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## CHAPTER IX

# ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

### 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 Electronic and 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 Electronic and 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 Electronic and 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 Electronic and Distance Learning.

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2  
3 **STANDARD 1: SPONSORSHIP**

- 4 1.1 Accreditation is granted to programs within either single-purpose or multi-purpose sponsoring institutions.
- 5 1.2 The program/institution must provide evidence that it assumes responsibility for
- 6
- 7 1.2.1 curriculum content,
- 8 1.2.2 classroom teaching and clinical education,
- 9 1.2.3 appointment and evaluation of faculty,
- 10 1.2.4 policies and procedures for admission, and
- 11 1.2.5 awarding a diploma, certificate, or degree documenting completion of the program.
- 12
- 13 1.3 The program must provide evidence that clinical experiences assigned each student are educational in nature.
- 14
- 15 1.4 The sponsoring institution must provide, or arrange for the provision of, all portions of the required
- 16 curriculum including all
- 17
- 18 1.4.1 classroom, laboratory, clinical field experiences, and
- 19 1.4.2 services necessary to support the curriculum in funeral service education as specified in the
- 20 Standards.
- 21
- 22 1.5 The sponsoring institution must demonstrate evidence of sound financial support of the educational program
- 23 on a current and continuing basis.
- 24
- 25 1.6 The sponsoring institution must provide written evidence that it is approved by the appropriate governing
- 26 authority in which it is located, or within which it offers instruction, to award the diploma, certificate, or
- 27 degree for which it seeks accreditation.
- 28
- 29 1.7 In a program in which more than one institution or organization provides academic and clinical education,
- 30 the
- 31 sponsoring institution must provide evidence or properly executed written agreements describing the
- 32 responsibilities of the respective institution or organizations.
- 33
- 34 1.8 If a funeral service program is associated with, or financially sponsored by, an organization whose main
- 35 purpose is other than education, the sponsoring institution must provide written evidence of sufficient
- 36 separation between the host institution and the funeral service program to guarantee an effective,
- 37 independent, and objective learning environment.
- 38
- 39 1.9 See also Standard 5.5
- 40

41 **STANDARD 2: ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION**

- 42
- 43 2.1 The governing board must be the legally constituted group which holds the assets of the institution in trust.
- 44 It must be responsible for sustaining the institution, approving its objectives, and implementing and
- 45 controlling the program.
- 46
- 47 2.2 The authority and responsibility of each organizational component of the sponsoring institution (governing
- 48 board, campus and program administration, faculty, students) together with the processes by which they
- 49 function or interrelate, must be clearly described by means of a current constitution, by-laws, or some similar
- 50 means.
- 51
- 52 2.3 The administration of the institution and/or program must
- 53
- 54 2.3.1 provide educational leadership competent to establish conditions providing for good learning
- 55 opportunities for students, good working conditions for faculty, and good communication processes
- 56 both inside and outside of the institution/program;
- 57 2.3.2 provide management of resources in support of educational objectives;
- 58
- 59

- 1           2.3.3   define expectations and quality control requirements of all agencies providing off-campus
- 2                   instruction in the name of the institution; and
- 3           2.3.4   establish an expeditious process allowing for communication flow both downward and upward
- 4                   within the organization in order for the administration to assess the achievements of its goals and the
- 5                   needs of its constituents;
- 6
- 7   2.4    2.4.1   A single purpose institution offering only a program of funeral service education must be
- 8                   administered by a chief administrative officer, directly accountable only to the governing board for
- 9                   the management of the institution. All other employees must report directly, or indirectly, to this
- 10                   chief administrative officer.
- 11           2.4.2   This officer may also be a member of the teaching faculty, as long as the teaching load is reduced
- 12                   commensurate with administrative duties.
- 13
- 14   2.5    2.5.1   A funeral service program within a multi-purpose institution must be administered by a director
- 15                   who has been delegated responsibility for the program. All other employees assigned to the
- 16                   program must report directly or indirectly, to this person.
- 17           2.5.2   This officer may also be a member of the teaching faculty, as long as the teaching load is reduced
- 18                   commensurate with administrative duties.
- 19
- 20   2.6    2.6.1   The program administrator for a program in a multi-purpose institution or the institutional chief
- 21                   administrative officer for a single purpose institution must possess an academic background
- 22                   consistent with the position of leadership held. For those hired after May 1979, this will always
- 23                   involve at least the master's degree, within five years of the date of the initial full-time appointment
- 24                   in funeral service education, from a regionally accredited college or university.
- 25           2.6.2   For program administrators earning degrees in colleges or universities outside the United States,
- 26                   the institution awarding the degree must have fulfilled governmental standards which in the
- 27                   judgment of AACRO are acceptable or similar to those of the ABFSE.
- 28
- 29   2.7    Within program policies, provisions must be made for consideration of student views and judgments in
- 30           those matters in which students have direct and reasonable interest.
- 31
- 32   2.8    See also Standard 5.5
- 33

