and which is represented at the meeting, shall be entitled to one vote.

The appointed representative of each funeral service association shall be entitled to one vote.

The public representatives shall each be entitled to one vote.

At no time shall the accredited institutions of funeral service education be entitled to less than the majority of the total votes cast.

ARTICLE V - OFFICERS

The officers of the ABFSE shall be the President, the Immediate Past President, the Vice-President, and the Secretary-Treasurer.

ARTICLE VI - COMMITTEES

The ABFSE shall create such committees as necessary.

ARTICLE VII - MEETINGS

The annual conference of the ABFSE shall be held between April 1 and May 15 of each year unless otherwise determined by the Executive Committee with at least 90 days' notice, which may be given in a written, electronic, or commonly accepted manner to the membership. Special meetings shall be called when deemed necessary by a majority of the ABFSE or its Executive Committee. Committee meetings, approved by the Executive Committee, shall be held as necessary.

ARTICLE VIII - FISCAL PERIOD

The fiscal period shall be from October 1 to September 30.

ARTICLE IX - AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended, repealed or altered by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any regular or special meeting, provided that all members shall have had written notice of any proposed amendment sent to them which may be done by means of a mail, electronic, or other commonly accepted manner thirty (30) calendar days (as represented by the U.S. postmark or other carrier official date) in advance of the scheduled vote.

To ensure that accredited institutions or programs continue to be in the majority on the Executive Committee, additional voting members will automatically be added to the Executive Committee any time the number of funeral service association representatives equal or exceed 50% of the Executive Committee. The new voting members shall be added in the following order: College and University Council Chair, College and University Council Secretary, and additional College and University Council representatives as elected by that group.
BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I

The American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE) shall be incorporated under the laws of the District of Columbia as an eleemosynary not-for-profit educational corporation.

ARTICLE II

Members of the ABFSE shall be appointed by their association or accredited institution as provided for in the Constitution.

Each appointment of a representative by the funeral service associations shall be made for a term not to exceed six years, to run from the conclusion of the annual meeting, provided, however, that each representative shall be subject to recall by the association, in which event the successor, when appointed, shall fill out the unexpired term. Each accredited institution or program shall appoint one individual to represent it at each ABFSE meeting.

Notice of all appointments of representatives to the ABFSE shall be made in writing by the association or institution, prior to the succeeding meeting for which the appointment is to become effective.

Each member shall have the right to name an alternate representative to the ABFSE who may serve for a specific meeting with voting privileges when its regular representative is unable to attend, provided, however, that official notification of such substitute shall be made in writing (at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting) by the presiding officer of the organization or the accredited institution concerned.

The executive officers of the member funeral service associations, or their duly designated representative, shall serve as ex-officio members of the ABFSE with privilege of the floor, but without vote.

The duly appointed representative of an executive director entitled to attend meetings as an ex-officio member of the ABFSE shall be the educational consultant or advisor or a former officer of the ABFSE who is a member in good standing of the organization which they represent.

The public members are to be appointed for a term of one year by the Committee on Accreditation of the ABFSE and may be eligible for reappointment up to a maximum period of six (6) years of service.

ARTICLE III

The members shall support the ABFSE.

Dues for funeral service association members shall be established by the Executive Committee. The amount of the dues shall be set in three-year intervals.

Annual Renewal of Accreditation and other fees for accredited institutions shall be established prior to the annual meeting by the Committee on Accreditation.

All travel and other expenses of a member of the ABFSE shall be paid by the association or accredited institution which appointed them, except the public representatives, whose expenses shall be paid by the ABFSE.

All members shall serve without pay.

ARTICLE IV

The President shall preside at all meetings and perform the customary duties of the office. The President shall approve, along with the Secretary-Treasurer, all written contracts approved by the ABFSE. All committees shall be
appointed by the President of the ABFSE with the approval of the Executive Committee except the Committee on Accreditation which appoints its own members. The President shall be an ex-officio nonvoting member of all committees, except the Committee on Accreditation. In making committee appointments, the President shall strive for a balance in representation of the different types of educational institutions.

The Vice-President, in the absence of the President, shall have the powers and shall perform the duties of the President.

The Secretary-Treasurer shall be responsible for a record of the proceedings of the ABFSE. On behalf of the Secretary-Treasurer, the Executive Director shall send out notices of meetings, conduct correspondence and perform such other duties as may be assigned to the office.

The Immediate Past President shall serve in an advisory capacity to the Executive Committee.

The voting members of the Executive Committee are the ABFSE President, the Immediate Past President, the ABFSE Vice President, the ABFSE Secretary Treasurer, and one representative from each member funeral service association. Ex officio non-voting members of the Executive Committee are the chairs of the standing committees, the ABFSE Executive Director and all Past Presidents.

The President, Immediate Past President, Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer, one representative from each member funeral service association, and Executive Director (non-voting) shall be empowered to act as the Executive Committee of the ABFSE in the interim between meetings to administer the affairs of the ABFSE. The Executive Committee shall be required to report its actions at the next meeting of the ABFSE.

The ABFSE may retain the services of such persons as it may deem necessary, who shall perform such duties as designated by the ABFSE.

The Executive Director is the paid, full-time administrator of the ABFSE. The Executive Director serves as non-voting staff to all committees and is responsible for carrying out all administrative and clerical functions required by the ABFSE and its committees. The Committee on Accreditation along with minority participation of ABFSE officers are responsible for the hiring and appointment of the Executive Director. Each member of the Committee on Accreditation receives one vote and each ABFSE officer receives one vote. At no time shall the ABFSE officers have more votes than the total combined votes of the members of the Committee on Accreditation. The Executive Director is evaluated [as stipulated in Chapter X, section R] at each annual conference of the ABFSE and serves on a re-appointable, annual basis with remuneration, vacation and other personnel benefits as approved by the Committee on Accreditation and the ABFSE officers. The Committee on Accreditation shall report on any actions regarding the Executive Director at the ABFSE annual conference.

ARTICLE V

The officers shall be selected from members who are full-time faculty or administrators at ABFSE accredited institutions or programs and they shall be elected by secret ballot at the regular annual conference of the ABFSE. If there is only one nominee for an office, the election may be by voice vote or show of hands.

Officers of the ABFSE shall hold office for a term of two years or until their successors are elected.

No elected officer of the ABFSE shall be represented in a given office for more than two terms in succession.

Candidate credentials for the officers of the ABFSE (i.e., President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer, and Immediate Past President) shall be at least: (1) a full-time faculty or administrator at an ABFSE accredited institution or program; (2) a current or past member of a standing committee of the ABFSE; and (3) have attended ABFSE annual conferences for at least three (3) of the previous five (5) years.
ARTICLE VI

The standing committees of the ABFSE shall be: Scholarship Committee, Finance Committee, Curriculum Committee, Committee on Accreditation, Accreditation Liaison Committee, College and University Council, Program Committee, Constitution and By-Laws Committee, and National Board Examination Liaison Committee.

The members of all standing committees, except the Committee on Accreditation, the Finance Committee and the Accreditation Liaison Committee, shall serve for a term of three years, exclusive of original appointments, which shall be staggered in such a way as to provide for orderly transition. Members shall be eligible for reappointment for only one additional consecutive three-year term. Members originally appointed to complete an unexpired term are eligible for reappointment to one consecutive term. Members are appointed by the President of ABFSE with the approval of the Executive Committee.

The members of each standing committee shall elect a chair and a vice chair at their spring meeting to serve for the ensuing year. The President of the ABFSE shall announce vacancies on the committees as they occur and will solicit nominations for individuals to fill the vacancies from the appropriate constituencies.

A. The Committee on Accreditation (COA) shall consist of twelve members, including two public members.

Representative of the public means a person who is not –

a) An employee, member of the governing board, owner, or shareholder of, or consultant to, an institution or program that either is accredited or preaccredited by the COA or has applied for accreditation or preaccreditation;

b) A member of any trade association or membership organization related to, affiliated with, or associated with the COA or ABFSE; or

c) A spouse, parent, child, or sibling of an individual identified in paragraph a or b of this definition.

In addition, membership includes one representative each from the funeral service associations; three representatives from the single purpose institutions of funeral service education; and three representatives from the multi-purpose institutions of funeral service education, and one educator representing the College and University Council. The chairs of the site visit committee are ex officio non-voting members of the COA. The chairs may participate in discussion, but may not make motions. The President of the ABFSE shall not be a member of the COA and is not entitled to the written reports to or from the COA.

At least 25% (of which includes one educator and one public member) of the voting members of the COA must demonstrate significant experience in Distance Education at the supervisory, developmental, or practitioner level.

Voting by the COA members at any regularly scheduled or special meeting shall be done by a majority of its entire membership.

Funeral service associations that are accepted as members of the ABFSE must complete a three-year waiting period before they are eligible to have a member on the Committee on Accreditation. Association members must maintain membership in good standing for the entire three-year period to be eligible.

The function of the COA shall be to grant candidacy, initial accreditation, or reaccreditation to institutions of funeral service education.

1. The COA possesses the sole authority to perform the functions as stated in Section A-1 by virtue of the authority delegated by the ABFSE and the recognition awarded by the U.S. Department of Education. An institution of funeral service education adversely affected by the decisions of this committee may avail itself of the appellate procedure.

2. The members of the COA shall serve for a term of three years, exclusive of original appointments, which shall be staggered in such a way as to provide for orderly transition. Members shall be eligible for reappointment for only one additional consecutive three-year period. Members are selected by the COA. The COA will announce vacancies on the committee as they occur and will solicit nominations for individuals.
to fill the vacancies from the appropriate constituencies as prescribed in the Accreditation and Policy Manual, Chapter X. Policies. Section P. The COA will select new members only from nominations received.

3. The COA shall elect a chairperson and a vice-chairperson who shall serve as chair in the event the chair is absent or unable to serve. The Executive Director shall serve as secretary for this committee.

4. The Executive Director of the ABFSE or chairperson of the COA shall select the chairperson of the site visit committee and their members in consultation with the institution being examined.

5. The COA shall appoint educators from disciplines other than funeral service education to serve as chairs of the site visit committee. Appointments shall be for a period of three years, renewable. The chairs shall serve as ex-officio members of the COA.

6. The COA shall create its own budget annually and submit it to the ABFSE for inclusion in the overall budget. The COA shall be autonomous in its expenditures and revenues.

7. The COA shall meet regularly twice each year, in the fall and in the spring. The COA may also choose to hold special meetings either in person or by conference call when dealing with issues deemed too timely to wait.

B. The Scholarship Committee shall consist of a minimum of eight members with educators comprising the majority of the membership but with a representative from each member association.

C. The National Board Examination Liaison Committee shall consist of a minimum of eight members with educators comprising the majority of the membership but with a representative from each member association.

D. The Finance Committee shall consist of the Executive Committee of the ABFSE.

E. The Curriculum Committee shall consist of a minimum of eight members with educators comprising the majority of the membership but with a representative from each member association.

F. The College and University Council shall consist of the representatives from each institution or program of funeral service education accredited by the ABFSE, with each ABFSE accredited institution or program having one vote. The College and University Council shall meet at least at each annual conference and shall elect its own officers. Minutes from the meetings will be included as a portion of the official minutes of the ABFSE annual conference.

This Council shall perform the following assigned responsibilities:

1. Review all notices of motion prior to each annual meeting of the ABFSE and recommend action to be taken on each.

2. Raise for discussion and recommendation to the ABFSE, such issues related to the policies and procedures of the ABFSE and any of its committees deemed appropriate, so long as actual ABFSE vote on new policies follows the requirement of at least thirty days notice prior to formal ABFSE action.

3. Serve as the "caucus" for all academic programs/institutions which are members of the ABFSE.

4. Establish a Nominating Committee to present a slate of names to the membership at the Annual Meeting for each officer position that is available. Candidates for office will be presented by the Nominating Committee of the College and University Council or they may be nominated from the floor at the Annual Meeting.

G. The Program Committee shall consist of a minimum of eight members with educators comprising the majority of the membership but with a representative from each member association. This Committee shall plan programs and workshops for the annual conference.
H. The Constitution and By-Laws Committee shall consist of a minimum of eight members with educators comprising the majority of the membership but with a representative from each member association. This Committee shall periodically review the Constitution and By-Laws and respond to requests for review from the Executive Committee.

I. The Accreditation Liaison Committee shall consist of the officers of ABFSE and three (3) ABFSE members appointed by the President, who do not currently serve on the Committee on Accreditation. The appointed members of the committee shall serve at the discretion of the President for a one-year (1) term. At least one member of the Accreditation Liaison Committee shall represent a single-purpose institution and one member shall represent a public institution. An appointed member shall not serve more than two consecutive terms (2 years).

The purpose of the Accreditation Liaison Committee is to foster and enhance communication between the ABFSE membership, the elected officers, and the members of the Committee on Accreditation. The Accreditation Liaison Committee members shall not serve as voting or Ex-officio members on the Committee on Accreditation and shall not be considered members of the Committee on Accreditation.

The Committee on Accreditation shall allow adequate time on each of their meeting agendas for members of the Accreditation Liaison Committee to meet with the entire Committee on Accreditation to communicate information and concerns beneficial to the members of ABFSE and the Committee on Accreditation. The Accreditation Liaison Committee shall not be present during regular Committee on Accreditation matters prior to the agenda item and shall be excused from the meeting once the agenda item is concluded.

ARTICLE VII

Written notices of all meetings shall be transmitted by mail or electronically to each of the members at least thirty calendar days prior to the date of such meetings.

ARTICLE VIII

When not inconsistent with the Constitution and By-Laws of the ABFSE, the latest edition of Roberts Rules of Order shall govern its deliberation.

ARTICLE IX

A majority (51%) of designated representatives of the ABFSE membership who are entitled to cast a vote at any meeting or annual conference shall constitute a quorum at such meeting.

ARTICLE X

By-Laws may be altered, repealed or amended at any regular or special meeting by a two-thirds vote of the members present, provided written notice of such changes has been transmitted by mail or electronically to all members at least thirty calendar days in advance of such meeting.

ARTICLE XI

A. Any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending, or completed cause of action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, administrative, or investigative (other than a suit by or in the right of the ABFSE) by reason of the fact that he/she is or was a trustee, director, officer, employee, or agent of the ABFSE, or is or was serving at the request of the ABFSE as a trustee, officer, director, employee or agent of another corporation, partnership, employee, or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise, shall be indemnified by the ABFSE for expenses (including reasonable attorney's fees), judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement, actually and reasonably incurred by him/her in connection with such cause of action, suit or proceeding if he/she acted in good faith and in a manner he/she reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the ABFSE, and, with respect to any such action
or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe his/her conduct was unlawful.

B. However, no indemnification shall be made in respect of any claim, issue, or matter as to which such person shall have been adjudged to be liable for personal misconduct or intentionally wrongful activity, or any activity outside the scope of his/her duties performed for the ABFSE. Nor shall any damages be paid for negligence or exemplary damages.

C. Expenses incurred in defending a civil or criminal action, suit, or proceeding may be paid by the ABFSE in advance of the final disposition of such action, suit, or proceeding as authorized by the Executive Committee in a specific case upon receipt of an undertaking by or on behalf of the trustee, director, officer, employee, or agent to repay such amount, unless it shall ultimately be determined that he/she is entitled to be indemnified by the ABFSE as authorized in this article.

D. The ABFSE may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was a director, trustee, officer, employee or agent of the ABFSE, or is or was serving at the request of the ABFSE in any such capacity.
CHAPTER III

THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

A. DEFINITION AND PURPOSE OF ACCREDITATION

Accreditation is a process through which a program or institution voluntarily submits to evaluation by its peers against an established set of standards. The American Board of Funeral Service Education, through its Committee on Accreditation, is charged with the responsibility for implementing a process to achieve the following purposes:

1. develop, approve and improve the standards of funeral service education and thereby protect the public interest;
2. describe the characteristics of an accredited institution of funeral service education;
3. assist each institution in upgrading its own standards through a continuing system of self study, visitation, evaluation and consultation;
4. provide a dependable basis for prospective students' evaluation and selection of an institution offering funeral service education;
5. provide an opportunity for interinstitutional relationships; and
6. provide a list of accredited institutions to the public and to all agencies interested in funeral service.

The accreditation process has three major components:

1. Self study conducted carefully and thoroughly by the institution. The results are summarized in the Self study Report and submitted to the Committee on Accreditation.
2. On-Site Visit, conducted by a visiting committee selected by the Committee on Accreditation. The visiting committee prepares an On-Site Evaluation Report which is submitted to the Committee on Accreditation and reviewed by the program.
3. Committee on Accreditation Action, which is based upon a thorough review of all documentation, including the program's formal responses to the on-site report.

Each of the above components is discussed in detail in Chapter V (Accreditation Procedures) of this manual.

B. THE ABFSE COMMITTEE ON ACCREDITATION

The Committee on Accreditation is a standing committee of the American Board of Funeral Service Education. It functions autonomously and independently of the Board. The Committee has the sole authority to approve and revise standards, grant candidacy, award or deny accreditation, and take all other actions related to an applicant's accreditation status except Appellate Review.

The Committee consists of twelve members appointed by the Committee, including two public members. (See membership in Article VI A of the By-Laws.)

Representative of the public means a person who is not –

a) An employee, member of the governing board, owner, or shareholder of, or consultant to, an institution or program that either is accredited or preaccredited by the COA or has applied for accreditation or preaccreditation;
b) A member of any trade association or membership organization related to, affiliated with, or associated with the COA or ABFSE; or

c) A spouse, parent, child, or sibling of an individual identified in paragraph a or b of this definition.

In addition, membership includes one representative from each affiliated organization, three representatives of the private institutions of funeral service education, and three representatives of the public institutions of funeral service education.

At least 25% (of which includes one educator and one public member) of the voting members of the COA must demonstrate significant experience in Distance Learning at the supervisory, developmental, or practitioner level.

The Committee appoints educators from disciplines other than funeral service education to serve as Chairpersons of on-site visiting committees; the chairpersons' appointments are for three-year terms. The Committee and its staff are responsible for selecting members in accordance with Chapter V of this manual.

C. ELIGIBILITY FOR INITIAL ACCREDITATION BY THE ABFSE

To be eligible for accreditation by the ABFSE, the applicant must:

1. offer a program of at least 60 semester or 90 quarter credit hours leading to a degree or diploma in funeral service education;

2. have a license or charter from the appropriate governmental agency to operate and award a degree or diploma;

3. submit a feasibility study which includes all documentation and information required by the Committee on Accreditation of the ABFSE;

4. meet or exceed the published accreditation standards of the ABFSE;

5. have achieved Candidacy Status (Chapter IV, Candidacy Status);

6. institutions/programs in candidacy status must have at least one class of students taking the second half of the program and enrolled in clinical embalming. Students are not eligible to take the NBE until the program achieves accreditation;

7. have a governing board which shall exercise all powers that may be performed by the institution under the license or charter above; and

8. have a chief executive officer directly accountable to the governing board.

9. ensure that its program director has attended the Self Study Workshop (workshops are offered twice a year).

10. After completion of the Candidacy Phase:
   a. the CEO of the institution makes a formal request to initiate the accreditation process;
   b. an application for initial accreditation is submitted;
   c. the program conducts a Self study; a site-visit is scheduled;
   d. a Self study report and other required documentation is submitted;
   e. an on-site visit is conducted;
   f. a written report is submitted by the on-site visiting committee;
g. the program is invited to respond in writing to the on-site report;

h. the Committee on Accreditation considers all documentation and oral testimony;

i. the institution is notified of the Committee action; and

j. the Committee on Accreditation publishes the accreditation status of the program.

11. Effective Date of Accreditation

For institutions or programs that achieve initial accreditation, the effective date of that accreditation is the date initial candidacy was awarded by the Committee on Accreditation. Students who complete all coursework after the date candidacy is awarded but before initial accreditation is achieved, will be permitted, after initial accreditation is awarded, to take the NBE and with all requirements completed, be considered graduates from an ABFSE accredited program.

D. ACCREDITATION CATEGORIES

Actions taken by the Committee on Accreditation may result in one of the following:

1. Pre-accreditation Categories

   Candidacy Awarded to new programs which, in the judgment of the Committee on Accreditation, demonstrate the potential to meet the standards for accreditation.

   Candidacy Withdrawn Given to a program in Candidacy Status, which in the judgment of the Committee, has failed to correct deficiencies as advised by the Committee.

   Candidacy Withheld Given to a program which fails to demonstrate the potential to meet the standards for accreditation or fulfill the Candidacy eligibility requirements.

2. Accreditation Categories

   a. Awarding Accreditation

      (1) Accreditation Initial or continuing accreditation may be granted when the accreditation or review process confirms that the program is in compliance with all standards.

      (2) Probation. Probation is imposed when the program is not in compliance with the Standards and the deficiencies are so serious that the capability of the program to provide acceptable educational experiences for the students appears to be threatened. Most assignments of probation are based on evidence substantiated by a site visit. However, if the cited deficiencies are not in dispute, the Committee on Accreditation may impose Probation without conducting a site visit.

      (3) Administrative Probationary Accreditation is awarded by the ABFSE Executive Director for a maximum of 90 days when an institution or program is not in compliance with one or more of the following requirements for maintenance of accreditation:

         • Paying accreditation-related fees and charges within 60 days of the invoice date;
         • Submitting reports or other required information by the due date;
         • Agreeing to a reasonable on-site visit date at or near the time established by the ABFSE Executive Director;
         • Advertising its programs ethically and accurately according to ABFSE policies (see Chapter X, Section D).
Administrative Probationary Accreditation is an accreditation category, and is not subject to appeal. Although the institution or program is recognized and listed as accredited during the period of administrative probationary accreditation, failure to completely remedy the situation by the date specified in the probationary letter may result in Involuntary Withdrawal of Accreditation as described under Section D (2)(b) of Chapter III.

Complete resolution of the situation cited in the administrative probationary accreditation letter, along with payment of the appropriate fee (see the fee schedule in Appendix D), will satisfy the administrative requirements and result in restoration of accredited status.

b. Denying Accreditation

(1) Accreditation Withdrawn

Accreditation Withdrawn – Voluntary (at request of sponsoring institution)

Accreditation Withdrawn – Involuntary (for failure to be in substantial compliance with the Standards or with administrative requirements.

The appropriate official is provided with a clear statement of each deficiency and is informed that the sponsoring institution may apply for accreditation as a new applicant whenever the program is believed to be in compliance with the Standards and with administrative requirements for maintaining accreditation.

The letter notifying the appropriate officials that the program has received Accreditation Withdrawn – involuntary indicates that the institution may appeal the decision. (A copy of the Appeals Procedures for Accreditation Withdrawn is enclosed with the letter.)

(2) Accreditation Withheld A program seeking Initial Accreditation may have Accreditation Withheld if the accreditation review process confirms that the program is not in compliance with Standards that are vital to the educational program.

The appropriate official is provided with a clear statement of each deficiency and is informed that application for accreditation as a new applicant may be made whenever the program is believed to be in compliance with the Standards.

E. DURATION OF ACCREDITATION

The maximum duration of Accreditation is seven years. Shorter durations may be awarded by the Committee based upon the extent to which the program has deficiencies to be corrected. Maintenance of accreditation throughout this period is contingent upon the submission of satisfactory annual reports.

In all cases of initial accreditation (i.e., moving from candidacy to accreditation), the initial duration of accreditation will be no longer than three years.

In cases where a program being considered for renewal of accreditation is determined to have several major deficiencies or is found to be in violation of one or more standards, the duration of accreditation will be no more than five years.

Probation is ordinarily granted for one year, during which time the program is expected to correct deficiencies.

Candidacy Status is granted for a period of one year and may, at the discretion of the Committee, be extended one additional year.

3-4
Programs whose Candidacy or Accreditation has been Withheld or Withdrawn must wait for a period of ninety days from the date of such action before reapplying for Candidacy or Accreditation. An institution that has had its accreditation withdrawn either by formal COA action or which has relinquished it voluntarily will not be bound by the provisions of Section C6 of Chapter III provided it submit a formal letter within two years of the loss indicating its intent to apply for candidacy status. All other provision applying to new programs - including the provision for a visit by the ABFSE Executive Director - apply.
CHAPTER IV

CANDIDACY

Candidacy for accreditation is a pre-accreditation status. It is not accreditation. Programs seeking eventual accreditation must first meet the evaluative criteria for Candidacy, which are designed to ensure that the program meets the eligibility requirements for membership in the ABFSE. In addition, the Candidacy application measures the program’s potential to meet the Standards for Accreditation, although the achievement of Candidacy does not insure eventual accreditation. There are two circumstances under which a program might be seeking candidacy: a Category One program has never been accredited, and is applying for Candidacy as a first step in this process; a Category Two program has previously had its accreditation withdrawn. The Candidate program must submit a detailed document or feasibility study that demonstrates that it meets the requirements, has effectively organized resources to enable it to accomplish its educational purpose, and is following realistic plans to acquire, organize, and apply additional resources needed to comply with the Standards for Accreditation. This document becomes the candidacy Self study. The institution or program is responsible to the Committee on Accreditation for any questions the committee might have regarding the document. The document should specifically address these eligibility requirements and should include extensive explanation and examples.

A. CONSULTING VISIT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1. A program planning to apply for Candidacy is required to have a consulting visit by the ABFSE Executive Director normally accompanied by a member of the Committee on Accreditation or by one of the permanent visiting committee chairs prior to submitting its application. This visit is to review the status of the program, including its ability to meet ABFSE Candidacy Requirements, ABFSE Standards of Accreditation as well as to provide general application process assistance. Costs of the visit will be travel and related expenses for the individuals who are making the visit. Although the ABFSE Executive Director does not charge a fee for the visit (other than travel and related expenses), a fee will be charged for the other individual (See Appendix D for a list of fees.)

2. The program is to contact the Executive Director to arrange a mutually convenient time for this campus visit. Costs of the visit are borne by the program.

B. CATEGORY ONE PROGRAM: ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR CANDIDACY STATUS

To be considered for candidacy, a program or its sponsoring institution

1. MUST have a license or charter from the appropriate governmental agency to operate and award a minimum of an Associate Degree or equivalent.

2. MUST submit documentation that the program has officially notified the appropriate state funeral service licensing agency and the appropriate state education agency of its intent to offer a program in funeral service education.

3. MUST submit evidence that the appropriate state licensing agency will allow graduates to be tested for licensure.
   a. State licensing agencies must provide a state version of the National Board Exam (NBE) or provide an exam that is comparable to the NBE standards and measurements.
   b. Provisions must be made for grading the examination by a testing agency separate from the state funeral service licensing agency.

4. MUST provide the names and addresses of the governing board that will exercise all powers that may be performed by the institution under the license or charter in item B.1.

4-1
5. MUST provide the name, address, and credentials of the chief executive officer directly accountable to the governing board and the name, address, and credentials of the individual responsible for the funeral service education program, if different.

6. The individual responsible for the funeral service education program MUST meet the following specific standards at the time of candidacy application:
   
   a. he or she must be a full-time employee of the institution.
   
   b. he or she must be a graduate of an ABFSE accredited program.
   
   c. he or she must possess a valid license to practice as a funeral service professional.
   
   d. he or she must provide evidence in the form of an official transcript from a regionally accredited college or university of completion of a Bachelor’s Degree or its equivalent. In addition, it is preferred that the program director of a program in candidacy have a Master’s Degree. In such cases where the program director does not possess a Master’s Degree or equivalent, the provisions of Standard 7.2.2 of Chapter IX apply (i.e. a Master’s must be received within five years of initial appointment).

7. MUST provide a detailed explanation in writing that there are plans to meet each standard of accreditation which describe how the requirements of each standard will be met. The discussion should include evaluation methods which demonstrate results in measurable terms.
   
   a. MUST show evidence that the mission statement as well as aims and objectives of the funeral service education program are being met.
   
   b. MUST have a catalog and other appropriate official publications available to students and the public that set forth the mission statement and aims and objectives of the funeral service education program to include entrance requirements, rules and regulations for conduct, programs and courses, program completion requirement, costs, and information related to attending or withdrawing from the program.
   
   c. MUST have established an adequate financial base and provide a copy of the current budget, including the funeral service education program budget and a copy of the most recent institutional budget. A copy of the most recent externally reviewed audited institutional financial statement prepared by a Certified Public Accountant must also be included.
   
   d. MUST have in place one or more programs in funeral service education of at least 60 semester or 90 quarter credit hours with students actively enrolled in some phase of the funeral service education program beyond the general education core courses. The curriculum should be logically arranged with evidence to indicate that students must be able to complete the program in not more than two (2) times the normal length of the program.
   
   e. MUST provide an outline of courses and course descriptions, as defined by the five (5) curriculum content areas of the Accreditation Manual (see Chapter IX), by quarter or semester hours.
   
   f. MUST provide course syllabi for all courses offered in the program and document the fact that subject matter contained in the ABFSE Curriculum Outlines is being presented to students in a manner comparable to other disciplines of academic study.
   
   g. MUST provide evidence of facilities that will meet the requirements in Standard 8 of the Standards of Accreditation prior to accreditation being awarded.
h. MUST have learning resources adequate for the support of the academic program in funeral service education, including the subjects of Microbiology, Anatomy, Chemistry, Pathology, Restorative Art, Embalming, Small Business Management, Funeral Directing, Funeral Merchandising, Funeral Service Management, Federal Trade Commission, Accounting, Cremation, Sociology, Funeral Service Psychology & Counseling, History of Funeral Directing & Embalming, Communication Skills, Business Law, Funeral Service Law and Ethics and other resources specifically related to the study of dying and death.

8. MUST define its service area in specific geographic and demographic terms and provide enrollment projections for three (3) consecutive years following candidacy application. Enrollment projections MUST be consistent with ABFSE validated statistics in the category of State of Origin of New Student (re: Annual Program Statistical Report) for the defined service area.

9. MUST provide data from state, local, and/or regional workforce studies showing a need for licensed individuals in funeral service in the funeral service education program's defined service area.

10. MUST submit plans for additional funeral service education program faculty and facilities as the program expands and provide financial projections for three (3) consecutive years following candidacy application.

11. MUST have an advisory board composed of not less than seven (7) practicing and licensed members of the funeral service profession who are graduates of ABFSE accredited programs and others that might contribute to the quality of the educational process in the candidate program. In addition, the following information shall be provided:
   a. documentation that advisory board meetings will occur not less than once during each twelve (12) month period.
   b. written minutes of advisory board meetings.

C. CATEGORY TWO PROGRAM: ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR CANDIDACY STATUS

The requirements for this category differ from those of new applicants because either an existing program is continuing to function or its sponsorship, personnel, curriculum clinical remain even though the program, after losing accreditation, has been suspended.

1. MUST provide an analysis of the underlying factors resulting in the withdrawal of accreditation, including personnel changes. If a consultant was used, his/her report must be attached.

2. MUST provide a detailed description of all steps that have been taken to change the program in response to the withdrawal of accreditation.

3. MUST provide the names and addresses of the governing board that will exercise all powers that may be performed by the institution under the license or charter in item B.1.

4. MUST provide the name, address, and credentials of the chief executive officer directly accountable to the governing board and the name, address, and credentials of the individual responsible for the funeral service education program, if different.

5. The individual responsible for the funeral service education program MUST meet the following specific standards at the time of candidacy application:
   a. he or she must be a full-time employee of the institution.
   b. he or she must be a graduate of an ABFSE accredited program.
   c. he or she must possess a valid license to practice as a funeral service professional.
d. he or she must provide evidence in the form of an official transcript from a regionally accredited college or university of completion of a Bachelor’s Degree or its equivalent. In addition, it is preferred that the program director of a program in candidacy have a Master’s Degree. In such cases where the program director does not possess a Master’s Degree or equivalent, the provisions of Standard 7.2.2 of Chapter IX apply (i.e. a Master’s must be received within five years of initial appointment).

