

ABFSE

AMERICAN BOARD OF
FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION

61ST ABFSE ANNUAL MEETING

Friday, April 14, 2023

Sheraton Atlanta Hotel I - Atlanta, GA

*****These minutes will be presented for approval at the 62nd Annual Meeting in Boston, MA*****

The meeting was called to order by President, Jolena Grande at 9:33 AM. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Secretary/Treasurer, Joseph Finocchiaro.

The Invocation and Prayer of Remembrance was given by Brian Mullins. The following were remembered in prayer: John Braboy, Duane Calloway, Elmer Davis, Kelli Jane DeHart, Harvey Hamilton Leavitt III, Evelyn Martin, Carol Evelyn Shine, and Geraldine “Jerry” Strasmick.

President Grande welcomed everyone and thanked them for taking time to attend. Mark Evely (Wayne State University) was appointed parliamentarian.

Roll was called by Immediate Past President, Jzyk Ennis (Jefferson State Community College).

Association Members:

National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA)

National Funeral Directors & Morticians Association (NFD&MA)

Cremation Association of North America (CANA)

Institutions

American Academy McAllister Institute

American River College

Arapahoe Community College

Arkansas State University-Mountain Home

Cape Cod Community College

Carl Sandburg College

Community College of Baltimore County-Catonsville

Chandler-Gilbert Community College

Columbus Technical College

Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service

Cypress College

Dallas Institute of Funeral Service

Des Moines Area Community College

Fayetteville Technical Community College

FINE Mortuary College

Florida State College at Jacksonville
Goodwin University
Gupton-Jones College of Funeral Service
Hudson Valley Community College
Ivy Tech Community College
Jefferson State Community College
John A. Gupton College
Lake Washington Technical College
Malcolm X College
Miami Dade College
Mid-America College of Funeral Service
Milwaukee Area Technical College
Mount Hood Community College
Nassau Community College
Northeast Texas Community College
North Shore Community College
Northampton Community College
Northwest Mississippi Community College
Ogeechee Technical College
Piedmont Technical College
Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science
Salt Lake Community College
San Antonio College
Southern Illinois University
Southwest Tennessee Community College
St. Louis Community College
St. Petersburg College
State University New York - Canton
Tidewater Community College
University of Arkansas Hope-Texarkana
University of Minnesota
Wayne State University
Worsham College of Mortuary Science
Staff: Robert Smith III, Michael Landon, Trudy Ellmore
ABFSE Team Chair: David Edds
ABFSE Executive Committee: Jolena Grande, President; Jzyk Ennis, Past President; Joseph Finocchiaro, Secretary/Treasurer.

Guests: Don Strickland, Anita Grant, Gina Hooper

There were fifty-two (52) remote attendance locations from eighteen (18) states.

Forty-eight (48) of fifty-eight (58) members and three (3) associations were present. A quorum was declared by Immediate Past President, Jzyk Ennis. The Executive Director welcomed those joining us via Livestream and noted those individuals are not counted towards voting.

Immediate Past President, Jzyk Ennis then invited members and guests to introduce themselves to all present.

President Grande expressed special thanks to our Silver Sponsor, Bronze Sponsors and Exhibitors for their participation in our annual conference, especially to TribuCast and Mr. Bruce Likly for the live stream of the meeting.

Appreciation was given to all the Exhibitors, which included:

ABFSE & Weave	Mortifin Consulting & Training, LLC
Answering Service for Directors (ASD)	NFDA
CANA	NFD & MA
The Conference (ICFSEB)	NBE Review Coach
The Dodge Company	RynoFlip, LLC
Funeral Directors Life Ins. Co.	Selected Educational Trust
H. S. Eckels & Company	TribuCast
Hudson Valley Professional Services	Tuesday Evening Publications
ICCFA Educational Foundation	Visible Body
Kelco Supply Co.	

Corn Hole Tournament winners will be announced at the Recognition Luncheon.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

President Grande stated the agenda was available in the Program Booklet.

MOTION: Cody Lopasky, (Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service), (second) David Penepent (SUNY-Canton) to adopt the agenda as presented.

VOTE: Passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF 2022 MINUTES

President Grande called for approval of the April 8, 2022 60th Annual Meeting Minutes as presented which were emailed to the membership thirty (30) days prior to the meeting.