**STANDARD 3: AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

- 36   3.1    Each program in funeral service education must have as its central aim recognition of the importance of
- 37           funeral service education personnel as
- 38           3.1.1   members of a human services profession;
- 39           3.1.2   members of the community in which they serve;
- 40           3.1.3   participants in the relationship between bereaved families and those engaged in the funeral service
- 41                   profession;
- 42           3.1.4   professionals knowledgeable of and compliant with federal, state, provincial/territorial, and local
- 43                   regulatory guidelines in the geographic area where they practice as well as
- 44           3.1.5   professionals sensitive to the responsibility for public health, safety, and welfare in caring for
- 45                   human remains.
- 46
- 47   3.2    Each program must have at least the following objectives:
- 48
- 49           3.2.1   to enlarge the background and knowledge of students about the funeral service profession;
- 50           3.2.2   to educate students in every phase of funeral service and to help enable them to develop
- 51                   proficiency and skills necessary for the profession, as defined in the Preamble at the beginning
- 52                   of this chapter;
- 53           3.2.3   to educate students concerning the responsibilities of the funeral service profession to the
- 54                   community at large;
- 55           3.2.4   to emphasize high standards of ethical conduct;
- 56           3.2.5   to provide a curriculum at the post- secondary level of instruction; and
- 57           3.2.6   to encourage student and faculty research in the field of funeral service;
- 58
- 59

1 3.3 The aims and objectives of the program must be in the published documents relating to the funeral service  
2 program.  
3

4 3.4 The program must assess the achievement of its Aims and Objectives (see also Standard 11).  
5

#### 6 **STANDARD 4: ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES AND ETHICAL STANDARDS** 7

8 4.1 Each institution/program must conduct its business and academic activities in an ethical manner. In this  
9 regard, each institution program must  
10

11 4.1.1 publish and adhere to a personnel policy assuring equal employment opportunity for all qualified  
12 persons; maintain admissions, financial aid, and education services policies for students assuring  
13 equal consideration without regard to race, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status,  
14 or veterans status; and

15 4.1.2 insure that publications and advertising accurately portray the realities of the program/institution.  
16 The catalog of each institution must give as much information as possible to include entire  
17 curriculum and program of study containing at least the following:

18 4.1.2.a course names and identification numbers;

19 4.1.2.b summary descriptions and credit hours;

20 4.1.2.c requirements for admission;

21 4.1.2.d requirements and processes for withdrawal and graduation;

22 4.1.2.e academic calendars;

23 4.1.2.f grading policies;

24 4.1.2.g the requirement that all students must take the National Board Examination (administered  
25 by the International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards) prior to graduation; and

26 4.1.2.h financial policies for tuition, fees, and refunds.  
27

28 4.2 All practices and procedures must apply equally to all students.  
29

30 4.3 Any reference by a program to accreditation in catalogs, bulletins, or other official publications and  
31 communication or other media must read as follows  
32

33 The (name of the accredited program ) at (name of sponsoring institution) is accredited by the American  
34 Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE) 3414 Ashland Avenue, Suite G, St. Joseph, Missouri 64506  
35 (816) 233-3747. Web: [www.abfse.org](http://www.abfse.org)  
36

37 NOTE: The reference to accreditation must name the specific program accredited by the ABFSE. (This  
38 requirement is particularly important in those institutions offering other areas of instruction which are not  
39 accredited, or eligible for accreditation, by the ABFSE.)  
40

41 4.4 ABFSE accredited institutions or programs which choose to offer, in addition to one or more accredited  
42 programs, unaccreditable programs must comply with the following procedures:  
43

44 4.4.1 publications describing the unaccreditable program must contain the following information:

45 "This academic program is designed to meet specific state or professional needs. It is not accredited  
46 by the American Board of Funeral Service Education. Students graduating from this program are  
47 not eligible to take the National Board Examination or any state board examination for which  
48 graduation from an ABFSE accredited program is required."

49 4.4.2 In addition, the academic transcript for graduates of unaccreditable programs must carry the  
50 statement: "This academic program is designed to meet specific state or professional needs. It is  
51 not accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education. Students graduating from this  
52 program are not eligible to take the National Board Examination or any state board examination for  
53 which graduation from an ABFSE accredited program is required."  
54

55 4.5 Written policies must exist which ensure due process for students, faculty, and staff, including grievance  
56 procedures, clearly defined disciplinary policies, and sexual harassment policies.  
57  
58  
59

1 4.6 See also Standard 5.5  
2  
3

### 4 **STANDARD 5: FINANCE**

5 5.1 The institution/program must have financial resources which are adequate to provide instruction and facilities  
6 in compliance with this manual and to ensure graduation of each class accepted.  
7

8 5.2 The learning resources budget shall be adequate for proper support of the curriculum.  
9

10 5.3 Acceptable accounting practices must be employed and the most current audited financial statements must be  
11 provided. For departmental programs in comprehensive institutions which are regionally accredited,  
12 institutional compliance will be assumed. In such cases departmental budgets must reflect adequate financial  
13 support of the funeral service department. Budget development for the department must be in evidence.  
14