6. MUST provide a detailed explanation in writing that there are plans to meet on a continuing basis each standard of accreditation which describe how the requirements of each standard will be met. The discussion should include evaluation methods which demonstrate results in measurable terms.

   a. MUST show evidence that the mission statement as well as aims and objectives of the funeral service education program are being met.

   b. MUST have a catalog and other appropriate official publications available to students and the public that set forth the mission statement and aims and objectives of the funeral service education program to include entrance requirements, rules and regulations for conduct, programs and courses, program completion requirement, costs, and information related to attending or withdrawing from the program.

   c. MUST have established an adequate financial base and provide a copy of the current budget, including the funeral service education program budget and a copy of the most recent institutional budget. A copy of the most recent externally reviewed audited institutional financial statement prepared by a Certified Public Accountant must also be included.

   d. MUST have in place one or more programs in funeral service education of at least 60 semester or 90 quarter credit hours with students actively enrolled in some phase of the funeral service education program beyond the general education core courses. The curriculum should be logically arranged with evidence to indicate that students must be able to complete the program in not more than two (2) times the normal length of the program.

   e. MUST provide an outline of courses and course descriptions, as defined by the five (5) curriculum content areas of the Accreditation Manual (see Chapter IX), by quarter or semester hours.

   f. MUST provide course syllabi for all courses offered in the program and document the fact that subject matter contained in the ABFSE Curriculum Outlines is being presented to students in a manner comparable to other disciplines of academic study.

   g. MUST provide evidence of facilities that meet (or will meet prior accreditation being awarded) the requirements in Standard 8 of the Standards of Accreditation prior to accreditation being awarded.

   h. MUST have learning resources adequate for the support of the academic program in funeral service education, include the subjects of grief psychology, grief counseling, funeral customs, and other resources specifically related to the study of dying and death.

7. MUST define its service area in specific geographic and demographic terms and provide enrollment projections for three (3) consecutive years following candidacy application. Enrollment projections MUST be consistent with ABFSE validated statistics in the category of State of Origin of New Student (re: Annual Program Statistical Report) for the defined service area.

8. MUST provide data from state, local, and/or regional workforce studies showing a need for licensed individuals in funeral service in the funeral service education program's defined service area.

9. MUST submit plans for additional funeral service education program faculty and facilities as the program expands and provide financial projections for three (3) consecutive years following candidacy application.
10. **MUST** have an advisory board composed of not less than seven (7) practicing and licensed members of the funeral service profession who are graduates of ABFSE accredited programs and others that might contribute to the quality of the educational process in the candidate program. In addition, the following information shall be provided:

a. documentation that advisory board meetings will occur not less than once during each twelve (12) month period.

b. written minutes of advisory board meetings.

**D. STEPS TO BE FOLLOWED IN APPLYING FOR CANDIDACY STATUS**

1. The program should request an Application for Candidacy form from the ABFSE office or download from the ABFSE website (www.abfse.org).

2. The program should contact the ABFSE Executive Director to arrange the required visit.

3. The program should submit the Application for Candidacy, the Candidacy Self study document, and the required application fee to the ABFSE office not less than sixty (60) days prior to a regularly scheduled meeting of the Committee on Accreditation. The Candidacy Self study document must demonstrate the program's compliance with each eligibility requirement in Section A above.

4. After submitting the Candidacy Self study, the program will be assigned a three-person visiting committee consisting of an ABFSE committee chair, a funeral service practitioner, and an approved mortuary science educator. Costs (expenses and stipends) for the visit are borne by the program or institution.

5. The Application for Candidacy, the Candidacy Self Study Document, and all supporting materials will be reviewed by the Committee on Accreditation at one of its two regular meetings each year and a decision rendered.

6. If Candidacy status is granted by the Committee on Accreditation, the period of candidacy shall be for a period of one (1) year. It can be renewed for one additional year only. The published renewal fee will be assessed.

**NOTE:** See Appendix D for accreditation and related schedule of fees.

**E. PUBLIC INFORMATION**

1. While programs are in Candidacy status, they may only describe their relationship to ABFSE as “Candidate for Accreditation.” The Candidate may not refer to itself in any manner which infers accreditation, including reference to a student being eligible to take the National Board Examination.

2. Each program applying for Candidacy, or already in Candidacy status, must publish the following statement in all printed materials until the program is accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education:

   **CAUTION:** Students applying for admission to the funeral service program [*specific program titles may be substituted*] should contact their respective state boards of funeral service regarding that state board's approval of this particular program of instruction.

   Initial Accreditation typically follows Candidacy.
CHAPTER V

ACCREDITATION PROCEDURES

Accreditation refers to initial accreditation and re-accreditation (or renewal of accreditation). Candidacy follows the same process.

Accreditation procedures include:
- an application
- comprehensive review also referred to the Self study
- site visit
- site visit team report
- response to the team report
- COA decision

A. APPLICATION

Accredited programs are reminded to initiate the comprehensive review (Self study) process approximately 18 months. This notice comes in the form or a letter from the ABFSE office. Comprehensive review schedule for each program appears in the ABFSE Directory of Programs found on the ABFSE website.

The Transmittal Form (found in Appendix B-3), serves as the application for all accreditations/re-accreditations.

The there is a separate application for Candidacy and Initial Accreditation. Candidate programs must follow the steps described in Chapter IV.

The accreditation process may be initiated only at the request of the sponsoring institution's CEO or other authorized official. The application procedure is considered complete when the following items have been submitted to the ABFSE office:
- the Transmittal Form,
- the Self study Report with all supporting documentation,
- required fees as specified in the ABFSE Schedule of Fees (see Appendix D).

B. COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW (SELF STUDY)

Comprehensive Review (Self Study) is the method by which an institution demonstrates that the accredited program is fulfilling the expectations of accreditation. Self study is both the process of evaluation done by the institution and the document presented to demonstrate the fulfillment of the process.

Definition: A Self study is a formal process through which an educational institution or program critically examines its structure and substance, evaluates the program's overall effectiveness relative to its mission, identifies specific strengths and deficiencies, and creates a plan for any necessary modifications and improvements. The process assesses the extent to which the program is in compliance with established accreditation Standards and should include consideration of external factors influencing the educational environment.

The Self study is:
- the activity that precedes the report;
- organized and systematic;
- conducted by and for the program with the participation of appropriate constituencies;
- comprehensive and considers all elements of the program;
The Self study:
- critically examines the current status of the program;
- judges overall effectiveness (conclusions should be reached)
- identifies and assesses specific strengths and deficiencies in an open, objective, and precise manner;
- helps establish a plan for modifications and improvements to amend any deficiencies uncovered during the process; (formal long-range planning is a logical precursor to the Self study process);
- identifies external factors influencing the educational environment (e.g. conditions within the sponsoring program, projected changes in the profession's role, and the legal, social, political and economic climate affecting the program); and
- determines the extent to which the program is in compliance with established ABFSE Accreditation Standards.

1. ORGANIZATION OF SELF STUDY

The actual process for conducting the Self study will vary from program to program, but certain characteristics should apply in every instance.

One individual should be selected to have over-all responsibility for seeing that the work is started in time, that appropriate progress as maintained and that departmental and committee assignments are properly prepared.

A steering committee should be formed. The committee should include representation from the institution's administrative staff, teaching faculty, students, alumni, and the governing board. Departmental personnel, librarians, faculty, staff and administrative officers must look at themselves critically in order to appraise objectively and to report honestly.

The general Chairperson will outline to participants the work that is to be done, the time schedule to be maintained, and the format of the Self study Report. For all these reasons, it is important that the program begin its Self study process approximately one-year in advance of the anticipated site visit.

The Self study process should culminate in the completion and presentation of the Self study Report.

2. SELF STUDY REPORT

Beginning in 2018 the ABFSE Self study document is created and submitted electronically. (See Appendix C for additional details)

The Self study Report will include the following components:
- Introduction
- Standards
- Additional Information

Introduction will include:
- Transmittal Form (Appendix B-3)
- Program and Institutional Data Form (Appendix B-4)
- Curriculum Distribution by ABFSE Content Area (Appendix B-6)
- Brief description of the Self study process, including a list of the participants and their assignments;
- A brief historical overview of the program;
- Description of steps taken to address any concerns from the last comprehensive review.

Standards
The program’s efforts to comply with each accreditation standard will be described and supporting evidence will be uploaded. In order to facilitate complete responses, questions are provided for each standard. Questions include prompts to upload pertinent evidence of compliance.
Additional Information
This is an opportunity to summarize the program’s strengths, concerns and plans to correct any issues discovered during the Self study process. Programs offering distance education will address additional questions in this section. For more detailed guidance concerning this narrative portion of the report and the exhibits, refer to Appendix C of this Manual.

C. SITE VISIT

The on-site visit provides the opportunity to validate and/or clarify the contents of the program's Self study report. A three person team visits the campus over a two-three day period and reports to COA.

Each program will be visited as part of the Candidacy and Initial Accreditation process, and periodically for renewal of Accreditation (usually at least once every seven years). In addition, it is the policy of the COA that it may schedule a revisit to any institution or program currently accredited if, in the judgment of the COA, situations have arisen in the institution or program which would justify a re-evaluation.

The comprehensive review / site visit schedule is maintained by the ABFSE office, reviewed by the COA and published in the ABFSE Directory with each school’s information.

Authority for assigning the academic year in which a program is to be visited is vested in the COA. Programs typically receive notification from the ABFSE office 18 months in advance of a pending visit.

Appropriate dates for the visit are determined by the ABFSE Executive Director and the Program Director. In establishing dates, consideration is given to the time necessary to conduct the Self study and prepare the Self study report.

For Initial Accreditation, the visit shall be scheduled to ensure that practical courses in embalming, restorative art, and funeral service have been completed or are in operation either prior to or during the visit dates.

Written notification of the selected dates and the names of the site visit team members will be provided to the CEO of the sponsoring institution.

1. SCHEDULE

The duration, agenda and sequence of events for the site visit may vary according to the nature of the program to be visited. Most visits encompass three days including travel but may vary depending on the size and nature of the program, location of facilities, and other relevant factors. The site visit is a working assignment with minimal social activities.

The program should provide a private workroom for the team, and materials relevant to the program not included in the Self study report should be available for review in that location.

Most visits begin with a private team meeting. This allows the team members to get acquainted, review the site visit schedule and, identify areas of the program requiring specific attention. Depending on the location, the site visit may begin with a tour of clinical facilities on day one.

A brief campus tour is customary. This will familiarize team members with the physical plant and the locations of scheduled appointments. Care must be taken that this tour is brief. Campus maps for team members will aid in this orientation.

Team Members shall be admitted to all facilities used by the program. They shall inquire into all phases of management and operation of the program in order to verify the content of the Self study report. They shall have complete freedom to confer with school officials, members of the faculty, students, and such other deemed necessary by the team.
Team members shall visit classes to observe lectures, laboratory exercises, and other methods of instruction. It is understood that team members are not limited to any prearranged schedule but are free to observe and consult as they desire. Schedules of free hours of faculty will be helpful. Team members will seek to cause as little disruption as possible to the routine of the program and institution.

The team will hold an exit interview with administration and program staff as selected by the administration.

2. EXIT INTERVIEW

Each site visit concludes with an Exit Interview. Representatives from the program and institution meet with the site visit team to review the team report. The Team Chairperson will summarize the team's findings and observations and discuss the subsequent events in the accreditation process.

This includes the anticipated dates for receipt of the written Site Visit report, timing of the program’s response to the report and the subsequent review by the COA. If any factual errors in the team’s findings or observations become apparent, they should be addressed during the exit interview. [NOTE: Site Visit teams do not make recommendations concerning accreditation.]

See Appendix C for additional information regarding site visit details, including a sample site visit agenda.

D. SITE VISIT TEAM

A team ordinarily consists of three members:
- the Chairperson or Team Chair, who is an educator from a discipline other than funeral service education;
- one educator member who has been actively engaged in teaching or administration at an ABFSE accredited program on a full-time basis for at least five years; and
- one funeral service licensee who has been a practitioner for at least five years.

The ABFSE officers, the Chairperson of the COA, and members of the COA may not serve on a site visit team, unless the site visit is a focused visit for a specified purpose.

The Executive Director in consultation with the Chairperson of the COA will assign the Team Chair and members of the site visit team in consultation with the program being examined. Care is taken to avoid any real or apparent conflict of interest between team members and the institution being evaluated and to select team members who understand the particular type of institution in which the program is located.

To assist in the selection of team members, the ABFSE office maintains a record of competent, experienced individuals with appropriate training to serve as team members.

Schedule

The duration, agenda and sequence of events for the site visit may vary according to the nature of the program to be visited. Most visits encompass three days including travel but may vary depending on the size and nature of the program, location of facilities, and other relevant factors.

The site visit is a working assignment with minimal social activities.

Most visits begin with a private team meeting. This allows the team members to get acquainted, review the site visit schedule and, identify areas of the program requiring specific attention. Depending on the location, the site visit may begin with a tour of clinical facilities on day one.

The program should provide a private workroom for the team, and materials relevant to the program not included in the Self study report should be available for review in that location.

A brief campus tour is customary. This will familiarize team members with the physical plant and the locations of scheduled appointments. Care must be taken that this tour is brief.
Campus maps for team members will aid in this orientation.

Team Members shall be admitted to all facilities used by the program. They shall inquire into all phases of management and operation of the program in order to verify the content of the Self study report. They shall have complete freedom to confer with school officials, members of the faculty, students, and such other deemed necessary by the team. Team members shall visit classes to observe lectures, laboratory exercises, and other methods of instruction. It is understood that team members are not limited to any prearranged schedule but are free to observe and consult as they desire. Schedules of free hours of faculty will be helpful.

While it is necessary for the team to have access to all facets of program operations, the members will seek to cause as little disruption as possible to the routine of the program and institution.

The team will hold an exit interview with administration and program staff as selected by the administration. The purpose of the meeting is to make known to the program the findings of the team committee. A sample site visit agenda is presented in Appendix C.

E. SITE VISIT TEAM REPORT

Within thirty (30) days following the on-site visit, the Team Chair shall provide the ABFSE office with the team's written report, signed by all members of the team.

Within forty-five (45) days after the visit, the Executive Director shall forward copies of this report to the institutional CEO with a copy to the program director. The institution/program is free to distribute the report as it deems appropriate.

The site visit report shall contain narrative comments regarding team’s observations and shall include a summary of the program’s strengths and concerns relative to the ABFSE Accreditation Standards. The comments and recommendations made in the report should be clear, factual, and specific without being unduly prescriptive as to the precise manner in which unfavorable factors should be remedied, and with clear emphasis on items the team believes to be most in need of improvement.

F. RESPONSE TO THE TEAM REPORT

The Chief Executive Officer of the institution or the program director shall have an opportunity to provide written comments on the report prior to the COA accreditation decision. This is also an opportunity to provide supplemental (written) materials pertinent to the facts and conclusions in the report before the COA takes action.

G. COMMITTEE ON ACCREDITATION DECISION

COA makes all accreditation decisions following review of the Self study, site visit report, and the school response.

The institution will be notified of the time and location of the COA meeting during which the accreditation decision will be decided. Representatives from the institution are encouraged to be present in order to answer questions.
H. RESPONSIBILITIES DURING ACCREDITATION

1. PROGRAM DIRECTOR RESPONSIBILITIES
   - Adhere to the appropriate time frames. Prepare and submit to the ABFSE office all materials required for the comprehensive review, including the Self study report. Make certain that copies are made for the institution's own use.
   - Ensure that all necessary fees related to the accreditation process and site visit are submitted in a timely manner (see Appendix D).
   - Confirm dates of visit with the ABFSE office, ensure that the date is acceptable to key personnel within the program. Notify practicum/clinical sites and preceptors to be visited and obtain necessary permissions for visitors.
   - Arrange for reasonably priced, convenient, and comfortable hotel accommodations for the team.
   - Provide in advance to the Team Chair all information regarding hotel accommodations, availability of taxi or limo service between airport and hotel, and transportation arrangements between hotel and program.
   - Work with the Team Chair to determine the site visit schedule, including individuals to be interviewed and visited.
   - Secure a private workroom on the institution's premises for team use. Have available in the workroom any supporting documents that have not been uploaded into the Self study.
   - Coordinate the activities during the on-site visit.
   - Facilitate a written response to the site visit and Team report for consideration at the assigned COA meeting. If necessary, submit supplemental information to COA following receipt of the Team Report. Proper format for the response and supplemental materials will be coordinated with the ABFSE Executive Director. Electronic submission is preferred.
   - Programs are encouraged to provide written evaluation of the site visit and the team itself, to the ABFSE office.

2. SITE VISIT TEAM CHAIRPERSON’S RESPONSIBILITIES
   - Confirm dates of visit and team roster with the Executive Director and the Program Director.
   - Assume responsibility for all visit related correspondence with team members.
   - Provide team members with details of hotel accommodations and transportation. Schedule appropriate time for a preliminary team meeting (on the evening) prior to the start of the visit.
   - Well in advance of the visit, thoroughly review all Self study materials including the report from the preceding site visit.
   - Be familiar with the ABFSE accreditation procedures, policies and the Standards.
   - Work with Program Director in arranging visit schedule, including individuals to be interviewed and off-campus locations to be visited.
   - In advance of the visit, inform team members of their assignments and specific areas requiring their attention and expertise.
   - During visit, conduct preliminary meeting with program personnel, as well as the exit interview. The Team Chairperson has the primary responsibility to see that time is used efficiently and resist any tendency on the part of the team members or the program to engage in irrelevant discussions and activities. The Chairperson should ensure that all essential personnel, sites and support services are reviewed and visited.
   - The Team Chairperson should ensure that any faculty, student, or other interested persons who wish to speak to the team have the opportunity to do so. The Team Chairperson must guide the team members in maintaining objectivity and sensitivity throughout the visit.
   - Draft final report and circulate it among team members for their signature. Submit the final report to the ABFSE office within thirty (30) days after the site visit.
   - Attend the COA meeting at which the program's accreditation status will be reviewed and be prepared to discuss the team findings with the COA.
3. SITE VISIT TEAM MEMBERS’ RESPONSIBILITIES

- Review thoroughly all program materials well in advance of the visit, including the Self study report with uploads and the program and institutional website.
- Become familiar with the ABFSE accreditation procedures, policies, and the Standards, including JURA (the software system currently in use for Self study preparation).
- Work with Team Chairperson in determining specific areas to be evaluated during visit.
- Avoid irrelevant discussions and activities during the visit and make every effort to maintain objectivity throughout the visit and evaluation. Members should bear in mind that the program is to be evaluated in light of its own stated objectives.
- Participate in the preparation of site visit report and the exit interview.
CHAPTER VI
THE COMMITTEE ON ACCREDITATION PROCEDURES

Final evaluation of a program will be made in accordance with the extent to which it complies with the total provisions of the manual with special importance to the Standards.

A. COMMITTEE REVIEW OF MATERIALS AND PROGRAM TESTIMONY

The Committee on Accreditation will consider all information obtained from the program's transmittal and program Data Form, Self study report, the visiting committee report and the program's written response to the report in reaching a decision on the program's accreditation status. The visiting committee chairperson attends the meeting in order to provide an overview of the program and present the findings. In addition, the program is encouraged to exercise its right of appearance before the Committee at the time its status is being considered. The purpose of the appearance is to clarify any unresolved questions the Committee may have concerning the materials submitted by the program and the visiting committee.

B. COMMITTEE ACTIONS

NOTE:

Unless the committee itself demonstrates an appropriate basis for doing otherwise, the Committee shall not take favorable accreditation action concerning any institution or program for which another recognized accreditation agency, or a state post-secondary review commission has (1) imposed an interim action leading to suspension, revocation, or termination of accreditation or pre-accreditation, or (2) notified the institution or program of a threatened loss or accreditation, or (3) threatened by the State or Province/Territory with loss of legal authority to provide postsecondary education. (See page 6-4 (E) below for the detailed policy.)

The Committee shall take one of the following actions.

1. **Grant initial or continuation of Candidacy Status** for one year in compliance with Chapter IV.

2. **Grant Initial or Continuing Accreditation** when the accreditation review process confirms that the program is in compliance with the Standards. The term "initial" is used to indicate that the program is being accredited for the first time.

   For deficiencies, if any, the Committee on Accreditation requires evidence documenting correction by a specific date. The Committee on Accreditation notification letter contains a clear statement of each deficiency and a due date for a progress report or plan of correction. Failure to submit a satisfactory progress report or plan to correct the deficiencies may result in reduction of the length of accreditation, an early accreditation review, or other appropriate action.

3. **Issue a Warning**. When the Committee on Accreditation finds that a program has pursued a course deviating from the American Board's criteria or policies to an extent that gives concern to the committee, it may issue a warning to the program to correct its deficiencies, refrain from certain activities, or initiate certain activities within a stated period of time. A warning does not alter the candidacy or accredited status of the program. The committee may allow no more than 18 months for a one-year program and no more than 24 months for two- and four-year programs, to bring deficient practices into compliance with all ABFSE Standards of Accreditation.

4. When a candidate or accredited program fails to meet the COA’s or the American Board’s criteria or policies, fails to respond to conditions imposed upon it by the Committee on Accreditation, including Warning, or fails to submit funds due, it will be placed on probation until such time as appropriate corrective action is taken by the program. The period of probation, however, may not exceed twelve months if the longest program offered by the institution is less than twelve months, eighteen months if the...
longest program offered by the institution is at least one year but less than two years, or two years if the
longest program offered by the institution is at least two years in length. If the conditions which led to the
probation are not removed within the stated time, the program will lose its accreditation unless it can show
good cause (see B 5 below) why accreditation should not be immediately removed.

While on probation, the program will be subject to special scrutiny by the Committee on Accreditation,
including a requirement to submit prescribed reports, and possible special visit(s) by representatives of the
committee. The costs of special visits are borne by the institution.

If the program has not taken steps satisfactory to the committee to remove the cause or causes for its
probation at the end of the specified time, the Committee on Accreditation will issue a Show Cause order.
Probation does not alter the candidacy or accredited status of the program.

5. Consistent with B 4 above, prior to removing accreditation the COA shall notify the program in advance (at
least six months) that it must show good cause why accreditation should not be withdrawn. If accreditation
is continued, it may include stipulations to include special visits by representatives of the COA, periodic
reports, and specific COA action at regularly or specially scheduled meetings.

While under Show Cause, the program will be subject to special scrutiny by the committee, including a
requirement to submit prescribed reports and possible special visit(s) by representatives of the committee.
The costs of special visits are borne by the institution.

A Show Cause order does not alter the candidacy or accredited status of the program.

6. Deferral or Denial of Accreditation. The application for candidacy, initial accreditation or re-accreditation
renewal may be withheld by a deferral or a denial.

a. A deferral is not a final decision. It is interlocutory in nature to provide further guidance and time for the
program to correct certain deficiencies.

b. A denial is a final decision which is subject to a request for review by the Committee on Accreditation
and subsequent appeal to the American Board under published appeal policies and procedures in Chapter VII.

7. Withdraw Candidacy or Accreditation. If in the judgment of the Committee on Accreditation, a program has
not satisfactorily explained or corrected matters of which it has been given notice, its candidacy may be
withdrawn involuntarily or allowed to lapse or its accreditation terminated. In such a case, the program must
complete again the entire accreditation process to qualify for candidacy or accreditation.

Nonrenewal or withdrawal of candidacy or of accreditation is subject to review and appeal under the
applicable policies and procedures of the American Board (See Chapter VII). If a program's candidacy is
withdrawn or if its accreditation is terminated, its status will continue unchanged if it requests a review and
later an appeal until the review and appeal processes have been completed. Otherwise, its candidacy or
accreditation ends on the date when the time period permitting such a request expires.

Any program whose accreditation has been withdrawn by the Committee on Accreditation or voluntarily
surrendered may not reapply for candidacy for at least ninety days from the date of such action. The
Committee on Accreditation shall determine the conditions for reaccreditation. Expenses incurred by a
visitation for reaccreditation shall be paid by the program.

In all cases of negative action the Committee on Accreditation will give the program written reasons for its
decision and advise the program of its right to appeal as outlined in Chapter VII.
The COA will notify the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education and other entities as noted above in C 3 of the voluntary relinquishment or withdrawal of accreditation of any program or institution it accredits.

8. Stipulations and Recommendations. Accreditation actions taken by the Committee may be accompanied by Stipulations and/or Recommendations.

Stipulations are conditions imposed on a program related to its inadequate compliance or non-compliance with specific Accreditation Standards. A written report must be submitted by the program to the Committee within a prescribed period of time indicating the program's progress in achieving compliance with the Standard(s) cited. Failure of the program to respond satisfactorily may result in the Committee's issuing a warning, placing the program on probation, or issuing a show cause order.

A Recommendation is a non-binding suggestion for improvement in certain areas of the Program.

9. Notice. The program shall be notified of the final action of the Committee on Accreditation within thirty (30) days of the date of such action. All communications of the Committee on Accreditation relating to the denial, deferral, limitation, or withdrawal of accreditation shall be by registered or certified mail, addressed to the chief administrative officer of the institution with a copy for the program director concerned and shall contain, in addition to the committee’s decision, a copy of the ABFSE Appeal Policy.

C. PUBLICATION OF ACCREDITATION DECISIONS

1. The Committee on Accreditation shall annually certify a list of accredited programs to the American Board, and, when a program is to be added to or deleted from the list, such notice shall be made within thirty (30) days of the final Committee action. Accredited programs and their sponsoring institutions are listed in the Directory of Accredited Institutions which is published periodically by the American Board, distributed to the appropriate constituencies, placed on the ABFSE web site, available from the American Board office, and available on the ABFSE website (www.abfse.org).

2. The American Board will announce publicly, as appropriate, through its Executive Director the status of each program subject to a negative action (except warning) in accordance with the Board's policy on "Disclosure and Confidentiality of Information" in Chapter IX of this manual. If a specific inquiry is made about a program which has been placed on probation or has received a "show cause" status, the Executive Director shall inform the inquirer of such status and the reasons therefore.

No public disclosure is made however, on deferments of action or warning. Negative actions are not communicated externally until the appeal process has been completed.

3. The Committee on Accreditation will notify the Secretary of Education (by electronic means), the appropriate State licensing or authorizing agency, the appropriate accrediting agencies, and the public by placing the information on the ABFSE web site, no later than 30 days after it makes the decision to award initial or preaccreditation or a decision to renew an institution’s or program’s accreditation or preaccreditation.

4. The Committee on Accreditation will notify the Secretary of Education (by electronic means), the appropriate State licensing or authorizing agency, and the appropriate accrediting agencies at the same time it notifies the institution or program of the decision, but no later than 30 days after it reaches a final decision

   a. to place an institution or program on probation or equivalent status (including placing an institution or program on Show Cause status - see B-5 above); or

   b. to deny, withdraw, suspend, revoke, or terminate the accreditation or preaccreditation of an institution or program.

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5. The Committee on Accreditation will provide written notice to the public of the decisions listed in the paragraphs 4 (a) and 4 (b) within 24 hours of its notice to the institution or program by placing this information on the ABFSE web site.

6. For any decision listed in paragraph 4 (b) of this section, the Committee on Accreditation will make available to the Secretary of Education (by electronic means), the appropriate State licensing or authorizing agency, and the public upon request no later than 60 days after the decision a brief statement summarizing the reasons for the Committee decision and the comments, if any, that the affected institution or program has made in regard to that decision.

7. The Committee on Accreditation will notify the Secretary of Education (by electronic means), the appropriate State licensing or authorizing agency, the appropriate accrediting agencies, and, upon request, the public, and place notice on the ABFSE web site, if an accredited or preaccredited institution or program decides to withdraw voluntarily from accreditation or preaccreditation, within 30 days of receiving notification from the institution or program that it is withdrawing voluntarily from accreditation or preaccreditation; or lets its accreditation or preaccreditation lapse, within 30 days of the date on which accreditation or preaccreditation lapses.

8. The Committee on Accreditation shall submit annually to the Secretary of Education the following:
   a. Copy of Annual ABFSE Directory
   b. Any concerns relative to Title IV compliance and/or non-compliance for those programs for which the Committee serves as "gatekeeper."
   c. Any program changes in committee policies, procedures, or standards which might alter the committee's scope of recognition or compliance with reporting requirements as listed in #3 and #4 above.

9. The Committee on Accreditation shall submit to the Secretary of Education, upon request, a summary of the Committee’s major accrediting activities during the previous year (an annual data summary).

10. The Committee on Accreditation will share with other appropriate, recognized accrediting agencies and recognized State approval agencies, upon request, information about the accreditation and preaccreditation status of an institution or program and any adverse actions it has taken against an accredited or preaccredited institution or program.

11. The COA will immediately report to the U.S. Department of Education information it received and believes likely to be correct regarding any program or institution it accredits that may be involved in fraud or abuse.

D. WITHDRAWAL OF PROGRAM FROM ACCREDITATION PROCESS

1. A program may withdraw from the accreditation process at any point up to the time of the final action of the Committee on Accreditation. This policy applies to all programs, whether they are seeking Candidacy, Initial Accreditation, Annual Renewal, or Continuation of Accreditation. To withdraw from the process, the Chief Administrative Officer of the program shall notify the American Board in writing that it is withdrawing its Application for Accreditation or Candidacy.

2. Should an accredited program close, it should notify the American Board of that intent along with the anticipated date of closure and the graduation date for its last class.
E. ADVERSE ACTION BY A STATE OR OTHER ACCREDITING AGENCY

1. Unless the committee itself is satisfied that there is good reason to do otherwise (see also E3 below), the Committee on Accreditation will not grant initial or renewed accreditation or preaccreditation to an institution, or a program offered by an institution, if the Committee knows, or has reasonable cause to know, that the institution is the subject of:

   a. a pending or final action brought by a State agency to suspend, revoke, withdraw, or terminate the institution’s legal authority to provide postsecondary education in the State;

   b. a decision by a recognized agency to deny accreditation or preaccreditation;

   c. a pending or final action brought by a recognized accrediting agency to suspend, revoke, withdraw, or terminate the institution; accreditation or preaccreditation; or

   d. probation or an equivalent status imposed by a recognized agency.

2. If an ABFSE accredited or candidate program has had an adverse action taken against it, or against its institution, by another accrediting agency or state agency, the Committee on Accreditation shall require the program to submit a written report describing the reason(s) for the action and the impact the action has, if any, on the program's ability to continue to meet the Standards of Accreditation of the ABFSE. The report will be discussed and acted upon, as necessary, at the next scheduled meeting of the Committee on Accreditation. If, in the opinion of the Executive Director and the Chair of the Committee on Accreditation, the adverse action requires earlier consideration by the Committee on Accreditation, a special meeting may be called.

   The COA will review the information submitted by the institution against the requirements of this policy and advise the institution if additional information is needed or if the COA plans to take additional action based on the information. That action may include requesting a formal report, scheduling an on-site visit, or such other action as the COA determines is appropriate based on the situation.

3. The Committee on accreditation may grant accreditation or preaccreditation to an institution or program described in this section (E-1, a-d) if it provides to the Secretary of Education, within 30 days of its action, a thorough and reasonable explanation, consistent with its standards, why the action of the other body does not preclude the Committee’s grant of accreditation or preaccreditation.

F. COMMITTEE ON ACCREDITATION MEETING PROCEDURES

The Committee on Accreditation (COA) meets in executive session twice per year, in the spring and fall, with other meetings scheduled as may be necessary, for consideration of program accreditation. It invites representatives of the programs under consideration to attend the meeting during the discussion about their program. In these cases, the COA functions as follows:

1. All Committee meetings are held in executive session.

2. For comprehensive evaluations, Committee members receive, and read, all pertinent materials prior to the meeting. One member of the COA is appointed to lead the discussion on each program under review.

3. At the meeting, the visiting committee chair presents a verbal report on the campus visit.

4. After the chair report, the assigned discussion leader and other members queries the committee chair, if necessary, on items which may be unclear. Thereafter, other Committee members may ask clarifying questions of the chair.
5. Once the committee chair's report is complete, program representatives are invited into the room for further discussion.
   a. Following introductions, program representatives are invited to make opening comments.
   b. The discussion leader queries the program representatives on issues of interest and/or concern. Once the discussion leader has concluded, the floor is opened to other COA members to ask questions, if any.
   c. Once the questions and discussion session has concluded, the program representatives are asked to leave the meeting room.

6. The COA chair with the committee still in Executive Session, invites a motion from the committee concerning the program under consideration. Following discussion and/or amendment of the motion, a vote is taken. The Executive Director is charged with making public the action of the Committee. All other actions, votes and deliberations of the Committee are confidential.

7. Immediately after the vote, either the COA chair or the ABFSE Executive Director conveys the action of the Committee verbally to the program representatives, if they are available.

