



Northampton Community College

**Funeral Service Education**  
**Associate in Applied Science Degree**  
**Audit**  
**2009 - 2014**

**External Auditor:**

**American Board of Funeral Service Education**  
**Evaluation Team Visitation**  
**October 19-21, 2014**

**Audit Prepared By:**

**Tony L. Moore, Director of Funeral Service Education**  
**Dr. Carolyn Bortz, Dean of Allied Health & Science**

This report is presented to the Board of Trustees in lieu of the traditional Academic Audit report due to accreditation status of this Allied Health program. Funeral Service Education (FSED) is accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE). This accreditation process requires an extensive periodic program evaluation (annually, with a complete self-study report every seven years). This accreditation process is based on twelve standards established by the accrediting agency. The FSED program completed this self-study process during this academic year and submitted the self-study report to the ABFSE in September 2014. A site team, representing the ABFSE, conducted a three-day on-site review of the program on October 19 – 21, 2014. The site team report is attached to this document. **(Appendix D)** Highlights and excerpts are summarized in this report.

## **Program Purpose**

Funeral Service Education is a prime example of the college's willingness to offer diverse programs that meet special needs in the community and region. FSED is one of only 58 programs in North America providing education for funeral directors. The associate degree has been established as the national minimum standard for licensure. The practice of funeral service in Pennsylvania is regulated by the State Board of Funeral Directors, and like most states, a one-year resident internship is required following completion of the associates degree.

The FSED program has been one that distinguishes the college and has had a reputation of providing excellent education for funeral service practitioners. The program was initiated in 1976 after considerable investigation and deliberation with funeral directors in the region, funeral service education officials, sponsoring school districts and the public-at-large. For over thirty years funeral service has been served well by Northampton Community College. The administration, advisory, and faculty have been amenable to the many changes taking place in the profession and will continue to remain a leader in funeral service education.

## **Curriculum (Appendices A & B)**

The curriculum underwent minor revisions during this audit period. The revisions were based on National Board Exam (NBE) results, adjustments required for acceptance into the funeral core and to establish a cohort system. The American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE) requires a 60% minimum passage rate for the NBE. The NBE passage rate for 2013 fell below the required minimum. To remedy this deficiency, FUNS 280 Funeral Service Education Comprehensive Review was developed. Students are required to register for this course during the spring semester prior to graduation. Approval was given for the following courses to score a minimum of "C" in order to be accepted into the Funeral Service Education program: ACCT110 Financial Accounting I, BIOS160 Human Biology, BIOS 202 Microbiology for Allied Health, BUSA152 Business Law I, CHEM135 Chemistry of Life, CISC101 Introduction to computers

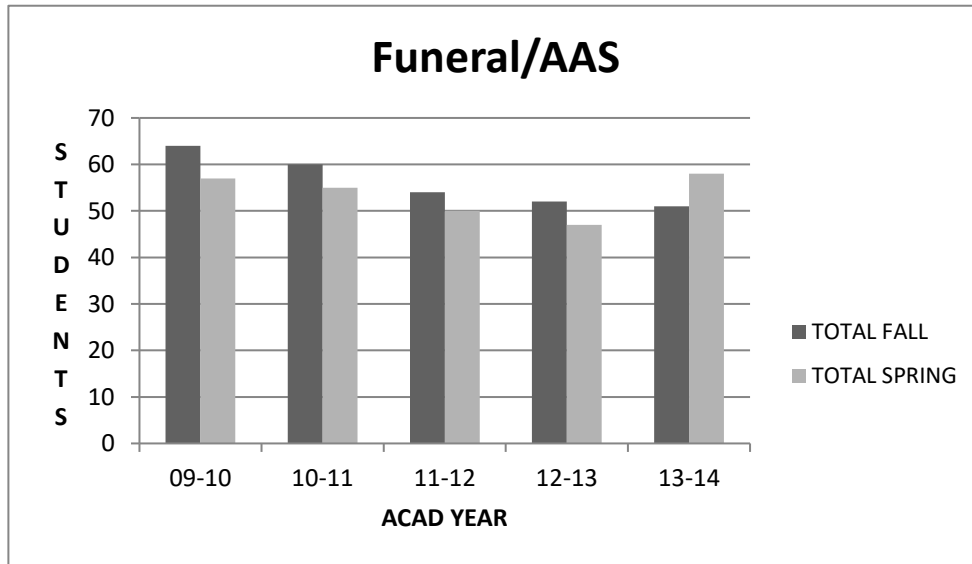
and PSYC221 Responding to the Bereaved. The purpose of this requirement is to ensure that students master the content in these courses, which are tested on the NBE. These courses and their required grade were also approved as a prerequisite for FUNS101 Principles of Funeral Service and FUNS102 Introduction to Funeral Service to improve student success in the major.

A minor revision was made to the course title for FUNS 203. The course title was changed from General Pathology to Pathology for Funeral Service. Pennsylvania law requires funeral students to complete sixty (60) hours of general education courses before beginning funeral core courses. Adjustments were made to insure students complete this requirement before being accepted into the program. In addition to the PA law, the ABFSE began requiring programs to establish a cohort model in order to follow students from acceptance into the FSED program through graduation.

## Enrollments

The enrollments in the program have remained consistent during this audit cycle. These levels align with the current staffing in the program.

<b>Funeral/AAS</b>						
<b>FSED</b>						
	<b>ACAD YR</b>	<b>09-10</b>	<b>10-11</b>	<b>11-12</b>	<b>12-13</b>	<b>13-14</b>
<b>FALL</b>						
FULL-TIME		55	45	46	41	43
PART-TIME		9	15	8	11	8
<b>TOTAL FALL</b>		<b>64</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>SPRING</b>						
FULL-TIME		51	40	40	38	40
PART-TIME		6	15	10	9	18
<b>TOTAL SPRING</b>		<b>57</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>58</b>



### Program Costs (Appendix C)

Total number of FTEs for the program has gone from 78.31 in 2010 to 60.88 in 2014, a reduction of 22% over the past five years. This aligns with the slight dip in enrollment discussed above. The total costs for the program reached a low in 2012 and then rebounded to slightly less than 2010 levels in 2014 at \$432,377. The direct instructional costs for the five year audit cycle have remained virtually the same.

During that same time frame, the total program income and total program costs have remained stable. Income per FTE increased from \$5,830 in 2010 to \$6,205 in 2014. In each year the income per FTE consistently exceeded the cost per FTE. The program ranks 24<sup>th</sup> among all programs in total cost to the college, down from 13<sup>th</sup> in 2010.

### FSED ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGETS (WRE 5-1)

07/08	\$208,049
08/09	179,678
09/10	184,408
10/11	196,723
11/12	176,791
12/13	167,443
13/14	195,313

## Outcomes and Assessments

Following each graduating class, employers are surveyed regarding the quality of preparation of program graduates. Surveys reflect that employers are highly satisfied with the quality of preparation of the program's graduates. Employers commented on surveys regarding the need for more business preparedness in areas of management and marketing. In response, the curriculum was modified, changing a "free" elective to a business elective.

NATIONAL BOARD EXAM RESULT 2010 - 2014			
	# Takers	# Passed	% Passed
2010 Arts	22	20	90%
2010 Science	21	19	90%
2011 Arts	27	23	85%
2011 Science	27	18	67%
2012 Arts	16	13	81%
2012 Science	16	16	100%
2013 Arts	21	13	62%
2013 Science	21	10	48%
2014 Arts	22	19	86%
2014 Science	22	19	86%

The FSED program uses board results (NBE and state) as an indication of the efficacy of instruction. If deficiencies in board sub-tests become evident, the particular course represented by the sub-test is reviewed against the ABFSE outline and adjustments are made accordingly. Deficiency in the NBE board results for 2013 indicated the need for a review/capstone course. This course has been approved and will be required beginning in the 2014-15 school year. Applicable ABFSE outlines are also provided to instructors outside FSED for use in instructional design. The program director meets periodically with those instructors to review the content of the courses and the outlines. General board results correlated to a particular course are discussed with non-funeral service core faculty, especially with instructors in science (i.e., microbiology and anatomy) on an annual basis. Board results are discussed as they are received on a case-by-case basis during the program's monthly cluster meetings.