15 5.4 The financial accounting system for institutions must not be combined with financial affairs of any other  
16 organizations.  
17

18 5.5 Subpart B, Chapter VI, Title 34, Volume 3 (revised as of July 1, 2005) of the Code of Federal Regulations  
19 identifies and then divides the "Standards for Participation in Title IV," HEA Programs into six broad areas  
20 (this document is at Appendix F): (a) Program records, (b) Fiscal records, (c) Required records, (d) General  
21 records issues, (e) Record retention, and (f) Examination of records. (A copy of Appendix F is attached.)  
22

23 Single purpose institutions for which the ABFSE serves as "gatekeeper" must also demonstrate compliance  
24 with those accreditation standards which speak directly to their situations, particularly Standards 1  
25 (Sponsorship), 2 (Organization and Administration), 4 (Administrative Practices and Ethical Standards), and  
26 5 (Finance). These matters will be addressed in the Self-study and provisions made by the institution to  
27 have available appropriate records and information as indicated below.  
28

29 Recognizing the primary role of financial aid auditors with regard to ensuring compliance with Title IV,  
30 ABFSE visiting committees will limit their review under this standard to the following:  
31

- 32 1. A specific examination of the most recent financial aid audit. That review will be referenced in  
33 the visiting committee report, including any audit exceptions.
- 34 2. Through sampling methods, the visiting committee will confirm that the records identified in  
35 the regulation indicated above as Part a (Program records), Part b (Fiscal records), and Part c  
36 (Required records) are on file at the institution.
- 37 3. The visiting committee will ensure the institution has a process in place that assures compliance  
38 with Part d (general requirements on records availability), Part e (appropriate retention of  
39 records, and Part f (a policy on availability of records for inspection by those identified in the  
40 regulation.
- 41 4. The visiting committee will, using sampling methods, ensure that records noted above are  
42 maintained in acceptable form and available for inspection by appropriate parties.  
43

### 44 **STANDARD 6: CURRICULUM**

45  
46 6.1 The ABFSE recognizes the Associate Degree, or its equivalent, as the minimum educational standard for  
47 preparation for the funeral service profession.  
48

49 6.1.1 The program in Funeral service Education must consist of not less than 60 semester (90 quarter or  
50 the equivalent where credits are measured by a different means) credits.

51 6.1.2 The program must be spread over at least three semesters or four quarters or the equivalent where  
52 academic periods are measured by a different means.  
53

54 6.2 The program must have and follow a well-organized curriculum plan.  
55

56 6.2.1 The plan must follow a logical sequence and result in a diploma or degree appropriate to the length  
57 and depth of the curriculum.  
58

- 1 6.2.2 Semester or quarter credit hours must be assigned to all courses and apportioned appropriately.
- 2 6.2.3 A syllabus must be available for each course offered in the program. Each syllabus must include
- 3 written course objectives and must be distributed to students at the beginning of that course. The
- 4 course objectives must be reviewed on a continuing basis.
- 5 6.2.4 All required prerequisite courses must be clearly indicated in institutional publications.
- 6 6.2.5 The curriculum undertaken by funeral service education students must consist of at least two
- 7 components: general education coursework and courses in Funeral Service Education (the "major").
- 8 6.2.6 At least 25% of the total credits must be in general education, non-technical courses.
- 9
- 10 6.3 The manner of inclusion of ABFSE stipulated content is left to the individual program to decide, provided
- 11 the minimum content as stipulated in this Standard on Curriculum is included. Some of the current ABFSE
- 12 content areas may be counted toward the general education component, as long as they are not counted
- 13 toward any other portion of the ABFSE requirements. The minimum requirements for the Funeral Service
- 14 Education program must include:
- 15
- 16 6.3.1 **Public Health and Technical** 14 minimum semester (21 quarter) credits. The curriculum must
- 17 involve a distribution of study in the following content areas:
- 18 6.3.1.a Chemistry,
- 19 6.3.1.b Microbiology and Public Health,
- 20 6.3.1.c Anatomy,
- 21 6.3.1.d Pathology,
- 22 6.3.1.e Restorative Art, and
- 23 6.3.1.f Embalming.
- 24
- 25 6.4 The **Embalming** requirement includes the following:
- 26
- 27 6.4.1 Embalming clinical must consist of a student actively participating in at least ten (10) embalmings.
- 28 These Embalming cases may either be completed in an on-campus setting or at an off-campus
- 29 instructional site.
- 30
- 31 There shall be no more than five (5) students per case receiving credit for a specific embalming.
- 32 There may be additional students observing; however, they may not interrupt or interfere with the
- 33 embalming process or distract the preceptor while the embalming is in process.
- 34
- 35 6.4.2 Active participation means hands-on learning and must include, at a minimum, the following tasks:
- 36
- 37 6.4.2.a raising vessels,
- 38 6.4.2.b mixing fluids,
- 39 6.4.2.c injecting fluids,
- 40 6.4.2.d aspiration,
- 41 6.4.2.e suturing incisions, and
- 42 6.4.2.f posing features.
- 43
- 44 6.4.3 Credit for individual cases will be allowed for only those students actively participating: No
- 45 embalming case credit shall be given for those students observing the case. The number of
- 46 observing students must be limited to ten (10) unless a video system or amphitheater is large enough
- 47 to accommodate additional students without interfering with those students actively participating.
- 48
- 49 6.4.4 Embalming case reports validating the tasks performed by the student are required. Each case
- 50 report must include:
- 51
- 52 6.4.4.a details of embalming treatments,
- 53 6.4.4.b case analysis, as well as types and quantities of embalming fluids used,
- 54 6.4.4.c a detailed list of the student's participation in the case, and
- 55 6.4.4.d a form that is uniform in nature as adopted by each program which is signed by
- 56 both the student and preceptor.
- 57
- 58
- 59