8. Within 30 days of the conclusion of the COA meeting, the action taken by the COA is sent to the institution’s CEO and program director by official letter from the Executive Director.
CHAPTER VII

APPELLATE PROCEDURE

A. COMPOSITION OF THE APPELLATE BOARD

1. Membership

   The Appellate Board shall be composed of three members. These members shall be educators who have had at least five years' administrative experience in an accredited institution of higher learning other than in the field of funeral service education, are experienced in accrediting procedures, and have had at least fifteen years' experience in teaching and/or administration in an institution of higher learning.

   The ABFSE Executive Director will develop a list of prospective panel members from names provided by the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors and other sources available to the Executive Director and present that list to the ABFSE President, who will select the panel members within thirty (30) days after the date of the filing of the appeal. The Appellate Board shall select its chairperson from among its members.

   All members of the appeals panel must meet the Conflict of Interest tests shown on the Conflict of Interest form in Appendix G and overviewed in Section C of Chapter X of the manual. Members must also sign the Conflict of Interest statement.

2. Term of Board

   An Appellate Board shall be appointed for each new appeal; however, if more than one appeal is to be heard on the same day the panel may hear multiple appeals.

3. Secretary of the Appellate Board

   The Secretary of the Appellate Board shall be the Executive Director of the American Board, who shall serve without voice or vote.

   In the case of a single-purpose, stand alone funeral service/mortuary science institution whose recognition by the ABFSE allows it to participate in federal programs and for which COA recognition serves the “gatekeeper” function insofar as the U.S. Department of Education is concerned, a public member (who must meet the same criteria established for public members of the COA as laid out in Section A of Article VI of the by-laws in Chapter I) will also be appointed by the ABFSE President.

B. ELIGIBILITY FOR APPEAL

   Each decision of the Committee on Accreditation involving either denial or withdrawal of accreditation may be appealed by the program/institution involved. The program/institution will be notified of its right to appeal the action in the initial letter conveying the decision of the Committee.

C. FILING A NOTICE OF APPEAL

   Appeals of the final decision of the Committee on Accreditation denying or withdrawing accreditation shall be perfected by filing a notice of appeal, signed by an authorized representative of the institution, with the Executive Director of the American Board no later than thirty (30) days after receipt by the institution of the decision of the Committee. Filing a notice of appeal shall operate as a stay of the decision of the committee.
The expenses of the appellate procedure shall be borne as follows:

1. The American Board shall bear the cost of its own legal, administrative, travel, and other internal costs.

2. The appealing institution shall bear the cost of its own legal, administrative, travel and other internal costs. The appealing institution shall bear the cost of all stenographic reporting fees related to the procedure.

3. The appealing institution/program must submit along with its statement of Intent to file an appeal a fee of $5000. If the decision is ultimately upheld by the panel, any panel and related costs over and above the $5,000 will be paid by the institution/program. If the decision is reversed or returned for reconsideration, the COA will bear any additional costs over the $5,000.

D. THE APPEALS PROCESS

1. Date of Hearing

The Executive Director of the American Board, upon receipt of a notice of appeal, shall docket same in his/her records and, within ten (10) days after appointment of the Appellate Board, shall notify the appealing institution of the date, time and place of hearing. No date for a hearing shall be set later than sixty (60) days from the date of the completion of appointment of the Appellate Board, nor earlier than sixty (60) days after filing the appeal.

2. Briefs

Communications from the COA and from the appealing institution/program to the panel shall be made through the ABFSE office. The COA Executive Director shall be the contact person for such communications. Each party (i.e., the COA and the appealing institution/program) shall receive copies of all documents submitted by either party.

Any institution shall have the right to file a brief in support of Appeal. Ten (10) copies of such brief must be filed with the Executive Director of the American Board no later than thirty (30) days after the institution files its notice of appeal. The Committee on Accreditation shall similarly file ten copies of a brief in response to the institution's brief no later than thirty (30) days after the institution's brief is filed. The institution's brief shall contain a concise and complete statement of the points on which the institution challenges the decision of the Committee on Accreditation, any points challenging the criteria of the American Board as they particularly affect the institution appealing, and argument on such points. The Committee on Accreditation's response brief shall contain a concise and complete statement of the rationale for the Committee's decisions with which the institution disagrees, and a discussion of the points raised in the institution's appeal brief.

A desire of the institution or the Committee on Accreditation to make oral argument before the Appellate Board shall be indicated on the title page of its brief by the words, “Oral Argument Desired.”

3. Scope of the Appeal

The Appellate Board’s review of an institution’s appeal shall be limited to the institution’s brief in support of appeal if any brief is filed, the response of the Committee on Accreditation, and a transcript of any oral argument or testimony presented to the Appellate Board. Upon review, the Appellate Board may consider not only the question presented by the decision of the Committee on Accreditation and related documentary evidence, but also the question of whether the regulations and criteria of the American Board in the particular case are unjust, unfair, or unworkable.
4. **Hearings**

Prior to the hearing, the COA will provide to the panel members an overview of the ABFSE and COA and the operations of both. A copy of all materials presented to the panel shall also be made available to the institution/program.

a. **Presiding Officer.** The hearing shall be presided over by a hearing officer, who shall be an attorney appointed by the American Board. The American Board of Funeral Service Education Board attorney may serve in this capacity. The presiding officer shall not have voice or vote in the Appellate Board's deliberations. The hearing shall generally be conducted in accordance with the recognized rules of procedure and evidence.

b. **Oral Testimony.** Oral testimony may be presented at the time of the hearing.

c. **Arguments.** The institution may offer oral argument in support of appeal at the hearing. The Committee on Accreditation may offer oral argument in support of its decision and in reply to the institution's argument. The institution shall have time to reply to the argument of the Committee on Accreditation. Length of arguments may be limited by the Appellate Board.

The panel may set time limits on testimony presented by both the appealing institution program and the COA and may otherwise structure the hearing as it determines most appropriate.

d. **Report of Proceedings.** The Appellate Board shall cause a recording to be made of the hearing. The institution appealing shall have the right to secure a typed transcript of said recording by paying the costs involved.

e. **Legal Representation.** The institution and the Committee on Accreditation may be represented at the hearings by legal counsel of their own choosing. The counsel shall be afforded the same rights as would normally be made available to the institution/program or to the COA during the hearing. The counsel shall be authorized to make any presentation that the institution or program itself would be authorized to make.

f. The appeal panel shall include in its report the rationale for the basis of the finding.

E. **DECISION OF THE APPELLATE BOARD**

1. The Appellate Board has several options for action:

   a. Uphold the action of the Committee on Accreditation;

   b. Recommend reconsideration by the Committee on Accreditation; or

   c. Amend, modify, or reverse an adverse action by the Committee on Accreditation. If such action is taken, the board shall clearly stipulate in its formal report the terms, conditions, or parameters of its decision.

2. The COA is responsible for implementing the panel's decision.

3. There shall be no appeal from the decision of the Appellate Board.

4. The Appellate Board, within thirty (30) days after the hearing, shall prepare an opinion in writing containing its decision. The Secretary of the Appellate Board shall prepare sufficient copies of said opinion and, within ten (10) days after receipt, shall mail a copy of the opinion and decision to the authorized representative of the institution and to the Committee on Accreditation.
5. If the panel remands the decision back to the COA, it must identify specific issues that the COA must address in its action following the remand. The COA must, in such instances, act in a manner consistent with the appeal panel’s decisions or instructions.

F. DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE ON ACCREDITATION

1. The Committee on Accreditation, within thirty 30 days after receiving the recommendation of the Appellate Board, shall make a final decision on the merits of the appeal and notify the institution of its final decision.

2. There shall be no appeal from the decision of the Committee on Accreditation.

3. The COA will place on the ABFSE web site any official comment submitted as a rebuttal by an institution or program. If such comment is extensive, it will be provided in alternate ways such as through a link or other electronic means or reference to—and appropriate contact information for—the school or program itself. In the absence of any such comment, the ABFSE/COA will indicate that the institution/program did not submit a statement despite being given an opportunity to do so.

NOTE: To meet the existing requirement promulgated by the Department of Education that an accreditation agency make information available to the public regarding adverse actions without waiting for a specific request that it do so, the ABFSE/COA presently posts on its web site all such decisions and also advises several agencies identified by the U.S. Department of Education of the decisions. The Department requires that accrediting agencies also include in such publications a reference to the specific standard(s) whose failure to be met led to the adverse action and also publish the school’s or program’s response to the adverse action.
CHAPTER VIII

MAINTAINING ACCREDITATION

A. ANNUAL RENEWAL OF ACCREDITATION AND MEMBERSHIP IN THE ABFSE

1. All programs accredited by the American Board must submit an Annual Report to the Committee on Accreditation for the purpose of continuing their accreditation by the Committee. The Annual Report is to be submitted in addition to any other interim or progress reports the Committee may require of the program as the result of an Accreditation action.

The Report shall be sent to the Executive Director of the American Board no later than February 1 each year. Failure to submit the Annual Report will result in the program's being placed on probation immediately by the Committee on Accreditation and could lead to removal of accreditation.

The Annual Report will:

a. Inform the Committee on Accreditation about any significant changes which have taken place during the past year, including those involving administration, budgets, faculty, curriculum, physical facilities, and other pertinent matters.

b. Provide information as to action by the program on recommendations or stipulations made by the Committee on Accreditation following the most recent on-site visit for continuation of accreditation.

c. Furnish accurate, current data to be published in the Directory of Accredited Programs.

d. Provide the Committee on Accreditation with the following:

- Applicable licensing examination pass rate for past year.
- Record of written student complaints received, if any.
- Summary of US Department of Education financial aid reviews (for "gatekeeper" colleges only).
- Default rate for federal student financial aid (for "gatekeeper" colleges only).
- Applicable student outcome examination pass rate for past year.

The Executive Director of the American Board shall report in writing to the Committee on Accreditation the failure of any program to provide required reports.

A copy of the Annual Report Form is located in Appendix B of this manual.

B. PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress reports may be required by the Committee on Accreditation and are always required when a Committee action is accompanied by a stipulation related to an Accreditation Standard. The program shall be notified of the issues to be addressed in the Progress Report and the date on which the report is due. Reports are to be submitted to the Executive Director of the American Board who will forward them to the Committee for action.

Programs must ensure that the reports address all items cited and be submitted within the specified period of time. Failure to respond may jeopardize the program's accreditation status.
C. CONTINUATION OF ACCREDITATION

All programs accredited by the American Board must undergo an on-site visit at least once every seven years; the interval between visits may be shorter if so specified by the Committee on Accreditation in its most recent action.

When an accredited program is due for an on-site visit, the Executive Director of the ABFSE will so notify the program approximately twelve months prior to the anticipated date of the visit so that the program will have sufficient time to prepare for its reevaluation. The procedures for applying for the reevaluation and continuation of accreditation are described in Chapter V of this manual.

All single-purpose, non-regionally accredited, funeral service institutions must be visited at least once between the normal comprehensive review term. The visit is to be conducted by the Committee on Accreditation, is to be unannounced, and will include a confirmation of continuing compliance with ABFSE standards. Costs of the visit will be borne by the institution.

D. CHANGES IN SPONSORSHIP

1. Sponsorship

A change in sponsorship occurs when the sponsoring institution of an accredited program in funeral service education relinquishes its control of the program to another institution and no longer participates in those activities which normally constitute sponsorship. In such instances, the ABFSE requires the following:

a. Within 30 days of a change in sponsorship, the institution relinquishing sponsorship shall notify the ABFSE Executive Director in writing that a change of sponsorship is anticipated, the reasons for the change, the anticipated effective date of the change, and the name, address, and phone number of the new sponsor and its Chief Executive Officer.

b. The institution assuming sponsorship of the accredited program shall notify the ABFSE Executive Director in writing of its intent to accept sponsorship, and shall submit the appropriate substantive change form (See Appendix K) and fee.

c. The Executive Director of the ABFSE shall forward the above information to the Committee on Accreditation for its review. The Committee on Accreditation may, at its discretion:

(1) Approve the change in sponsorship and continue the accreditation status of the program.

(2) Request additional information before reaching a decision.

(3) Require that the program conduct an abbreviated Self study.

(4) Require that the program undergo a complete accreditation review, following the procedures outlined in Chapter V of this manual.

The Committee's choice of action shall depend upon its assessment of the extent to which the change in sponsorship affects the program's continued compliance with the Standards for Accreditation and the provisions of the manual.

d. In all cases of change in sponsorship, the institution that has undergone the change in sponsorship which has resulted in a change of control must undergo a site visit conducted by the Committee on Accreditation. This visit must take place within six (6) months of the change of sponsorship, with costs borne by the institution.

See also discussion in Section I in this chapter, Chapter X Section I, and Appendix K.
2. **Mergers**

A merger occurs when two or more institutions sponsoring programs in funeral service education combine to form one institution. The resulting institution must meet the accreditation requirements as a new institution. In such instances, candidacy status for the new institution may be waived at the option of the Committee on Accreditation.

For programs presently accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education which are seeking Interim Accreditation approval from the Committee on Accreditation, the new curricula or curriculum must be presented in written fashion. Interim Accreditation shall be based upon "Initial Accreditation" procedures and criteria. However, well-documented written materials for an acceptable new funeral service curriculum may be acted upon by the Committee at its discretion without recourse to candidacy status, a formal Self study document, an on-site visitation, or payment of appropriate fees.

**NEW PROGRAM ADDITIONS IN ACCREDITED INSTITUTIONS**

When an accredited institution wishes to offer a new or additional funeral service program or curriculum, the substantive change cover sheet and form 9 (see Appendix K) must be submitted. A site visit will be conducted, with costs borne by the institution within six months of the effective change date. Interim accreditation for the new program or curriculum may, at the discretion of the Committee on Accreditation, be obtained by submitting material documenting that the new or additional program(s) are in compliance with the Accreditation Standards and the American Board's manual requirements.

**UNACCREDITABLE PROGRAMS IN ACCREDITED INSTITUTIONS/DEPARTMENTS**

ABFSE accredited institutions/departments which choose to offer, in addition to accredited programs, unaccreditable programs, must comply with following procedures:

1. Publications describing the unaccreditable program must contain the following caveat: "This academic program is designed to meet specific state or professional needs. It is not accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education owing to the fact that it does not include instruction in the following areas: (list all deficits). Students graduating from this program are not eligible to take the National Board Examination or any state board examination for which graduation from an ABFSE accredited program is required."

2. The academic transcript for graduates of unaccreditable programs must carry the following wording: "This academic program is designed to meet specific state or professional needs. It is not accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education. Students graduating from this program are not eligible to take the National Board Examination or any state board examination for which graduation from an ABFSE accredited program is required."

**COMPLAINTS ABOUT ACCREDITED PROGRAMS**

The discussion in this section applies to all complaints about accredited programs or institutions whether received randomly, received during a visiting committee site visit, or received as part of the "third party comment" provisions outlined in Section J of Chapter VIII.

1. **Alleged Violations**

Neither the COA nor the ABFSE attempts to resolve disagreements or misunderstandings concerning course grades, teaching methodologies, fee and tuition structures, program requirements, employment issues, etc. among various parties and/or organizations that are unrelated to accreditation standards. When either the COA or the ABFSE receives such complaints, individuals submitting the complaint(s) will be encouraged to submit the matter directly to the program director, institution president, or other party or parties involved. It is recognized that the COA/ABFSE, its officials, and its representatives as well as site visit committees may from time to time hear student and other complaints (including third party complaints/comments...
referred to in Section J of Chapter VIII) either during an accreditation cycle or outside of the accreditation cycle. In such cases, no action shall be taken unless the complaint specifically deals with an accreditation standard, involves what appears to be a significant ethical violation, or involves what appears to be a legal issue.

- If the complaint deals with the possible violation of an accreditation standard, the provisions outlined herein and in G2 below will apply.
- If the complaint raises a serious ethical issue, complainant will be advised that before any follow up action can be taken he or she must submit the matter in writing and specifically authorize the COA/ABFSE to discuss the matter with the appropriate party or parties. The communication must be notarized. In such instances, the procedures identified herein and in G2 below will be followed.
- If the complaint raises a legal issue, the complaint will be encouraged to report the matter to the appropriate civil authorities.

Notification Alleged Violations of the Standards of Accreditation normally must be made within 3 months of the complainant becoming aware of the standard alleged to have been violated and after all available campus procedures have been pursued. The Committee on Accreditation will not consider alleged violations which can be and are more properly resolved within the institution’s own system of due process and grievance or situations which are outside the accreditation standards.

A standard form for the submission of complaints is available on the ABFSE website or by contacting the ABFSE office.

2. Investigation and Consideration of Alleged Violations

The Executive Director of the American Board will send a copy of the allegations and complaint, submitted as required in #1 above, to the institution concerned and to the Chairperson of the Committee on Accreditation, within 10 days of its receipt. Also within 10 days of receipt, the complainant will be notified of the receipt of the complaint and will be supplied with a copy of the ABFSE complaint policy.

Formal Complaints

When the Executive Director receives a formal complaint, it is reviewed to ensure that it properly alleges non-compliance with a Standard. If the complaint does not allege non-compliance with a Standard, the complaint is dismissed by the ED and the complainant is given notice of such action. (Alternatively, the complainant could be given leave to amend the complaint within 30 days).

If the Executive Director determines the complaint does allege non-compliance with a Standard, the Executive Director forwards the details of the complaint to the responsible official at the school, citing the Standards that are alleged to have been violated.

The school has 30 days to respond.

Within 30 days of receipt of the school response, the Executive Director in consultation with the COA Chair, will:

- determine that there is not a sufficient basis to sustain the allegations in the complaint. The Executive Director will then notify the school and complainant that the complaint has been dismissed. This action will be reported to the COA as a whole at the next regular meeting.

OR
- refer the matter to the COA at the next regularly scheduled meeting (if within 60 days from the receipt of the school’s response) or by special meeting if more than 60 days before the next regular meeting or if the Executive Director determines that the complaint is of an urgent nature.

When a complaint is forwarded to the COA for action, the COA may:

(a) appoint an investigator or investigative subcommittee to investigate the complaint to establish facts,
(b) if sufficient facts are established, require the school to take certain action to comply with the Standard(s),
(c) defer the inquiry to the next re-accreditation process for the school or
d (d) dismiss the complaint.

Anonymous Complaints

When an anonymous complaint is received, the Executive Director is to determine if the complaint alleges non-compliance with a Standard. If the complaint does not allege non-compliance with a Standard, the complaint is dismissed.

If the complaint does allege non-compliance with a Standard, the complaint is reviewed by the site-visit team during the next re-accreditation.

If the Executive Director determines that:

(a) the anonymous complaint is of a serious nature and
(b) requiring identification of the complainant would jeopardize the investigation and pose a significant risk to the complainant, the complaint will be referred to the COA for consideration at the next regular meeting (if within 60 days from the receipt of the complaint) or by special meeting if more than 60 days before the next regular meeting or if the ED determines that the complaint is of an urgent nature.

3. Following are the actions available in responding to a complaint:

- Should evidence submitted in answer to the complaint satisfy the Committee on Accreditation, the committee shall clear the institution of the charges. Both complainant and institution will be notified of this within 48 hours of the committee meeting.

- Should the answer to the complaint not satisfy the Committee on Accreditation, it may delay a decision and require additional information from either or both the complainant and the institution. The request for additional information shall be sent within 7 days of the committee meeting and any additional information will be required to be filed with the committee within 30 days thereafter.

- Should the answer to the complaint not satisfy the Committee on Accreditation, and if no further information is required, the committee may give notice to the program and advise the complainant and otherwise publish the action (see Committee Actions, Chapter 6, B. 3-7, pages 6-1through 6-3 of a warning, probation, show cause, revocation of Candidacy, or termination of Accreditation within 48 hours of the committee meeting unless satisfactory action is taken by the program. The committee may take additional actions appropriate to the situation.

- (Action by the Committee on Accreditation is final, subject only to the appeal process (see Chapter VII above).
H. SPECIAL EVALUATIONS OR SITE VISITS TO MONITOR COMPLIANCE WITH ABFSE STANDARDS

It is the responsibility of the COA to ensure that all programs remain in compliance with ABFSE standards throughout their accreditation or preaccreditation period. When the Executive Director receives credible information from any source that a program is out of compliance with any of the American Board Standards, the Executive Director will discuss with the Chair of the Committee on Accreditation whether there is a need for a special evaluation or site visit to that program. If a special evaluation or site visit is determined to be necessary, the following steps will be followed:

1. The program will be notified in writing that there is evidence that the program is out of compliance with one or more standards.

2. The program will be asked to file a complete and concise written response to the allegation within one week. In the case of a standard related to the immediate health and safety of students and staff, the program will be asked to file a complete and concise written response to the allegation within 72 hours.

3. Based on the program response, the Chair of the Committee on Accreditation will determine if a special evaluator or site visitor should be appointed.

4. If a special evaluator or site visitor is required, the Executive Director will appoint the person in consultation with the Chair of the Committee on Accreditation. For issues related to health and safety, the evaluation or site visit will be scheduled within one week of the decision to proceed with an evaluation. The costs of the visit will be borne by the institution.

5. Following the evaluation or visit, the evaluator will draft a report on the findings from the evaluation.

6. A copy of the report will be sent to the program for a written response.

7. The report of the evaluator or site visitor and the program response to the report will be considered by the Committee on Accreditation at its next regularly scheduled meeting. If the compliance issue is considered by the Chair to be too serious to wait for the next scheduled meeting of the Committee on Accreditation, a special meeting, by conference call or in person, will be scheduled.

I. SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE

The Committee on Accreditation requires that institutions apply for, and obtain COA approval of any substantive change before the change is included in the scope of accreditation or candidacy previously granted to the institution. Approval is based on evidence that the proposed change will not adversely affect the capacity of the institution to continue to meet the Standards. Please note that some changes require a one-day on-site visit in addition to submission of the appropriate application forms and fee. Application forms are available on the ABFSE website and in Appendix K. The COA will consider substantive changes on a case-by-case basis and determine whether a comprehensive evaluation of an institution is appropriate instead. Changes that significantly impact the financial stability or enrollments of an institution, receipt of more than three applications at one time, or any other changes that affect the institution’s ability to comply with the Standards will result in the need for a comprehensive evaluation.

The COA reserves the right to require a comprehensive evaluation (likely including the institution/program submitting a Self study and related materials as well as undergoing an on-site visit), an on-site visit, or take other action at anytime it believes there may be a violation one or more accreditation standards (Section H of Chapter VIII). In addition, certain substantive changes may also lead to a comprehensive evaluation an on-site visit, or other action. These changes include when an institution

1. establishes one or more branch campus programs (see also Section I-2 of Chapter X (page 104)
2. changes sponsorship to the extent that it likely will affect a program’s continued compliance with the Standards for Accreditation and the related provisions of the manual (see Section D-1 of Chapter VIII).

3. adds a new or additional funeral service program or curriculum (see also Section D-1-e of Chapter VIII)

4. makes a substantive change that places an institution in violation of one or more standards (See Section H of Chapter VIII).

Determination of whether any such action is appropriate will be made using the following procedure. Within ten calendar days of the notice of substantive change, the COA staff shall advise the institution whether in the staff’s opinion a site visit, a comprehensive evaluation, or other action may be appropriate. The institution shall be given ten days to respond to the staff’s determination. At the end of those ten days, the COA shall review the institution’s request for substantive change, the staff’s analysis, and the institution’s response to the staff’s analysis.

Within fourteen days of that review, the COA shall determine if a site visit or other action is appropriate. If it so determines, that action shall normally occur within 30 days unless, in consultation with the institution, the COA determines a longer period of time, not to exceed six months, is appropriate. In instances where the COA has determined a comprehensive evaluation (which would likely include a Self study and related materials as well as on-site visit) is appropriate, the timeline shall be established by the COA in consultation with the institution. In such cases, the comprehensive evaluation shall occur within six months.

The COA will generally designate the date of its formal action as the effective date of any substantive change. When there is good and obvious reason for a later date, the later date will be used as the effective date. The date will not be retroactive other than in the case where a change in ownership occurs within 30 days prior to the COA’s action. In such case, the COA may establish the effective date to coincide with the change in ownership.

1. Substantive change includes the following types of changes:

   (i) any change in the established mission or objectives of the institution or program.

   (ii) any change in the legal status, form of control, or ownership of the institution or program (on-site visit required).

   (iii) the addition of courses or programs that represent a significant departure, in either content or method of delivery, from those that were offered when the agency last evaluated the institution or program (on-site visit required).

   (iv) the addition of accredited courses or programs at a degree or credential level different that which is included in the institution’s or program’s current accreditation or candidacy (on-site visit required).

   (v) a substantial increase (more than 25%) in the number of credit hours awarded for successful completion of a program (on-site visit required).

   (vi) A change in the legal name of the institution or program.

   (vii) A change in the director or a change in more than 60% of the core faculty within one program cycle.

   (viii) Relocation of the institution’s or program’s permanent instructional site (on-site visit required).

   (ix) The acquisition of any other institution or any program or location of another institution (on-site visit required).
The addition of a permanent location at a site at which the institution or program is conducting a teach-out for students of another institution that has ceased operating before all students have completed their program of study (on-site visit required).

The establishment of an additional location geographically apart from the main campus at which the institution or program offers at least 50 percent of an educational program.

Please see Appendix K for Substantive Change Application forms.

The following types of substantive change requirements apply to institutions or programs whose recognition by the COA allows them to seek eligibility to participate in Title IV, HEA programs. Exceptions are outlined below.

If the accreditation of an institution enables the institution to seek eligibility to participate in Title IV, HEA programs, the entering into a contract under which an institution or organization not certified to participate in the Title IV, HEA programs offers more than 25% of one or more of the accredited institution’s educational programs (on-site visit required).

If the accreditation of an institution enables it to seek eligibility to participate in Title IV, HEA programs, the establishment of an additional location geographically apart from the main campus at which the institution offers at least 50% of an educational program. The addition of such a location must be approved by the COA unless the COA determines, and issues a written determination that the institution has—

i. Successfully completed at least one cycle of accreditation of the maximum length offered by the COA and one renewal, or has been accredited for at least ten years;

ii. At least three additional locations that the COA has approved; and

iii. Met criteria established by the COA indicating sufficient capacity to add additional locations without individual prior approvals, including at a minimum satisfactory evidence of a system to ensure quality across a distributed enterprise that includes—

a) Clearly identified academic control;

b) Regular evaluation of the locations;

c) Adequate faculty, facilities, resources, and academic and student support systems;

d) Financial stability; and

e) Long-range planning for expansion

The COA’s procedures for approval of an additional location require timely reporting to the COA of every additional location established under this approval.

The COA’s determination or re-determination to pre-approve an institution’s addition of locations may not exceed five years.

The COA will not pre-approve an institution’s addition of locations after the institution undergoes a change in ownership resulting in a change of control until the institution demonstrates that it meets the conditions for the COA to pre-approve additional locations described in this section.

The COA will conduct, at reasonable intervals not to exceed the normal period of accreditation, visits to a representative sample of additional locations utilizing the substantive change application procedure described above.

If the COA’s accreditation of an institution enables the institution to seek eligibility to participate in Title IV, HEA programs, the COA’s procedures for the approval of an additional location described in this section will be
contingent upon the institution’s demonstration that it has the fiscal and administrative capacity to operate the additional location. In addition, the COA’s procedures will include:

1. a visit, within six months, to each additional location the institution establishes, if the institution—
   
   (i) has a total of three or fewer additional locations;
   
   (ii) has not demonstrated, to the COA’s satisfaction, that it has a proven record of effective educational oversight of additional locations; or
   
   (iii) has been placed on warning, probation, or show cause by the COA or is subject to some limitation by the COA on its accreditation or preaccreditation status;

2. The COA’s accreditation activities will include visits to additional locations of institutions that operate more than three additional locations using the same schedule as visits to the primary location, although more frequent visits may be scheduled if the COA determines it appropriate to do so; and

3. The COA may include special visits to additional locations to ensure that accredited and preaccredited institutions that experience rapid growth in the number of additional locations maintain educational quality.

4. The purposes of the visits described in this section include verifying that all additional locations have the personnel, facilities, and resources indicated in the institution’s application for approval of the locations.

See also the discussion in Section I of Chapter X below.

J. THIRD PARTY COMMENT

The Committee on Accreditation publishes in its directory of accredited programs the date of the most recent and the date of the next comprehensive review for each program. The directory of accredited programs carries an invitation to any interested third parties to submit to the Committee on Accreditation written comments on any program’s qualifications for accreditation or pre-accreditation prior to its next committee review. The committee shall consider any input received during its program review.

K. FINANCIAL AND OTHER NEW INFORMATION

An institution or program may, before the COA reaches a final adverse action decision, seek review of new financial information if all of the following conditions are met:

1. The financial information was unavailable to the institution or program until after the decision subject to appeal was made.

2. The financial information is significant and bears materially on the financial deficiencies identified by the COA. The criteria of significance and materiality will be determined by the COA on the basis of information provided by the program or institution.

3. The only remaining deficiency cited by the agency in support of a final adverse action decision is the institution’s or program’s failure to meet an agency standard pertaining to finances.

An institution or program may seek the review of new financial information described above only once and any determination by the COA made with respect to that review does not provide a basis for an appeal.”
CHAPTER IX

ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

(New Standards will take effect January 1, 2020; see ABFSE website for details.)

PREAMBLE

Funeral service is a profession practiced by men and women who are required to meet certain educational, societal, and governmental standards. Some of them are administrative and logistical; others concern health and sanitation. The primary focus of funeral service lies in competent, ethical service to the public. Accreditation of Funeral Service Education programs is intended to help insure that those ingredients necessary to the successful practice of funeral service are offered each student in a consistent and universal manner. Standards have been developed to foster this goal.

The Standards of Accreditation, as established at associate (or comparable) degree and bachelor degree levels, are for the most part qualitative and apply to both individual programs and the institution as a whole. In making its decisions on candidacy or accreditation, the Committee on Accreditation bases its judgment on the objectives of the program, the manner in which it is currently meeting its objectives, and the probability that it will continue to meet its objectives in the future as well as the Accreditation Standards.

It is recognized that technology is influencing approaches to providing instructional, academic, and student services to learners, on and off campus. These standards apply to all instruction and services wherever and whenever and however offered. See also Appendix E of this Manual which contains ABFSE Guidelines for Distance Learning.

Standards are expressed in terms of “must” and “shall.” Guidelines, intended to help interpret the Standards, are expressed in terms of “should” and “may.”

The provisions contained in the Standards are separable. If any section, sub-section, paragraph, sentence, clause, phrase, or requirement contained herein shall be held to be illegal or unenforceable, such illegality or unenforceability of such part shall not affect or in any way impair the validity, application, or enforceability of the remaining portion of that section.

Each program/institution which offers one or more courses via Distance Learning formats must specifically address that course or courses independent of its discussion of other courses. That discussion must proceed on two levels. First, as each Standard is discussed, specific reference must be made to how the Standard is met by the Distance Learning offering(s). Second, the Self study must demonstrate how each element in the Guidelines is satisfied for each course offered via Distance Learning. See also Appendix E of this Manual which contains ABFSE Guidelines for Distance Learning.

The Self study discussion and the Visiting Committee Report relative to Distance Learning offerings will assess to what extent the courses and the educational services offered in support of Distance Learning are structured in a manner that recognizes the distinction between traditional on-campus students and those taking courses via Distance Learning methodologies with regard to admissions, registration, academic advising, tuition and fee payments, bookstore services, library services, testing security, etc. See also Appendix E of this Manual which contains ABFSE Guidelines for Distance Learning.

The Self study discussion and the Visiting Committee Report relative to Distance Learning must also assess academic support for faculty (e.g., faculty training of online course development, access to computer equipment, online support systems, etc.). See also Appendix E of this Manual which contains ABFSE Guidelines for Distance Learning.
STANDARD 1: SPONSORSHIP

1.1 Accreditation is granted to programs within either single-purpose or multi-purpose sponsoring institutions.

1.2 The program/institution must provide evidence that it assumes responsibility for

   1.2.1 curriculum content,
   1.2.2 classroom teaching and clinical education,
   1.2.3 appointment and evaluation of faculty,
   1.2.4 policies and procedures for admission, and
   1.2.5 awarding a diploma, certificate, or degree documenting completion of the program.