### Funeral Service Education Assessment Project:

An assessment was conducted to determine if students were able to perform selected embalming tasks after practicing the tasks in either the on-campus lab or field study environment.

Assessment Method	Results	Recommendations/Action Plan
<p>Each student, involved in field study and on campus clinical lab, was evaluated on embalming tasks performed during the fall semester 2013. Each student was re-evaluated during the spring 2014 semester on the same tasks performed to determine if the student had made significant improvement from the previous evaluation.</p> <p>Students were given 4 tasks to be evaluated: making incision, raising vessels for the procedure, cavity aspiration and injection, and completion of an embalming case report</p>	<p>During the fall semester, 75% of campus clinical embalming students were performing the four tasks evaluated at a satisfactory level. During this same semester only 50% of the field study students were performing at a satisfactory level. The anticipated level of achievement for the final assessment was that 100% of students would be competent to embalm an entire case if called upon to do so. Results from the final assessment from both the on-campus clinical and field study students indicated that 100% of them were able to satisfactorily (scoring a minimum of X out X on the rubric) perform all four of the tasks assessed as part of this project. The goal was met.</p>	<p>The change that we would like to make is that <u>all</u> first semester students participate in on-campus embalming labs. This would allow for consistent levels of instruction and practice opportunities for students. Students would be encouraged to take field study during the second semester. By front-end loading the embalming skill development, the clinical instructor can be assured students going off site for field study in second semester are ready to perform the tasks at a level of second semester.</p> <p>Implementing changes will not happen overnight. This change will require a plan for resources to support the increase in on-campus labs. The department will work with the Dean to plan these changes. In the short term, meetings and professional development of the field study site coordinators will be conducted to discuss these results and encourage more student participation in embalming cases in the field.</p>

## Faculty

A number of faculty and staff changes have been made since the previous audit report. The changes include: retirement of Richard Trexler, (1976-2007); employment of Justin Huey as instructor (2008) and his resignation (2010); Patricia A. Werner was hired as an adjunct instructor (2011), appointed full-time instructor (2012), interim program director (2012-2013) and reappointed full-time instructor (2013); death of program director, John Lunsford (2012); Jennifer Krumrine, Ph.D. was hired as interim instructor (2012-2013); and Tony L. Moore was appointed program director (2013).

The FSE Department at NCC employs two full time faculty members (a Program Director and one faculty), who are responsible for teaching all funeral service education classes. The Team was very impressed with the dedication and commitment of the FSE faculty members and how they both appear to be interested in the development of the Program with technology. In discussions with first year students, it is apparent that the students feel they are getting a quality education.

## Discussion and Conclusions

The strengths of Northampton Community College and the Funeral Service Program are in the students, faculty and staff, and the significant support from both the college administration and funeral service community at large. The self-study process revealed the high level of institutional commitment to students, their academic success, and excellence in funeral service education. The reputation of the program locally and regionally reflects a level of quality that is endorsed by the professional community. This internal and external support of the funeral service program has contributed to the success of the program to date. Based on the research conducted for this study, several opportunities to improve the program were identified. As written in this study, steps have been taken to enhance the program. There are opportunities that will continually be improved upon to insure the Funeral Service Education Program is providing the students with an excellent education and the funeral service industry with well qualified employees.

1. Prerequisites to enter the Funeral Service Core courses (FUNS) were established in order to insure students are academically prepared to successfully complete the required courses and score well on the National Board Exam. Students are now required to obtain a minimum grade of C for general education courses that are tested on the NBE. Students must also complete 60 hours of general education courses prior to receiving their Pennsylvania Trainee License.
2. The classroom and embalming lab are well equipped to insure learning takes place. Up-to-date technology can be found in the classroom. An iPad learning lab was purchased during the 2013-14 school year. This has allowed students to individually research topics during class and take assessments.
3. Assessment is top priority at Northampton Community College. The Funeral Service Education program has utilized different assessment instruments. The opportunity to improve assessing the aims and objectives, learning outcomes, and the program overall is in the forefront. Work is underway to develop and implement a comprehensive Assessment Plan. The program looks forward to using data received in order to assess its aims and objectives and make program improvements.
4. The college provides the necessary resources to have a first class program. Financially, the institution provides adequate funding. The Funeral Service Program is fortunate to have two foundations that provides funding for equipment and

educational experience such as: field trips, guest speakers, etc.

5. The program desires an above average passage rate on the NBE. A new capstone course has been developed and will begin during the 2015 spring semester. This course will be required to be taken during a student's last semester. A trial was carried out during the 2014 spring semester. The NBE scores for 2014 were 86% passage on both portions of the exam.
6. During this accreditation period, the program has experienced it challenges. The death of the program director has created many challenges during this self-study process. The challenges have been primarily with student files. After diligent searches for files, it was found that many were missing, especially Field Study student files. From this point forward, all student files will be kept in the program director's office. All files will be scanned and electronically saved. These records will be kept for a minimum of 7 years.

**Recommendations:** Continuation of the program.

---

Tony L. Moore  
Director, Funeral Services Education

---

Carolyn Bortz, Ph.D.  
Dean, Allied Health & Science Division



Funeral Service Education

### **Allied Health & Sciences**

**Degree awarded: Associate in Applied Science**

#### **Program Narrative**

Are you interested in:

- Helping Others?
- The Human Biological Sciences?
- Community Involvement?
- A business environment?

Have you considered a career in Funeral Service?

The funeral service professional:

- Provides support to the bereaved during initial stages of grief.
- Arranges and directs funeral ceremonies.
- Performs the transfer of the deceased from the place of death.
- Prepares the body according to the wishes of the survivors and requirements of the law.
- Sells funeral related services and merchandise.
- Establishes pre-arranged/pre-financed funeral accounts.
- Secures information for legal documents.
- Files death certificates and other legal papers.
- Assists survivors with details for filing claims for death benefits.
- Helps individuals adapt to changes in their lives following a death through post-death counseling and support group activities.

Why should you enter funeral service?

- You are a caregiver who desires to serve others.
- You believe ceremony is an effective way of expressing feelings.
- You are open-minded about ways in which people of different faiths and cultures express their feelings and practice their beliefs.
- You are interested in the technical sciences.
- You exhibit sensitivity and compassion for those with whom you are in contact.
- You are interested in learning all aspects of a business.

Funeral Service Education provides you with a comprehensive understanding of all phases of funeral service necessary to serve the bereaved in a professional and ethical manner. The need for funeral directors and embalmers will escalate over the next twenty years and the earning potential has never been better.

## **Mission Statement**

Our mission as Northampton Community College Funeral Service Education is to educate students in the fundamental skills, knowledge, and practice of funeral service. We strive to create a supportive learning environment which fosters communication, critical thinking, self-discipline, compassion and encourages student and faculty research in the field of funeral service. The program embraces the college's mission, vision and values, and is committed to providing an unexcelled educational experience that is inclusive and diverse.

## **Accreditation**

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

National Board Examination scores, 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 scores and rates, go to Commonwealth Hall Office 106 , by e-mail at [tmoores@northampton.edu](mailto:tmoores@northampton.edu), or by telephone 610-861-5576. The annual passage rate of first-time takers on the National Board Examination (NBE) for the most recent three-year period for this institution and all ABFSE accredited funeral service education programs is posted on the ABFSE web site ([www.abfse.org](http://www.abfse.org)) or can be [obtained here](#).