- 1 6.4.5 The program must provide substantive evidence of the technical competence of each graduating  
2 student. Such certification must be performed by a qualified faculty member as defined in  
3 Standards 7.2.1, 7.2.2, and 7.2.4a.
- 4 6.4.6 Embalming cases may be completed in an on-campus setting or at an off-campus  
5 instructional site.
- 6 6.4.7 If preceptors are used, there must be an identified certification process in place and proper  
7 documentation that each preceptor has been properly oriented about the school's requirements  
8 concerning knowledge base, competency, and evaluation of student procedures and criteria. The  
9 training must include an on- or off-campus workshop and/or a manual pertaining to the training and  
10 methods of evaluation. In addition, preceptors must meet the requirements of Standard 7.2.4a and  
11 be certified as indicated in Standard 7.3.
- 12 6.4.8 Programs utilizing an off-campus instructional site must conduct occasional visits to off-  
13 campus sites to assure compliance and consistency.
- 14 6.4.9 Signed affiliation agreements must be maintained by each program. The agreements must include a  
15 stated process for interrupting the clinical experience and recourse dismissal of a student from  
16 clinical experience and a clear definition of what is to be expected of the preceptor and what is  
17 provided by the program.
- 18 6.4.10 In addition, each student must participate in an on-campus course in which the application of  
19 Restorative Art principles is practiced in a laboratory setting.
- 20 6.4.11 Embalming case reports must be retained for at least seven years.
- 21
- 22 6.5.1 **Business Management** 14 minimum semester (21 quarter) credits. The curriculum must involve a  
23 distribution of study in the following content areas:  
24 6.5.1.a Accounting,  
25 6.5.1.b Funeral Home Management and Merchandising,  
26 6.5.1.c Computer Applications,  
27 6.5.1.d Funeral Directing, and  
28 6.5.1.e Small Business Management.
- 29
- 30 6.6.1 **Social Sciences/Humanities** 8 minimum semester (12 quarter) credits. The curriculum must involve a  
31 distribution of study in the following content areas:  
32 6.6.1.a Dynamics of Grief,  
33 6.6.1.b Counseling,  
34 6.6.1.c Sociology of Funeral Service,  
35 6.6.1.d History of Funeral Service, and  
36 6.6.1.e Communication Skills (oral and/or written).
- 37
- 38 6.7.1 **Legal, Ethical, Regulatory** 3 minimum semester (4 quarter) credits. The curriculum must involve study  
39 in the following content areas:  
40 6.7.1.a Mortuary Law,  
41 6.7.1.b Business Law, and  
42 6.7.1.c Ethics.
- 43
- 44 6.8.1 **General Education** Each associate degree student must earn a minimum of 60 (90 quarter) credits; each  
45 bachelor degree student must earn a minimum of 120 (180 quarter) credits of which at least 25% of the total  
46 credits required by the program for earning a degree must be in general education, non-technical, courses. In  
47 addition, each student must complete sufficient general education credits to meet graduation requirements for  
48 the Associate Degree (or its equivalent) or Baccalaureate Degree as described by each state or  
49 province/territory and institution.
- 50
- 51 6.9.1 Each program must append Form B-6, "Curriculum Distribution by ABFSE Content Area," to its Self-study.
- 52
- 53 6.10.1 Instruction must be at a level generally held commensurate with postsecondary education and directed  
54 toward the individual growth of each student in areas such as independent thought, resourcefulness, and  
55 scientific inquiry.
- 56 6.11.1 Students must be evaluated at reasonable intervals and kept informed of their progress in a timely fashion.
- 57  
58  
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3 **STANDARD 7: FACULTY**