1.3 The program must provide evidence that clinical experiences assigned each student are educational in nature.

1.4 The sponsoring institution must provide, or arrange for the provision of, all portions of the required
curriculum including all

   1.4.1 classroom, laboratory, clinical field experiences, and
   1.4.2 services necessary to support the curriculum in funeral service education as specified in the Standards.

1.5 The sponsoring institution must demonstrate evidence of sound financial support of the educational program
on a current and continuing basis.

1.6 The sponsoring institution must provide written evidence that it is approved by the appropriate governing
authority in which it is located, or within which it offers instruction, to award the diploma, certificate, or
degree for which it seeks accreditation. In situations in which there are conflicts between an Accreditation
Standard and a governmental or institutional requirement, the more stringent rule will be applied.

1.7 In a program in which more than one institution or organization provides academic and clinical education, the
sponsoring institution must provide evidence or properly executed written agreements describing the
responsibilities of the respective institution or organizations.

1.8 If a funeral service program is associated with, or financially sponsored by, an organization whose main
purpose is other than education, the sponsoring institution must provide written evidence of sufficient
separation between the host institution and the funeral service program to guarantee an effective, independent,
and objective learning environment.

1.9 See also Standard 2.8

STANDARD 2: ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

2.1 The governing board must be the legally constituted group which holds the assets of the institution in trust.
It must be responsible for sustaining the institution, approving its objectives, and implementing and controlling
the program.

2.2 The authority and responsibility of each organizational component of the sponsoring institution (governing
board, campus and program administration, faculty, students) together with the processes by which they
function or interrelate, must be clearly described by means of a current constitution, by-laws, or some similar
means.

2.3 The administration of the institution and/or program must

   2.3.1 provide educational leadership competent to establish conditions providing for good learning
opportunities for students, good working conditions for faculty, and good communication processes both inside and outside of the institution/program;

2.3.2 provide management of resources in support of educational objectives;

2.3.3 define expectations and quality control requirements of all agencies providing off-campus instruction in the name of the institution; and

2.3.4 establish an expeditious process allowing for communication flow both downward and upward within the organization in order for the administration to assess the achievements of its goals and the needs of its constituents;

2.4 2.4.1 A single purpose institution offering only a program of funeral service education must be administered by a chief administrative officer, directly accountable only to the governing board for the management of the institution. All other employees must report directly, or indirectly, to this chief administrative officer.

2.4.2 This officer may also be a member of the teaching faculty, as long as the teaching load is reduced commensurate with administrative duties.

2.5 2.5.1 A funeral service program within a multi-purpose institution must be administered by a director who has been delegated responsibility for the program. All other employees assigned to the program must report directly or indirectly, to this person.

2.5.2 This officer may also be a member of the teaching faculty, as long as the teaching load is reduced commensurate with administrative duties.

2.6 2.6.1 The program administrator for a program in a multi-purpose institution or the institutional chief administrative officer for a single purpose institution must possess an academic background consistent with the position of leadership held. For those hired after May 1979, this will always involve at least the master’s degree, within five years of the date of the initial full-time appointment in funeral service education, from a regionally accredited college or university.

2.6.2 For program administrators earning degrees in colleges or universities outside the United States, the institution awarding the degree must have fulfilled governmental standards which in the judgment of AACRO are acceptable or similar to those of the ABFSE.

2.7 Within program policies, provisions must be made for consideration of student views and judgments in those matters in which students have direct and reasonable interest.

2.8 In order to provide additional guidance to non-regionally accredited institutions for which the ABFSE acts as “gate-keeper” and to clarify the documents that representatives of the Committee on Accreditation (COA) conducting accreditation-related visits (both regularly scheduled and unannounced) are expected to review, the COA hereby advises all involved of the following expectations:

2.8.1 The institution is expected to provide or have available on campus for review a complete list of members of the Board of Trustees as well as a list of members of the Advisory Committee.

2.8.2 The institution is expected to provide or have available on campus for review copies of agendas and minutes of Board of Trustees meetings for the two-year period immediately preceding the visit and have available on campus agendas and minutes for prior years.

2.8.3 The institution is expected to provide or have available on campus for review copies of the by-laws of the Board of Trustees.
2.8.4 The institution is expected to provide or have available on campus for review copies of all contracts, including management contracts.

2.8.5 To the extent feasible, it is suggested the materials be part of the Self study or of the Appendices attached to the Self study. If an institution determines doing so is not feasible, it may have the materials available on campus only. If the institution determines some of the cited materials are of a confidential nature, it may restrict review of them to the chair of the visiting committee or the individual conducting an unannounced visit.

STANDARD 3: AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Each program in funeral service education must have as its central aim recognition of the importance of funeral service personnel as:

3.1.1 members of a human services profession;
3.1.2 members of the community in which they serve;
3.1.3 participants in the relationship between bereaved families and those engaged in the funeral service profession;
3.1.4 professionals knowledgeable of and compliant with federal, state, provincial/territorial, and local regulatory guidelines in the geographic area where they practice as well as
3.1.5 professionals sensitive to the responsibility for public health, safety, and welfare in caring for human remains.

3.2 Each program must have at least the following objectives:

3.2.1 to enlarge the background and knowledge of students about the funeral service profession;
3.2.2 to educate students in every phase of funeral service and to help enable them to develop proficiency and skills necessary for the profession, as defined in the Preamble at the beginning of this chapter;
3.2.3 to educate students concerning the responsibilities of the funeral service profession to the community at large;
3.2.4 to emphasize high standards of ethical conduct;
3.2.5 to provide a curriculum at the post-secondary level of instruction; and
3.2.6 to encourage student and faculty research in the field of funeral service;

3.3 The aims and objectives of the program must be in the published documents – other than brief informational/marketing materials – relating to the funeral service program.

3.4 The program must assess the achievement of its Aims and Objectives (see also Standard 11).

STANDARD 4: ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES AND ETHICAL STANDARDS

4.1 Each institution/program must conduct its business and academic activities in an ethical manner. In this regard, each institution program must

4.1.1 publish and adhere to a personnel policy assuring equal employment opportunity for all qualified persons; maintain admissions, financial aid, and education services policies for students assuring equal consideration without regard to race, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status, or veterans status; and
4.1.2 insure that publications and advertising accurately portray the realities of the program/institution. The catalog of each institution must give as much information as possible to include entire curriculum and program of study containing at least the following:

4.1.2.a course names and identification numbers;
4.1.2.b summary descriptions and credit hours;
4.1.2.c  requirements for admission;
4.1.2.d  requirements and processes for withdrawal and graduation;
4.1.2.e  academic calendars;
4.1.2.f  grading policies; and
4.1.2.g  the requirement that all students must take the National Board Examination (administered by the International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards) prior to graduation; and (Removed effective October 13, 2014.)
4.1.2.g  financial policies for tuition, fees, and refunds.

4.2  All practices and procedures must apply equally to all students.

4.3  Any reference by a program to accreditation in catalogs, bulletins, or other official publications and communication or other media must read as follows

The (name of the accredited degree program) at (name of sponsoring institution) is accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE) 992 Mantua Pike, Suite 108, Woodbury Heights, NJ 08097 (816) 233-3747. Web: www.abfse.org

NOTE: The reference to accreditation must name the specific program accredited by the ABFSE. (This requirement is particularly important in those institutions offering other areas of instruction which are not accredited, or eligible for accreditation, by the ABFSE.)

4.4  ABFSE accredited institutions or programs which choose to offer, in addition to one or more accredited programs, unaccreditable programs must comply with the following procedures:

4.4.1  publications describing the unaccreditable program must contain the following information:
“This academic program is designed to meet specific state or professional needs. It is not accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education. Students graduating from this program are not eligible to take the National Board Examination or any state board examination for which graduation from an ABFSE accredited program is required.”

4.4.2  In addition, the academic transcript for graduates of unaccreditable programs must carry the statement: “This academic program is designed to meet specific state or professional needs. It is not accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education. Students graduating from this program are not eligible to take the National Board Examination or any state board examination for which graduation from an ABFSE accredited program is required.”

4.5  Written policies must exist which ensure due process for students, faculty, and staff, including grievance procedures, clearly defined disciplinary policies, and sexual harassment policies.

4.6  Honesty and integrity are required of all accredited programs and each program will conduct itself in an ethical manner. Violations of ethics include, but are not limited to:

4.6.1  Providing false, misleading, or distorted information directly or by omission to the ABFSE or COA;
4.6.2  Engaging in illegal conduct;
4.6.3  Presenting false information to students, faculty, or the public;
4.6.4  Engaging in intentional conduct that is coercive to students or prejudicial to student learning or outcomes
4.6.5  Any other conduct that is generally regarded as unethical in higher education, accreditation of educational programs and institutions, or funeral service.

4.7  See also Standard 5.1 and Standards 2.8 and 12.2 (if applicable) for additional topics subject to Administrative Practices and Ethical Standards.
STANDARD 5: FINANCE

5.1 The institution/program must have financial resources which are adequate to provide instruction and facilities in compliance with this manual and to ensure graduation of each class accepted.

5.2 The learning resources budget shall be adequate for proper support of the curriculum.

5.3 Acceptable accounting practices must be employed and the most current audited financial statements must be provided. For departmental programs in comprehensive institutions which are regionally accredited, institutional compliance will be assumed. In such cases, departmental budgets must reflect adequate financial support of the funeral service department. Budget development for the department must be in evidence.

5.4 The financial accounting system for institutions must not be combined with financial affairs of any other organizations.

STANDARD 6: CURRICULUM

6.1 The ABFSE recognizes the Associate Degree, or its equivalent, as the minimum educational standard for preparation for the funeral service profession.

6.1.1 The program in Funeral Service Education must consist of not less than 60 semester (90 quarter or the equivalent where credits are measured by a different means) credits.

6.1.2 The program must be spread over at least three semesters or four quarters or the equivalent where academic periods are measured by a different means.

6.2 The program must have and follow a well-organized curriculum plan.

6.2.1 The plan must follow a logical sequence and result in a diploma or degree appropriate to the length and depth of the curriculum.

6.2.2 Semester or quarter credit hours must be assigned to all courses and apportioned appropriately.

6.2.3 A syllabus must be available for each course offered in the program. Each syllabus must include written course objectives and must be distributed to students at the beginning of that course. The course objectives must be reviewed on a continuing basis.

6.2.4 All required prerequisite courses must be clearly indicated in institutional publications.

6.2.5 The curriculum undertaken by funeral service education students must consist of at least two components: general education coursework and courses in Funeral Service Education (the "major").

6.2.6 At least 25% of the total credits must be in general education, non-technical courses.

6.3 The manner of inclusion of ABFSE stipulated content is left to the individual program to decide, provided the minimum content as stipulated in the following is included. Some of the current ABFSE content areas may be counted toward the general education component, as long as they are not counted toward any other portion of the ABFSE requirements. For the purpose of this Standard, general education courses are those in which the instructional content is not narrowly focused on the specific knowledge, skills, and techniques unique to the Funeral Service profession. The minimum requirements for the Funeral Service Education degree program must include:

6.4 Public Health and Technical 14 minimum semester (21 quarter) credits. The curriculum must involve a distribution of study in the following content areas:

6.4.1 Chemistry, for Funeral Service

6.4.2 Microbiology

6.4.3 Human Anatomy

6.4.4 Pathology

6.4.5 Restorative Art

6.4.6 Embalming
6.5 **Business Management and Professional** 16 minimum semester (24 quarter) credits. The curriculum must involve a distribution of study in the following content areas:

- 6.5.1 Accounting
- 6.5.2 Funeral Service Management
- 6.5.3 Funeral Merchandising
- 6.5.4 Cremation
- 6.5.5 Funeral Directing
- 6.5.6 Small Business Management
- 6.5.7 Professional or Business Communications
- 6.5.8 Federal Trade Commission

6.6 **Social Sciences/Humanities** 6 minimum semester (9 quarter) credits. The curriculum must involve a distribution of study in the following content areas:

- 6.6.1 Sociology
- 6.6.2 History of Funeral Service and Embalming
- 6.6.3 Funeral Service Psychology and Counseling

6.7 **Legal, Ethical, Regulatory** 3 minimum semester (4 quarter) credits. The curriculum must involve a distribution of study in the following content areas:

- 6.7.1 Funeral Service Law
- 6.7.2 Business Law
- 6.7.3 Ethics

6.8 **General Education** Each associate degree student must earn a minimum of 60 (90 quarter) credits; each bachelor degree student must earn a minimum of 120 (180 quarter) credits of which at least 25% of the total credits required by the program for earning a degree must be in general education, non-technical, courses. In addition, each student must complete sufficient general education credits to meet graduation requirements for the Associate Degree (or its equivalent) or Baccalaureate Degree as described by each state or province/territory and institution if the student is enrolled in a degree program.

In addition to the statement in Standard 6.3 that some of the current ABFSE content area may be counted toward the general education component, as long as they are not counted toward any other portion of the ABFSE requirements, General Education courses may be drawn from the following areas:

- 6.8.1 Accounting
- 6.8.2 Business
- 6.8.3 Computer Applications
- 6.8.4 Speech
- 6.8.5 English
- 6.8.6 History
- 6.8.7 Mathematics
- 6.8.8 Psychology
- 6.8.9 Religion
- 6.8.10 Sociology

6.9 The **Embalming** is a requirement of the curriculum:

- 6.9.1 Each student must actively participate in at least ten (10) embalmings in order to fulfill the clinical embalming component of the curriculum.

These Embalming cases may either be completed in an on-campus setting or at an off-campus instructional site.

There shall be no more than five (5) students per case receiving credit for a specific embalming. There may be additional students observing; however, they may not interrupt or interfere with the embalming process or distract the preceptor while the embalming is in process.
6.9.2 Active participation means hands-on learning and must include, at a minimum, the following tasks:
6.9.2.a raising vessels
6.9.2.b mixing fluids
6.9.2.c injecting fluids
6.9.2.d aspiration
6.9.2.e suturing incisions
6.9.2.f posing features

6.9.3 Credit for individual cases will be allowed for only those students actively participating:
No embalming case credit shall be given for those students observing the case. The number of observing students must be limited to ten (10) unless a video system or amphitheater is large enough to accommodate additional students without interfering with those students actively participating.

6.9.4 Embalming case reports validating the tasks performed by the student are required. Each case report must include:
6.9.4.a details of embalming treatments
6.9.4.b case analysis, as well as types and quantities of embalming fluids used
6.9.4.c a detailed list of the student's participation in the case
6.9.4.d a form that is uniform in nature as adopted by each program which is signed by both the student and preceptor

6.9.5 The program must provide substantive evidence of the technical competence of each graduating student. Such certification must be performed by a qualified faculty member as defined in Standards 7.2.1, 7.2.2, and 7.2.4a.

6.9.6 Embalming cases may be completed in an on-campus setting or at an off-campus instructional site.

6.9.7 If preceptors are used, there must be an identified certification process in place and proper documentation that each preceptor has been properly oriented about the school's requirements concerning knowledge base, competency, and evaluation of student procedures and criteria. The training must include an on- or off-campus workshop and/or a manual pertaining to the training and methods of evaluation. In addition, preceptors must meet the requirements of Standard 7.2.4a and be certified as indicated in Standard 7.3.

6.9.8 Off-campus instructional sites where students receive college credit are to be physically visited by a representative of the program and approved prior to the start of instruction. Instruction includes management, funeral directing and clinical. These visits must occur at least biennially or prior to each use if the use occurs intermittently over a period of several years. Visits must also occur whenever physical changes to the facility are reported. Inspections of off-campus instruction sites must ensure the location has a valid, current license. In addition, inspections must ensure that off-campus sites are clean and adequate for instructional purposes. The inspection must ensure that appropriate equipment and protocols (drench shower, eye wash station, SDS [formerly MSDS] and blood borne pathogen program, ventilation system, proper protective equipment, etc.) are in place and functioning.

6.9.9 Signed affiliation agreements must be maintained by each program. The agreements must include a stated process for interrupting the clinical experience and recourse dismissal of a student from clinical experience and a clear definition of what is to be expected of the preceptor and what is provided by the program.

6.9.10 In addition, each student must participate in an on-campus course in which the application of Restorative Art principles is practiced in a laboratory setting.

6.9.11 Embalming case reports must be retained for at least seven years.

9-8
Participation in **Funeral Directing** is a requirement of the curriculum. Each student must actively participate in the funeral tasks included in this standard.

6.10.1 Active participation means hands-on learning and must include, at a minimum, the tasks enumerated in 6.10.2 – 6.10.7.

6.10.2. Students must utilize the following forms:
- 6.10.2.a. First call sheet
- 6.10.2.b. Arrangement worksheet
- 6.10.2.c. FTC-compliant General Price List
- 6.10.2.d. FTC-compliant Casket Price List
- 6.10.2.e. FTC-compliant Outer Burial Container Price List
- 6.10.2.f. Embalming Authorization form
- 6.10.2.g Cremation Authorization form

6.10.3 First call - Students must demonstrate the process of receiving five (5) first calls. This can be done in a simulation setting.

6.10.4 Transfer of remains - Students must demonstrate the process of performing a body removal. This can be done in a simulation setting.

6.10.5 Arrangement Conference - Students must participate (observe or assist) in five Arrangement Conferences. If done in a simulation setting, no more than 5 students may receive credit at one time (during 1 simulation).

6.10.6 As part of the Arrangement Conference requirement in 6.10.5, students must prepare the following at least one time:
- 6.10.6.a. Death Certificate
- 6.10.6.b. Burial Transit permit
- 6.10.6.c. Social Security form (Statement of Death by Funeral Director)
- 6.10.6.d. Death notice
- 6.10.6.e. Obituary
- 6.10.6.f. FTC-compliant Statement of Funeral Good and Services Selected
- 6.10.6.g. Veterans flag application, Burial benefits forms, and headstone/marker forms

6.10.7 Funeral Observation - Students must observe five funeral related services. Three of the five must be from the following list: Liturgical, Non-liturgical, Secular, Chapel, Graveside, Military, Fraternal, Memorial (without the deceased), Direct Cremation, or Other (describe).

To receive credit, the student will be required to provide documentation of the service (via service folder, obituary, prayer card, or other artifacts), his/her level of participation in the activity and designate the participants involved. (clergy, celebrant, FD, family, or others). This may not be done in a simulation setting.

6.10.8 Documentation of student participation must be maintained by the program for at least seven years.

6.11 Each program must append Form B-6, (found in Appendix B) “Curriculum Distribution by ABFSE Content Area,” to its Self study.

6.12 Instruction must be at a level generally held commensurate with postsecondary education and directed toward the individual growth of each student in areas such as independent thought, resourcefulness, and scientific inquiry.

6.13 Students must be evaluated at reasonable intervals and kept informed of their progress in a timely fashion.
STANDARD 7: FACULTY

7.1 The faculty must be adequate in

7.1.1 number,
7.1.2 education,
7.1.3 competence, and
7.1.4 experience to implement effectively the program of instruction.

7.2 Members of the teaching faculty must be qualified in accordance with certain degree and professional requirements, as follows:

7.2.1 All full- or part-time faculty initially appointed after September 1, 1969, as funeral service educators must have a bachelor’s or higher degree from a regionally accredited college or university.

7.2.2 As of May 1, 1979, all newly- and re-appointed full-time faculty must earn a master’s degree from a regionally accredited college or university within five years of their initial appointment date. Faculty who fail to meet the five-year requirement may not be allowed to teach until the degree is awarded. For faculty earning degrees in colleges or universities outside the United States, the institution awarding the degree must have met degree standards which in the judgment of AACRO are acceptable or similar to those of ABFSE.

7.2.3 The only exception to the above is in the category of laboratory assistant, guest lecturer, clinical instructor, preceptor, or comparable positions. Individuals in such categories must serve under the direct supervision of a qualified member of the faculty, as above.

7.2.4 In addition to above degree requirements, faculty in specific areas must be meet the following criteria:

7.2.4.a a qualified faculty member in embalming is one who holds a valid license that entitles him/her to practice embalming in the state in which he/she is teaching, who has had sufficient specialized training and at least one year of experience as an embalmer, and who has graduated from an institution of funeral service education accredited by the American Board or its predecessor or, for programs outside the U.S., has graduated from a post-secondary funeral service program equivalent to ABFSE-accredited programs;

7.2.4.b a qualified faculty member in mortuary management is one who has graduated from an institution of funeral service education accredited by the American Board or its predecessor or, for programs outside the U.S., from a post-secondary funeral service program equivalent to ABFSE accredited programs, holds a funeral director’s license, or its legal equivalent, and has had sufficient specialized training and experience in funeral service practice to enable him/her to give proper instruction;

7.2.4.c a qualified faculty member in restorative art is one who has graduated from an institution of funeral service education accredited by the American Board or its predecessor, or for programs outside the U.S., from a post-secondary funeral service program equivalent to ABFSE accredited programs;

7.2.4.d a qualified faculty member in other required or elective courses is one who has sufficient specialized education or experience in these subjects to enable proper instruction to be provided;

7.2.4.e all personnel serving as off-campus preceptors must be licensed as Funeral Directors, Embalmers, or both, and, after January 1, 1989, embalming preceptors must be graduates of ABFSE accredited programs or, for programs outside the U.S., graduates of a post-secondary funeral service program equivalent to ABFSE accredited programs.

7.3 Preceptor credentials must be certified in one of the following ways by the program:

7.3.1 Have on file an official transcript from the accredited funeral service institution from which the preceptor graduated plus a copy of his or her state license;
7.3.2 Have on file a copy of the preceptor's license from the State Board of Funeral Service and Embalming (if the state requires graduation from an ABFSE accredited program)

7.3.3 Have on file a copy of (or be able to provide access to) verification from the State web site that the preceptor is licensed in the state (if the state required graduation from an ABFSE accredited program) with the name of the preceptor and date of the issuance of the license maintained by the program.

7.4 The program must give evidence of active development of high quality faculty, and the involvement of the faculty in the conduct of the academic program including maintaining the standards and conditions pertaining to instruction and research.

7.5 Instructional support for faculty, in the form of library facilities, office facilities, development leave (with or without pay) involvement in program planning, etc., must be in evidence.

7.6 Student-teacher ratios must be available for review and must not exceed 30:1 overall (full-time equivalent per federal/state guidelines/definitions) in the funeral service program, no more than 25:1 headcount for laboratory sessions, and 5:1 headcount for each clinical embalming case. No instructor may supervise more than 3 embalming cases at any one time.

STANDARD 8: FACILITIES

8.1 Classrooms, laboratories, and other areas used for instruction must be properly equipped, adequate in number and size, and supplied for quality instruction to support the aims and objectives of the program and to meet the needs of students. For funeral service education the following is required:

8.1.1 Classrooms and laboratories must be properly lighted, heated, ventilated, cleaned, and furnished with, or have available, the equipment and supplies necessary for lectures to enable the educational program to be carried out;

8.1.2 Laboratories must be furnished with sufficient equipment and supplies to permit students to work in small groups or individually. Sufficient equipment and supplies must be available to carry on all research and instruction mentioned in program/institution publications. Equipment and supplies must be replaced as required and upgraded to maintain currency with funeral service practice.

8.1.3 All facilities must satisfy federal, state, provincial/territorial, and local regulations.

8.1.4 Each program must maintain an on-campus embalming/preparation space either fully functional or for demonstration purposes. The embalming space must be of sufficient size to accommodate at least one preparation table. It must have an electric embalming machine, instruments, and real or simulated chemicals. In the case of a demonstration lab, it must adequately reflect an actual functional embalming laboratory.

8.2 Off-Campus Instructional Sites: Instruction at off-campus locations is generally in the form of practicum, internship, or embalming instruction. Whenever students receive program credit for work carried out off the main campus, the following facilities requirements must be in effect:

8.2.1 Funeral homes in which off-campus instruction takes must be licensed by the appropriate authorities;

8.2.2 Off-campus instruction must take place in locations which offer adequate learning space for students involved. In the case of instruction in embalming, preparation room facilities must be of sufficient size to allow for satisfactory participation by each student involved;

8.2.3 The program must have written affiliation agreements with each off-campus instructional site. Each agreement must specify the responsibilities of the program/institution and the instructional site relative to supervision and instruction of students and liability. Where appropriate, and in accordance with institutional policies, personnel at the instructional site may be given adjunct faculty appointments by the institution; and

8.2.4 All facilities must satisfy federal, state, and local regulations.
STANDARD 9: LIBRARY / LEARNING RESOURCES

9.1 Learning resources, including computer resources, collections of books, periodicals, and reference materials must be both sufficient in scope and readily accessible to students to provide adequate support to the Funeral Service Education curriculum.

9.2 Computer resources include computer assisted instruction materials as well as access to internet resources. The learning resources program should provide access to external computer databases.

9.3 Since quality and availability affect program outcomes, learning resources must be accessible to students outside of regular classroom hours. The program must require student utilization of these resources.

9.3.1 An acquisition policy relevant to Funeral Service Education must be in place and funeral service personnel must be involved with the annual acquisitions related to this program.

9.3.2 Sufficient space must be devoted to learning resources to provide for the needs of students in Funeral Service Education and must be accessible during reasonable hours and administered by qualified staff.

9.3.3 Learning resources must be catalogued according to a recognized standard method.

STANDARD 10: STUDENTS

10.1 Admissions: The admissions requirement for the program must be publicly stated in institutional publications including the catalog and must be administered as published.

The program/institution must recognize and follow ethical practices in student admissions and other student-related matters and so advise the public by publishing in its program information either its own statement of ethical practices which must include key elements of widely recognized and available documents describing such practices or specifically referring in program materials to its adherence to recognized documents on ethical practice (e.g. documents available from the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers [AACRAO] and from several of the regional accrediting agencies. At Appendix I is a representative document from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education).

In addition to the above, the following Standards must be met.

10.1.1 The minimum educational requirement for admission to a funeral service education program must be graduation from an accredited four-year high school or its equivalent, such as a recognized G.E.D. or other evidence of academic achievement such as a post-secondary transcript with at least nine semester hour credits (or the equivalent), exclusive of developmental courses, and a satisfactory grade point average from a regionally accredited post-secondary institution.

10.1.2 No program shall enroll any student until evidence is supplied by the applicant that the above minimum standard has been met. Such evidence must be

10.1.2.a Transcript of high school or college work, received by mail directly from the institution from which the credits were received. If an institution/program accepts internet transcripts it must have a system in place to verify that such transmissions are secure and an accurate representation of student credits and grades, or

10.1.2.b Evidence that the applicant has a certificate (such as a G.E.D.) equivalent to the high school diploma. Such certificate must be certified by the principal of a recognized high school, the state department of education or its equivalent, or any other authorized and recognized authority in the state or province/territory, or

10.1.2.c In the case of applicants from outside the United States, a statement from a recognized education authority certifying that the applicant has completed formal educational requirements at least equivalent to high school graduation in this country.
10.2 Attendance, Promotion, Graduation

10.2.1 Program/institution policies regarding grading and academic progression must be clearly stated and provided to students in advance. Graduation requirements must be stated in official program/institution catalogs.

10.2.2 Attendance regulations must be uniformly applicable to all students. This must include clear statements as to attendance expectations, if any, as well as any basis for separation from the institution of students who violate such.

10.2.3 Graduation must ensure a certification that all program and college requirements have been met. **which includes taking the NBE** (Removed; effective October 13, 2014.)

10.2.4 Only degrees or diplomas for which the institution has received state or equivalent authorization may be awarded, unless on an honorary basis.

10.3 Student Health and Safety

10.3.1 Each accredited funeral service education program must have written policies and procedures ensuring safety of its students.

10.3.2 Each accredited funeral service education program must have health services information available.

10.4 Guidance and Student Involvement

10.4.1 Students must have access to services for personal and/or academic problems. These must include services covering academic difficulty, veterans affairs, housing (housing itself does not need to be provided by the institution or program) academic advising, conduct, part-and full-time employment, licensure requirements, personal problems, and post graduation placement.

10.4.2 Extracurricular activities intended to supplement the funeral service instructional program shall be offered and must be in the form of lectures, student group activities related to funeral service, field trips, and other such activities which cannot take place in the formal classroom setting.

10.4.3 Each funeral service education program must provide opportunities for student involvement in program and institutional governance.

10.5 Records and Reports

10.5.1 Each institution/program must have in operation adequate filing systems for student academic records. This must include policies insuring maintenance of student academic records in perpetuity and ensuring that such will be secured from fire, theft, alteration, and damage.

10.5.2 Student academic transcripts must include indications of the quality of the student's work in each subject studied and the extent of each course, expressed in either semester or quarter credits. Grading must be explained on the transcript.

10.5.3 In the event a program ceases to function, assurance must be made to guarantee maintenance of the student academic records in perpetuity. The American Board of Funeral Service Education is available to serve as repository for academic records for programs which cannot otherwise guarantee such. All costs associated with sending original records to the American Board are the responsibility of the program that is closing as are costs associated with the American Board making back-up electronic copies of those files.

10.6 All institutions/programs must have specific published policies which are made available to all students and which provide a process that allows any student who believes he or she has been discriminated against, has been a victim or sexual harassment, or has been treated unfairly in an academic or other student-related matter to seek corrective action. If the matter cannot be resolved through discussion with appropriate individuals, the procedure must include provisions whereby the student is given an impartial hearing, to include a written report of the hearing. The policy must include a statement of how students are made aware of the policy and what assistance is provided to students who have a grievance but are unsure about how to proceed.
10.7 Each program or institution the COA accredits must have a transfer of credit policy that is published and available to students and the public. The policy must include the criteria established by the institution regarding the transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education. In addition, the statement must include, at a minimum, the established criteria the institution or program uses regarding the transfer of credit earned at another institution and a list of institutions with which the institution has established an articulation agreement.

STANDARD 11: PROGRAM PLANNING AND EVALUATION / ASSESSMENT

11.1 ABFSE believes that acceptable National Board Exam pass rates, graduation rates, and employment rates are important outcome and quality measures. Accredited institutions/programs are expected to make substantial efforts to assist students in successfully completing their educational programs and in gaining employment in the funeral service profession following graduation. To enhance these efforts, each institution/program must have a continuous system of planning and assessment in place in order to measure its effectiveness and to implement necessary improvements.

11.1.1 The concept of program planning and evaluation has at its core a documented plan which incorporates guidelines, procedures, and methodologies that assess the program's achievement of stated aims and objectives and measures the attainment of expected instructional outcomes.

11.1.1.a The plan must be directly related to the program's aims and objectives.
11.1.1.b The plan must be written and must be approved by appropriate administrative authority.
11.1.1.c The plan must contain provisions for periodic review and revision.

11.1.2 Each program must establish a comprehensive, ongoing system of planning and assessment that ensures instructional quality and documents student success. The system must include the following:

11.1.2.a Provisions for collecting, maintaining, and analyzing at least seven years of data.
11.1.2.b Opportunities for continuous feedback by students, faculty, and other constituents.
11.1.2.c Regularly scheduled student evaluations of courses and faculty;
11.1.2.d Regularly scheduled supervisory evaluation of faculty and program administrators;
11.1.2.e Results of annual surveys of graduates and employers to include satisfaction with instructional quality, preparation for employment, and expectations of employment;
11.1.2.f Methods used to measure the attainment of expected instructional outcomes; and
11.1.2.g Documentation of how the assessment efforts are used to improve instructional and program quality.

11.2 If the program has been evaluated previously by ABFSE, the program must document what has been done since the last review to correct any deficiencies that may have been cited in reference to the Standards.

11.3 For at least seven years, the program must maintain, calculate, and explain how it has utilized the following data for planning and assessment purposes:

11.3.1 Pass Rates on the National Board Examination (NBE): Accredited programs must require each student to take both the “Arts” and “Sciences” sections of the National Board Examination as a requirement for graduation. Statistical results are provided annually by the International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards. (Changes effective October 13, 2014.)

11.3.2 Graduation rates: In each Annual Report beginning in 2014 (January 2015 Annual Report), students must be reported by name as a cohort when they have completed one half of the coursework leading to the degree. For the purpose of calculating graduation rates, students moving through the second half of an associate program will be considered to have graduated on time if they complete their degrees within 18 months, and students halfway through a baccalaureate degree would have 36 months for on-time completion. The same calculation (the second half of the program plus 50%)
would apply to other modes of program completion (i.e., diplomas). Each year, each cohort must be identified and tracked in the Annual Report.