## **Funeral Service Education Aims and Objectives**

The Funeral Service Education Program has as its central aim recognition of the importance of funeral service education personnel as:

- members of a human service profession,
- members of the community in which they serve,
- participants in the relationship between bereaved families and those engaged in the funeral service profession,
- professionals knowledgeable of and compliant with federal, state, and local regulatory guidelines,
- professionals sensitive to the responsibility for public health, safety and welfare in caring for human remains.

## **Objectives of the Funeral Service Education Program:**

To enlarge the background and knowledge of students about the funeral service profession.

- To educate students in every phase of funeral service, and to help enable them to develop the proficiency and skills necessary in the profession, as defined above.
- To educate students concerning the responsibilities of the funeral service profession to the community at large.
- To emphasize high standards of ethical conduct.
- To provide a curriculum at the post-secondary level of instruction.
- To encourage research in the field of funeral service.

## **Program Features**

Northampton's Funeral Service Education is designed to meet the educational requirements for licensure set forth by the Pennsylvania State Board of Funeral Directors.

- All students of Funeral Service Education must sit for the National Board Examination of the International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards prior to graduation.

Upon graduation you will be awarded an Associate in Applied Science degree and will be eligible to begin your 12-month Resident Internship. Our graduates have experienced a high level of placement within the profession.

Students are admitted to the program during the Fall sessions of each year and are encouraged to participate in the social and community service activities of Sigma Phi Sigma- The Funeral Service Education Student Association. Funeral Service Education core courses are offered during the day.

## **Program Admission Requirements**

Acceptance into the Funeral Services Education Program is competitive and you will need to **meet certain prerequisites to be considered for admission**. These admission criteria include:

High school graduates and non-traditional student applicants: will need to have completed high school Biology and Chemistry (with labs) with a grade of C or better AND have an overall G.P.A. of 2.5 or better.

Transfer student applicants: Grades of C or better in each course being transferred in; achieved a minimum G.P.A. of 2.5 for any college-level work completed.

Funeral Service Education core courses (courses with the prefix FUNS) may only be taken by those students who have completed the 60 hours of general education requirement. See prerequisites for grade requirements.

A physical examination and completed medical health form are also required for acceptance.

## **The application procedure for Funeral Service Education is as follows:**

1. Forward completed application with \$25 (non-refundable) fee to the Admissions Office.
2. Have official transcripts from all institutions attended (high school and college, if applicable) to the Admissions Office. Your file will not be reviewed until all transcripts are received.
3. Files completed by February 1st will be given primary consideration for acceptance. Applications received after this date will be reviewed on a space available basis only.

A Funeral Service Education advisor will guide you in selecting the appropriate courses that will prepare you to enter the Funeral Service Education core. When you are ready to pursue the Funeral Service Education core phase (which includes all FUNS courses) you need to submit a Clinical/Core Readiness form to the Admissions Office by February 1st. Priority for core seats will be given to those students with the most general education program courses completed and highest G.P.A.

Contact the Admissions Office at 610.861.5500 for further information.

## Program Outcomes

*Graduates of the program will:*

- Discuss the history and development of the funeral service profession and practices.
- Demonstrate competence in the knowledge and skills necessary to perform in the role of a funeral service professional.
- Recognize the responsibilities of the funeral service profession to the community at large.
- Demonstrate professionalism and accountability related to the legal, regulatory and ethical issues facing funeral service.
- Communicate effectively in oral and written forms with client families, peers, members of the funeral service community and those in allied professions.
- Assess and attend to the pre-need, at-need, and aftercare needs of client families.
- Employ safe practices, competence and compassion when caring for the deceased.
- Identify application of scholarly research in the field of funeral service.
- Complete satisfactorily a curriculum at the post- secondary level of instruction

## Funeral Service Education

*Associate in Applied Science Degree*

<b>Course Code</b>	<b>Course Title</b>	<b>Credits</b>
<b>Summer Sessions</b>		
ENGL 101C	English I	3
MATH____	Mathematics Elective (QL)	3
PSYC 103	Introduction to Psychology	3
-----	Elective	3
		12
<b>First Semester (Fall)</b>		
BIOS 160*	Human Biology	4
CISC 101*	Introduction to Computers	3
CMTH 102	Speech Communication	3
ENG 151L	English II (Literature)	3
BUSA____	Business Elective	3
		16
<b>Second Semester (Spring)</b>		
ACCT 101*	Financial Accounting I	3
BIOS 202*	Microbiology for Allied Health	4
BUSA 152*	Business Law I	3
PHIL 111G	On Death & Dying	3

PSYC 221*	Responding to the Bereaved	3
SOCA 103	Principles of Sociology	3
		19
	<b>Summer Sessions</b>	
CHEM 135*	Chemistry of Life	4
BUSA____	Business Elective	3
-----	Social Science: Societies and Institutions over Time Elective (SIT)	3
-----	Prescribed Elective +	3
		13
	<b>Third Semester (Fall)</b>	
FUNS 101	Principles of Funeral Service	2
FUNS 102	Introduction to Funeral Service	4
FUNS 201	Funeral Home Operations I	4
FUNS 203	Pathology for Funeral Service	3
FUNS 210	Embalming Theory I	3
FUNS 241 or	Field Study I or	
FUNS 212	Clinical Embalming I	1
		17
	<b>Fourth Semester (Spring)</b>	
FUNS 105	Funeral Directing	3
FUNS 220	Embalming Theory II	3
FUNS 231	Funeral Home Operations II	2
FUNS 242 or	Field Study II or	
FUNS 222	Clinical Embalming II	1
FUNS 251	US & PA Funeral Law	3
FUNS 255	Cosmetology & Restorative Art	3
FUNS 280	Funeral Service Education Comprehensive Review	1
		16
	<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>93</b>

\*Students must earn a grade of “C” or better in these courses to begin FUNS Courses

+ Prescribed Elective options: ACCT 151, BUSA 202, BUSA 221, CISC 104

- For their Social Science: Societies and Institutions over Time (SIT) Elective, students must select a course from the list of approved courses in that category.
- One General Education course must be taken in a Writing Intensive (WI) section. In addition, writing intensive work is included in various courses in this program; thus completing the program automatically satisfies the program-related Writing Intensive (WI) requirement.
- Computer competencies are included in various courses in this program as well as in CISC101. Thus, completing the program automatically satisfies the computing requirement.
- For their Mathematics (QL) Elective, students must select a course from the list of approved courses in that category.
- Students must earn a grade of "C" or better in all FUNS courses to progress in the program.
- A student must sit for the National Board Examination of the International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards prior to graduation.

**Career Potential:** Funeral Director, Embalmer, Pre-Need Funeral Counselor

## Appendix B

### **FUNS 101 Principles of Funeral Service (Cr2) (2:0)**

A review of the typical religious funeral customs associated with Judaism, Roman Catholicism, and Protestantism and strategies to enhance the relationships between the funeral director, the clergy, and the bereaved. Restricted to Funeral students. Prereq. - ACCT101, BIOS160, BIOS202, BUSA152, CHEM135, CISC101 and PSYC221 all with C or better. Offered fall semester only.

### **FUNS 102 Introduction to Funeral Service (Cr4) (4:0)**

An overview of the funeral service profession with an emphasis on professionalism, ethics, funeral history, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), current trends (pre-need and cremation), statistics, and relevant vocabulary. Restricted to Funeral students. Prereq. - ACCT101, BIOS160, BIOS202, BUSA152, CHEM135, CISC101 and PSYC221 all with C or better. Offered fall semester only.