MOTION: David Coughran (St. Louis Community College), (second) Venus Smith (Jefferson State Community College) to approve the to approve the April 8, 2022 60th Annual Meeting Minutes.

VOTE: Passed unanimously.

REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT, JOLENA GRANDE

We have been to visit Gupton Jones College and NFD & MA, been in committee meetings, been in the exhibit hall and been inspired by this time together. Over this last year work commenced to update our ABFSE Strategic Plan which will be voted on for adoption later in the meeting. The Curriculum Committee has been busy updating and bringing outlines to be voted on. Constitution and By Laws Committee has convened. COA has been hard at work. The Program Committee has put together an amazing collection of professional development sessions. Our Executive Committee, College and University Council, NBE Liaison Committee and Accreditation Liaison Committee all meet. We have had a lot of work take place over the last twelve (12) months. The Committee reports and Notices of Motion bring together the culmination of that hard work today.

REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – ROBERT C. SMITH III

Since the 2022 Annual Meeting, ABFSE engaged in many proactive activities:

- Created an updated Strategic Plan
- Initiated the 5-year Review of Standards
- Rolled out the new Student Tracker as a precursor to an updated Annual Report that will auto fill with info from Student Tracker.
- Planning has been initiated for an updated ABSE website and a Faculty database.
- Engaged in ongoing curriculum review (i.e., Merchandising, Business Law, Ethics, in summer 2022/ Embalming, Chemistry, Psych & Counsel planned for 2023)

Reminder: ABFSE has a copyright on the curriculum work. Rules for use of curriculum are found in the Accreditation Manual. New Candidate programs purchase the curriculum as part of the Candidacy Fee.

- ABFSE/funeral service education was represented at conventions/annual meetings of our association member partners – NFDA, NFDMA, CANA and also The Conference.
- The voice of ABFSE was heard at a meeting of the Indiana State Board during which they were evaluating the place of funeral service education and testing in the state's future plans for licensure.
- Participated in meetings of CHEA & ASPA to facilitate understanding of the accreditation environment.

ABFSE membership - composed of schools & associations

58 schools, 3 associations, 2 public members

When I started in 2014 there were 56 schools/programs, 3 association members and 2 public members. However, in that time 11 programs stopped operating and 9 programs went through the Candidacy process to earn accreditation/re-accreditation. Two associations dropped their membership in ABFSE and CANA came on board as the newest association member in 2017.

ABFSE is an accreditor recognized by the US Dept of Ed and CHEA. Each agency has its own recognition criteria and most of the ABFSE accreditation standards and policies have their roots in USDE and CHEA expectations. The USDE expectations carry what many view as a regulatory orientation.

The Department wants assurance that schools receiving financial aid dollars are legitimate institutions and are programs worthy to receive federal dollars. CHEA emphasizes academic quality and improvement. CHEA's latest expectations are demonstration of DEI initiatives and innovation.

Both agencies require Self study like reviews every 5-7 years, plus mid-cycle reports.

ABFSE is one of approximately 25 accreditors recognized by both agencies. To maintain the accreditor recognition status ABFSE must demonstrate:

- that we have standards meeting the guidelines and expectations of both organizations,
- that accredited programs meet the ABFSE standards, and
- that ABSE takes action when programs fail to meet the standards.

USDE and CHEA requirements are also the reason that COA operates as a separate and independent committee within the ABFSE.

And those requirements are responsible for much of the content of our Accreditation and Policy Manual including the regular Review of Standards.

Some of the Manual language updates in recent years were driven by the need to meet USDE and CHEA expectations. Examples:

- publication of outcomes data (in our Directory on each program webpage)
- policy for approval of DE
- policy for teach out when a program closes

When most of the current COA members were selected for their terms, COA was meeting twice each year in April and October. However, the workload has increased and additional meetings were added so COA met 4 times in April – June - October – February.

During that time accreditation related activity included:

- 8 full site visits for re-accreditation
- 1 pre-Candidacy visit
- 4 Focus visits to approve the addition of Distance Education
- 8 USDE mandated follow-up visits after Covid-era virtual site visits.

The ABFSE Executive Committee instituted quarterly meetings this past year as well to supplement the traditional April and October meetings. Too much is happening in funeral service at the present time to wait 6 months in order to consider appropriate action.