11.3.3 **Employment rates:** Data for students employed in funeral service/mortuary science must be provided on the Annual Report each year beginning with the 2014 rates (January 2015 Annual Report). Job placement is to be calculated within six months of each student’s graduation. Programs must specify funeral service related employment, active military duty, or enrollment in further higher education as the three instances that are considered “employment” for purposes of this calculation.

11.4 The National Board Exam (NBE) is the licensing standard for funeral service/mortuary science in the US. Programs must maintain at least a 60% three (3) year average pass rate for first-time takers of the Arts and the Sciences sections of the NBE. The three (3) year average pass rate will be determined using only the first attempt scores of students who have taken either the Arts or Sciences sections. (Effective for evaluation of 2015 results) Please see the policy on and procedure for calculating and tracking cohorts and requesting exemptions in Appendix J.

11.4.1 A program with less than a 60% three (3) year average pass rate on the same section of the NBE must comply as follows:
- first year less than 60% - Program Placed on Probation and Report Required (see 11.4.2 for report details)
- second consecutive year less than 60% - Accreditation Withdrawn Unless Good Cause Is Shown (see 11.4.2)

11.4.2 A program with a single year NBE pass rate below 60% on either or both of the Arts and the Sciences sections in any calendar year is subject to additional monitoring and must submit a report to the Committee on Accreditation by March 1 of the following year. The report must analyze the reason(s) for the low pass rate and explain plans for improvement. This warning language will include a reminder of the Probation and Show Cause consequences described in Standard 11.4.1. Failure to submit a satisfactory report may lead to negative action by the Committee on Accreditation.

An institution with sporadic pass rates will be reviewed and may be subject to comparable actions identified above.

11.4.3 National Board Examination pass rates for programs offering courses via Distance Learning must differentiate, on the Annual Report, between those students who take less than 50% of their courses via traditional methods and those who take 50% or more of their courses via Distance Learning. The passage rates of both groups of students (i.e., traditional on-campus and Distance Learning) will be considered both combined and separately in all accreditation actions by the COA.

11.5 The annual passage rate of first-time takers on the National Board Examination (NBE), and program employment rates and graduation rates for the most recent three (3) year period will be posted annually by the Executive Director on the ABFSE website, with a link to each program’s website or with contact information for the program.

11.5.1 So that the public and prospective students can easily access these statistics, programs must include the following statements on their website and in the institution's catalog: “National Board Examination pass rates, graduation rates, *(beginning in 2015)* and employment rates *(beginning in 2015)* for this and other ABFSE-accredited programs are available at [www.abfse.org](http://www.abfse.org). To request a printed copy of this program’s pass rates and rates, go to _________(specific location; i.e., the Mortuary Science Office, Room 222, Feather Hall or a specific program web page where the request can be submitted ) or by e-mail at ___________, or by telephone ___________.”

11.5.2 Institutions failing to comply with this requirement will be placed on probation immediately. Continued non-compliance may lead to the removal of accreditation.
11.6 Programs must maintain at least a 60% annual graduation rate for each calendar year. Please see the policy on and procedure for calculating and tracking cohorts in 11.3.2.

11.6.1 As of 2017 (2-year programs) or 2019 (four-year programs), a program with a graduation rate below 60% in any calendar year must submit a report to the Committee on Accreditation by March 1 of the following year. The report must analyze the reason(s) for the low average rate and explain plans for remediying the deficiency. Failure to submit a satisfactory report and to provide evidence of a plan to improve graduation rates may lead to negative action by the Committee on Accreditation.

11.7 Programs must maintain at least a 60% annual employment rate for each calendar year. Please see the policy on and procedure for calculating and tracking cohorts in 11.3.3.

11.7.1 As of 2015, a program with an employment rate below 60% in any calendar year must submit a report to the Committee on Accreditation by March 1 of the following year. The report must analyze the reason(s) for the low average rate and explain plans for remediying the deficiency. Failure to submit a satisfactory report and to provide evidence of a plan to improve employment rates may lead to negative action by the Committee on Accreditation.

**STANDARD 12: DEFAULT RATES IN THE STUDENT LOAN PROGRAMS UNDER TITLE IV AND COMPLIANCE WITH TITLE IV PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES**

(Only single-purpose, non-regionally accredited, funeral service institutions which participate in Title IV Higher Education Act programs must respond)

12.1 The institution must demonstrate compliance with its obligations under Title IV, including results of compliance audits, program reviews, and the like.

12.2 Subpart B, Chapter VI, Title 34, Volume 3 (revised as of July 1, 2005) of the Code of Federal Regulations identifies and then divides the “Standards for Participation in Title IV,” HEA Programs into six broad areas (this document is at Appendix F): (a) Program records, (b) Fiscal records, (c) Required records, (d) General records issues, (e) Record retention, and (f) Examination of records. (A copy of Appendix F is attached.)

Single purpose institutions for which the ABFSE serves as “gatekeeper” must also demonstrate compliance with those accreditation standards which speak directly to their situations, particularly Standards 1 (Sponsorship), 2 (Organization and Administration), 4 (Administrative Practices and Ethical Standards), and 5 (Finance). These matters will be addressed in the Self study and provisions made by the institution to have available appropriate records and information as indicated below.

Recognizing the primary role of financial aid auditors with regard to ensuring compliance with Title IV, ABFSE visiting committees will limit their review under this standard to the following:

12.2.1 A specific examination of the most recent financial aid audit. That review will be referenced in the visiting committee report, including any audit exceptions.

12.2.2 Through sampling methods, the visiting committee will confirm that the records identified in the regulation indicated above as Part a (Program records), Part b (Fiscal records), and Part c (Required records) are on file at the institution.

12.2.3 The visiting committee will ensure the institution has a process in place that assures compliance with Part d (general requirements on records availability), Part e (appropriate retention of records, and Part f (a policy on availability of records for inspection by those identified in the regulation).

12.2.4 The visiting committee will, using sampling methods, ensure that records noted above are maintained in acceptable form and available for inspection by appropriate parties.
12.3 The institution must present Default Rates for the Title IV Student Loan Program for the years since the last accreditation review, as reported to the college by the US Department of Education.

12.4 For institutions in which rates are above the federal guidelines, plans to bring rates into compliance must be presented.

**STANDARD 13: RECORD OF STUDENT COMPLAINTS**

13.1 All student complaints about the program, submitted in writing since the last accreditation review, must be available for review.

13.2 With each written complaint, the program must file a written response, or demonstrate resolution, of the complaint.

13.3 See also Standard 10

**STANDARD 14: PROGRAM LENGTH, TUITION, AND FEES MUST RELATE TO SUBJECT MATTER**

(Only single-purpose, non-regionally accredited, funeral service institutions, which participate in Title IV Higher Education Act programs, must respond)

14.1 The Institution must demonstrate that the subject matter taught relates reasonably to tuition and fees charged and to length of the program.

**STANDARD 15: PROGRAM LENGTH IN CREDIT HOURS**

(Only single-purpose, non-regionally accredited, funeral service institutions, which participate in Title IV Higher Education Act programs, must respond)

15.1 The Institution must demonstrate that its program is defined in standard credit hour terms, either semester hour or quarter hour following the current Department of Education definition of credit hours.

15.1.1 The Federal Definition of Credit Hour is found in 34 CFR 668.8(k) and (l). Credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than:

(1) One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or

(2) At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.
CHAPTER X

POLICIES

A. GENERAL POLICIES

Funeral service practitioners are licensed because funeral service involves significant considerations of public health, both as it relates to the proper disposition of human remains and to the counseling of bereaved persons. Accordingly, programs of education relating thereto must maintain as high a standard of excellence as possible in the light of existing knowledge.

The American Board encourages each program to develop and implement experimental programs designed to expand and improve the professional education of its students.

The American Board will, upon request, make available to individual institutions an educational consultant to advise in matters pertaining to Standards for Accreditation. This service, a significant and growing phase of the American Board's program, provides a medium for the exchange of productive ideas and experience. The expenses incurred shall be paid by the requesting program.

B. DISCLOSURE AND CONFIDENTIALITY

It is the obligation of every program applying for candidacy, extension of candidacy, accreditation, annual renewal, or continuing accreditation to provide the Committee on Accreditation access to all parts of its operations with due regard for the rights of individual privacy and with complete and accurate information with respect to the institution's affairs, including reports from other accrediting, licensing, and auditing agencies. Failure to do so, or to make complete, accurate, and honest disclosure, is sufficient reason in and of itself to deny or revoke candidacy or accreditation.

The Committee on Accreditation will maintain inviolate the confidentiality of information supplied by the program except in those cases where it is deemed necessary by the American Board to make public information which forms a substantive basis for the committee's decision.

The American Board will announce publicly, as appropriate, through its Executive Director, the fact an institution's program's

1. candidacy or accreditation has been approved;
2. candidacy has not been extended or its accreditation renewed;
3. candidacy has not been renewed or its accreditation has been terminated;
4. has been placed on probation and the reasons therefore;
5. has been given a show cause order effective at a specific date and the reasons therefore;
6. application for candidacy or accreditation has been denied.

If a program so conducts its affairs that it becomes a matter of public concern, the American Board may announce, through its Executive Director, any action the Committee on Accreditation has taken and the basis for that action, making public any pertinent information available to the Committee.

C. CONFLICT OF INTEREST: Real as well as perceived conflicts will be avoided.

1. Selection of Site Visitors:
a. No individual who has served as consultant to a program may serve as a site visitor to that program.

b. No personnel from programs potentially in direct competition with the program being evaluated may serve on the visiting committee.

c. No recent (within 5 years) graduate nor recent faculty member (within 5 years) of the program being evaluated may serve on the site visiting committee.

d. No faculty members or practitioners from within the same state in which the evaluated program is located may serve on the visiting committee.

e. No faculty member from within institutions in the same systems as the program being evaluated may serve on the visiting committee.

f. Except for focused visits, no member of the Committee on Accreditation or the ABFSE chairperson may serve on the visiting committee.

2. Site Visit Behavior: Site visitors are prohibited from using the site visit as either an employment opportunity for themselves or to hire faculty away from the program being evaluated.

3. Voting by Committee on Accreditation Members: Members must abstain from voting and from the discussion if they have a real or perceived Conflict of Interest. Committee members from within the state of the program being evaluated may not make motions, participate in the discussion, or vote concerning that program. Committee members employed by the program being evaluated or any other program within the same educational system must absent themselves during the executive session and voting concerning that program.

4. Persons serving as consultants, administrative staff, or in any other way serving the committee shall avoid real or perceived conflicts of interest and shall follow all policies listed in #1-3 above. Members of the Committee on Accreditation, visiting committees and employees of the ABFSE will be expected to sign a Conflict of Interest statement. (See Appendix G)

D. REFERENCE TO ACCREDITATION STATUS BY A PROGRAM

1. Any reference by a program to accreditation in catalogs, bulletins or other official publications and communication or other media shall read as follows:

“The (name of accredited degree program) at (name of sponsoring institution) is accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE), 992 Mantua Pike, Suite 108, Woodbury Heights, NJ 08097. (816) 233-3747. Web: www.abfse.org.”

Please note that the reference to accreditation names the specific program accredited by the ABFSE; this requirement is particularly important in those institutions engaged in other areas of instruction which are not accredited by, or eligible for accreditation by, the ABFSE.

Institutions accredited by ABFSE (for Title IV eligibility) will use the following accreditation statement:

“(Name of sponsoring institution) and the (name of accredited degree program) are accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE), 992 Mantua Pike, Suite 108, Woodbury Heights, NJ 08097. (816) 233-3747. Web: www.abfse.org.”

2. ABFSE accredited institutions/departments which choose to offer, in addition to accredited programs, unaccreditable programs, must comply with the following procedures:
a. Publications describing the unaccreditable program must contain the following information: "This academic program is designed to meet specific state or professional needs. It is not accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education. Students graduating from this program are not eligible to take the National Board Examination or any state board examination for which graduation from an ABFSE accredited program is required."

b. The academic transcript for graduates of unaccreditable programs must carry the following information: "This academic program is designed to meet specific state or professional needs. It is not accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education. Students graduating from this program are not eligible to take the National Board Examination or any state board examination for which graduation from an ABFSE accredited program is required."

E. PROTECTION OF STUDENTS: Students matriculated in an accredited program which loses its accreditation status prior to their graduation are still considered graduates of an accredited program.

F. REVISIONS OF THE ACCREDITATION AND POLICY MANUAL AND STANDARDS: Recognizing that the funeral service profession is continuously evolving, periodic review of ABFSE policies, procedures, and Accreditation Standards is an on-going process.

1. The Committee on Accreditation (COA) is responsible for all policies related to Accreditation, including Standards, accreditation process, accreditation procedures, accreditation policies, and granting or taking other actions regarding Candidacy and Accreditation.

2. Although it may review them at any time, the Committee on Accreditation will review the Standards of Accreditation at least once every five (5) years. Standards are constantly monitored using information provided from the indices listed in #6 below. If the COA determines at any point during its systematic program of review that it needs to make changes to its Standards, the Committee will initiate action within 12 months and make the changes within a reasonable period of time (normally six months). The formal review of the Standards every five (5) years will follow the process outlined in Appendix H of the Manual.

3. For any changes in the Standards of Accreditation or other policies or procedures related to accreditation (including but not limited to the formal five-year review), the COA will provide advance notice to allow interested parties opportunity to comment on the proposed changes prior to their adoption. To ensure opportunity for broad input, the process to ensure broad review will follow the guidelines in items 3, 4, and 5 of Appendix H of the Manual.

4. Other, non-accreditation, ABFSE policies are to be voted upon by the board and must be submitted to all members at least 30 days prior to the meeting at which the proposal will be considered. Submission will be in the form of a Notice of Motion.

5. The Notice of Motion proposing a change to any non-accreditation policy shall require two thirds vote of members present at an official meeting of the ABFSE and, if passed, shall become effective upon passage unless otherwise directed by the board.

6. The Committee on Accreditation uses several indices to ensure that the Standards of Accreditation are valid, current, consistent, and relevant indicators of the quality of the education needed for entry into the funeral service profession. Among the indices used are

a. annual reports from each program providing information on demographics, attrition, and program changes;

b. surveys of graduates to identify satisfaction and relevance of their academic preparation and success in the field;
c. on-going liaison with the Curriculum Committee which insures that the required curricula include all areas tested by the National Board Examination, which, itself, is based on task analyses provided by practitioners in the field;

d. surveys of graduating students to identify their expectations of wages, benefits, and working conditions in the first licensed position. These expectations are compared with actual job conditions, wages, and benefits identified by surveying employers; and

e. Introspective analysis by the Committee (to insure its application of Standards is consistent. The Committee on Accreditation periodically splits itself into two groups which are required to agree on decisions independently as it reviews Standards and processes.)

G. WAIVER AUTHORITY: The Committee on Accreditation may waive policies related to accreditation as contained in this manual when, in its opinion, unusual or compelling reasons supporting such waiver exist.

H. PUBLICATION OF INACCURATE INFORMATION: In the event a program accredited by the ABFSE, or its sponsoring institution, publishes or otherwise disseminates information that misrepresents or distorts action taken by the Committee on Accreditation with respect to the accreditation process or status of the program, the following will occur:

The administrative officer of the sponsoring institution and the director of the funeral service program will be notified in writing of the misrepresentation or distortion and will be asked to take corrective action in writing regarding the misrepresentation or distortion.

Should the sponsoring institution and/or the funeral service program fail to take prompt corrective action, the Committee on Accreditation may publish a statement providing correct information to appropriate publics which will appear in the ABFSE website and in whatever other forms deemed appropriate by the Committee.

I. BRANCH CAMPUS PROGRAMS: If an accredited funeral service institution intends to establish a branch campus, it is required to submit a business plan for the proposed branch in the form of a Self study.

1. As defined by the Department of Education’s Criterion 602.24a, a Branch Campus is a location of an institution or program that is geographically apart and independent of the main campus of the institution or program. Such a location is permanent in nature, offers courses in educational programs leading to a degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential, has its own faculty and administrative or supervisory organization, and has its own budgetary and hiring authority.

The COA will consider as a “branch campus” for purposes of this and all other Standards any off-campus location of the program at which at least 50% of the educational program is offered. Each branch campus (or other location as noted herein) must meet all ABFSE/COA Standards of Accreditation as if it were a separate campus in and of itself.

See also the discussion above in Section I of Chapter VIII.

2. Institutions planning to establish a new Branch Campus must

a. submit a complete Self study for the Branch campus, following all required ABFSE guidelines;

b. within six months of the establishment of a Branch Campus program host a visiting committee. Cost of the visit is to be borne by the institution.

3. Once accreditation has been extended, each Branch Campus will be visited as an integral part of each accreditation comprehensive visitation and each must be included in all ABFSE Standards of Accreditation in the Self study.
J. TEACH-OUT PLANS AND AGREEMENTS

1. The COA requires that an institution it accredits or grants candidacy to submit a teach-out plan to the COA for approval upon the occurrence of any of the following events:

   (i) The United States Department of Education’s Secretary notifies the COA that the Secretary has initiated an emergency action against an institution, in accordance with Section 487(c)(1)(G) of the HEA, or an action to limit, suspend, or terminate an institution participating in any Title IV, HEA program, in accordance with Section 487(c)(1)(F) of the HEA, and that a teach-out plan is required.

   (ii) The COA acts to withdraw, terminate, or suspend the accreditation or candidacy status of the institution.

   (iii) The institution notifies the COA that it intends to cease operations entirely or close a location that provides one hundred percent of at least one program.

   (iv) A state licensing or authorizing agency notifies the COA that an institution’s license or legal authorization to provide an educational program has been or will be revoked.

2. The COA will evaluate the teach-out plan to ensure it provides for the equitable treatment of students under criteria indicated in this section, specifies additional charges, if any, and provides for notification to the students of any additional charges.

   The COA requires that an institution it accredits or has granted candidacy to, which enters into a teach-out agreement either on its own or at the request of the COA must submit that teach-out agreement to the COA for approval. The COA may approve the teach-out agreement only if the agreement is between institutions that are accredited or have candidacy status (i.e., preaccredited) by a nationally recognized accrediting agency, is consistent with applicable standards and regulations, and provides for the equitable treatment of students by ensuring that--

   (i) The teach-out institution has the necessary experience, resources, and support services to

      (A) Provide an educational program that is of acceptable quality and reasonably similar in content, structure, and scheduling to that provided by the institution that is ceasing operations either entirely or at one of its locations; and

      (B) Remain stable, carry out its mission, and meet all obligations to existing students; and

   (ii) The teach-out institution demonstrates that it can provide students access to the program and services without requiring them to move or travel substantial distances and that it will provide students with information about additional charges, if any.

   Closed Institutions. If an institution the COA accredits or has granted candidacy to closes without a teach-out plan or agreement, the COA will work with the United States Department of Education and the appropriate State agency, to the extent feasible, to assist students in finding reasonable opportunities to complete their education without additional charge.

Finally, the COA may require that an institution it accredits or has granted candidacy to enter into a teach-out agreement as part of its teach-out plan. Whether such a requirement is put in force will be determined on a case by case basis with due consideration to practicality, cost, feasibility, and likely effectiveness of such a plan.

K. CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS

The ABFSE realizes that continuity of operations in the event of incapacitation of the Executive Director is vital. In order to provide such continuity, it has an agreement with an individual who is trained in all ABFSE operations. This individual is prepared to take over temporarily in the event of the incapacitation of the Executive Director.
This individual would assume all duties of the Executive Director if such became necessary; would immediately take over all operations of the ABFSE office to insure total continuity of operations; would be titled Interim Executive Director; and would serve in this capacity until a permanent successor is identified by the ABFSE.

L. FILE MAINTENANCE: For each accredited program the ABFSE office shall maintain on file at least the last two full accreditation and/or pre-accreditation reviews. This shall include the last two committee reports, periodic review reports, if any, institutional responses to reports, special reviews, if any, responses to stipulations, if any, and committee final actions. The file shall also contain the most recent Self study report. In addition, the written record of all decisions made throughout an institution's or program's affiliation with the COA regarding its candidacy, accreditation, and any substantive changes -- including all correspondence that is significantly related to those decisions -- will be maintained in the ABFSE office. ABFSE Document Retention and Destruction Policy is found in Appendix L.

M. COLLECTION OF DEFAULT RATES: Accredited institutions for which the ABFSE serves as primary accreditor (single purpose, stand alone, non-regionally accredited funeral service colleges) must submit, along with the annual report, default rate for USDE Title IV programs. The committee will take appropriate action thereupon at their next scheduled meeting or at a special meeting if the default rates warrant immediate action.

N. COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE COMMITTEE ON ACCREDITATION: When a written complaint is filed with the ABFSE office or the COA related to the Standards or procedures, the following actions will be taken:

1. the complainant will be notified within 10 days of receipt of the complaint and the fact that the COA will review the complaint and respond to complainant within 30 days;

2. the COA will meet to review the complaint within 30 days of the acknowledgement to complainant;

3. after the committee meeting the complainant will be notified of the result(s) and will also be notified of the opportunity for appeal or further input to the committee, as appropriate. This notice to complainant will be sent within 10 days after the committee meeting at which the complaint was discussed;

4. if the complaint is unable to be resolved in a manner considered satisfactory by the complainant, complainant may appeal the committee action to the ABFSE Executive Committee for independent review. Complainant has 30 days from receipt of the committee’s decision to file this appeal;

5. upon receipt of such appeal, complainant will be notified that the ABFSE Executive Committee will review the committee’s decision and respond to the appeal within 30 days;

6. the Executive Committee will prepare a report and recommendation to the Committee on Accreditation for its consideration. A copy will be provided to the complainant;

7. the COA will meet to review the report and recommendation of the Executive Committee within 30 days of the receipt of the report and to make a final decision on the complaint; and

8. the decision of the ABFSE Committee on Accreditation is final.
O. DIRECTORY OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES. The Directory of Officers and Committees will include the following information about each officer listed:

1. Full name
2. Academic qualifications
3. Professional qualifications
4. Employment affiliation
5. Organizational affiliations

The Directory of Committees will include:

1. Full Name
2. Employment or Association affiliation
3. Contact info with email

P. PROCESS FOR APPOINTING MEMBERS TO THE COMMITTEE ON ACCREDITATION

Also see APPENDIX B

When the term of any member of the Committee on Accreditation is set to expire, the Executive Director will notify the appropriate constituency of the pending vacancy 12 months in advance

1a. Educators Representing Public and Private Institutions: The Executive Director will send a notice to all accredited institutions and programs when an educator seat on the Committee on Accreditation will be or is vacant. The notice will specify whether the position was filled by a representative from a private or public institution. The College and University Council will nominate three (3) qualified individuals for each open seat on the Committee on Accreditation. Consistent with Section A2 of Article VI of the By-laws, the COA shall select the new member(s) from the applications or nominees submitted to it by the College and University Council for applicable private/public seat. In making their selection the COA will strive to maintain the traditional balance of membership with three (3) individuals representing programs in the public institutions and three (3) representing the private, single purpose institutions. Individuals selected by the COA to serve as one of the Educator members of the committee must be full-time funeral service faculty or administrators at an ABFSE accredited institution/program, possess a minimum of a master’s degree, be credentialed as a Funeral Director in their state of employment, have completed the Self study/Accreditation Workshop, sign the ABFSE/COA Conflict of Interest Statement (see Appendix G of the Manual), and have at least three years experience in funeral service education at an ABFSE accredited education institution or program. See application form in Appendix B.

1b. Educators Representing the College and University Council: In the event it becomes necessary to seat one or more representatives from the College and University Council as required by Section A of Article VI of the By-Laws, a notice will be sent to members of the College and University Council soliciting three or more nominations from that group for membership on the COA. Member qualifications are cited in 1a. above. The COA will elect from the list of those nominated. Following that election as future vacancies occur in the College and University representative, the COA will advise that group 12 months prior to a vacancy occurring and solicit nominations in the manner noted elsewhere in Section P. See application form in Appendix B.

2. Member Associations A notice will be sent to the appropriate association requesting that the association nominate three qualified individuals to be considered for appointment. The nominees from each member association may not include its chief executive officer or any sitting members of its board (whether elected or non-elected). Nominees must be selected by a vote of the membership, and not by the board or chief executive officer. When each association receives the invitation to nominate candidates, it will be provided with instructions on how to document its nomination and election procedures. The COA may choose from the list of nominees or it may request that additional names be submitted. The appointment of an association representative to the COA is the sole responsibility of the Committee on Accreditation.
Includes: COA revisions approved October 2013
COA corrections October 2014 and October 2015
COA and ABFSE Revisions approved April 2016
COA and ABFSE Revisions approved October 2017
COA and ABFSE Revisions approved April 2019

Individuals selected by the COA to serve as Professional members of the committee must be licensed as funeral service practitioners or funeral service regulators at the time of their appointment, be actively involved in the profession, sign the ABFSE/COA Conflict of Interest Statement (see Appendix G of the Manual), be members in good standing of their respective national and/or state professional associations, and complete the Self study/Accreditation Workshop within six months of their first meeting.

3. Public. A notice will be sent to accredited programs, the associations, and appropriate funeral service organizations requesting that they publish the request for nomination of individuals to serve as public members. The notice will indicate that the public member must be from outside the field of funeral service or funeral service education. (See Appendix B-7) The appointment of a public member to the COA is the sole responsibility of the Committee on Accreditation. Individuals selected by the COA to serve as Public members of the committee must sign the ABFSE/COA Conflict of Interest Statement (see Appendix G of the Manual), complete the Self study/Accreditation Workshop within six months of their first meeting, and meet the ‘public member’ definition appearing in Article VI of the by-laws and Chapter III of the Manual on Accreditation.

At least 25% (of which includes one Educator and one Public Member) of the voting members of the COA must demonstrate significant experience in Distance Learning at the supervisory, developmental, or practitioner level.

Q. CURRICULUM OUTLINES

1. The following statement shall appear at the bottom of each page of the Curriculum Outlines: “This outline and glossary may not be reproduced without the express written permission of ABFSE.”

2. Member schools are authorized to distribute glossaries to their students.

3. Member schools agree that

   a. The outline is available to ABFSE accredited member institutions and approved candidates for educational purposes only.

   b. The Executive Committee of ABFSE, at its discretion, has the authority to distribute these documents, as it considers appropriate, to ABFSE affiliated members and other member organizations only.

4. The following policies apply to the use and distribution of curriculum outlines:

   a. Glossaries (but not Outlines) may be reproduced and distributed to students.

   b. Outlines are not to be reproduced or distributed to anyone other than funeral service or related faculty.

   c. Outlines may not be posted to public access media (e.g., the www) unless password protected.

   d. Outlines and glossaries are not to be duplicated for sale in any form without the written permission of ABFSE.

5. Use of ABFSE curriculum outlines and glossary.

   a. The curriculum outlines and glossary of the ABFSE are viewed as intellectual property of the ABFSE. ABFSE holds copyright for the Outlines and accompanying glossaries. Duplication of glossaries in textbooks must be approved by ABFSE.
b. In lieu of royalties for use of the ABFSE outlines and glossaries the following will apply:

- Duplication of glossary and use of outline as basis for a textbook applicable for life of outline (until next revision) $1000
- Access to all outlines/glossaries for use in textbooks on continuous basis $1500/year
- Purchase of complete set of curriculum outlines (hard copy) $10,000

Purchase of outlines by interested schools/programs (including candidate schools) does not authorize use or distribution for textbooks and is subject to the policy cited above.

R. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EVALUATION

1. A detailed, written annual evaluation of the Executive Director is the responsibility of the Chair of the COA and the ABFSE President.

2. The Executive Director prepares a self-evaluation in February each year which is sent to the COA chair and the President. The self-evaluation will include a discussion of the following: an overall assessment of the accomplishments for the year based on the list of responsibilities of the Executive Director; a list of those areas that merited special attention; areas that may need special attention; and goals for the next year.

3. The Executive Director, the COA chair, and the President will discuss the self-evaluation and any other issues that they may wish to consider.

4. The COA chair and the ABFSE President shall prepare a written evaluation of the Executive Director based on the Executive Director’s work with the COA and with the ABFSE in its entirety. The COA chair and President shall solicit input from ABFSE Committee chairs, Executive Committee members, and others. The written evaluation includes a discussion of strengths, areas needing more attention, and recommendations for renewal of appointment (if that is the decision) and also for an appropriate salary increase. Also included in the evaluation are any suggestions for improvement that might be thought beneficial to ABFSE, the COA, and the Executive Director. The Executive Director has an opportunity to review the written evaluation and discuss it with the COA chair and President before it is finalized.

5. The evaluation of the Executive Director is put on the agenda of the Committee on Accreditation for its April meeting. ABFSE officers shall be invited to the COA meeting for the agenda item. The ABFSE President and officers shall not be present during regular Committee on Accreditation matters prior to the Executive Director evaluation agenda item and shall be excused from the meeting once the agenda item is concluded. A copy of the Executive Director’s self-evaluation as well as the written evaluation by the chair of the COA and President is included as supporting material for that agenda item. At the meeting, the Executive Director is invited to make a brief presentation to the Committee on Accreditation and then the COA chair and President make a presentation, including their recommendations.

6. Members of the Committee on Accreditation and ABFSE officers are invited to ask questions of the Executive Director, the Chair of the COA, and/or the President.

7. Following full discussion, the Committee on Accreditation and the ABFSE officers votes on the recommendations of the COA chair and President, including any amendments to the motion. Each member of the Committee on Accreditation receives one vote and each ABFSE officer received one vote. At no time shall the ABFSE officers have more votes than the total combined votes of the members of the Committee on Accreditation.

8. The action of the Committee on Accreditation and the ABFSE Officers is reported to the full membership at the annual meeting for their information.
S. USE OF ABFSE LOGO

1. The logo created by ABFSE to create brand recognition is for the express use of ABFSE only.

2. In the event an accredited program/institution desires a visual demonstration of accreditation status, the use of the logo in college publications may be authorized with written consent of the Executive Director.

3. Written requests to use the ABFSE logo must designate the name of the school/program as recognized by the ABFSE, the purpose for which the logo will be used and the anticipated length of time the logo will be used.

4. Use of the ABFSE logo in connection with an unaccredited program, including a program in Candidacy, is strictly prohibited.

T. ABFSE BANKING/INVESTMENT POLICY

1. ABFSE funds shall be held in FDIC insured banking institutions with attention paid to limits on total deposits per institution.

2. Appropriate balances are to be held in operating accounts. Excess funds should be transferred to money market (or equivalent) accounts where practical.

3. Where possible, Certificates of Deposit (or similar instruments) shall be utilized.

4. Accounts designated via audit as “Donor Restricted” accounts will be designated on the Budget report to the Executive Committee (example: Scholarship funds).

U. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ILLNESS AND DEATH POLICY

1. When the ABFSE office is notified of the illness of an ABFSE member, a Get Well card will be mailed as soon as possible.

2. ABFSE will acknowledge the death of a member, spouse, child, or parents of members with an email notification to the ABFSE community, sympathy card and flowers or a donation to either the memorial chosen by the family or to the ABFSE Scholarship Fund ($100).

3. The same policy will apply for members of the ABFSE Executive Committee, Committee on Accreditation, ABFSE staff and past officers of ABFSE.

4. Email notification to the ABFSE community and card are authorized for past members of AFSE.

5. An ABFSE representative to attend the funeral is authorized for an ABFSE member. The Executive Director has discretion to make exceptions.

6. ABFSE makes every effort to acknowledge the loss of members (and family) during the Annual Conference “Prayer of Remembrance.”

V. ABFSE EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

Individuals authorized to represent ABFSE and COA are eligible for reimbursement of reasonable and necessary travel expenses (i.e., site visits, invited guests/presenters, attendance at COA meetings, etc).

Reimbursement is to include:

1. Transportation, i.e., regular airfare (no 1st class) with bag fees, mileage to/from airport, parking, transfers,
rental car when that is best option, and mileage at current IRS approved rate, etc. (when personal auto is
mode of travel, mileage reimbursement should be comparable to other modes of travel).

2. Lodging, including local taxes. Early arrival or late departure not related to the event will be the
responsibility of the traveler.

3. Meals (alcoholic beverages will not be billed to an institution during site visits without prior approval).

4. Ground transportation to meals and back to the hotel during authorized travel.

5. Gratuities.

W. TRAVEL DISRUPTION POLICY

In the event that travel for site visits, etc. is disrupted, the following will apply to travel reimbursement
considerations:

1. When weather and issues outside the control of the traveler intervene, reasonable efforts to re-schedule
should be attempted. Re-booking fees will be included in the travel reimbursement request.