### **FUNS 105 Funeral Directing (Cr3) (3:0)**

The procedures to be used by the funeral director to carry out the necessary functions associated with the notification of a death, transfer of human remains, arrangement conference counseling, visitation, funeral or memorial services, disposition, and post funeral services; funeral related financial resources (Social Security, Veteran's Administration, National Cemeteries, Armed Forces, Public Assistance, etc.) Restricted to Funeral students. Offered spring semester only.

### **FUNS 201 Funeral Home Operations I (Cr4) (4:0)**

The role and function of an effective funeral home manager with emphasis on entrepreneurial skills related to buying and selling a funeral home, succession planning, managing facilities, financial statements, financing, and consumer behavior. Restricted to Funeral students. Offered fall semester only.

### **FUNS 203 Pathology for Funeral Service (Cr3)(3:0)**

Pathological changes affecting the human body, its structure, function, with particular emphasis on the implications these changes have on the embalming and/or restorative art process. Restricted to Funeral students. Offered fall semester only.

### **FUNS 210 Embalming Theory I (Cr3) (3:0)**

Theoretical training in all phases of the embalming process, including an orientation and introduction to embalming, death, pre-embalming changes, embalming instrumentation, preparation of the body, selection of vessels, injection and drain-age techniques, dilution-distribution-diffusion, cavity treatment, and postmortem examinations. Restricted to Funeral students. Prereq. - BIOS 160 (or BIOS204 and 254) and CHEM135. Offered fall semester only.

### **FUNS 212 Clinical Embalming I (Cr1) (0:3)**

On-campus practical experience in all phases of the applied embalming process. Restricted to Funeral students. Coreq. - FUNS 210. Additional course fees: \$75.00. Offered fall semester only.

### **FUNS 220 Embalming Theory II (Cr3) (3:0)**

Theoretical training in all phases of the embalming process, including embalming chemicals and arterial solutions, specific embalming treatments, disaster management, the history of embalming, biohazardous waste disposal, OSHA standards, and case analysis; continuation of Embalming Theory I. Restricted to Funeral students. Prereq. - FUNS 210. Offered spring semester only.

**FUNS 222 Clinical Embalming II (Cr1) (0:3)**

A continuation of Clinical Embalming I. Restricted to Funeral students. Prereq. - FUNS 212. Additional course fees: \$75.00. Offered spring semester only.

**FUNS 231 Funeral Home Operations II (Cr2) (2:0)**

Business principles related to pricing, promotion, personnel management, inventory control, computer usage, and merchandising & pricing of caskets, outer burial containers, and cremation urns, etc. Restricted to Funeral students. Prereq. - FUNS 201. Offered spring semester only.

**FUNS 241 Field Study I (Cr1) (0:6)**

A minimum of six hours (maximum of ten hours) per week of cooperative education in an approved funeral home, under the direction of a licensed funeral director; all phases of funeral service, with emphasis on embalming and restorative art/cosmetology. Restricted to Funeral students. Coreq. - FUNS 210. Additional course fees: \$75.00. Offered fall semester only.

**FUNS 242 Field Study II (Cr1) (0:6)**

A continuation of Field Study I. Restricted to Funeral students. Prereq. - FUNS 241. Additional course fees: \$75.00. Offered spring semester only.

**FUNS 251 United States and Pennsylvania Funeral Law (Cr3) (3:0)**

Basic business laws and principles associated with funeral contracts, negligence, tort liability, magistrates, state and local courts, disposition rights, probate, and Pennsylvania Funeral Director Law and the rules and regulations. Restricted to Funeral students. Offered spring semester only.

**FUNS 255 Cosmetology & Restorative Art (Cr3) (2:3)**

Aspects of general art as applied to funeral service, anatomical modeling, facial expressions, familiarization with tools, materials and techniques necessary to reconstruct human features, color in cosmetics, and development of special laboratory skills. Restricted to Funeral students. Prereq. - BIOS 160 or 254. Additional course fees: \$85.00. Offered spring semester only.

**FUNS 280 Funeral Service Education Comprehensive Review (Cr1)(1:0)**

A course designed as a review of the entire curriculum, culminating with an exam designed to prepare students for the national board or various state board examinations. Courses must be taken during the final semester of course work. Restricted to Funeral students. Prereq. - FUNS201 and 210. Offered spring semester only.

**FUNS 291 Special Studies in Funeral Service (Cr1)**

See statement on Special Studies. Offered on demand. Restricted to Funeral students.

**FUNS 292 Special Studies in Funeral Service (Cr2)**

See statement on Special Studies. Offered on demand. Restricted to Funeral students.

**FUNS 293 Special Studies in Funeral Service (Cr3)**

See statement on Special Studies. Offered on demand. Restricted to Funeral students.

## Appendix C

NORTHAMPTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE								
ACADEMIC AUDIT FINANCIAL DATA								
2013-14								
Funeral Service Degree								
<b>Program Income</b>								
FY	Program Cr. Hours	Program FTEs	Tuition Income	Local Reimb.	Operating Reimb.	Stipend Reimb.	Total Income	Income/FTE
2010	1,990	78.31	270,104	46,362	83,045	\$ 57,071	456,582	5,830
2011	1,715	67.85	241,077	41,118	72,168	\$ 49,347	403,710	5,950
2012	1,542	61.12	227,618	38,262	67,866	\$ 46,676	380,422	6,224
2013	1,486	58.80	231,189	39,453	87,448		358,089	6,090
2014	1,565	60.88	261,475	42,128	74,158		377,760	6,205
<b>Program Costs</b>								
FY	Direct Costs	Indirect Costs	Total Costs	Total FY FTEs	Cost/FTE	Rank	Inst. Avg. Cost/FTE	
2010	280,360	173,745	454,105	78.31	5,799	13 of 77	4,766	
2011	250,416	155,038	405,454	67.85	5,976	7 of 74	4,906	
2012	242,581	145,139	387,720	61.12	6,343	13 of 71	5,182	
2013	253,431	146,371	399,802	58.80	6,800	11 of 66	5,430	
2014	269,384	162,993	432,377	60.88	7,102	24 of 122	5,730	
<b>INCOME FACTORS</b>								
FY	Tuition, Compr.& Tech. Fee/Cr.Hr.	Local FTE Reimb.	State FTE Operating Reimb.	Act 173 FTE Stipend Reimb.	Indirect Cost/Cr. Hour	Average Cr. Hour/FTE		
	Per Fte	Per Fte	Per Fte					
2010	3,449	592	1,060	701 HP 729 HP/HC	87.31	25.411		
2011	3,553	606	1,064	699 HP 727 HP/HC	90.40	25.2757		
2012	3,724	626	1,110	734 HP 764 HPHC	94.12	25.2283		
2013	3,932	671	1,487		98.50	25.2735		
2014	4,295	692	1,218	792 HP 824 HPHC	104.15	25.7068		



CONFIDENTIAL REPORT

AMERICAN BOARD OF FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION

Evaluation Team Visitation

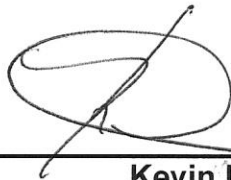
for

Northampton Community College  
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania  
October 19-21, 2014



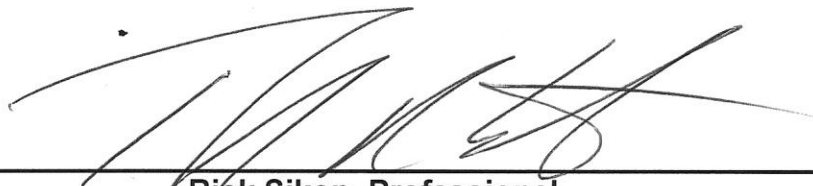
---

Catherine C. Gannon, Ph.D., Chair



---

Kevin Davis, Educator



---

Rick Sikon, Professional

## **PREFACE**

The American Board of Funeral Service Education Evaluation Team – Kevin Davis (educator: Director, Funeral Services Program, St. Petersburg College, Pinellas Park, Florida; former COA member); Rick Sikon (practitioner: Director, Virginia State Anatomical Program, Richmond, Virginia), and Dr. Catherine Gannon (Team Chair; CEO and Professor, The Pennsylvania State University, New Kensington [retired]) – visited the Funeral Service Education Program [FSE] at Northampton Community College on October 19-21, 2014.