- 4 7.1 The faculty must be adequate in  
5 7.1.1 number,  
6 7.1.2 education,  
7 7.1.3 competence, and  
8 7.1.4 experience to implement effectively the program of instruction.
- 9 7.2 Members of the teaching faculty must be qualified in accordance with certain degree and professional  
10 requirements, as follows:  
11 7.2.1 All full- or part-time faculty initially appointed after September 1, 1969, as funeral service  
12 educators must have a bachelor's or higher degree from a regionally accredited college or university.  
13 7.2.2 As of May 1, 1979, all newly- and re-appointed full-time faculty must earn a master's degree from a  
14 regionally accredited college or university within five years of their initial appointment date.  
15 Faculty who fail to meet the five-year requirement may not be allowed to teach until the degree is  
16 awarded. For faculty earning degrees in colleges or universities outside the United States, the  
17 institution awarding the degree must have met degree standards which in the judgment of AACRO  
18 are acceptable or similar to those of ABFSE.  
19 7.2.3 The only exception to the above is in the category of laboratory assistant, guest lecturer, clinical  
20 instructor, preceptor, or comparable positions. Individuals in such categories must serve under the  
21 direct supervision of a qualified member of the faculty, as above.  
22  
23 7.2.4 **In addition** to above degree requirements, faculty in specific areas must be meet the following  
24 criteria:  
25 7.2.4.a a qualified faculty member in embalming is one who holds a valid license that entitles  
26 him/her to practice embalming in the state in which he/she is teaching, who has had  
27 sufficient specialized training and at least one year of experience as an embalmer, and  
28 who has graduated from an institution of funeral service education accredited by the  
29 American Board or its predecessor or, for programs outside the U.S., has graduated from  
30 a post-secondary funeral service program equivalent to ABFSE-accredited programs;  
31 7.2.4.b a qualified faculty member in mortuary management is one who has graduated from an  
32 institution of funeral service education accredited by the American Board or its predecessor  
33 or, for programs outside the U.S., from a post-secondary funeral service program  
34 equivalent to ABFSE accredited programs, holds a funeral director's license, or its legal  
35 equivalent, and has had sufficient specialized training and experience in funeral service  
36 practice to enable him/her to give proper instruction;  
37 7.2.4.c a qualified faculty member in restorative art is one who has graduated from an institution  
38 of funeral service education accredited by the American Board or its predecessor, or for  
39 programs outside the U.S., from a post-secondary funeral service program equivalent to  
40 ABFSE accredited programs;  
41 7.2.4.d a qualified faculty member in other required or elective courses is one who has sufficient  
42 specialized education or experience in these subjects to enable proper instruction to be  
43 provided;  
44 7.2.4.e all personnel serving as off-campus preceptors must be licensed as Funeral Directors,  
45 Embalmers, or both, and, after January 1, 1989, embalming preceptors must be graduates  
46 of ABFSE accredited programs or, for programs outside the U.S., graduates of a post-  
47 secondary funeral service program equivalent to ABFSE accredited programs.  
48  
49 7.3 Preceptor credentials must be certified in one of the following ways by the program:  
50  
51 7.3.1 Have on file an official transcript from the accredited funeral service institution from which the  
52 preceptor graduated plus a copy of his or her state license;  
53 7.3.2 Have on file a copy of the preceptor's license from the State Board of Funeral Service and  
54 Embalming (if the state requires graduation from an ABFSE accredited program)  
55 7.3.3 Have on file a copy of (or be able to provide access to) verification from the State web site that the  
56 preceptor is licensed in the state (if the state required graduation from an ABFSE accredited  
57 program) with the name of the preceptor and date of the issuance of the license maintained by the  
58 program.  
59  
60

- 1 7.4 The program must give evidence of active development of high quality faculty, and the involvement of the  
2 faculty in the conduct of the academic program including maintaining the standards and conditions pertaining  
3 to instruction and research.  
4
- 5 7.5 Instructional support for faculty, in the form of library facilities, office facilities, development leave (with or  
6 without pay) involvement in program planning, etc., must be in evidence.  
7
- 8 7.6 Student-teacher ratios must be available for review and must not exceed 30:1 overall (full-time equivalent per  
9 federal/state guidelines/definitions) in the funeral service program, no more than 25:1 headcount for  
10 laboratory sessions, and 5:1 headcount for each clinical embalming case. No instructor may supervise more  
11 than 3 embalming cases at any one time.  
12