2. Should illness prevent a team member from participating in an assignment, COA may approve reasonable
expenses and time spent in preparation.

3. Purchase of travel insurance is not recommended unless extenuating circumstances apply. Such occurrences
should be reviewed with the Executive Director prior to the purchase of travel insurance, unless this is
impossible.

4. Schedule changes made solely to accommodate the traveler are not generally approved for reimbursement,
unless such changes positively impact travel expense.

5. Questions and requests for exceptions to these guidelines should be addressed to the Executive Director.
APPENDIX A

GLOSSARY
APPENDIX A

GLOSSARY

1. Accreditation. The voluntary submission of an institution to the close scrutiny of this association composed of lay, funeral professionals, and educational representatives for adherence to high standards of educational opportunity for all students.

2. Accreditation Term. The period for which accreditation is awarded.


4. Bachelor's or Master's Degree. When required of faculty or administration such degrees shall be awarded by a college or university accredited by an agency recognized by the US Department of Education.

5. Candidacy. This is the pre-accreditation status for programs seeking recognition/accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation of ABFSE. (see Chapter IV)

6. Chairperson of the Evaluation/Site Visit Team. A non-funeral service educator, experienced in the evaluation of institutions of higher learning, who has been appointed by the COA.

7. Chief Administrative Officer. If the curriculum in funeral service education is part of other curricula offered by the college or university, then the chief administrative officer shall be the highest administrative officer of the central administration. In this case, all matters concerning accreditation shall be sent to both the central administration and the department that offers instruction in funeral service education. In a single purpose institution, the chief administrative officer is that person so designated by the institution.

8. CHEA. Council for Higher Education Accreditation is a United States organization of degree-granting colleges and universities formed to coordinate the U.S. accreditation process for higher education.

9. Clinical Instructor. An individual licensed and employed full or part time to assist in teaching a laboratory or clinical offering under the supervision of the qualified faculty member responsible for the classroom lecture course in which the lab is offered.

10. Committee on Accreditation. An autonomous standing committee of the ABFSE with sole authority to grant candidacy, initial accreditation or reaccreditation to institutions of funeral service education. (see By-Laws, Article VI)

11. Continuous System of Program Planning and Assessment. A written, well-defined process that produces a documented plan directly related the program’s aims and objectives and which contains guidelines, procedures, and methodologies for continually ensuring the on-going educational quality of the instructional program and the attainment of expected student outcomes.

12. Evaluation Team/Visting Committee/Site Visit Team. A committee duly appointed by the COA to visit and evaluate an institution that offers a program of funeral service education.

13. Executive Director. The person responsible for the function of the office of the American Board.

14. Feasibility Study. A detailed document that demonstrates that a program/institution meets the requirements, has effectively organized resources to enable it to accomplish its educational purpose, and is following realistic plans to acquire, organize, and apply additional resources needed to comply with the Standards for Accreditation. This document becomes the candidacy Self study.

15. Focus Visit. A visit by a representative of the Committee on Accreditation, to a program about which the committee has a specific concern. These are solely for the purpose of reviewing the items of Committee concern. Expenses are the responsibility of the program/institution being visited.

16. Funeral Service Education or Mortuary Science Education. An educational program designed to prepare professionally an embalmer, funeral director, and/or similarly designated professional.

17. Initial Accreditation. Status that applies when a program moves from Candidacy to Accreditation. Maximum

18. Institution. A school, college, or university offering a program of funeral service education, whether identified as an academy, a college, an institute, a school, or by similar designations.

19. IPEDS. Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System. It is a system of interrelated surveys conducted annually by the U.S. Department of Education’s United States National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). IPEDS gathers information from every college, university, and technical and vocational institution that participates in the federal student financial aid programs.

21. **National Board Examination (NBE).** The formal certifying examination for the funeral service/mortuary science profession developed and administered by the International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards, 1885 Shelby Lane, Fayetteville, Arkansas 72704. (The formal description of the NBE from the ICFSEB's web site at [www.afseb.org](http://www.afseb.org) follows: The purpose of the National Board Examination (NBE) is to provide official licensing agencies with a national evaluation of an applicant for licensure in the diverse areas of competency required for the field of funeral service. The International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards develops, administers and provides score reporting services to the state licensure boards. The NBE is used in 49 states [except California] and the District of Columbia as an assessment of content knowledge needed to practice as a licensed Funeral Director or Embalmer.)

22. **Pre-Candidacy.** This represents the time during which a program/institution is considering or anticipating the application for Candidacy. A consulting visit by ABFSE representatives is required to review the status of the program including the ability to meet ABFSE candidacy eligibility requirements. (see Chapter IV and Appendix D).

23. **Preceptor.** A licensed individual who is a full-time employee of a funeral home who is under contract to the school or department and who meets qualifications as indicated in this manual, to provide on the job training and who assumes responsibilities for a student assigned between the times of regular visitors of the school or department faculty member-supervisor of record.

24. **Program:** A program in funeral service education as one unit in a comprehensive, multi-purpose institution.

25. **Public Members.** Representatives who are laypersons in the sense that they are not educators in or members of the profession for which the students are being prepared, nor are in any way directly related to the institutions or programs being evaluated.

26. **Qualified Instructor.** A full- or part-time faculty member meeting qualifications as indicated in this manual.

27. **Substantive change.** Any change at the institution or program level that impacts the ability to maintain compliance with standards. See Chapter VII. p. 8-6 and Appendix K for examples and associated fees.

28. **Self Study.** Is a formal process (which culminates in a written document) during which an educational institution or program critically examines its structure and substance, judges the program's overall effectiveness relative to its mission, identifies specific strengths and deficiencies and indicates a plan for necessary modification and improvements. A similar document is prepared for candidacy and is also referred to as a feasibility study.
AMERICAN BOARD OF FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION
APPLICATION FOR CANDIDACY

NAME OF INSTITUTION________________________________________

PROGRAM TITLE______________________________________________

ADDRESS____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________

TELEPHONE________________________________ FAX _______________________________

EMAIL____________________________ WEB______________________________

DEGREE TO BE OFFERED________________________________________

DEGREE TO BE OFFERED VIA DISTANCE EDUCATION? ______YES ______NO

LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE CLASSIFICATION OF PROGRAM (as applicable)

COLLEGE/DIVISION/DEPARTMENT____________________________________

PROGRAM LOCATION: ____________ON-CAMPUS_________OFF-CAMPUS

SPECIFICALLY DEFINE SERVICE AREA:

_____________________________________________________________

ARE THERE OTHER ABFSE ACCREDITED OR CANDIDATE PROGRAMS IN YOUR
PROJECTED SERVICE AREA? ______YES ______NO (If yes, list the programs)

_____________________________________________________________

CERTIFICATION: I certify that the following items have been, or are being submitted in
support of this application:

1. the Candidacy Self study via JURA as described in Chapters IV and V of the
   Accreditation and Policy Manual, and
2. a Candidacy Fee as specified in Appendix D of the Accreditation and Policy
   Manual.

Signature of person authorized to act on behalf of the institution:

_____________________________________________________________

Title

Signature Date
We hereby certify that  _____________________________________________________________
(name of institution or program)

meets the eligibility criteria for Initial Accreditation by the American Board of Funeral
Service Education as stipulated in Chapter III. C., page 3-2, of the ABFSE Accreditation and
Policy Manual, and makes formal application for Initial Accreditation.

We further certify the following materials are being submitted in support of this application:

1. the Initial Accreditation Self study via JURA as described in Chapter V and
   applicable appendices of the Accreditation and Policy Manual, including any other
   literature descriptive of the Funeral Service Program.
2. applicable Initial Accreditation fees as specified in Appendix D of the

Signed:

(Person directly in charge of the Funeral Service Program) (Title)

(Chief Executive Officer of the Institution) (Title)

Date: ______________________________
This Application for Accreditation is submitted by:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name and Address of Institution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

for use by the site visit team and the Committee on Accreditation for the purpose of recommending whether or not this institution should be accredited, by the American Board of Funeral Service Education.

We certify that:

1. In preparing this Application, there was broad participation by members from all applicable segments of the institution;
2. We believe this Application truly and accurately portrays this institution.

**Signature**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name and Title</th>
<th>Chief Academic Officer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(President, Chancellor, etc.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Signature**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name and Title</th>
<th>Head of the Funeral Service Education Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Signature**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name and Title</th>
<th>Faculty member, Officially representing the Faculty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Signature**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name and Title</th>
<th>Student officially representing the Student Body</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Signature**

_(SAMPLE – Should be signed by all groups participating; delete this line before submission)_
### PROGRAM AND INSTITUTION DATA FORM for Self Study

1. Name of Program ____________________________  2. Program Director ______________________________

Address ____________________________  Phone ____________________________

3. Institution ________________________________

4. Institution CEO ______________________________  Phone ____________________________

Address (if different than Program) ____________________________  e-mail ____________________________

5. Name and Title of Individual to Whom Program Director Reports:

   (note: An Organizational Chart for the Institution must be provided to satisfy Standards 1.7 & 2)

6. Type of Institution:

   Public _______  Single Purpose _______

   Private _______  Multi Purpose _______

   Two-year or Community College _______

   Four-year College or University _______

7. Is the institution regionally accredited? Yes_______ No_______

   If yes, give agency name and date of last action ____________________________

8. Has any adverse action been taken or is any adverse action currently in effect concerning the institution by any accrediting agency approved by the US Secretary of Education? Yes_______ No_______

   If yes, describe below (add additional sheets if necessary) ____________________________

9. Is ABFSE a ‘gatekeeper’ for Title IV eligibility for the institution? Yes_______ No_______

10. Indicate the accredited program(s) offered. Check all that apply:

    _____ Associate degree  _____ Diploma  _____ Certificate  _____ Other (specify) ____________________________

    _____ Bachelor’s degree (leading to funeral service licensure)

    _____ Bachelor’s degree (leading to funeral service degree completion)

11. Can students complete courses in any accredited program via Distance Education? Yes_______ No_______

    Is 50% or more of the accredited program available via Distance Education? Yes_______ No_______

    If yes, indicate the number of credit hours applicable to the program(s) that are available via Distance Education ____________________________

12. The accredited program (or Candidate program) primarily draws students from which area?:

    National _______  Regional _______  Local _______

    Comments (optional) ____________________________

13. Institution/program operates under the statutory authority of which state? (Standard 1.6) ____________________________

B-4-1

---

Includes:  COA revisions approved October 2013  
          COA corrections October 2014 and October 2015  
          COA and ABFSE Revisions approved April 2016  
          COA and ABFSE Revisions approved October 2017  
          COA and ABFSE Revisions approved April 2019
Program Background.

1. Year in which the accredited Program was originally established _______

2. Has the program operated continuously at this institution and/or location? Yes _____ No _____

3. If no, explain ________________________________________________________________

4. Year in which first class graduated _______

5. Total number of graduates to date _______

6. First year Class capacity _______

7. Provide a three-year summary of the following data (which is available via Annual Reports)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New enrollees</th>
<th>M/F</th>
<th>Related</th>
<th>Graduates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 years prior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Curriculum Overview. (required to fulfill expectations of Standard 6 along with Form B-6)

   • List all courses for each accredited program(s) in single document (preferably a single page).
   • Include both general education and funeral service specific courses.
   • Group courses by semester/quarter and identify the sequence in which the terms occur.
   • For each course, provide the course number, course title, and credit hours assigned.
   • Designate the delivery modality (on-campus, online, blended) for each program course.
   • Indicate which courses are elective.

9. Faculty Data for Self study (is submitted as a separate report for Standard 7).

B-4-2
URL Directory

College website ____________________________
Program webpage __________________________
College catalog ____________________________
Program curriculum page(s) __________________
Accreditation Statement ______________________
Student Handbook __________________________
Faculty Handbook __________________________
Constitution and By-Laws _____________________
Other _______________________________________

Includes:  COA revisions approved October 2013
          COA corrections October 2014 and October 2015
          COA and ABFSE Revisions approved April 2016
          COA and ABFSE Revisions approved October 2017
          COA and ABFSE Revisions approved April 2019

ABFSE and COA Accreditation and Policy Manual
ABFSE Annual Report

B5

The following link will take you to the ABFSE Online Annual Report and User Guide:

[ABFSE User Guide and Reports](PDF)
CURRICULUM DISTRIBUTION by ABFSE CONTENT AREA
(as per pages 9-6 and 9-7 [items 6.3 - 6.7.1] of the Accreditation and Policy Manual;
revised April 2016 changes to be implemented no later than September 2017)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course #</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public Health &amp; Technical (Min: 14 sem/21 qtr)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>SUBTOTAL in Public Health</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Business Management and Professional (Min: 16 sem/24 qtr)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>SUBTOTAL in Business Management</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Sci/Humanities (Min: 6 sem/9 qtr)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SUBTOTAL in Social Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Legal, Ethical, Regulatory (Min: 3 sem/4 qtr)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBTOTAL in Legal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General Education (25% of Total in Line 52 [including Gen Ed])</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL in General Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL CREDITS REQUIRED IN PROGRAM</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Includes: COA revisions approved October 2013
COA corrections October 2014 and October 2015
COA and ABFSE Revisions approved April 2016
COA and ABFSE Revisions approved October 2017
COA and ABFSE Revisions approved April 2019

ABFSE and COA Accreditation and Policy Manual
American Board of Funeral Service Education  
COMMITTEE ON ACCREDITATION  
Public Member Nominee Worksheet

Name of Nominee  
Contact Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A.  
Nominating Individual or Organization (Identify):  
Self-Nomination

1. Is this nominee an employee, member of the governing board, owner, or shareholder of, or consultant to, an institution or program that either is accredited or pre-accredited by the Committee on Accreditation, or has applied for accreditation of pre-accreditation?  
No [ ] Yes [ ]  
If yes, please explain:

2. Is this individual a member of any trade association or membership organization related to, affiliated with, or associated with the Committee on Accreditation or the American Board of Funeral Service Education  
No [ ] Yes [ ]  
If yes, please explain:

3. Is this individual a spouse, parent, child, or sibling, or an individual identified in the first or second paragraph of this definition?  
No [ ] Yes [ ]  
If yes, please explain:

COMMENTS:

B. Nominee should provide 1) brief resume and 2) brief statement describing his/her interest in serving on the COA

C. List two references:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address/Phone/Email</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Name/Title of Person Completing This Report  
Date  
B-7

Includes:  
COA revisions approved October 2013  
COA corrections October 2014 and October 2015  
COA and ABFSE Revisions approved April 2016  
COA and ABFSE Revisions approved October 2017  
COA and ABFSE Revisions approved April 2019
Committee on Accreditation
Educator Member Application

Name of Applicant ___________________________________________________________

Representing ABFSE accredited institution/program

Name _________________________________________________________________

Type: Single purpose_____ Multi-purpose _____

Applicant is: FT Faculty_____ FT Administrator_____ 

State of licensure ________________________________

Number of years in funeral service education ___________ Date started ___________

Attended Self-Study workshop? yes no if yes, Date _________________

Distance Education experience yes no

(At least 25% of the voting members of the COA must demonstrate significant experience in Distance Learning at the supervisory, developmental, or practitioner level.
(By-Laws Article VI. A. page 2-6)

Attach resume. (include accreditation and/or site visit experience)

Individuals selected by the COA to serve as one of the Educator members of the committee must:

• be full-time funeral service faculty or administrators at an ABFSE accredited institution/program,
• possess a minimum of a master’s degree,
• be credentialed as a Funeral Director in their state of employment,
• have completed the Self study/Accreditation Workshop,
• have at least three years experience in funeral service education at an ABFSE accredited education institution or program
• sign the ABFSE/COA Conflict of Interest Statement (see Appendix G of the Manual)

(ABFSE Policy Manual. Chapter X. P. page 10-6/10-7)
Additional considerations:

- COA must select its own members as per the Constitution and By-laws in order to maintain separate and independent status necessary for recognition as an accreditor by USDE and CHEA.
- Candidates should demonstrate familiarity with ABFSE activities via attendance at ABFSE annual meetings, ABFSE committee participation, documented participation in institutional Self study preparation, participation as a member of a site visit team, etc.

One educator vacancy on COA must be filled in 2019. This educator position is for one from a single purpose institution. The candidate selected will be eligible for two 3-year terms.
COMPLAINT ABOUT ABFSE ACCREDITED PROGRAM

Complainant Contact Information

Name:
Address:
City, State, Zip Code:
Telephone Number:
Email Address:

Summary of Complaint (Attach additional pages, if necessary)

Name of ABFSE Accredited School:

1. Provide a brief summary of the complaint. Include any documentation or other evidence to support the allegation. (Attach additional pages if necessary)

2. Indicate the Standard(s) alleged to have been violated and when the alleged violation(s) took place.

3. Describe how the alleged complaint is in violation of ABFSE Standards:

4. Describe attempts to resolve the issues with the accredited program and/or sponsoring institution and any responses received.

By signing below, I authorize a copy of this complaint to be sent to the institution and to provide the ABFSE further information as requested in its investigation. I have read the complaint process outlined in the ABFSE Manual and I understand that the ABFSE only investigates complaints related to the standards of accreditation and does not resolve issues between individuals and an accredited institution or program. Actions taken against a program or institution as the result of a complaint are limited to the sanctions outlined in the ABFSE Manual and do not adjudicate or resolve any other causes of action or disputes.

Signature __________________________________ Date ______________

Includes: COA revisions approved October 2013
COA corrections October 2014 and October 2015
COA and ABFSE Revisions approved April 2016
COA and ABFSE Revisions approved October 2017
COA and ABFSE Revisions approved April 2019
Faculty Without Masters

Standard 7.2.2

As of May 1, 1979, all newly- and re-appointed full-time faculty must earn a master's degree from a regionally accredited college or university within five years of their initial appointment date. Faculty who fail to meet the five-year requirement may not be allowed to teach until the degree is awarded.

Institution/program name ________________________________

Faculty Member name ________________________________

Date of initial employment (month/year) ____________________

I/we understand that full-time faculty members must earn a Master’s Degree from a regionally accredited institution within five years of initial appointment.

Faculty who fail to meet the five-year requirement are not allowed to teach until the degree is awarded.

Violation of this standard is reason for the program to be placed on ‘Probation’ immediately.

__________________________________________
Faculty member date

__________________________________________
Program Director date

__________________________________________
Dean/Academic Officer date
APPENDIX C

GUIDE FOR THE
SELF STUDY PROCESS AND REPORT
APPENDIX C-1

GUIDE FOR SELF STUDY PROCESS AND REPORT

INTRODUCTION:

This section of the Accreditation and Policy Manual is intended to assist programs with the Self study process and preparing the Self study document prior to an accreditation visit. Chapter V of the Accreditation and Policy Manual presents an overview of the accreditation process and important information related to the Self study process and report. It should be read before proceeding with this section.

Effective 2018, the Self study report will be submitted via JURA as an electronic document.

I. ORGANIZING AND CONDUCTING THE SELF STUDY PROCESS

As noted in Chapter V, a Self study is a formal process during which an educational institution or program critically examines its structure and substance, judges the program's overall effectiveness relative to its mission, identifies specific strengths and deficiencies and identifies a plan for any necessary modification and improvements. Because the formalized process takes several months, programs should begin well in advance of an anticipated site visit.

Ideally, the Self study should be an integral part of the program's ongoing self-evaluation and not constitute the only evidence of planning which takes place.

Programs seeking Initial Accreditation often use consultants as guides through the process. (This is neither required nor expected, but often valuable.) Consultants can play the role of "Devil's Advocate" as well as advise on program development and operation. Further information on the consultant process is available from the American Board of Funeral Service Education office.

Following are general procedures to follow in the preparation of the Self study.

1. Approximately 18 months in advance of reaccreditation, the program is notified by letter of the approximate date for the next comprehensive evaluation. This letter also suggests a possible timeline for the process.

2. Approximately one year in advance, the program should establish a Self study Steering Committee whose responsibility will be completion of the final document. The makeup of the committee varies. However, most include membership from departmental faculty along with student representation from the department. The committee is most often, but not always, chaired by the head of the program. It is important, however, that one person be assigned overall responsibility for insuring the work is done on time, that it progresses as it should, that all assignments are carried out properly, and that the electronic self study document is submitted on a time.

3. The committee organizes itself to collect data with regard to each of the standards of accreditation. This process generally involves meetings with campus personnel, program alumni, and advisory board members. Task Committees dealing with specific standards are often used. All committees used should be structured to be analytical and encouraged to question and debate broadly. A result of the Self study should always be a broader knowledge of the program, its underlying philosophy, and the application of that philosophy to its student. Demonstrating how departmental goals are integrated with institutional goals is always important.

4. To conduct the Self study, the program director should preview the self study in JURA and see Appendix C-3 to ensure that the questions about each standard are adequately addressed.

5. The self study will be submitted electronically. Evidence to support answers and responses to the standards are to be uploaded. Scanned documents or PDF files are preferred.

6. Chapter V of the Accreditation and Policy Manual describes items to be submitted to the ABFSE with the Self study. Using JURA you will be instructed to upload the necessary documents. A summary of the
II. ORGANIZING AND COMPLETING THE SELF STUDY REPORT

A. Instructions for organizing the Self study.

The Self study is expected to be a document of evidence. Questions in JURA are designed to ensure that necessary information is provided. For each Standard there is an option to supplement the response with analysis and projection, to provide additional clarity regarding the manner in which the standards are being met and to explain future plans.

The JURA Self study report is organized as follows:

INTRODUCTION
STANDARDS
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Introduction includes basic instructions. Here the Program will upload:
1. Transmittal Form (B-3)
2. Program and Institutional Data Form (B-4)
   Includes: Curriculum Overview, Faculty Data Summary and a list of URLs for pertinent documents
3. Brief Description of the Self study Process
4. Description of Remediation of previously-cited deficiencies

Standards
The program is expected to provide a realistic description of its present status with regard to each Standard. Questions for each standard have been provided in order to focus the response on areas of interest to COA. Supporting documents/evidence will be uploaded with responses.

Responses will typically be a narrative text, answers to yes/no type questions and / or upload of supporting documents. In some cases, the URL will be requested. However, links are not accepted. Since JURA is the depository for the Self study and must be accessible in the future, uploaded Word, Excel and/or PDF files are expected. Links are unlikely to survive changes to websites, etc. and therefore will not be accessible over time. In some cases, uploaded photos will fulfill the expectations.

Additional Information includes Summary and Conclusions and Appendix E. This is the opportunity to provide a brief summary of program strengths, concerns, and plans to correct any problems discovered during the Self study process.
Appendix E is required for programs offering distance learning. (much of the original Appendix E has been incorporated into the standards in JURA. The focus for Appendix E in Additional Information is for Standard 10 and 11.

B. Instructions for Completing the Report

Below are additional instructions for each section of the Self study report.

Introduction:
1. No TABLE OF CONTENTS is necessary.
   JURA provides organization of the Self Study document.

2. TRANSMITTAL FORM (B-3)
   This form is uploaded in the Introduction section. The original form accompanies payment of the comprehensive review invoice.
3. PROGRAM AND INSTITUTION DATA FORM (B-4)
Complete the Program and Institution Data Form (B-4), providing data in short answers or chart form as indicated in the directions on the form. Items 19 and 20 are completed via the Curriculum Overview (Excel) Chart and the Faculty Data Sheet (Word and Excel). Both are uploaded in response to other standards.

4. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SELF STUDY PROCESS
Describe the process which resulted in the Self study report, including the names and titles of individuals involved, their Self study committee assignments and the time schedule followed.

5. DESCRIPTION OF REMEDIATION OF PREVIOUSLY-CITED DEFICIENCIES
If the program has been evaluated previously, indicate what the program has done since the last review to correct any deficiencies that may have been cited.

6. STANDARDS
After completing the questions associated with each standard there is an opportunity to provide an optional summary of the manner in which the program maintains compliance with the overall Standard. The optional summary is an opportunity to add additional description, analysis and projection to the program’s compliance with the standard and/or address compliance efforts not covered by the questions. Analysis evaluates effectiveness of practices with attention to strengths, weaknesses, achievements and problems, etc. Projection includes future plans to enhance strength or correct weaknesses.

7. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS (in Additional Information section)
Provide a brief summary of overall program strengths, concerns, and plans to correct any problems discovered during the Self study process.

8. APPENDIX E is required for programs offering distance education. (much of the original Appendix E has been incorporated into the standards in JURA.) The focus for Appendix E in Additional Information is responses for Standards 10 and 11 related to Distance Education.

III. DOCUMENTS. Review of evidence to support the Self study begins before the team arrives on the campus. Therefore, pertinent documentation should be uploaded in the response to each Standard. When this is not possible or practical, exceptions must be discussed with the team chair in advance and noted in the Self study document.

Institutions are expected to label each evidence file or folder by standard and substandard number, i.e. for Standard 1.1 or Standard 6.8.9. Embalming case reports by year/semester, student, etc.

When paper documents are necessary, they should be available in the team workroom for review during the on-site visit.

The Self study report, the team’s on-site visit report, the program’s response to that report, and the interaction of program representatives with the Committee on Accreditation form the basis on which the COA determines compliance or non-compliance with the Accreditation Standards and ultimately the accreditation decision.
APPENDIX C-2

Sample Site Visit Agenda

THE ON-SITE VISIT

a. The duration, agenda and sequence of events for the site visit will vary according to the nature of the program to be visited. Most visits require three days including travel. Travel connections are the unknown element. The duration of the time spent on-site visit is usually one and one-half to two days, depending upon the size of the program, location of facilities, and other relevant factors. More time may be required if multiple delivery modalities are utilized or more than one credential is evaluated.

b. The visit is a working assignment and social activities should be minimal. Some visits include an opening get acquainted meal with key program and institutional members. This should be discussed with the Team Chair.

c. Most visits begin with a private team meeting. This allows the team members to get acquainted, review the site visit schedule and identify areas of the program requiring specific attention. Depending on the location, the site visit may begin with a tour of clinical facilities on day one.

d. Team Members shall be admitted to all facilities used by the program. They shall inquire into all phases of management and operation of the program in order to verify the content of the Self study report. They shall have complete freedom to confer with school officials, members of the faculty, students, and such others as deemed necessary by the team.

e. The program should provide a private workroom for the team and materials relevant to the program not included in the Self study report should be available for review in the workroom.

f. While it is necessary for the team members to have access to all facets of program operations, the members will seek to cause as little disruption as possible to the routine of the program and institution.

g. On the morning of the Day Two, the team meets with key program personnel. The purpose of this meeting is for all parties to become acquainted, review the program in general terms and obtain specific information that may be needed at this point. The site visit schedule and team assignments should be reviewed with program personnel at this time.

h. A brief campus tour is customary. This will familiarize team members with the physical plant and the locations of scheduled appointments. Care must be taken that this tour is brief. (Brief is emphasized. This is not a recruiting visit.) Campus maps for team members will aid in this orientation.

i. Team members shall visit classes to observe lectures, laboratory exercises, and other methods of instruction. It is understood that team members are not limited to any prearranged schedule but are free to observe and consult as they desire. Schedules of free hours of faculty will be helpful. Team members will seek to cause as little disruption as possible to the routine of the program and institution.

j. Interim team progress meetings may scheduled to summarize the work accomplished and to plan for the remainder of the time.

k. In the late morning or early afternoon of the final day, the team will meet, review accomplishments, and make plans for the exit interview. At this private meeting, the team will review findings, which are to be presented to the institution representatives at the exit interview and included in the final Team Report.

l. Participants in the exit interview are invited by the institution. In addition to the team, participants typically include institutional leaders, members of the program staff and other pertinent administration representatives. The purpose of the meeting is to make known to the program the findings of the site visit team.
Although the actual content and sequence of the site visit may vary according to the nature of the program to be visited, a sample site visit agenda is presented below as a guide.

SAMPLE SITE VISIT AGENDA

DAY 1
Team Travel
Initial meeting of the site visit team in host school location.
*Optional:* Pre-arranged visit(s) to clinical sites.
(particularly when sites are on the route from airport to institution)

DAY 2
Morning:
Preliminary meetings with key program personnel
Brief tour of campus, program offices, classrooms, labs

Noon:
Working lunch; may incorporate faculty, student advisory committee.
Interviews

Afternoon:
The following assignments are usually divided among team members.
Tour clinical (practicum) sites
Interview administrative officer(s) of program
Interview faculty
Interview students and graduates
Observe classes in session
Review and observe support services, including library, financial aid, registrar, and maintenance of student records, etc.

Evening:
Team meeting to review observations from Day 2 activities, identify areas still to be evaluated or requiring additional attention, and work on draft of site visit report.

DAY 3
Morning:
Complete remaining interviews, tours, etc.
Team meeting to review the main findings which are to be discussed during the exit interview and included in the written report.
Complete draft of the written report.

Noon:
Working lunch for team: continuation of the above discussions and final report preparation as necessary.

Afternoon:
Exit interview with institutional CEO and such persons as he/she invites
Final brief meeting, if needed.
Team departure.

Note: Travel logistics are coordinated between the Team Chair and the Program Director.
Depending on connection opportunities, additional travel time may be necessary.
APPENDIX C-3
ABFSE Self Study using JURA

Access to JURA requires the username and password assigned to each Program Director.
Use of the Username and Password is for the institution and may be used simultaneously by multiple users. However, users may only work in one standard at a time.
To access JURA go to: https://accredit.getjura.com

The Self study in JURA utilizes a series of questions to elicit responses pertinent to each accreditation standard.
JURA responses are in the form of drop-down box for answers, text box for narrative and/or upload of evidence to support the answer.

Go to the ‘For Educators’ page on the ABFSE website to review the JURA questions in a Word document.
APPENDIX D

ACCREDITATION FEE SCHEDULES

Effective April 2017
AMERICAN BOARD OF FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION, INC.

SCHEDULE OF FEES

(Subject to change -- contact the ABFSE office to confirm current fees)

Fees are due as indicated. Failure to submit when due may also lead to warning, probation, or loss of accreditation.

1. CANDIDACY

a. PRE-CANDIDACY VISITATION EXPENSE
   Each program anticipating applying for Candidacy is required to have a consulting visit by the ABFSE Executive Director normally accompanied by a member of the COA or one of the permanent visiting team chairs. This visit is to review status of the program, including its ability to meet ABFSE Candidacy Eligibility Requirements and ABFSE Standards of Accreditation. The visit allows the Executive Director to provide general application process assistance. Cost of the visit is borne by the program. A $1,000 deposit is required to cover visit costs. Costs over $1,000 will be billed to the institution. The institution will also be responsible for paying a stipend $500 to and reimbursing travel and related costs incurred by the second person. If visit costs are less than $1,000 a refund will be given of funds over and above the costs.

b. CANDIDACY FEE – $12,000 effective through September 2017 (2 times the annual renewal fee). See note at #3 below. Must accompany the "Application for Candidacy Status" form and feasibility study.

c. RENEWAL OF CANDIDACY FEE – $10,000
   Must send with the request for continuation of candidacy status. This request must be made if the institution has not requested an initial accreditation visitation within one year of the date of the original granting of candidacy status.

2. INITIAL ACCREDITATION FEE – $7,500 (Same as ANNUAL RENEWAL)
   Must be attached to the "Application for Initial Accreditation" form and the Self study document.

3. ABFSE ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE (ANNUAL RENEWAL of ACCREDITATION) – $7,500
   Must be submitted on or before September 1 of each year, except when fiscal policy necessitates a reasonable delay, which must be approved by the Executive Director of the American Board. NOTE: The ABFSE Annual Membership Fee (Annual Renewal of Accreditation) has undergone a two-step increase and moves to $7,500 effective with renewals for the 2017/2018 academic year.

4. COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW REACCREDITATION FEE -- $5,000 (note: This is in addition to the annual renewal of accreditation fee, if applicable at the time of the visit.)
   Each institution scheduled for reaccreditation must submit the Self study AND a comprehensive review reaccreditation fee 60 days prior to the scheduled visit.

5. SITE VISIT EXPENSE
   Although there is no set fee for campus visitations, the institution/program being visited is responsible for the entire cost of the visit, including team expenses and stipends. The visiting team chairs receive an honorarium of $1,500; site visit team members each receive an honorarium of $500.