On Sunday, the Team’s practitioner, escorted by full-time faculty Patti Warner, visited two off-campus “Field Study” sites: Heintzelman Funeral Home (David Heintzelman, Chad Hamman, Joe Tavormina) in Hellertown and Schantz Funeral Home (Justin Grim) in Emmaus. Later the Team had dinner with the FSE Department’s Chair, Tony Moore. On Monday, after a tour of the facilities, Team members met with President Mark Erickson, Vice President Academic Affairs Michael McGovern, Vice President Administrative Affairs Helene Whitaker, Vice President Finance and Operations James Dunleavy, Dean Allied Health Carolyn Bortz, Assistant Controller Operations Lisa Ferguson, Director Planning Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness Jill Hirt, Registrar Kara Howe, and Assistant Admissions Director Brandon Kwiatek, who is also the principal advisor for prospective FSE students. The Team lunched with seven of the eleven members of Program’s Advisory Board (R. Kline Ashton, Sr., Justin Huie, Zachary Lysek, Gary Raish, Kathy Ryan, Aaron Schisler, Michael Schmauder), reviewed transcripts and evaluations in Human Resources (Donna Talaber), visited the Library (Director Library Services Sandra Sander, Acquisitions Librarian Evonne Loomis, Cataloger/Bibliographer Anne Bittner), learning resources and student services, met with students, and audited a portion of “Introduction to Funeral Service.”

All of the Team’s interactions with the Department and College were positive, from the responses in interviews to the organized data that was supplied. The visitors thank NCC and FSE for their cordial reception, the pleasant accommodations, the readily-available transportation, and the generous hospitality.

## **BACKGROUND**

In October 1967, the first group of 846 students started College classes, choosing from the 14 career- and development programs available at NCC. Nine years later, Funeral Service Education was added to the Campus’ increasing curricular array and growing physical plant. In the 1980’s and 90’s, expansion continued on these same fronts, as educational partnerships were forged with business and industry and the Monroe Center was established, later evolving into a second campus (1993), this year doubling its capacity in a new physical plant on a 72-acre site. The Fowler Family Southside Center is a third significant instructional location.

Currently, NCC offers more than 100 career and transfer programs in fields ranging from art to leisure services. On its “Fact Sheet,” the College indicates that it serves nearly 34,000 students per year, with about 15,000 of them enrolled in credit programs. NCC is accredited by the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, and a number of its programs, including Funeral Science Education, have been endorsed by specialized accrediting bodies.

Since the last Team review of the Program, the Board of Trustees selected NCC’s fourth President (2012), bringing new leadership to the entire College. The FSE Department during the same period went through a number of faculty and Director changes. John Lunsford, Program Director when a site Team last visited, passed away unexpectedly (June, 2012). He was replaced on an interim basis by a relatively new faculty member, Patti Werner, who returned to teaching after Tony Moore was appointed to the position (July 2013). Two full-time and one part-time faculty members either retired, or resigned or were temporary before the present configuration was stabilized. Because of the turnover, steps had to be taken to shore up the Program, especially with respect to low National Board Examination scores. Actions such as updating course materials to reflect ABFSE outlines, adjusting the grading scales, revising admission requirements, and adding a capstone course have been completed. Still others, such as integrating more technology, developing an FSE computer lab, renovating the embalming room to enhance observation, and reviving the practice of offering Continuing Education for professionals are in progress.

More than 700 students have graduated from FSE over the course of its 37- year existence, and the 93-credit Program now enrolls more females than males, with 15-20% of its students coming from funeral service backgrounds. In 2013, NCC enrolled 15,158 unduplicated students taking credit coursework.

## **THE SELF-STUDY**

The Self Study addresses the Standards fully and includes helpful links to relevant evidence of compliance or improvement. In the process, the Program uncovered gaps in the maintenance of records and material needing to be updated. The majority of these matters have been addressed. The document also indicates that the areas of concern based on the 2007 visit are resolved.

### **Standard 1:**

## **SPONSORSHIP**

NCC, a multi-purpose, multi-campus, public institution, sponsors the FSE Program through the various Standard-related responsibilities it assumes. Its published open

enrollment admissions policy is modified for selected specialized programs. In the case of FSE, students need a high school GPA of at least 2.5 and must have completed high school biology and chemistry with average or above grades, as well as 60 College credits, information that is published on the website and in the online Catalog.

The curricular process is described in the Self Study (pp. 14-15). It includes dissemination of proposals through “MY NCC” to give College personnel the opportunity to provide input before the President acts on recommendations.

Although students can opt to take general education courses through distance learning and are provided the support services necessary for their success, all of FSE’s classes, with the exception of the clinicals for some students, are offered in person at the Bethlehem (main) Campus. When students opt to take their embalming requirement off campus, the “Field Study” courses in which they are enrolled are governed by written contractual agreements, Field Study Coordinator orientation, and prior site visits to ensure that students benefit educationally.

After completing the curriculum and taking the National Board Examination, students are awarded the Associate in Applied Science in Funeral Service Education. In Pennsylvania the State Department of Education exercises limited jurisdiction over community colleges, requiring them to be authorized to operate, but delegating governance to their Boards of Trustees. This includes the power to approve programs within the scope of the degrees community colleges are permitted to offer. The site Team was given Board minutes from January 8, 1976 (the FSE Associate was “lodged for action”) and from February 5, 1976 (the FSE Associate was formally approved) to demonstrate that NCC is authorized to award the degree. The Board is also ultimately responsible for the curricula of the programs offered.

Faculty, who are all hired according to NCC protocols, are evaluated annually by their supervisors (Self Study, pp. 12-13). Students have the opportunity to express their views about courses and instructions as well.

Students can access services, ranging from tutoring to career planning, to support their academic program. In addition, they can participate in an array of activities from intercollegiate athletics to specialized clubs, including the Funeral Service Education Student Association (Sigma Phi Sigma). Based on evidence such as the two full-time Departmental faculty and the Program Director’s indication that any crucial needs were fully met, the Team concluded that funds allotted to FSE appear to be historically and currently sufficient to ensure compliance with all ABFSE Accreditation and Policy Manual [ABFSE Manual] standards.

- -

## Standard 2:

### **ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION**

The authority and responsibilities of NCC's organizational components from the Board of Trustees to students are clearly defined in such materials as Northampton Community College Policies & Procedures, the Faculty Handbook, the Collective Bargaining Agreement between Northampton Community College and the American Federation of Teachers, and the Student Handbook.

Eight school districts sponsor and govern NCC through a 15-member Board of Trustees elected by the involved communities, with the more heavily populated having more representation. Policies and Procedures contains materials that essentially constitute a set of by-laws in accordance with the Articles of Agreement (the Community College Act of 1963), detailing such matters as the Board's powers, membership, and officers. Its responsibilities include selection and evaluation of NCC's President, regulation of admissions and tuition and fees, control over facilities and grounds, the adoption of curricula, and the awarding of earned degrees/certificates.