### 13 **STANDARD 8: FACILITIES**

- 15 8.1 Classrooms, laboratories, and other areas used for instruction must be properly equipped, adequate in  
16 number and size, and supplied for quality instruction to support the aims and objectives of the program and to  
17 meet the needs of students. For funeral service education the following is required:  
18 8.1.1 classrooms and laboratories must be properly lighted, heated, ventilated, cleaned, and furnished  
19 with, or have available, the equipment and supplies necessary for lectures to enable the educational  
20 program to be carried out;  
21 8.1.2 laboratories must be furnished with sufficient equipment and supplies to permit students to work in  
22 small groups or individually. Sufficient equipment and supplies must be available to carry on all  
23 research and instruction mentioned in program/institution publications. Equipment and supplies  
24 must be replaced as required and upgraded to maintain currency with funeral service practice.  
25 8.1.3 All facilities must satisfy federal, state, provincial/territorial, and local regulations.  
26 8.1.4 Each program must maintain an on-campus embalming/preparation space either fully functional or  
27 for demonstration purposes. The embalming space must be of sufficient size to accommodate at  
28 least one preparation table. It must have an electric embalming machine, instruments, and real or  
29 simulated chemicals. In the case of a demonstration lab, it must adequately reflect an actual  
30 functional embalming laboratory.  
31
- 32 8.2 Off-Campus Instructional Sites: Instruction at off-campus locations is generally in the form of practicum,  
33 internship, or embalming instruction. Whenever students receive program credit for work carried out off  
34 the main campus, the following facilities requirements must be in effect:  
35 8.2.1 funeral homes in which off-campus instruction takes must be licensed by the appropriate  
36 authorities;  
37 8.2.2 off-campus instruction must take place in locations which offer adequate learning space for  
38 students involved. In the case of instruction in embalming, preparation room facilities must be of  
39 sufficient size to allow for satisfactory participation by each student involved;  
40 8.2.3 the program must have written affiliation agreements with each off-campus instructional site.  
41 Each agreement must specify the responsibilities of the program/institution and the instructional  
42 site relative to supervision and instruction of students and liability. Where appropriate, and in  
43 accordance with institutional policies, personnel at the instructional site may be given adjunct  
44 faculty appointments by the institution; and  
45 8.2.4 all facilities must satisfy federal, state, and local regulations.  
46

### 47 **STANDARD 9: LIBRARY / LEARNING RESOURCES**

- 49 9.1 Learning resources, including computer resources, collections of books, periodicals, and reference materials  
50 must be both sufficient in scope and readily accessible to students to provide adequate support to the  
51 Funeral Service Education curriculum.  
52
- 53 9.2 Computer resources include computer assisted instruction materials as well as access to internet resources.  
54 The learning resources program should provide access to external computer databases.  
55
- 56 9.3 Since quality and availability affect program outcomes, learning resources must be accessible to students  
57 outside of regular classroom hours. The program must require student utilization of these resources.  
58  
59

- 1 9.3.1 An acquisition policy relevant to Funeral Service Education must be in place and funeral service
- 2 personnel must be involved with the annual acquisitions related to this program.
- 3 9.3.2 Sufficient space must be devoted to learning resources to provide for the needs of students in
- 4 Funeral Service Education and must be accessible during reasonable hours and administered by
- 5 qualified staff.
- 6 9.3.3 Learning resources must be catalogued according to a recognized standard method.

7  
8 **STANDARD 10: STUDENTS**  
9

- 10 10.1 Admissions: The admissions requirement for the program must be publicly stated in institutional
- 11 publications including the catalog and must be administered as published.

12  
13 The program/institution must recognize and follow ethical practices in student admissions and other student-

14 related matters and so advise the public by publishing in its program information either its own statement of

15 ethical practices which must include key elements of widely recognized and available documents describing

16 such practices or specifically referring in program materials to its adherence to recognized documents on

17 ethical practice (e.g. documents available from the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and

18 Admissions Officers [AACRAO] and from several of the regional accrediting agencies. At Appendix I is a

19 representative document from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education).

20  
21 In addition to the above, the following Standards must be met.

- 22
- 23 10.1.1 The minimum educational requirement for admission to a funeral service education program must
- 24 be graduation from an accredited four-year high school or its equivalent, such as a recognized
- 25 G.E.D. or other evidence of academic achievement such as a post-secondary transcript with at least
- 26 nine credits, exclusive of developmental courses, and a satisfactory grade point average from a
- 27 regionally accredited post-secondary institution.
- 28
- 29 10.1.2 No program shall enroll any student until evidence is supplied by the applicant that the above
- 30 minimum standard has been met. Such evidence must be
- 31 10.1.2.a Transcript of high school or college work, received by mail directly from the institution
- 32 from which the credits were received. If an institution/program accepts internet transcripts
- 33 it must have a system in place to verify that such transmissions are secure and an accurate
- 34 representation of student credits and grades, or
- 35
- 36 10.1.2.b Evidence that the applicant has a certificate (such as a G.E.D.) equivalent to the high
- 37 school diploma. Such certificate must be certified by the principal of a recognized high
- 38 school, the state department of education or its equivalent, or any other authorized and
- 39 recognized authority in the state or province/territory, or
- 40
- 41 10.1.2.c In the case of applicants from outside the United States, a statement from a recognized
- 42 education authority certifying that the applicant has completed formal educational
- 43 requirements at least equivalent to high school graduation in this country.

- 44
- 45 10.2 Attendance, Promotion, Graduation

- 46 10.2.1 Program/institution policies regarding grading and academic progression must be clearly stated
- 47 and provided to students in advance. Graduation requirements must be stated in official program/
- 48 institution catalogs.
- 49 10.2.2 Attendance regulations must be uniformly applicable to all students. This must include clear
- 50 statements as to attendance expectations, if any, as well as any basis for separation from the
- 51 institution of students who violate such.
- 52 10.2.3 Graduation must ensure certification that all program and college requirements have been met.
- 53 10.2.4 Only degrees or diplomas for which the institution has received state or equivalent authorization
- 54 may be awarded, unless on an honorary basis.