   Institutions/Programs to be visited must submit a $4,500.00 Site Visit Expense Deposit at the time of submission of the Self study. This will be credited against final site visit team expenses and the program will be provided with a final statement within 45 days of the visit. The institution is responsible for all reasonable expenses regardless of school policy.
Site visit team member expenses are submitted directly to the ABFSE office for immediate reimbursement. As soon as all expenses have been reimbursed in that manner, a final statement will be sent to the program/institution along with copies of all receipts. Payment by the institution/program of the balance, if any, will be due upon receipt. Refund, if any, will accompany the final statement.

Expenses charged will be in conformance with the ABFSE Guidelines for Expense Reimbursement in effect on the dates of the visit. Challenge to any portion of the final statement shall be made to the Executive Director. If the institution/program wishes to dispute the Executive Director's decision on such expenses, it may file a written appeal directly to the Executive Committee of the ABFSE which will consider the matter at its next regularly scheduled meeting. Executive Committee decisions are final.

6. **FOCUS VISIT**

When deemed necessary by the ABFSE Committee on Accreditation, a Focus Visit will be scheduled. Participating in the Focus Visit will be the ABFSE Executive Director and one of the permanent visiting committee/team chairs or a member of the COA. Cost of the visit is borne by the program. These costs include a stipend of $1,000 to the COA representative and reimbursement of travel and related costs incurred by the ABFSE Executive Director and the second person.

7. **COURSE OUTLINE(S) FEE**

a. Member Institutions (available via the Program Director using ABFSE provided password) no charge
   Applicable use/distributions policies are described in Chapter X. Policies, Section Q.

b. Non-Member Institutions (one hard copy, printed and mailed)
   (1) Affiliated with funeral service but not ABFSE member. Set of outlines: $10,000
   (2) Institutions seeking candidacy. Set of outlines: $10,000

8. **ADMINISTRATIVE PROBATIONARY ACCREDITATION**

a. Late and/or Incomplete Annual Report $ 500.00
b. Late payment of Annual Renewal Fee (due by September 1 of each year) $ 500.00
c. Failure to advertise a program ethically and accurately (includes references in Chapter X, Policies, Section D). $ 500.00
d. Late reports (i.e. response to stipulations, response to visits, etc.) $ 500.00
e. Late payment of expense reimbursements and other accreditation related fees $ 500.00
f. Failure to agree to a reasonable on-site visit date $ 500.00
APPENDIX E

DISTANCE LEARNING GUIDELINES and REQUIREMENTS
APPENDIX E

DISTANCE LEARNING GUIDELINES and REQUIREMENTS

ABFSE policy stipulates that the Accreditation Standards apply equally to all curricular content regardless of the method of delivery. Distance Learning offerings must meet these same Standards in addition to meeting requirements of the U.S. Department of Education (see items preceded by an asterisk). These offerings also need to be evaluated with additional considerations in mind. The following document (Appendix E of the Accreditation and Policy Manual) lays out these considerations.

Background

The eight regional accrediting commissions guidelines and Best Practices developed in response to the emergence of technologically mediated instruction offered on-campus and at a distance are designed to address “concerns that regional accreditation standards are not relevant to the new distributed learning environments, especially when those environments are experienced by off-campus students.” The Best Practices are not new evaluative criteria or standards but rather they are “designed to assist institutions in planning distance education activities and to provide a self-assessment framework for those already involved. For the regional accrediting associations they constitute a common understanding of those elements which reflect quality distance education programming. As such they are intended to inform and facilitate the evaluation policies and processes of each region.”

Preface

The ABFSE Standards were originally written when all programs required that students attend courses on campus for most or all of their program. With the advent of instruction by the various modes, students are increasingly able to complete significant portions of their degree programs off campus without face-to-face interaction. As this mode of academic program delivery proliferates, it is imperative that accreditation agencies develop standards which will help ensure that all distance learning programs are consistent with the role and mission of the institution and that they receive academic and administrative support to a similar degree as all other institutional programs.

Therefore, based on the work completed by the regional accreditors, a draft set of guidelines was developed for the consideration of the ABFSE Committee on Accreditation at their October, 2000 meeting. Following that meeting, the COA requested comment from the accredited programs and other appropriate constituencies.

At the meeting of the COA in Clearwater Beach, Florida, in April 2001, the Committee approved the following Guidelines as Appendix E of the Accreditation and Policy Manual. It is intended that they be used by institutions in planning the use of distance learning strategies and for the assessment of distance learning once implemented. The Guidelines are in the form of questions which allow the institution or program to respond in a manner appropriate to that institution or program.

Each program/institution which offers one or more courses via Distance Learning formats must specifically address that course or courses independent of its discussion of other courses. That discussion must proceed on two levels. First, as each Standard is discussed, specific reference must be made to how the Standard is met by the Distance Learning offering(s). Second, the Self study must demonstrate how each element in the Guidelines is satisfied for each course offered via Distance Learning.

The Self study discussion and the Visiting Committee Report relative to Distance Learning offerings will assess to what extent the courses and the educational services offered in support of Distance Learning are structured in a manner that recognizes the distinction between traditional on-campus students and those taking courses via Distance Learning methodologies with regard to admissions, registration, academic advising, tuition and fee payments, bookstore services, library services, testing security, etc.

The Self study discussion and the Visiting Committee Report relative to Distance Learning must also assess academic support for faculty (e.g., faculty training of online course development, access to computer equipment, online support systems, etc.).

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Includes: COA revisions approved October 2013 COA corrections October 2014 and October 2015 COA and ABFSE Revisions approved April 2016 COA and ABFSE Revisions approved October 2017 COA and ABFSE Revisions approved April 2019
GUIDELINES and REQUIREMENTS

A. Sponsorship

1. Does the e-learning program have the approval of the appropriate institutional decision-making body?

B. Organization and Administration

1. Does the organizational structure of the institution enable it to address at least the following:
   a. is instructional and technical support adequate?
   b. does any marketing plan address the needs of the target population?
   c. are training and support available to participating instructors and students?
   d. is compliance with copyright law ensured?
   e. do distance learning courses and programs meet institution-wide standards?
   f. in the institution’s organizational documentation, is there a clear and integral relationship between those responsible for distance learning programs and the mainstream academic structure?

C. Aims and Purposes

1. What is the evidence that the program is consistent with the role and mission of the institution, including its goals with regard to student success?
2. Is the institution fulfilling its stated role as it offers the program to students at a distance or is the role being changed?

D. Administrative Practices and Ethical Standards

1. If services are outsourced, how is their integrity and reliability assured?

E. Finance

1. How is the student assured that the program will be sustained long enough for the cohort to complete it?
2. How are distance learning programs included in the institution’s overall budget structure?
3. What are the institution’s policies concerning the establishment, organization, funding, and management of distance learning programs? Do they reflect ongoing commitment to such programs?
4. Does the institution’s budget plan provide for appropriate updating of the technologies employed?
5. Is the staffing structure appropriate and fully qualified to support the distance learning program?

F. Curriculum

* Institutions are required to have processes to establish that the student who registers in a distance education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program, and receives the academic credit.

* Methods which may be used to verify student identity are secure logins and pass codes; proctored examinations; and other new technologies and practices. These methods will be requested on the Annual Report each year, and verified during team visits to the institution.

* Institutions are expected to use processes that protect student privacy, and notify students of any projected additional student charges associated with verification of student identity at the time of registration or enrollment.

1. When a student or instructor proceeds from one course or program to another, is it necessary to learn another software program or set of technical procedures?
2. When new software or systems are adopted, what programs or processes are used to acquaint instructors and students with them?
3. Are the intended students likely to find their technology costs reasonable?
4. Given the rapid pace of change in modern information technology, what policies or procedures are in place to keep the infrastructure reasonably up-to-date?

5. What provisions for instructor-student and student-student interaction are included in the program/course design and the course syllabus? How is appropriate interaction assured?

6. Is instructor response to student assignments timely? Does it appear to be appropriately responsive?

7. How successful is the program’s interactive component, as indicated by student and instructor surveys, comments, or other measures?

8. Do course and program schedules reflect an appropriate commitment to the program’s students?

9. Do budget, faculty, and facilities assignments support that commitment?

10. When examinations are employed (e.g., paper, online, demonstrations of competency, etc.), do they take place in circumstances that include firm student identification?

11. How are the conditions of examinations (security, time limits, etc.) controlled?

G. Faculty

1. What are the academic qualifications of those responsible for curricular decisions, assessment, and program oversight?

2. Does the institution have well-developed policies to address such issues as workload, compensation, intellectual property rights, and faculty evaluation for those faculty teaching using distance learning technologies?

3. Have these decisions been made in accordance with institutional or system processes customarily used to address comparable issues?

4. What support services are available to those responsible for preparing distance learning courses or programs?

5. Do participating faculty members consider these services to be appropriate and adequate?

6. Does the staff include qualified instructional designers? If so, do they have an appropriate role in program and course development?

7. What orientation and training programs are available?

8. Is adequate attention paid to pedagogical changes made possible and desirable when information technologies are employed?

9. Do those involved consider these orientation and training programs to be appropriate and adequate?

H. Library

1. How are library services provided to distant learners?

2. Are there special orientation programs for distant learners?

I. Students

1. What are the institution’s policies concerning articulation and transfer? What are the decisions regarding transfer of academic credit based upon?

2. Is a help desk function realistically available to students during hours when it is likely to be needed?

3. Is help available for all hardware, software, and delivery systems specified by the institution as required for the program?

4. Does the help desk involve a person-to-person contact for the student? By what means (e.g., email, phone, fax)?

5. Is there a well-designed FAQ service online and/or by phone menu or on-demand fax?

6. How are students notified of program requirements?

7. If the institution relies on other providers to offer program-related courses, what is the process by which students learn of these courses?

8. Is the total program realistically available to students for whom it is intended?

9. Prior to admitting a student to the program, does the institution inform the prospective student about:

   a. required access to technologies used in the program;
   
   b. technical competence required of students in the program;
   
   c. estimated or average program costs;

   E-1-3
d. the time frame in which courses are offered;

e. library and other learning services available;

f. the full array of other support services available;

g. arrangements for interaction with the faculty and fellow students;

h. the potential challenges of learning in the program’s technology-based environment; and

i. the estimated time for program completion?

10. Are appropriate services available for students of distance learning programs, using the working assumption that these students will not be physically present on campus, including

a. accurate and timely information about the institution, its programs, its courses, its costs, and related policies and requirements;

b. pre-registration advising;

c. application for admission;

d. enrollment/registration in programs and courses;

e. financial aid, including information about policies and limitations, information about available scholarships, processing of applications, and administration of financial aid and scholarship awards;

f. secure payment arrangements;

g. academic advising;

h. tutoring;

i. career counseling and placement;

j. training in the use of library resources and in research techniques;

k. bookstore service (ordering, secure payment, and prompt delivery of books, course packs, course-related supplies and materials, and institutional memorabilia);

l. ongoing technical support, preferably offered during evenings and weekends as well as normal institutional working hours;

m. referrals for student learning differences, physical challenges, and personal counseling?

11. What strategies and practices are implemented by this institution to involve distant students as part of an academic community? By their statements and actions, do administrators and participating faculty members communicate a belief that a sense of academic community is important?

J. Program Planning and Evaluation

1. What process resulted in the decision to offer the program?

2. By what process was the program developed? Were academically qualified persons responsible for curricular decisions?

3. How does the institution review the effectiveness of its distance education programs to assure alignment with institutional priorities and educational objectives?

4. How is student performance evaluated?

5. How does evaluated student performance compare to intended learning outcomes?

6. How is overall program effectiveness determined in such areas as

a. the extent to which student learning matches intended outcomes;

b. the extent to which student intent is met;

c. student retention rates, including variations over time;

d. student satisfaction, as measured by regular surveys;

e. faculty satisfaction, as measured by regular surveys and by formal and informal peer review processes;

f. measures of the extent to which library and learning resources are used appropriately by the programs’ students;

g. measures of student competence in fundamental skills such as communication, comprehension, and analysis;

h. cost effectiveness of the program to its students, as compared to campus-based alternatives?

7. Does the institution’s ongoing program of assessment and improvement cover the essential categories of improved learning outcomes, retention, use of resources, and service to core constituencies?

8. What are the administrative and procedural links between the evaluation of distance learning programs and the ongoing evaluation of all academic programs?

9. How are the respective characteristics of campus-based and distance learning programs taken into account?
APPENDIX F

STANDARDS FOR PARTICIPATION IN TITLE IV, HEA PROGRAMS
§ 668.24 Record retention and examinations.

(a) Program records. An institution shall establish and maintain, on a current basis, any application for title IV, HEA program funds and program records that document—

1. Its eligibility to participate in the title IV, HEA programs;

2. The eligibility of its educational programs for title IV, HEA program funds;

3. Its administration of the title IV, HEA programs in accordance with all applicable requirements;

4. Its financial responsibility, as specified in this part;

5. Information included in any application for title IV, HEA program funds; and

6. Its disbursement and delivery of title IV, HEA program funds.

(b) Fiscal records. (1) An institution shall account for the receipt and expenditure of title IV, HEA program funds in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

(2) An institution shall establish and maintain on a current basis—

(i) Financial records that reflect each HEA, title IV program transaction; and

(ii) General ledger control accounts and related subsidiary accounts that identify each title IV, HEA program transaction and separate those transactions from all other institutional financial activity.

(c) Required records. (1) The records that an institution must maintain in order to comply with the provisions of this section include but are not limited to—

(i) The Student Aid Report (SAR) or Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR) used to determine eligibility for title IV, HEA program funds;

(ii) Application data submitted to the Secretary, lender, or guaranty agency by the institution on behalf of the student or parent;

(iii) Documentation of each student's or parent borrower's eligibility for title IV, HEA program funds;

(iv) Documentation relating to each student’s or parent borrower’s receipt of title IV, HEA program funds, including but not limited to documentation of—

(A) The amount of the grant, loan, or FWS award, its payment period, its loan period, if applicable, and the calculations used to determine the amount of the grant, loan, or FWS award;

(B) The date and amount of each disbursement or delivery of grant or loan funds, and the date and amount of each payment of FWS wages;
(C) The amount, date, and basis of the institution's calculation of any refunds or overpayments due to or on behalf of the student, or the treatment of title IV, HEA program funds when a student withdraws; and

(D) The payment of any overpayment or the return of any title IV, HEA program funds to the title IV, HEA program fund, a lender, or the Secretary, as appropriate;

(v) Documentation of and information collected at any initial or exit loan counseling required by applicable program regulations;

(vi) Reports and forms used by the institution in its participation in a title IV, HEA program, and any records needed to verify data that appear in those reports and forms; and

(vii) Documentation supporting the institution's calculation of its completion or graduation rates under §§668.46 and 668.49.

(2) In addition to the records required under this part—

(i) Participants in the Federal Perkins Loan Program shall follow procedures established in 34 CFR 674.19 for documentation of repayment history for that program;

(ii) Participants in the FWS Program shall follow procedures established in 34 CFR 675.19 for documentation of work, earnings, and payroll transactions for that program; and

(iii) Participants in the FFEL Program shall follow procedures established in 34 CFR 682.610 for documentation of additional loan record requirements for that program.

(d) General. (1) An institution shall maintain required records in a systematically organized manner.

(2) An institution shall make its records readily available for review by the Secretary or the Secretary's authorized representative at an institutional location designated by the Secretary or the Secretary's authorized representative.

(3) An institution may keep required records in hard copy or in microform, computer file, optical disk, CD-ROM, or other media formats, provided that—

(i) Except for the records described in paragraph (d)(3)(ii) of this section, all record information must be retrievable in a coherent hard copy format or in other media formats acceptable to the Secretary;

(ii) An institution shall maintain the Student Aid Report (SAR) or Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR) used to determine eligibility for title IV, HEA program funds in the format in which it was received by the institution, except that the SAR may be maintained in an imaged media format;

(iii) Any imaged media format used to maintain required records must be capable of reproducing an accurate, legible, and complete copy of the original document, and, when printed, this copy must be approximately the same size as the original document;

(iv) Any document that contains a signature, seal, certification, or any other image or mark required to validate the authenticity of its information must be maintained in its original hard copy or in an imaged media format; and

(v) Participants in the Federal Perkins Loan Program shall follow procedures established in 34 CFR 674.19 for maintaining the original promissory notes and repayment schedules for that program.

(4) If an institution closes, stops providing educational programs, is terminated or suspended from the title IV, HEA programs, or undergoes a change of ownership that results in a change of control as described in 34 CFR 600.31, it shall provide for—

(i) The retention of required records; and

(ii) Access to those records, for inspection and copying, by the Secretary or the Secretary's authorized representative, and, for a school participating in the FFEL Program, the appropriate guaranty agency.

Includes: COA revisions approved October 2013
ABFSE and COA Accreditation and Policy Manual
COA corrections October 2014 and October 2015
COA and ABFSE Revisions approved April 2016
COA and ABFSE Revisions approved October 2017
COA and ABFSE Revisions approved April 2019
(e) Record retention. Unless otherwise directed by the Secretary—

(1) An institution shall keep records relating to its administration of the Federal Perkins Loan, FWS, FSEOG, Federal Pell Grant, ACG, or National SMART Grant Program for three years after the end of the award year for which the aid was awarded and disbursed under those programs, provided that an institution shall keep—

(i) The Fiscal Operations Report and Application to Participate in the Federal Perkins Loan, FSEOG, and FWS Programs (FISAP), and any records necessary to support the data contained in the FISAP, including "income aid information," for three years after the end of the award year in which the FISAP is submitted; and

(ii) Repayment records for a Federal Perkins loan, including records relating to cancellation and deferment requests, in accordance with the provisions of 34 CFR 674.19;

(2)(i) An institution shall keep records relating to a student or parent borrower's eligibility and participation in the FFEL or Direct Loan Program for three years after the end of the award year in which the student last attended the institution; and

(ii) An institution shall keep all other records relating to its participation in the FFEL or Direct Loan Program, including records of any other reports or forms, for three years after the end of the award year in which the records are submitted; and

(3) An institution shall keep all records involved in any loan, claim, or expenditure questioned by a title IV, HEA program audit, program review, investigation, or other review until the later of—

(i) The resolution of that questioned loan, claim, or expenditure; or

(ii) The end of the retention period applicable to the record.

(1) Examination of records. (1) An Institution that participates in any title IV, HEA program and the institution's third-party servicer, if any, shall cooperate with an independent auditor, the Secretary, the Department of Education's Inspector General, the Comptroller General of the United States, or their authorized representatives, a guaranty agency in whose program the institution participates, and the institution's accrediting agency, in the conduct of audits, investigations, program reviews, or other reviews authorized by law.

(2) The institution and servicer must cooperate by—

(i) Providing timely access, for examination and copying, to requested records, including but not limited to computerized records and records reflecting transactions with any financial institution with which the institution or servicer deposits or has deposited any title IV, HEA program funds, and to any pertinent books, documents, papers, or computer programs; and

(ii) Providing reasonable access to personnel associated with the institution's or servicer's administration of the title IV, HEA programs for the purpose of obtaining relevant information.

(3) The Secretary considers that an institution or servicer has failed to provide reasonable access to personnel under paragraph (f)(2)(i) of this section if the institution or servicer—

(i) Refuses to allow those personnel to supply all relevant information; or

(ii) Refuses to allow interviews with those personnel only if the institution's or servicer's management is present; or

(iii) Refuses to allow interviews with those personnel only if the interviews are tape recorded by the institution or servicer.

(4) Upon request of the Secretary, or a lender or guaranty agency in the case of a borrower under the FFEL Program, an institution or servicer promptly shall provide the requester with any information the institution or servicer has respecting the last known address, full name, telephone number, enrollment information, employer, and employer address of a recipient of title IV funds who attends or attended the institution.
§ 668.16 Standards of administrative capability.

To begin and to continue to participate in any Title IV, HEA program, an institution shall demonstrate to the Secretary that the institution is capable of adequately administering that program under each of the standards established in this section. The Secretary considers an institution to have that administrative capability if the institution—

(a) Administers the Title IV, HEA programs in accordance with all statutory provisions of or applicable to Title IV of the HEA, all applicable regulatory provisions prescribed under that statutory authority, and all applicable special arrangements, agreements, and limitations entered into under the authority of statutes applicable to Title IV of the HEA;

(b)(1) Designates a capable individual to be responsible for administering all the Title IV, HEA programs in which it participates and for coordinating those programs with the institution’s other Federal and non-Federal programs of student financial assistance. The Secretary considers an individual to be "capable" under this paragraph if the individual is certified by the State in which the institution is located, if the State requires certification of financial aid administrators. The Secretary may consider other factors in determining whether an individual is capable, including, but not limited to, the individual's successful completion of Title IV, HEA program training provided or approved by the Secretary, and previous experience and documented success in administering the Title IV, HEA programs properly;

(2) Uses an adequate number of qualified persons to administer the Title IV, HEA programs in which the institution participates. The Secretary considers the following factors to determine whether an institution uses an adequate number of qualified persons—

(i) The number and types of programs in which the institution participates;

(ii) The number of applications evaluated;

(iii) The number of students who receive any student financial assistance at the institution and the amount of funds administered;

(iv) The financial aid delivery system used by the institution;

(v) The degree of office automation used by the institution in the administration of the Title IV, HEA programs;

(vi) The number and distribution of financial aid staff; and

(vii) The use of third-party servicers to aid in the administration of the Title IV, HEA programs;

(3) Communicates to the individual designated to be responsible for administering Title IV, HEA programs, all the information received by any institutional office that bears on a student's eligibility for Title IV, HEA program assistance; and

(4) Has written procedures for or written information indicating the responsibilities of the various offices with respect to the approval, disbursement, and delivery of Title IV, HEA program assistance and the preparation and submission of reports to the Secretary;
Electronic Code of Federal Regulations:

(c)(1) Administers Title IV, HEA programs with adequate checks and balances in its system of internal controls; and

(2) Divides the functions of authorizing payments and disbursing or delivering funds so that no office has responsibility for both functions with respect to any particular student aided under the programs. For example, the functions of authorizing payments and disbursing or delivering funds must be divided so that for any particular student aided under the programs, the two functions are carried out by at least two organizationally independent individuals who are not members of the same family, as defined in §668.15, or who do not otherwise exercise substantial control, as defined in §668.15, over the institution;

(d) Establishes and maintains records required under this part and the individual Title IV, HEA program regulations;

(e) For purposes of determining student eligibility for assistance under a Title IV, HEA program, establishes, publishes, and applies reasonable standards for measuring whether an otherwise eligible student is maintaining satisfactory progress in his or her educational program. The Secretary considers an institution's standards to be reasonable if the standards—

(1) Are the same as or stricter than the institution's standards for a student enrolled in the same educational program who is not receiving assistance under a Title IV, HEA program;

(2) Include the following elements:

(i) A qualitative component which consists of grades (provided that the standards meet or exceed the requirements of §668.34), work projects completed, or comparable factors that are measurable against a norm.

(ii) A quantitative component that consists of a maximum timeframe in which a student must complete his or her educational program. The timeframe must—

(A) For an undergraduate program, be no longer than 150 percent of the published length of the educational program measured in academic years, terms, credit hours attempted, clock hours completed, etc., as appropriate;

(B) Be divided into increments, not to exceed the lesser of one academic year or one-half the published length of the educational program;

(C) Include a schedule established by the institution designating the minimum percentage or amount of work that a student must successfully complete at the end of each increment to complete his or her educational program within the maximum timeframe; and

(D) Include specific policies defining the effect of course incompletes, withdrawals, repetitions, and noncredit remedial courses on satisfactory progress;

(3) Provide for consistent application of standards to all students within categories of students, e.g., full-time, part-time, undergraduate, and graduate students, and educational programs established by the institution;

(4) Provide for a determination at the end of each increment by the institution as to whether the student has met the qualitative and quantitative components of the standards (as provided for in paragraphs (e)(1) and (ii) of this section);

(5) Provide specific procedures under which a student may appeal a determination that the student is not making satisfactory progress; and

(6) Provide specific procedures for a student to re-establish that he or she is maintaining satisfactory progress.

(f) Develops and applies an adequate system to identify and resolve discrepancies in the information that the institution receives from different sources with respect to a student's application for financial aid under Title IV, HEA programs. In determining whether the institution's system is adequate, the Secretary considers whether the institution obtains and reviews—

(1) All student aid applications, need analysis documents, Statements of Educational Purpose,
Electronics Code of Federal Regulations:

Statements of registration status, and eligibility notification documents presented by or on behalf of each applicant;

(2) Any documents, including any copies of State and Federal income tax returns, that are normally collected by the institution to verify information received from the student or other sources, and

(3) Any other information normally available to the institution regarding a student's citizenship, previous educational experience, documentation of the student's social security number, or other factors relating to the student's eligibility for funds under the Title IV, HEA programs;

(g) Refers to the Office of Inspector General of the Department of Education for investigation—

(1) After conducting the review of an application provided for under paragraph (f) of this section, any credible information indicating that an applicant for Title IV, HEA program assistance may have engaged in fraud or other criminal misconduct in connection with his or her application. The type of information that an institution must refer is that which is relevant to the eligibility of the applicant for Title IV, HEA program assistance, or the amount of the assistance. Examples of this type of information are—

(i) False claims of independent student status;

(ii) False claims of citizenship;

(iii) Use of false identities;

(iv) Forged of signatures or certifications; and

(v) False statements of income; and

(2) Any credible information indicating that any employee, third-party servicer, or other agent of the institution that acts in a capacity that involves the administration of the Title IV, HEA programs, or the receipt of funds under those programs, may have engaged in fraud, misrepresentation, conversion or breach of fiduciary responsibility, or other illegal conduct involving the Title IV, HEA programs. The type of information that an institution must refer is that which is relevant to the eligibility and funding of the institution and its students through the Title IV, HEA programs;

(h) Provides adequate financial aid counseling to eligible students who apply for Title IV, HEA program assistance. In determining whether an institution provides adequate counseling, the Secretary considers whether its counseling includes information regarding—

(1) The source and amount of each type of aid offered;

(2) The method by which aid is determined and disbursed, delivered, or applied to a student's account; and

(3) The rights and responsibilities of the student with respect to enrollment at the institution and receipt of financial aid. This information includes the institution's refund policy, the requirements for the treatment of Title IV, HEA program funds when a student withdraws under §668.22, its standards of satisfactory progress, and other conditions that may alter the student's aid package;

(i) Has provided all program and fiscal reports and financial statements required for compliance with the provisions of this part and the individual program regulations in a timely manner;

(j) Shows no evidence of significant problems that affect, as determined by the Secretary, the institution's ability to administer a Title IV, HEA program and that are identified in—

(1) Reviews of the institution conducted by the Secretary, the Department of Education's Office of Inspector General, nationally recognized accrediting agencies, guaranty agencies as defined in 34 CFR part 682, the State agency or official by whose authority the institution is legally authorized to provide postsecondary education, or any other law enforcement agency; or

(2) Any findings made in any criminal, civil, or administrative proceeding;

(k) Is not, and does not have any principal or affiliate of the institution (as those terms are defined in 34...
Electronic Code of Federal Regulations:

CFR part 65) that is—

(1) Deemed or suspended under Executive Order (E.O.) 12549 (3 CFR, 1986 Comp., p. 189) or the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR), 48 CFR part 9, subpart 9.4; or

(2) Engaging in any activity that is a cause under 34 CFR 85.205 or 85.405 for debarment or suspension under E.O. 12549 (3 CFR, 1986 Comp., p. 189) or the FAR, 48 CFR part 9, subpart 9.4;

(i) For an institution that seeks initial participation in a Title IV, HEA program, does not have more than 33 percent of its undergraduate regular students withdraw from the institution during the institution’s latest completed award year. The institution must count all regular students who are enrolled during the latest completed award year, except those students who, during that period—

(1) Withdraw from, dropped out of, or were expelled from the institution;

(2) Were entitled to and actually received in a timely manner, a refund of 100 percent of their tuition and fees;

(e)(1) Has a cohort default rate—

(i) Calculated under subpart M of this part, that is less than 26 percent for each of the three most recent fiscal years for which the Secretary has determined the institution’s rate; and

(ii) As defined in 34 CFR 674.5, on loans made under the Federal Perkins Loan Program to students for attendance at that institution that does not exceed 15 percent;

(2)(i) However, if the Secretary determines that an institution’s administrative capability is impaired solely because the institution fails to comply with paragraph (e)(1) of this section, the Secretary allows the institution to continue to participate in the Title IV, HEA programs but may provisionally certify the institution in accordance with §668.13(c); and

(ii) The institution may appeal the loss of full participation in a Title IV, HEA program under paragraph (e)(1) of this section by submitting an erroneous data appeal in writing to the Secretary in accordance with §668.13(c); and

(c) Does not otherwise appear to lack the ability to administer the Title IV, HEA programs competently; and

(c) Participates in the electronic processes that the Secretary—

(1) Provides at no substantial charge to the institution; and

(2) Identifies through a notice published in the Federal Register.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 1840–0537)


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For questions concerning e-CFR programming and delivery issues, email webveq@naacp.gov.

Section 508 / Accessibility

Last updated: February 16, 2007
APPENDIX G

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT
Confidentiality Statement
Conflict of Interest Statement

To be completed by all members of the Committee on Accreditation,
Staff Members, Permanent Team Chairs and Site Visitors

As a member of the Committee on Accreditation, ABFSE Staff, Permanent Team Chair or Site Visitor, I have access
to information that is, and must remain, confidential. I agree to respect and protect the confidentiality of all
accreditation materials and of all other information discussed during Executive Sessions. I pledge to uphold this
confidentiality agreement at all times and abide by the ABFSE Document Retention and Destruction policy.

In addition, I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the Conflict of Interest prohibitions which appear in
Chapter X, Section C, page 10-1, of the ABFSE Accreditation and Policy Manual. ___________________ (initial)

____________________________________
Signature

____________________________________
Printed Name

I am participating as (please circle appropriate capacity):
COA member, ABFSE Staff, Permanent Team Chair or Site Visitor

Date(s)
Committee on Accreditation meeting __________________________ Location
or
Site/focus visit __________________________ School

G-1

Includes: COA revisions approved October 2013
          COA corrections October 2014 and October 2015
          COA and ABFSE Revisions approved April 2016
          COA and ABFSE Revisions approved October 2017
          COA and ABFSE Revisions approved April 2019
Conflict of Interest

All members of the Committee on Accreditation, the Permanent Team Chairs, all Site Visit Committee Members, and employees of the ABFSE/COA must review the ABFSE Conflict of interest policy.

The Conflict of Interest prohibitions appear in Chapter X, Section C, page 10-1, of the Accreditation and Policy Manual. The section is restated below.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST: Real as well as perceived conflicts will be avoided.

1. Selection of Site visitors:
   a. No individual who has served as consultant to a program may serve as a site visitor to that program.
   b. No personnel from programs potentially in direct competition with the program being evaluated may serve on the visiting committee.
   c. Neither recent (within 5 years) graduates nor recent faculty members (within 5 years) of the program being evaluated may serve on the site visiting committee.
   d. No faculty members or practitioners from within the same state in which the evaluated program is located may serve on the visiting committee.
   e. No faculty member from within institutions in the same systems as the program being evaluated may serve on the visiting committee.
   f. Except for focused visits, no voting member of the Committee on Accreditation or the ABFSE chairperson may serve on the visiting committee.

2. Site Visit Behavior: Site visitors are prohibited from using the site visit as either an employment opportunity for themselves or to hire faculty away from the program being evaluated.

3. Voting by Committee on Accreditation Members: Members must abstain from voting and from the discussion if they have a real or perceived Conflict of Interest. Committee members from within the state of the program being evaluated may not make motions, participate in the discussion, or vote concerning that program. Committee members employed by the program being evaluated or any other program within the same educational system must absent themselves during the executive session and voting concerning that program.

4. Persons serving as consultants, administrative staff, or in any other way serving the committee shall avoid real or perceived conflicts of interest and shall follow all policies listed in #1-3 above.
APPENDIX H

FORMAL REVIEW OF STANDARDS OF ACCREDITATION
APPENDIX H

Formal Review of Standards of Accreditation
(See Also Chapter 10, Section F, page 10-3 of the Accreditation and Policy Manual)

Although the Committee on Accreditation may review the Standards, either in their totality or individually more frequently, a full review of all Standards will occur every five years. The full review will follow the process indicated below:

1. Every five years (beginning in 2007) at its spring meeting the COA will formally initiate the review process. (It will continue at intervals of five years thereafter [i.e., 2012, 2017, 2022, etc.]).