The President, with a doctorate in educational leadership and extensive administrative experience including a prior college presidency, is NCC's CEO responsible for day-to-day operations through the College's administration structure. Six Vice-Presidents serve under him, one of them the Vice President for Academic Affairs. He, in turn, supervises four Directors and five Deans, including the Dean of Allied Health and Sciences. FSE's Director is one of five reporting to this Division. Allied Health and Sciences is unique in having in its Division administrative directors.

Although formal FSE "Cluster" meetings are held, informal interaction between the two faculty members is almost continuous. The Self Study speaks to NCC's liberal dissemination of internal information and also to regular cabinet, dean/academic leadership, and administrative staff meetings at all levels. The working culture at NCC is special. Administrators do not appear to isolate themselves in turf silos or to insist on communication only through "proper" channels. Similarly, the unionization of the faculty has not led to the "We/Them" atmosphere that sometimes accompanies contractual relationships. External corroborating evidence for working conditions is NCC being named as one of the Valley's "Top Workplaces for 2013."

FSE's Director receives released time in acknowledgement of his responsibilities which include developing and maintaining the Program and the Departmental budget as well as overseeing FSE faculty. His leadership is visible through the changes that have been made to the Program (i.e., admissions requirements, capstone course, Program dismissal policy for low grades).

Besides such initiatives as identifying strategic priorities, NCC has accrued funding that attests to its institutional leadership. It is one of four colleges (and the only community college) that has been selected through Partners of the Americas Foundation to join with a college in Trujillo, Peru to create a 6-week study abroad service-learning course providing low-income communities with renewable energy sources. It has also received a Department of Education grant to develop courses in Arabic and Chinese and establish short-term study-abroad programs in Jordan and China.

Students clearly have a voice at several levels in matters that concern them, separate from the usual complaint/grievance pathways. In addition to NCC's Student Senate, the College's standing committees (viz., Curriculum, Academic Policy, College Life) have student representation. In addition, all FSE students are members of the Funeral Service Education Student Association, another route through which students can channel their views. Good learning conditions appear to be institutional and Program priorities.

### **Standard 3:**

#### **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The ABFSE Manual in Standard 3.3 stipulates each program in funeral service education must have aims and objectives and that they must be in "published documents relating to the program." FSE's aims and objectives are listed on pp. 97-98 in the printed version of the Catalog, in the FSE Student Handbook pp. 2-3, and on the [Program's website](#).

The Program's aims and objectives appear to be a verbatim reprinting of Standard 3.1-3.2. In addition FSE has developed Program outcomes, which are listed below and are also publicly promulgated.

Graduates of the Program will:

- Discuss the history and development of the funeral service profession and practices.
- Demonstrate competence in the knowledge and skills necessary to perform in the role of a funeral service professional.
- Recognize the responsibilities of the funeral service profession to the community at large.
- Demonstrate professionalism and accountability related to the legal, regulatory and ethical issues facing funeral service.
- Communicate effectively in oral and written forms with client families, peers, members of the funeral service community and those in allied

professions.

- Assess and attend to the pre-need, at-need, and aftercare needs of client families.
- Employ safe practices, competence and compassion when caring for the deceased.
- Identify application of scholarly research in the field of funeral service.
- Complete satisfactorily a curriculum at the post-secondary level of instruction.

It does not appear there is an assessment plan fully evaluating the aims and objectives of the Program as required in 3.4.

#### **Standard 4:**

### **ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES AND ETHICAL STANDARDS**

NCC provided the Self Study for the Team and also had hard copies on-site of the Collective Bargaining Agreement, Policies and Procedures, the Catalog, the Student Handbook, the Funeral Service Education Student Handbook, and the FSE/Allied Health programs brochure. All publications related to NCC employment appear to adhere to Standard 4.1.1, which requires personnel policies maintaining equal employment opportunities for all qualified persons. Policies pertaining to admissions, financial aid, and educational services for students to ensure all are given equal consideration without regard to race, color, sex, national origin, disability, or marital or veteran status are also published.

FSE's publications accurately portray the realities of the Program/institution. The Catalog includes the entire curriculum and program of study including course names, identification numbers, course descriptions and designated credit hours. Requirements and processes for withdrawal and graduation; academic calendars; grading policies; and financial policies for tuition, fees, and refunds are also listed in the general section. Specific Program admission requirements are included in the Catalog and in the FSE Student Handbook, and the Program-specific section of website.

Statements regarding the requirement that all students take the National Board Examination (NBE) prior to graduation are included in all publications pertaining to the Funeral Service Education Program. With regards to Standard 4.3, all references to accreditation by the ABFSE are listed as required. FSE offers only one program; therefore, Standard 4.4 does not apply.

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

## **Standard 5:**

### **FINANCE**

NCC derives its revenue from three historically equal sources when viewed from the perspective of sponsored students (viz., those supported by the eight school districts): state appropriations, local school district community support, and student tuition and fees. Because they are not subsidized locally, non-sponsored Pennsylvania students' costs are doubled, and out-of-State students, who do not generate either local or State support, pay triple the sponsored rate. The scope of NCC and the size of its operating budget of about 70 million dollars ensure that each class accepted can be sustained through graduation and that learning resources, instruction, and facilities will be adequate to support the curriculum of the programs the institution offers. The Team was provided a copy of "Northampton Community College Basic Financial Statements and Single Audit Report, June 30, 2013 and 2012," Kreisler Miller.

Sponsored students are assessed \$128 per credit hour, an amount that includes a comprehensive and a technology fee. Other PA residents pay \$280, which covers increased tuition, the same comprehensive and technology fees and a \$61 capital outlay fee. Students from Monroe County where NCC's branch campus is located, attend at a somewhat reduced rate totaling \$212 per credit hour. Students from other States are charged both a higher tuition rate and a higher capital outlay fee (\$414 per credit hour). Tuition and fees in every category are capped when a student registers for 12-18 credit hours. In two Programs, distance courses are somewhat discounted for non-sponsored students.

The Self Study (pp. 25-26) outlines the budget process, which begins in September, and moves through various levels with a draft budget forwarded to the Trustees in January, after which it is presented individually to the eight school districts supporting NCC. Ultimately, the President's proposed budget must be ratified by the Board and at least five of the sponsoring districts. Within the approved budget, there is both flexibility (administrators can request budget transfers between accounts) and reserves set aside for unexpected contingencies. At the Department level, the process is relatively straightforward, with the Program Director and the Dean reviewing allocations and requests. Although FSE's Director monitors direct and indirect costs, some budgetary elements such as salaries and benefits are set by contractual agreements.

In several places, the Self Study comments that the budget, which has remained relatively steady over the years, with the exception of personnel costs and accreditation expenses, is "ample enough" to meet the needs of the Program. Besides prudent spending, NCC has



followed a decade-long practice of setting aside money to smooth out the differences between periods of higher and lower revenue. Also helpful is a Foundation with about 42 million dollars in assets. Besides being eligible to request funds from that source, FSE has a designated equipment endowment (about 77 thousand dollars), which distributes income to the Program based on a five- year average. This added resource permits FSE to maintain an up-to-date embalming lab.

Instruction accounts for about 60% of the operating budget; student services is in the 12-15% range, with academic support about the same.

### **Standard 6:**

## **CURRICULUM**

NCC offers a 93-semester-credit-hour curriculum, which leads to an Associate of Applied Science in Funeral Service Education. The coursework appears to follow a logical sequence.

The curriculum can be completed in as little as four semesters and two summer sessions. Students who have taken all the general education classes before admittance to the Program can complete the degree in two semesters.

The Team was provided course syllabi for all the courses. All were sufficient in content, containing course outlines and course objectives, as well as other pertinent information. The Program stores electronic syllabi through the College's online learning management system, "Concourse," for online access for face-to-face classes. This system allows potential students to preview the requirements for a class before enrolling. In addition the Program provides a thumb drive loaded with all FSE class syllabi and course handouts at the beginning of the semester.