- 1 10.3 Student Health and Safety  
2  
3 10.3.1 Each accredited funeral service education program must have written policies and procedures  
4 ensuring safety of its students.  
5 10.3.2 Each accredited funeral service education program must have health services information  
6 available.  
7  
8 10.4 Guidance and Student Involvement  
9  
10 10.4.1 Students must have access to services for personal and/or academic problems. These must include  
11 services covering academic difficulty, veterans affairs, housing (housing itself does not need to be  
12 provided by the institution or program) academic advising, conduct, part-and full-time employment,  
13 licensure requirements, personal problems, and post graduation placement.  
14 10.4.2 Extracurricular activities intended to supplement the funeral service instructional program shall be  
15 offered and must be in the form of lectures, student group activities related to funeral service, field  
16 trips, and other such activities which cannot take place in the formal classroom setting.  
17 10.4.3 Each funeral service education program must provide opportunities for student involvement in  
18 program and institutional governance.  
19  
20 10.5 Records and Reports  
21  
22 10.5.1 Each institution/program must have in operation adequate filing systems for student academic  
23 records. This must include policies insuring maintenance of student academic records in  
24 perpetuity and ensuring that such will be secured from fire, theft, alteration, and damage.  
25 10.5.2 Student academic transcripts must include indications of the quality of the student's work in each  
26 subject studied and  
27 the extent of each course, expressed in either semester or quarter credits. Grading must be  
28 explained on the transcript.  
29 10.5.3 In the event a program ceases to function, assurance must be made to guarantee maintenance of the  
30 student academic records in perpetuity. The American Board of Funeral Service Education is  
31 available to serve as repository for academic records for programs which cannot otherwise  
32 guarantee such.  
33

34 **STANDARD 11: PROGRAM PLANNING AND EVALUATION / ASSESSMENT**  
35

- 36 11.1 The program must have a continuous system of program planning and assessment in order to measure its  
37 effectiveness.  
38 11.1.1 The concept of program planning and evaluation has at its core a documented plan which  
39 incorporates guidelines, procedures, and methodologies that assess the program's achievement of  
40 stated aims and objectives and measures the attainment of expected instructional outcomes.  
41 11.1.1.a The plan must be directly related to the program's aims and objectives.  
42 11.1.1.b The plan must be written and must be approved by appropriate administrative authority.  
43 11.1.1.c The plan must contain provisions for periodic review and, as necessary, revision.  
44 11.1.2 A program must establish a comprehensive, ongoing system of program planning and assessment  
45 that ensures instructional quality and documents student success. The system must include, at a  
46 minimum, the following.  
47  
48 11.1.2.a Provisions for collecting and analyzing data.  
49 11.1.2.b Opportunities for continuous feedback by students, faculty, and other constituents.  
50 11.1.2.c Documentation of how the assessment results were used to improve instructional quality.  
51  
52 11.2 If the program has been evaluated previously by ABFSE, the program must document what has been done  
53 since the last review to correct any deficiencies that may have been cited in reference to the Standards.  
54  
55 11.3 The system of program planning and evaluation must produce documented evidence that, as a minimum,  
56 includes administering, analyzing, and retaining  
57  
58  
59