2. Following the spring meeting, the Executive Director will send letters (in electronic format) to the groups/agencies/individuals indicated in numbers 3 and 4 below along with a copy of this Appendix, the timeline noted herein, and a copy of the Standards along with the web address for the Accreditation and Policy Manual. The letters will include a request that each addressee and appropriate constituencies of the addressee formally review each Standard and advise the COA, through the Executive Director, whether the Standard appear appropriate as written, whether changes appear to be in order, or whether Standard should be deleted. In addition, each respondent will be asked to propose any new Standards.

3. Letters, in electronic format, will go to each president or chief executive of an institution which offers an ABFSE accredited funeral service program, each funeral service program director at those institutions, the president (or other appropriate leadership position) of the student funeral service association, the funeral service/mortuary science faculty association president or appropriate leadership position, and the funeral service/mortuary science staff senate president (or other appropriate staff officer). Each recipient will be asked to widely share and publicize to his/he constituency the request for broad participation in the review of the Standards.

4. In addition, the Executive Director will send a similar letter and related materials to the Executive Directors of the ICFSEB, the NFDA, the NFD&MA, and the ICCFA asking for similarly broad dissemination, including publication in their newsletters or magazines.

5. A notice with comparable information will be placed on the ABFSE web site.

6. All such notices will request that responses be received in the ABFSE office not later than the following September 1 and note a strong preference that all responses be in electronic format.

7. All responses will be distributed to members of the COA prior to their fall meeting.

8. The COA will consider all responses and draft proposed changes which will be distributed to those recipients noted above with a request for any secondary comments. The proposed changes will also be posted on the ABFSE web site with a request for further comment. Such notices will advise all recipients that the COA will take formal action in regard to the items at its following spring meeting. Any responses received as a result of this item will be distributed to COA members prior the spring meeting.

9. Any changes to the Standards which occur at the referenced spring meeting will be distributed to all recipients noted above within 30 days after adoption by the COA. Changes will also be published on the ABFSE web site.
APPENDIX I

ADVERTISING AND STUDENT RECRUITMENT
Accreditation Standard 10 requires that programs/institutions have statements to show that they follow ethical practices in student admission and other student-related matters and that they publish either their own statement regarding such practices or specifically refer in program materials to their adherence to recognized documents on ethical practice such as those available from the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Offices (AACRAO) or from several of the regional accrediting agencies. In order to provide a sample of the type of statements that are available, the ABFSE has reprinted below the policy now used by a regional accreditor (Middle States). Programs and institutions seeking to develop an appropriate policy dealing with student admissions and related matters may find the Middle States document to be a useful resource.

Middle States Commission on Higher Education

Policy

Advertising, Student Recruitment, and Representation of Accredited Status

Advertising, Publications, and Promotional Literature

1. Educational programs and services offered should be the primary emphasis of all advertisements, publications, promotional literature, and recruitment activities.

2. All statements and representations should be clear, factually accurate, and current. Supporting information should be kept on file and readily available for review.

3. Catalogs and other official publications should be readily available either on-line or in hard copy and should accurately depict:

   a. institutional purposes and objectives;
   b. admission requirements and procedures, including policies on transfer credit;
   c. academic calendars and basic information on programs and courses, with required sequences and frequency of course offering explicitly stated;
   d. degree and program completion requirements, including length of time normally required to obtain a degree or certificate of completion;
   e. grievance procedures;
   f. faculty and primary administrators (full-time and part-time listed separately) with degrees held and the conferring institution;
   g. institutional facilities and services readily available for educational use;
   h. rules and regulations for conduct;
   i. grading system and related policies;
   j. tuition, fees, and other program costs;
   k. opportunities and requirements for financial aid;
1. policies and procedures for refunding fees and charges to students who withdraw from enrollment.

4. In college catalogs and/or official publications describing career opportunities, clear and accurate information should be provided on:
   a. national and/or state legal requirements for eligibility for licensure or entry into an occupation or profession for which education and training are offered;
   b. any unique requirements for career paths, or for employment and advancement opportunities in the profession or occupation described.

5. Information on student learning outcomes should be available to prospective students.

6. Policies and procedures regarding transfer of credit and credit for extra-institutional college-level learning should be published and implemented. (See “Transfer Credit, Prior Learning, and Articulation.”)

7. All information required to be disclosed by applicable law or regulation should be disclosed as required.

**Student Recruitment for Admissions**

1. Student recruitment should be conducted by well-qualified admissions officers and trained volunteers whose credentials, purposes, and position or affiliation with the institution are clearly specified.

2. Independent contractors or agents used by the institution for recruiting purposes shall be governed by the same principles as institutional admissions officers and volunteers.

3. No misrepresentations should be made in student recruitment, including:
   a. assuring employment unless employment arrangements have been made and can be verified;
   b. misrepresenting job placement and employment opportunities for graduates;
   c. misrepresenting program costs;
   d. misrepresenting abilities required to complete intended program;
APPENDIX J

CONSIDERATIONS For NBE pass rate exemptions
APPENDIX J

ABFSE policy required students graduating prior to October 13, 2014 to take the NBE as a graduation requirement. For graduation after October 13, 2014 taking the NBE is no longer an accreditation requirement.

The ABFSE office works with schools to verify NBE Pass Rates.

The Committee on Accreditation recognizes that students who take the NBE 12 months or more after completion of formal instruction may have a diminished capacity for success on the NBE and may fail the test. Such failures may reflect the delay in taking the test rather than the current instructional success of the program. In order to obtain accurate outcomes assessment for current program evaluation, the COA will offer exceptions for failures in the following situation:

Situation A (NBE Pass Rate Calculations)

This situation applies when a student graduates but does not take the NBE within one year of completing the graduation requirements. The program director may request an exemption of that student's NBE results from the current year's NBE Pass Rate Calculation. The written exemption request must include:

1. Printed on school letterhead
   Signed by Program Director
   Identify the student(s) by name and ID number.
2. Verify date that NBE Arts & Sciences were taken
3. An official transcript* with graduation posted. This transcript must demonstrate that no funeral program course work (with the exception of an optional NBE review course) was completed during a 12 month period prior to taking the first section of the NBE.
4. A college catalog to establish the graduation requirements pertaining to the student

Exemption requests are due in the ABFSE office by March 1 of the calendar year.

*Due to constraints regarding release of official transcripts, the Executive Director has the discretion to accept an unofficial copy of the transcript, signed and dated by the Program Director, as long as such copy demonstrates the semester(s) during which courses were taken.

The Executive Director will determine the accuracy of the requests to adjust NBE pass rates. Questionable requests will be referred to the COA for action. There will be no retroactive adjustments after the due date and no adjustments will be made to previous year graduation statistics.

The revised NBE Pass Rates are to be used by the institution in all public presentations of data involving NBE pass rates, including the program website. Revised NBE Pass Rates will be utilized when calculating 3-year average NBE pass rates posted in the Directory of Programs on the ABFSE website.
APPENDIX K

APPLICATION FOR
SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE
A request for Substantive Change must be submitted to and approved by the COA before the change is included in the scope of accreditation of the institution/program.

DATE OF THIS REPORT      EFFECTIVE DATE OF CHANGE

INSTRUCTIONS: Indicate the type of Substantive Change proposed and answer the questions at the bottom of this page. Then complete the appropriate form (see following pages) and supply required documentation. Submit the fee (see page K-12) and two copies of these documents to the ABFSE office. If an on-site visit is required, the program/institution will be responsible for all expenses incurred.

Check all that apply:

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<td>1. Change in legal name</td>
<td>6. Change in ownership/control</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Change in mission or objectives</td>
<td>7. Relocation of permanent instructional site</td>
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<td>3. Change in faculty/staff: □ Director</td>
<td>8. Application for approval of additional location(s) (see Chapter X.I)</td>
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<td>9. Addition of courses/programs/degrees significantly different from existing offerings or delivery</td>
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<td>10. Change in President/CEO</td>
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<td>11. Change of Accreditor/Accreditation Status</td>
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QUESTIONS AND EXPLANATIONS

Reason(s) for the change

Who participated in the decision to make the change and/or request approval for it?

By what process was the decision accomplished?

Other comments:

DIRECTOR STATEMENT

Submission of the Request for Approval of Substantive Change is in partial fulfillment of the COA’s requirements for true and accurate description of the change. Supporting documentation is attached.

SIGNATURE OF PROGRAM DIRECTOR      DATE

K-1-1
CHANGE 1: LEGAL NAME

Instructions: Complete the Substantive Change Cover Sheet and the information required by this section.

Former Name of Institution/Program: 
New Name of Institution/Program: 

List licenses required for operation in your state and affected by the name change:

If other aspects of the institution/program are affected by the name change, describe briefly:

ATTACHMENTS (Identified by number as follows):

- 1. COPY OF LEGAL AUTHORIZATION FOR THE CHANGE OF NAME
- 2. COPIES OF REVISED GOVERNMENTAL LICENSES IN THE NEW NAME
- 3. PUBLICITY MATERIALS (revised to show name change)

CHANGE 2: MISSION OR OBJECTIVES

Instructions: Complete the Substantive Change Cover Sheet and the information required by this section.

Evaluation of impact of the change: With reference to the ABFSE Accreditation Standards, indicate all aspects of the institution that will be affected and attach a detailed narrative explanation for each, with supporting documentation as appropriate.

Check all that apply:

- Sponsorship
- Organization and Administration
- Aims and Objectives
- Administrative Practices and Ethical Standards
- Finance
- Curriculum
- Faculty
- Facilities
- Library
- Students
- Program Planning and Evaluation/Assessment
- Default Rates in Student Loan Program under Title IV
- Record of Student Complaints
- Program Length, Tuition, and Fees Related to Subject Matter Taught
- Program Length in Credit Hours

ATTACHMENTS (Identified by number as follows):

- 1. COPIES OF BOTH THE PREVIOUS AND REVISED VERSIONS OF THE MISSION STATEMENT AND/OR OBJECTIVES
- 2. REVISED MATERIALS IN WHICH MISSION STATEMENT AND/OR OBJECTIVES APPEAR (e.g., brochure, student handbook, etc.)
### CHANGE 3: FACULTY/STAFF

**Instructions:** Complete the Substantive Change Cover Sheet and the information required by this section.

1. □ **Change in Director:**
   - Name of Former Director: 
   - New Director: 

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**NOTE:** The COA must be informed within thirty (30) days of any change in director, even if it is temporary.

2. □ **Change in 60% or more of the faculty during one program cycle:**
   - Which degree program is affected?

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<tr>
<th>NEW FACULTY NAME(S)</th>
<th>JOB TITLE(S)</th>
<th>PERSON(S) REPLACED</th>
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Evaluation of impact of the change: With reference to the ABFSE Accreditation Standards, indicate all aspects of the institution that will be affected and attach a detailed narrative explanation for each, with supporting documentation as appropriate.

3. Check all that apply:
   - □ Sponsorship
   - □ Organization and Administration
   - □ Aims and Objectives
   - □ Administrative Practices and Ethical Standards
   - □ Finance
   - □ Curriculum
   - □ Faculty
   - □ Facilities
   - □ Library
   - □ Students
   - □ Program Planning and Evaluation/Assessment
   - □ Default Rates in Student Loan Program under Title IV
   - □ Record of Student Complaints
   - □ Program Length, Tuition, and Fees Related to Subject Matter Taught
   - □ Program Length in Credit Hours

**ATTACHMENTS:** For each new director and new faculty member: resume, copy of license, copies of transcripts, current job description (if revised for new faculty, include previous version).
CHANGE 4: PROGRAM CLOSING

Instructions: Complete the Substantive Change Cover Sheet and information required by this section.

List degree programs affected: ____________________________________________

Briefly describe the proposed change: ______________________________________

Evaluation of impact of the change: With reference to the ABFSE Accreditation Standards, indicate all aspects of the institution that will be affected and attach a detailed narrative explanation for each, with supporting documentation as appropriate.

Check all that apply:

- Sponsorship
- Organization and Administration
- Aims and Objectives
- Administrative Practices and Ethical Standards
- Finance
- Curriculum
- Faculty
- Facilities
- Library
- Students
- Program Planning and Evaluation/Assessment
- Default Rates in Student Loan Program under Title IV
- Record of Student Complaints
- Program Length, Tuition, and Fees Related to Subject Matter Taught
- Program Length in Credit Hours

ATTACHMENTS (identified by number as follows):

- 1. CALENDARS (specific time line for teach-out)
- 2. TEACH-OUT PLAN (indicate courses to be offered, credit hours, semester, sample schedule, proposed instructor)
- 3. PUBLICATIONS (showing appropriate disclosure of pertinent information)
- 4. LETTER OF VERIFICATION from credit-granting institution or college/university Department Chair

Additional comments/explanations:

K-1-4
CHANGE 5: GREATER THAN 25% INCREASE IN NUMBER OF CREDIT HOURS AWARDED

1 Instructions: Complete the Substantive Change Cover Sheet and information required by this section.

2 List degree programs affected: ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

3 Briefly describe the proposed change: ______________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

4 Evaluation of impact of the change: With reference to the ABFSE Accreditation Standards, indicate all aspects of the institution that will be affected and attach a detailed narrative explanation for each, with supporting documentation as appropriate.

5 Check all that apply:
   ☐ Sponsorship
   ☐ Organization and Administration
   ☐ Aims and Objectives
   ☐ Administrative Practices and Ethical Standards
   ☐ Finance
   ☐ Curriculum
   ☐ Faculty
   ☐ Facilities
   ☐ Library
   ☐ Students
   ☐ Program Planning and Evaluation/Assessment
   ☐ Default Rates in Student Loan Program under Title IV
   ☐ Record of Student Complaints
   ☐ Program Length, Tuition, and Fees Related to Subject Matter Taught
   ☐ Program Length in Credit Hours

6 ATTACHMENTS (identified by number as follows):
   ☐ 1. CALENDARS (previous and revised, showing credit hours, content, instruction and total)
   ☐ 2. BUDGETS (previous and revised)
   ☐ 3. PUBLICATIONS (showing appropriate revision or pertinent information)
   ☐ 4. RENT/LEASE AGREEMENT (if different from previous Self Study)
   ☐ 5. LETTER OF VERIFICATION from credit-granting institution or college/university

   Department Chair

7 Additional comments/explanations:

8

9

10

K-1-5
**CHANGE 6: OWNERSHIP/CONTROL**

**Instructions:** Complete the Substantive Change Cover Sheet and information required by this section.

**Organization/Control currently:**

☐ Non-profit

☐ For-profit

Date by which the change is expected to be complete:

________________________________________

**Type of change:**

☐ Change in legal status: ☐ form of organization

☐ authorization to operate

☐ Change in control (ownership/controlling interest) through

☐ Sale of institution

☐ Acquisition of another institution or program/location of another institution

☐ Transfer of controlling interest of stock of the institution or its parent corporation

☐ Merger of two or more institutions

☐ Division of one institution into two or more institutions

☐ Transfer of assets that comprise a substantial portion of the educational business of the institution

☐ Conversion of the institution into two or more institutions

☐ Change from non-profit to for-profit

**Excluded transactions:** Upon the retirement or death of the owner:

☐ Transfer to a member of the owner’s family

☐ Transfer to a person with ownership interest who has been involved in the management of the institution

for at least two (2) years preceding the transfer.

Briefly describe the change (from/to; names of parties involved, etc.):

________________________________________

**Evaluation of impact of the change:** With reference to the ABFSE Accreditation Standards, indicate all aspects of the institution that will be affected and attach a detailed narrative explanation for each, with supporting documentation as appropriate.

Check all that apply:

☐ Sponsorship

☐ Organization and Administration

☐ Aims and Objectives

☐ Administrative Practices and Ethical Standards

☐ Finance

☐ Curriculum

☐ Faculty

☐ Facilities

☐ Library

☐ Students

☐ Program Planning and Evaluation/Assessment

☐ Default Rates in Student Loan Program under Title IV

☐ Record of Student Complaints

☐ Program Length, Tuition, and Fees Related to Subject Matter Taught

☐ Program Length in Credit Hours

**ATTACHMENTS** (identified by number as follows):

☐ 1. LEGAL REGISTRATION (STATE) FOR NEW STRUCTURE OR OWNERSHIP

☐ 2. STATE POSTSECONDARY AUTHORIZATION or date of application:

☐ 3. VERIFICATION OF FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR NEW STRUCTURE/OWNERSHIP

**NOTES:** A one-day on-site visit is required within six (6) months of the effective date of change and the COA must be informed within thirty (30) days of a change in ownership.

K-1-6
CHANGE 7: RELOCATION OF PERMANENT INSTRUCTIONAL SITE*

Instructions: Complete the Substantive Change Cover Sheet and information required by this section.

Effective date of change:

Old Address:

New Address:

Brief explanation/description of change:

Evaluation of impact of the change: With reference to the ABFSE Accreditation Standards, indicate all aspects of the institution that will be affected and attach a detailed narrative explanation for each, with supporting documentation as appropriate.

Check all that apply:

☐ Sponsorship
☐ Organization and Administration
☐ Aims and Objectives
☐ Administrative Practices and Ethical Standards
☐ Finance
☐ Curriculum
☐ Faculty
☐ Facilities

☐ Library
☐ Students
☐ Program Planning and Evaluation/Assessment
☐ Default Rates in Student Loan Program under Title IV
☐ Record of Student Complaints
☐ Program Length, Tuition, and Fees Related to Subject Matter Taught
☐ Program Length in Credit Hours

ATTACHMENTS (identified by number as follows):

☐ 1. LICENSING/AUTHORIZATIONS (covering new address)
☐ 2. PUBLICATIONS (revised to reflect change)
☐ 3. RENT/LEASE/USE AGREEMENT OR PROOF OF OWNERSHIP FOR NEW FACILITY
☐ 4. FLOOR DIAGRAMS FOR OLD AND NEW FACILITIES (include scale drawing; dimensions)
☐ 5. RENT/LEASE/USE AGREEMENT FOR EDUCATION MATERIALS/OFFICE EQUIPMENT (If applicable)

NOTE: A one-day on-site visit is required within six (6) months of the effective date of change.

* This substantive change applies to instructional site relocation only. If only the institution’s/program’s office is relocating, the COA and all enrolled students must be informed by mail within fifteen (15) days of the change.
CHANGE 8: APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF ADDITIONAL LOCATIONS

Instructions: Complete the Substantive Change Cover Sheet and information required by this section.

Type of site: □ Branch Campus*  □ Additional Location  □ Contract Site

☐ The addition of a permanent location at a site at which the institution is conducting a teach-out for students of another institution that has ceased operating before all students have completed their program of study.

Degree(s) to be offered at new site: __________________________________________

If this is a contract site, beginning and ending dates of the contract are as follows:

________________________ Through ______________________

Other additional locations of the institution/program at this level currently approved: (Use an additional page if necessary):

1. __________________________  2. __________________________
   __________________________  __________________________

Additional (new) location for which approval is requested:

Name of Site: __________________________________________

Site Administrator: __________________________ Site Phone: __________________________

Street Address: __________________________ Fax: __________________________

City, State Zip: __________________________ Email: __________________________

Institution/program director for new site: __________________________

Percentage of content to be offered at new site: __________________________

If less than 100% of content, list components to be offered:

List state and local licenses required for the new site: __________________________

If licensing is required but not completed:

Date you applied __________________________ Date by which completion is expected: __________________________

Number of students expected at new site: _________ Student-instruction ratio: _________

* See Chapter X, I

(continued on page K-9)
ATTACHMENTS (identified by number as follows):

- 1. CONTRACT WITH HOST SCHOOL OR AGENCY (does not apply to Branch Campuses)
  - Check here if facility is institution-owned
- 2. FACULTY TEACHING LOAD (complete the chart below)*
- 3. STATE AND LOCAL LICENSES FOR NEW SITE
- 4. SCHEDULE FOR ALL CURRENT DEGREE PROGRAM(S) AND ADDITIONAL SITES (include: name of site, degree program(s), and director)
- 5. CURRENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART (show where new site fits into structure)
- 6. PROMOTIONAL LITERATURE FOR NEW SITE (include date(s) released)
- 7. BUDGET (show: total budget amount, with breakdown by column for each degree program and additional site, including projection for new site)
- 8. RESUMES FOR ON-SITE DIRECTOR AND FACULTY MEMBERS (identify job title for each, including curriculum area for instructors)
- 9. FLOOR DIAGRAM FOR SPACE TO BE USED AT NEW SITE (to scale, with dimensions)
- 10. RENT/LEASE/USE AGREEMENT FOR FACILITY SPACE
- 11. LIST OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT TO BE USED FOR DURATION OF PROGRAM
- 12. RENT/LEASE AGREEMENT FOR INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT
- 13. SUMMARY TABLE FOR PROGRAM(S) OFFERED AT NEW SITE (component title [and number, if appropriate], hours, inclusive dates, instructor, position in program cycle)
- 14. SCHEDULES FOR PROGRAM(S) OFFERED AT NEW SITE (academic calendars: schedule of daily hours and content for academic phase; seminar schedule dates, hours, content)
- 15. SYLLABUS (if altered or revised since most recent Self Study Report)
- 16. LIST OF CLINICAL SITES (name, address, telephone, supervising teacher)

* Complete the following chart for all instructors scheduled for the new site. List all teaching responsibilities, including those at other sites operated by the institution/program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FACULTY MEMBER</th>
<th>SUBJECT AREAS(S) &amp; /CREDIT HOURS FOR ALL SITES AND LEVELS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>New Site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other Site(s)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A = Additional
C = Contract
B = Branch
M = Mobile
P = Primary

NOTE: Approval by the COA is required PRIOR TO THE SITE’S OPENING and an on-site visit is required within six (6) months of the effective date of change.

(continued on page K-10)
The following types of substantive change requirements apply to institutions with recognition by the COA that allows them to seek eligibility to participate in Title IV, HEA programs. Please check the appropriate box. In addition to the requirements below, submission of all attachments listed on page K-9 of this application form are also required. A one-day, on-site visit will be required within six (6) months of the effective date of change.

- Entering into a contract under which an institution or organization not certified to participate in the Title IV, HEA programs offers more than 25% of one or more of the accredited institution’s educational programs.

- Establishing an additional location geographically apart from the main campus at which the institution offers at least 50% of an educational program. The addition of such a location must be approved by the COA unless the COA determines, and issues a written statement that the institution has —

  - Successfully completed at least one cycle of accreditation of the maximum length offered by the COA and one renewal, or has been accredited for at least ten years.

  - At least three additional locations that the COA has approved; and

  - Met criteria established by the COA indicating sufficient capacity to add additional locations without individual prior approvals, including at a minimum satisfactory evidence of a system to ensure quality across a distributed enterprise that includes—

    - Clearly identified academic control;
    - Regular evaluation of the locations;
    - Adequate faculty, facilities, resources, and academic and student support systems;
    - Financial stability; and
    - Long-range planning for expansion

The COA’s procedures for approval of an additional location require timely reporting to the COA of every additional location established under this approval.

The COA’s determination or re-determination to pre-approve an institution’s addition of locations may not exceed five years.

The COA will not pre-approve an institution’s addition of locations after the institution undergoes a change in ownership resulting in a change of control until the institution demonstrates that it meets the conditions for the COA to pre-approve additional locations described in this section.

The COA will conduct, at reasonable intervals not to exceed the normal period of accreditation, visits to a representative sample of additional locations utilizing the substantive change application procedures described above.
CHANGE 9: ADDITION OF COURSES/PROGRAMS/DEGREES SIGNIFICANTLY DIFFERENT FROM EXISTING OFFERINGS OR DELIVERY

Instructions: Complete the Substantive Change Cover Sheet and information required by this section.

List degree(s), courses(s), or programs to be added:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Briefly describe the proposed changes:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Evaluation of impact of the change: With reference to the ABFSE Accreditation Standards, indicate all aspects of the institution that will be affected and attach a detailed narrative explanation for each, with supporting documentation as appropriate.

Check all that apply:

☐ Sponsorship
☐ Organization and Administration
☐ Aims and Objectives
☐ Administrative Practices and Ethical Standards
☐ Finance
☐ Curriculum
☐ Faculty
☐ Facilities

☐ Library
☐ Students
☐ Program Planning and Evaluation/Assessment
☐ Default Rates in Student Loan Program under Title IV
☐ Record of Student Complaints
☐ Program Length, Tuition, and Fees Related to Subject Matter Taught
☐ Program Length in Credit Hours

ATTACHMENTS (identified by number as follows):

☐ 1. PUBLICATIONS (showing appropriate revision of pertinent information)
☐ 2. BUDGETS (previous and revised)
☐ 3. PERSONNEL (resumes for new faculty)
☐ 4. RENT/LEASE AGREEMENT (if different from most recent Self Study Report)
☐ 5. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES (list of new equipment, library, etc.)
☐ 6. ALL APPLICABLE INFORMATION REQUIRED BY STANDARD 6
☐ 7. STATE LEGAL REGISTRATION AND POSTSECONDARY AUTHORIZATION
☐ 8. ASSESSMENT: New assessment forms and sample transcript

*NOTE: A one-day, on-site visit is required within six (6) months of the effective change date.
CHANGE 10: PRESIDENT/CEO

Instructions: Complete the Substantive Change Cover Sheet and the information required by this section.

☐ Change in President or CEO:

Name of Former President/CEO: __________________________
New President/CEO: __________________________

Name __________________________ Email __________________________
Institution __________________________ Telephone __________________________

Mailing Address __________________________ Fax __________________________

NOTE: The COA must be informed within thirty (30) days of any change in President or CEO, even if it is temporary. In certain situations, ABFSE must be able to communicate directly with the CEO of the institution.

Evaluation of impact of the change in the context of the ABFSE Accreditation Standards.
(This is for reporting purposes only.)
CHANGE 11: NOTIFICATION OF CHANGE OF ACCREDITOR/CHANGE OF ACCREDITATION STATUS.

Instructions: Complete the Substantive Change Cover Sheet and the information required by this section.

___ Change of accreditor. Complete 1-4 below.

___ Change of accreditation status. Complete 1, 3, 5-7 below.

(any adverse/negative action cited by the institution’s regional (or other) accreditor, including the Department of Education or CHEA, must the reported to COA)

1. Name of original accrediting agency. ____________________________________________

2. Name of new accrediting agency. ______________________________________________

3. Effective date of change. ______________________________________________________

4. Briefly explain reason(s) for the change. _________________________________________

   ____________________________________________

   ____________________________________________

5. Briefly describe the adverse/negative action cited by the applicable agency. ______

   ____________________________________________

   ____________________________________________

6. Evaluation of the impact of the adverse action on the potential to comply with ABFSE Accreditation Standards:

   Indicate which ABFSE standards have the potential to be affected by the adverse action.

   Attach a detailed narrative explanation for each, with supporting documentation, as appropriate.

   Check all that apply:

   □ Sponsorship
   □ Organization and Administration
   □ Aims and Objectives
   □ Administrative Practices and Ethical Standards
   □ Finance
   □ Curriculum
   □ Faculty
   □ Facilities
   □ Library
   □ Students
   □ Program Planning and Evaluation/Assessment
   □ Default Rates in Student Loan Program under Title IV
   □ Record of Student Complaints
   □ Program Length, Tuition, and Fees Related to Subject Matter Taught
   □ Program Length in Credit Hours

7. Briefly describe the institution’s response to the cited action(s). ____________________

   ____________________________________________

   ____________________________________________

ATTACHMENTS (Supporting documents to identify the adverse action, and describe the impact of the change and/or the institutional response.)

K-1-13
## SCHEDULE OF FEES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHANGE 1: LEGAL NAME</th>
<th>$150</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHANGE 2: MISSION OR OBJECTIVES</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHANGE 3: FACULTY/STAFF</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHANGE 4: PROGRAM CLOSING</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHANGE 5: GREATER THAN 25% INCREASE IN NUMBER OF CREDIT HOURS AWARDED</td>
<td>$150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHANGE 6: OWNERSHIP/CONTROL *</td>
<td>$300 plus cost of the visit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHANGE 7: RELOCATION OF PERMANENT INSTRUCTIONAL SITE *</td>
<td>$300 plus cost of the visit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHANGE 8: APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF ADDITIONAL LOCATIONS *</td>
<td>$250 per location plus cost of the visit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHANGE 9: ADDITION OF COURSES/PROGRAMS/DEGREES SIGNIFICANTLY DIFFERENT FROM EXISTING OFFERINGS OR DELIVERY *</td>
<td>$250 per location plus cost of the visit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHANGE 10: PRESIDENT or CEO</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHANGE 11: ACCREDITOR/ACCREDITATION STATUS</td>
<td>n/a unless accreditation status change requires site visit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* These Substantive Changes require an on-site visit. Institution will be billed for cost of visit in accordance with Appendix D.
APPENDIX L

DOCUMENT RETENTION AND DESTRUCTION POLICY
ABFSE Document Retention and Destruction Policy  
Approved October 2015

The American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE) as a 501.C.3 non-profit corporation engaged in accreditation of educational programs maintains traditional business records and documents relative to the accreditation function. This policy is intended to comply with relevant law, including the IRS, and ABFSE accreditation policies as defined in the ABFSE Accreditation and Policy Manual. The policy ensures that valuable documents are available when needed and the proper disposal of documents that are no longer necessary. Policy also complies with Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Policies as defined by ARMA (Association of Records Managers and Administrators)

Procedures

- **Business Income Tax Returns and Supporting Documents.** A final copy of business income tax returns and related correspondence with the IRS will be maintained permanently. Supportive tax records will be maintained for 7 years.

- **Employment Tax Records.** Employment tax records will be maintained for 4 years after the date taxes were due or were paid, whichever is later. These employment tax records include employer identification number, amounts and dates of wage and retirement payments and tax deposits, the names, addresses, social security numbers, dates of employment and occupations of employees and records of allocated tips and fringe benefits.

- **Business Asset Records.** Business asset records will be maintained in a safe deposit box until the property is sold or otherwise properly disposed.

- **Business Ledgers and Other Key Documents.** Major business documents, i.e. annual reports, corporate by-laws and amendments, Board of Director information, annual meeting minutes and business formation documents, will be retained on a permanent basis. Profit and loss and other financial statements will be retained on a permanent basis. Journal entries check registers; general business ledgers including accounts payable/receivable ledgers will be retained for 7 years. Invoices and expense reports will be retained for 7 years unless site visit/accreditation policy supersedes.

- **Human Resources Files.** Excluding employment tax records, files relating to current employees should be retained while they are working and for 7 years after a current or former employee has left or been terminated. This includes records of employee benefits, i.e. Simple IRA.
  - For job applicants, who were not hired, keep files for 3 years.
  - If an employee suffers an accident on the job, retain pertinent documentation for 7 years after that matter is resolved or 10 years after which any workers compensation benefits are paid or as mandated by OSHA.
  - If an employee lodges a discrimination claim, retain records for 4 years after the case is finally concluded.

- **Cancelled Checks.** Destroy paper copies after 7 years.

- **Bank Account and Credit Card Statements.** Retained detailed annual statements for 7 years. Dispose of underlying monthly statements after 24 months.
• **ABFSE File Maintenance.** For each accredited program the ABFSE office shall maintain on file at least the last two full accreditation and/or pre-accreditation reviews. This shall include the last two committee reports, periodic review reports, if any, institutional responses to reports, special reviews, if any, responses to stipulations, if any, and committee final actions. The file shall also contain the most recent Self study report. In addition, the written record of all decisions made throughout an institution's or program's affiliation with the COA regarding its candidacy, accreditation, and any substantive changes -- including all correspondence that is significantly related to those decisions -- will be maintained in the ABFSE office.

• ABFSE is not the repository of any current student files. However, ABFSE is responsible for academic records from certain closed institutions (for which ABFSE became repository of documents under Standard 10.5.3) and thus subject to FERPA guidelines. FERPA does not provide specific requirements for educational agencies and institutions regarding disposition or destruction of the data they collect or maintain themselves, other than requiring safeguard of FERPA-protected data from unauthorized disclosure, and not to destroy any education records if there is an outstanding request to inspect or review them.

• Student Scholarship applications and faculty credentials may contain personally identifiable information. Self study reports, Team reports, COA notes and minutes contain sensitive data. These data will be purged and/or destroyed at the conclusion of the useful life.