A review of the Catalog shows that all prerequisites and course descriptions are listed on pp. 190-91 and on NCC's [website](#). The courses are divided into 60 general education credits and 33 credit hours within the major. The higher number of general education credits required for the degree is to meet Pennsylvania requirements for licensure.

The curriculum distribution appears to be in keeping with the minimum requirements of the ABFSE Manual, according to the B-6 form provided to the Team.

To meet their embalming cases requirement, students are given the option of on-campus clinical or funeral home [Field Study] embalming. Students electing one location in first semester embalming may select the alternative option during the second semester.

There is a limit of 3 students in each on-campus embalming laboratory, with each actively participating in raising vessels, mixing and injecting fluids, aspirating, suturing, and posing features, as described in embalming case reports completed by individual students and verified by the clinical instructor

The on-campus embalming lab receives its cases from the Philadelphia Medical Examiner's Office, with an average of 30 embalming cases for the academic year. FSE is in the final stages of an agreement with the Northampton County Coroner to secure more cases for the on-campus embalming lab experience.

For the off-campus option and prior to students being placed, the Field Study instructor visits each funeral home every new academic year.

On file and for the Team to review were the Field Study Checklists, signed affiliation contracts, funeral home facility licenses, and funeral directors' licenses in the Field Study instructor's office. The affiliation agreements contain a statement for dismissing the student from the off-campus clinical experience. Also on file was the student-signed non-disclosure confidentiality form for students embalming at approved funeral homes.

The Team was provided embalming reports for the past seven years and reviewed random files. As reported in the Self Study, the Program could not produce embalming reports for students who elected to do the Field Study option, prior to 2011. FSE also could not identify if the Program had students doing off-campus embalming during the time period of 2008 through 2011.

The Program uses what they call "Site Coordinators" to supervise embalming at off-campus clinical sites. The Team was provided with copies of the Field Study Site Coordinator Manual used to orient Site Coordinators. Copies of the Site Coordinators' valid state funeral director's licenses were located in the Field Study instructor's office along with signed affiliation agreements and funeral home licenses.

In their interview with the Team, first semester students indicated that they were evaluated on a regular basis and were informed of their progress in the classes. In addition the Program lets students track their progress by utilizing the College learning management system, Blackboard.

The Team observed a classroom used when appropriate for the hands- on practice of restorative art.

## **Standard 7:**

### **FACULTY**

The FSE Department at NCC employs two full time faculty members (a Program Director and one faculty), who are responsible for teaching all funeral service education classes. The Team visited Human Resources and met with Administrative Assistant Donna Talaber. The Team reviewed personnel files of faculty members and one full-time and one adjunct general education class instructor. A careful review of the credentials support that the faculty members do meet the requirements to teach according to Standard 7 in the ABFSE Manual.

Tony Moore has earned a Master's in Education/Administration, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and in Music, Mississippi College. Patricia Werner, employed full-time at NCC since January 2012, has earned a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Elizabethtown College and is currently enrolled at DeSales University for her Master's degree. She has completed 21 credit hours of the 36 required for the advanced degree. Both are graduates of ABFSE-accredited programs.

The Team was very impressed with the dedication and commitment of the FSE faculty members and how they both appear to be interested in the development of the Program with technology. In discussions with first year students, it is apparent that the students feel they are getting a quality education.

The Program utilizes Site Coordinators for students who elect to do clinical embalming at funeral homes [Field Study]. Prior to students beginning Field Study with the participating funeral home, the Field Study instructor visits the clinical site to inspect and to do the necessary training and secure the necessary documents. The Team was provided with copies of the current five Site Coordinators' credentials.

NCC offers a wide range of development opportunities for the faculty. The Center for Teaching and Learning gives workshops on a variety of educational topics for professional development. The two faculty members interviewed reported that the College supports them financially for attendance at conferences and seminars. The faculty has access to tuition waivers for NCC courses and can apply for tuition reimbursement for taking classes at other institutions.

Based on a review of class rosters, the Program is within the student/teacher ratio set by the ABFSE. In addition FSE does not place more than one student per clinical site, appearing to meet the Standard with respect to off- campus embalming.

## **Standard 8:**

## **FACILITIES**

FSE is located in Commonwealth Hall, which is located on NCC's Bethlehem (Main) Campus. Space is designated for use as a classroom, embalming and restorative art laboratories, and Program administrative and faculty offices. It appears that there is adequate space to support quality instruction. The classroom is multipurpose, serving as space for lecture courses and as a restorative art laboratory. Supplies and equipment are brought in for the restorative art component using the table type desks as workspace.

The facility is well maintained and supplied. Proper furnishings, heating/ventilation systems, and lighting enable the Program to properly support its aims and objectives and meet the needs of the students. The laboratories, classrooms, and other space within the facility appear to satisfy federal, state, and local regulations. The classroom is outfitted with up-to-date audio-visual capabilities and is equipped to enhance the students' learning experience.

The classroom space also includes full-size casket, quarter casket, vault and urn displays. The designated space is adequate for instructional purposes. Students and instructors have the opportunity to use this space to attain exposure to merchandising.

The embalming laboratory is fully functional and is used for on-campus clinical instruction. It is equipped with two distinct embalming stations and contains all the equipment, instruments, and chemicals that would be found in any embalming lab in a funeral home. It is of sufficient size to accommodate the required number of students. The Program Director and the other faculty note that a request has been made to convert an adjacent room currently utilized for FSE-related storage into an embalming observation room equipped with audio-visual capabilities.

Team member Rick Sikon had the opportunity to visit two off-campus funeral homes on Sunday. These facilities are identified as Field Study sites. The two visited were local to the College and representative of many others located in Pennsylvania and surrounding states.

The first facility visited was Heintzelman Funeral Home in Hellertown, PA. Present was the owner David Heintzelman, Funeral Director Chad Hamman, Site Coordinator, and former NCC student Joe Tavormina. All spoke highly of the Program and the clinical experience. The facility was well maintained and properly licensed. The preparation facility was adequately equipped and supplied to provide a proper learning environment for students assigned to complete embalming requirements.

The other facility visited was Shantz Funeral Home in Emmaus, PA. Present was the Site Coordinator, Dustin Grimms. This facility was also found to be adequate to serve as an off-campus instructional site. It was also well maintained and properly licensed and of sufficient size for instruction in the preparation room.

There are currently five students participating in Field Study at five different sites. Affiliation agreements (the “Field Study Affiliation Agreement”) with the funeral homes were made available to the Team. The agreements adequately specify responsibilities of the Program and the instructional site relative to the supervision and instruction of students. Designated individuals serving as Site Coordinators who possess the proper credentials are appointed in each named facility. These individuals have received training and have signed the “Field Study Site Coordinator Agreement,” which outlines responsibilities and expectations of the College and designated coordinator. Additionally it is noted that students are also required to sign an agreement that includes and discloses the Funeral Service Education Program’s and the student’s responsibilities.

Each facility is frequently visited by the full-time faculty member responsible for overseeing the off-campus site experiences. An affiliation facilities checklist is completed by this faculty member. This checklist includes licensing, OSHA, HCHO monitoring results, and various related requirements (See p. 27 of the Field Study Site Coordinator Manual). Findings are documented and were made available to Team members during the visit. All off-campus facilities appear to satisfy federal, state, and local regulations pertaining to authority to operate as a mortuary.

The Site Coordinators available at each site were enthusiastic, very diligent, and concerned with providing a quality experiential opportunity for each student. The former student (Joe Tavormina) was very complimentary of the Program and the clinical experience afforded to him due to the fact that he was exposed to all aspects of funeral service.