- 1 11.3.1 regularly scheduled student evaluations of courses and faculty;  
2 11.3.2 regularly scheduled supervisory evaluation of faculty and program administrators;  
3 11.3.3 results of annual surveys of graduates and employers to include satisfaction with instructional  
4 quality and preparation for employment; and  
5 11.3.4 methods used to measure the attainment of expected instructional outcomes;  
6  
7 11.4 For at least seven years, the program must maintain, calculate and explain how it utilized for program  
8 planning and assessment purposes, the following statistics  
9  
10 11.4.1 graduation rates (students graduating vs. those beginning);  
11 11.4.2 job placement rates (students placed vs. number graduating); and  
12 11.4.3 pass rate on the National Board Examination (NBE).  
13  
14 11.5 After January 1, 2004, each accredited program in funeral service education must require that each funeral  
15 service student take the National Board Examination (NBE) as a requirement for graduation.  
16  
17 11.6 11.6.1 Programs must maintain at least a 60% annual student pass rate of first-time takers on the NBE for  
18 each calendar year. The annual passage rate will be determined using only the scores of students  
19 who have taken both the Arts and Sciences parts of the NBE and only the first attempt on each part  
20 will be used during the calendar year. A student must pass both parts of the NBE on the first  
21 attempt to be considered as passing. Any other failure, partial failure or non-attempt will be  
22 considered as failing.  
23  
24 Please see policy on and procedure for requesting exceptions at Appendix J.  
25  
26 11.6.2 A program with a score below 60% in any calendar year must submit a report to the Committee on  
27 Accreditation by March 1 of the following year. The report must analyze the reason(s) for the low  
28 average score and explain plans for remedying the deficiency. Failure to submit a satisfactory report  
29 could lead to negative action by the Committee on Accreditation.  
30 11.6.3 A program with less than a 60% pass rate on the NBE in any calendar year (annual  
31 scores are generally reported in February of the following year) will immediately be placed on  
32 Warning and advised that if it does not increase the passage rate for the following calendar year to at  
33 least 60% it will be placed on Probation and, further, that if the passage rate is not increased to a  
34 minimum of 60% within twenty-four months that the program will lose its accreditation unless it  
35 can show Good Cause why accreditation should not be withdrawn.  
36 11.6.4. An institution with sporadic pass rates will be reviewed and may be subject to comparable  
37 action.  
38 11.6.5 For programs offering courses via Distance Learning, National Board Examination scores must be  
39 broken out to differentiate between those students who take less than 50% of their courses via  
40 traditional methods and those who take 50% or more of their courses via Distance Learning. The  
41 passage rates of both groups of students (i.e., traditional on-campus and Distance Learning) will be  
42 considered both combined and separately in all accreditation actions by the COA.  
43  
44 11.7 11.7.1 The annual passage rate of first-time takers on the National Board Examination (NBE) for the  
45 most recent three (3) year period will be posted annually on the ABFSE web site by the Executive  
46 Director. In addition, the official scores reported by the ICFSEB must also be made available by the  
47 program or institution in print form for distribution to the general public and students. Programs  
48 must maintain at least a 60% annual student pass rate of first time takers on the NBE. (The scores  
49 for the calendar year 2004 were first to be posted.  
50 11.7.2 The NBE scores will be posted with the following information: number of first-time takers;  
51 number of first-time takers who passed both parts of the NBE; and the percentage of first-time  
52 takers who passed both parts of the NBE.  
53  
54 11.8 11.8.1 Accredited programs must include in publicly promulgated documents and electronic formats the  
55 following statement: "The annual passage rate of first-time takers on the National Board  
56 Examination (NBE) for the most recent three-year period for this institution and all ABFSE  
57 accredited funeral service education programs is posted on the ABFSE web site (www.abfse.org)."  
58  
59

1 11.8.2 Institutions failing to comply with this requirement will be placed on probation immediately.  
2 Continued non-compliance could lead to the removal of accreditation.  
3

4 11.9 The requirements in Standard 11 in regard to the compliance of accredited institutions become effective on  
5 July 1, 2005, except those in 11.6.3 which became effective for scores reported in 2006 and later.  
6

7 11.10 Effective October 2007, in addressing Standard 11.1.2, 11.3, and 11.4 in its Self-study, each  
8 program/institution must also indicate what actions are being taken if attrition rates, graduation rates, or job  
9 placement rates are lower than the national averages for those rates for ABFSE/COA accredited funeral  
10 service/mortuary science programs/institutions. (The data will be collected annually from each  
11 program/institution and the averages will be published annually by the ABFSE beginning in October 2009.)  
12

13 Each Visiting Committee will review the discussion in the Self-study and examine any resulting issues and  
14 assess to what extent the program/institution is taking effective action.  
15

16 The COA will consider the Self-study discussion and the Visiting Committee report relative to this Standard  
17 as it makes accreditation decisions regarding the program/institution.  
18

19 In addition, the COA will, on an annual basis, examine attrition rates, graduation rates, and job placement  
20 rates for all accredited programs/institutions and may require special reports from any where the data indicate  
21 problems may exist. If it determines it appropriate to do so, the COA may also take additional action in the  
22 form of stipulations, requiring special reports, scheduling site visits, placing a program/institution on  
23 probation, removing of accreditation, etc.  
24

## 25 **STANDARD 12: DEFAULT RATES IN THE STUDENT LOAN PROGRAMS UNDER TITLE IV and** 26 **COMPLIANCE WITH TITLE IV PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES** 27

28 (Only single-purpose, non-regionally accredited, funeral service institutions  
29 which participate in Title IV Higher Education Act programs must respond)  
30

31 12.1 The institution must present Default Rates for the Title IV Student Loan Program for the years since the last  
32 accreditation review, as reported to the college by the US Department of Education.  
33

34 12.2 For institutions in which rates are above the federal guidelines, plans to bring rates into compliance must be  
35 presented.  
36

37 12.3 The institution must demonstrate compliance with its obligations under Title IV, including results of  
38 compliance audits, program reviews, and the like.  
39

40 12.4 See also Standard 5.5  
41

## 42 **STANDARD 13: RECORD OF STUDENT COMPLAINTS** 43

44 13.1 All student complaints about the program, submitted in writing since the last accreditation review, must be  
45 available for review.  
46

47 13.2 With each written complaint, the program must file a written response, or demonstrate resolution, of the  
48 complaint.  
49

## 50 **STANDARD 14: PROGRAM LENGTH, TUITION, AND FEES MUST RELATE TO SUBJECT MATTER** 51

52 (Only single-purpose, non-regionally accredited, funeral service institutions,  
53 which participate in Title IV Higher Education Act programs, must respond)  
54

55 4.1 The Institution must demonstrate that the subject matter taught relates reasonably to tuition and fees  
56 charged and to length of the program.  
57  
58  
59