The Field Study Site Coordinator Manual was comprehensive and included the necessary information and forms for successful completion of the Field Study experience.

#### **Standard 9:**

### **LIBRARY/ LEARNING RESOURCES**

A Team member met with Director Library Services Sandra Sander, Acquisitions Librarian Evonne Loomis and Cataloger/Bibliographer Anne Bittner in the Paul and Harriet Mack Library, located on the fourth floor of the College Center on the Main Campus. The Library facility was toured and found to be spacious, modern, and well suited to provide an environment for students to research and access materials necessary to support instruction. The facility includes books, periodicals, DVD’s, VHS tapes, computer stations, group study rooms, testing facilities, and a designated audio-

visual room. The Team member also toured the newly renovated spaced reserved for DVD and VHS holdings.

The Library currently has a collection of over 73,000 books, and access to various electronic books and databases. The Library also subscribes to the major and accepted funeral service periodicals. All materials are cataloged using the Library of Congress classification system. It is noted that books related to funeral services are cataloged under various related subject areas.

Library staff is readily available to assist students with research, and Library resources are available 24 hours a day. Students also have access to several online databases, and Library staff has developed a designated funeral service related search engine. The Library staff also monitor an index of journal titles referenced in the Morgue to discover additional journals for use by FSE students.

The Program faculty have an active role in acquisitions, and there is a designated Library staff member to collaborate with them to enhance and increase FSE-related resources. The new Library Director and the staff expressed a desire to serve and assist the faculty to ensure that resources are available as needed.

#### **Standard 10:**

#### **STUDENTS**

The Catalog, website, and publications related to FSE outline the specific requirements for admission into NCC and admission into the Funeral Service Education Program. Minimum educational requirements requiring students to have graduated from an accredited four-year high school or its equivalent are clearly stated as well as programmatic requirements related to specific course requirements.

Team member Rick Sikon met with the College Registrar, Kara M. Howe. She explained processes for the receipt of high school and college transcripts and the process of certifying the FSE Program's requirement of students having to sit for the National Board Examination. Transcripts are received by mail directly from the institution previously attended by the student or via secure and credible electronic transcript database providers.

A methodology for the certification of the student's completion of sitting for the National Board Examination is in place. A designated staff member of the Registrar's office assigned to handle Graduation Applications emails the FSE Program Director to verify that the student has in fact completed the requirement. Random sample emails were made available to the Team to document the process.

The Registrar honored a Team request to randomly select the records of three students: one recent graduate and two current students. Review of the record and transcripts of the recent graduate satisfied requirements for the Associate of Applied Science degree. Review of the other records verified that NCC had received high school and prior college transcripts and that credit for prior courses had been awarded as applicable.

Student records are maintained in perpetuity as required by Standard 10.5.1. The Registrar verified that all records are scanned and then archived electronically.

The Visiting Team member also met with Brandon Kwiatek. He serves as the assistant admissions director and is the primary advisor for those students who indicate an interest in FSE. Mr. Kwiatek is the student's advisor while the student is enrolled in the General Studies curriculum. Students who indicate they are interested in or intend to enroll in the Funeral Education Program are placed into the General Studies curriculum to satisfy the general education requirements prior to application and admission into FSE. It is noted in the student record that the student intends to apply to the Funeral Service Education Program. This is documented on a special form developed for these students by the advising office. This record also documents the receipt of high school and previous college transcripts.

Students who may have physical or learning disabilities are directed to NCC's disability services where they may secure accommodation letters to present to faculty as needed. The College also has designated staff to assist with financial aid.

All policies pertaining to attendance, promotion, and graduation are listed in College and programmatic publications. FSE also has written policies and procedures pertaining to Student Health and Safety. A Health and Safety plan that has been developed for Program students was made available to Team members. All records involving exposure incidents, vaccine records, and other health-related issues are maintained by Student Health and Safety.

Policies and procedures as outlined in Standard 10 are found in many publications and are readily available in many formats to students.

## Standard 11:

### **EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT**

The assessment plan for FSE was developed before the current Director was appointed, and it has not been utilized or reviewed since about 2008. The plan itself is generic, and assigns no timelines or responsibility to specific individuals or groups. A set of 15 outcomes is also appended to the Self Study, and these, while more specific, do not really lead to a continuous full evaluation of either the Program or FSE's aims and objectives. The College's required "audit" (Self Study/Team Report for accredited programs) generally occurs only at widely spaced intervals, so it is not an appropriate mechanism for on going Program improvement

What appears to be needed at this juncture is a thorough review of FSE's assessment instruments to make certain that the on-going self-scrutiny covers key Program elements, that it is triggered regularly so that evaluation actually takes place, and that someone is accountable for keeping the process in motion.

A Team member met with Vice President, Administrative Affairs Helene Whitaker, who is responsible for coordinating academic assessments, and Director Jill Hirt, Director Planning, Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness, who is responsible for institutional assessments. Both individuals alluded to a College assessment plan, which is presented to the Board of Trustees but does not provide a full template for continuous improvement of individual programs.

The Program does appear to collect and analyze data retrieved from students' evaluation of instructors, graduate surveys, faculty evaluations, and employers' surveys, with results available to the Team. There is no evidence, however, that refinements to the Program have emerged from the data.

The Funeral Education Program provided documented evidence of regularly scheduled student evaluations of courses and faculty for each course in the major. In addition, Human Resources made available supervisory evaluations of faculty and the Program administrator, and Institutional Research provided results of annual graduate and employer surveys showing satisfaction with instructional quality and preparation for employment. These results were also supported by students and members of the advisory committee who met with the Team.

The Program provided statistics for graduation rates, job placement rates, and pass rates on the National Board Exam. It is evident the NBE results have been used in Program planning, through new admission and curriculum changes based upon low board scores (2013). FSE has developed several measures, including a new course "Comprehensive Review," to help prepare students for the NBE.



The Catalog and the website contain the appropriate references to the posting of the scores, graduation rates and employment being available on the ABFSE website as according to 11.5.1.

**Standard 12:**

**DEFAULT RATES**

**Not applicable.**

**Standard 13:**

**RECORD OF STUDENT COMPLAINTS**

NCC has published procedures for handling grievances. There has been one formal complaint by a FSE student who challenged a grade, which, under published policy led to dismissal from the Program. At the conclusion of the grievance process, the grade was upheld.

**Standards 14/15:**

**PROGRAM LENGTH**

**Not applicable.**

## **STRENGTHS:**

1. The students, who referred to their two faculty as “Mom” and “Dad,” praised the two instructors, a sentiment also echoed by Program alumni. The relationship between the two seems very collaborative.
2. The new Program Director appears to be competent and committed to developing and maintaining a strong Program.
3. The Field Study Site Coordinator Manual is both comprehensive and thorough and includes all necessary forms and documents pertaining to the clinicals [Field Study]. Copies are bound for ease of use and professional appearance.
4. NCC provides tuition reimbursement for professional development, including the pursuit of the ABFSE-required master’s degree.
5. FSE’s relationship with the coroner’s/ medical examiner’s offices increases the number of cases available for on-campus embalming. It also serves as curricular enrichment as students learn about funeral directors’ roles in cause-of-death investigations and how a working relationship with the coroner/medical examiner is maintained in these circumstances.
6. FSE has a designated Library liaison. On behalf of the Program, the Library staff has developed a funeral-service specific search engine helpful for student research and for professional continuing education.
7. Brandon Kwiatek’s knowledge and dedication in advising potential FSE students is a strength.

## **CONCERNS:**

1. Embalming reports for Field Study students prior to 2011 (as noted in the Self Study) were not available (6.4.11).
2. The written assessment plan for FSE is moribund and in need of both thoughtful revision and on-going implementation (11.1; 3.4).