In addition, the ABFSE officers continue to meet weekly via Zoom for informal conversation regarding the state of affairs in funeral service, funeral service education and ABFSE.

Annual Report - by its title, the Annual Report happens every year.

Your input for Annual Report provides valuable data about those preparing to enter funeral service and helps provide evidence for USDE and CHEA recognition.

Annual Report summaries are available on the ABFSE website dating back to 2013.

Some excerpts from the 2022 Annual Report:

- Total enrollment – highest level since we started tracking that statistic in 2010.
- Total enrollment increased every year since 2017 from 5394 – 7034.
- New Enrollees – at highest level ever 3462 (previous high in 1996).

- Graduates – 1588 is a 3% increase over 2021, but consistent with the level of the past 5 years except for a spike in 2020 (highest level ever 1995 - 2221).
- Graduation rate???? Calculation of grad rate is still problematic. ABFSE, like many accreditors, is struggling to find an appropriate technique to calculate and describe graduation rate.
- Attrition has grown every year since 2017 and reached an all-time high of 1049 in 2022. While there are multiple reasons for attrition, poor academic performance is cited 42% of the time.
- Female student population in 2022:
 - 72% of graduates and
 - 75% of new enrollees
- Non-accredited – 19 programs in 11 states offered non-accredited programs and had 231 graduates.
- A part-time enrollment/completion option is offered by 43% (25 schools).
- Distance Education:
 - 32 of 58 programs offered some FS courses via distance education
 - 23 programs had DE grads (defined as completing 50% of more of the program via DE)
 - 726 graduates reported as DE = 46.7% of total grads

Growth of DE was anticipated after the Covid experience. In addition to those programs with recently approved DE programs, three more are currently seeking approval.

Remember: Sub Change application & a visit are required for DE approval
US DE requires accreditors to approve DE.

On the horizon/2023

- ❖ Updated accreditation statements
- ❖ Updated ABFSE Directory
- ❖ Faculty database & revised ABFSE website

Reminders:

- Deadlines – missed deadlines means delayed review of data, and delayed update of Directory and reporting of accredited status
 - fines are assessed for missed deadlines
- Participate in the Review of Standards surveys
- Use resources available on the website/ask questions
- Read email / correspondence

REPORT FROM THE PAST PRESIDENT – JYZK ENNIS

- As I leave you as an officer, I plan to remain an active member of the ABFSE serving in other ways. I do want to leave you all with some insight that I have gleaned over the past twelve years as I have watched the ABFSE, and the funeral profession *sausage being made*.
 - We all have more in common than we do differences. Sometimes we spend a lot of time on private/public, size, geography, license laws, accreditation standards, etc. At the end of the day, we all are trying to accomplish the same goals.

- Accreditation matters. If we do not have accreditation, we really don't have anything, at all. It really is what separates us from the online "diploma mills." Be sure that you engage in the process of the upcoming review of accreditation standards. Dive deep and understand how those changes affect your program, your students, and your profession.
- You MUST be active in your national, state, and local associations, and in your state regulatory boards. ABFSE cannot ride in and save the day. Each and every one of you ARE ABFSE!! You are the ones that we count on to represent accredited programs and the value of ABFSE-accreditation.
- As business owners in the profession are further squeezed by the employment shortage, it is only natural that they will look to any and all means to fill that gap. We have seen this with license exams, license laws, and even education. We each must remain vigilant in this cause. Too much can happen in the back rooms and negotiation tables if we are not there to represent our interests.
- Robb, the ABFSE officers, and the COA cannot be in all of your states. If you hear nothing from me today, here this. YOU are ABFSE. YOU are the ones that ABFSE must count on to understand the value of what we do, and then go and tell that message to the masses. We need YOU!
- Madam President, this concludes my final past president's report to ABFSE.

FINANCIAL REPORT, JOSEPH FINOCCHIARO, SECRETARY/TREASURER

I am pleased to report that the ABFSE is solvent. The financial reports are available upon request from the ABFSE office. The financial reports are covered at every Executive Committee meeting. Thank you to the Executive Director for his outstanding stewardship of the ABFSE funds.

The Executive Director, Robert C. Smith III reported that ABFSE is audited annually. This year we have a new auditor. The audit went very smoothly compared to previous years. Everything was completed on time. A copy of the audit is available to any who are interested. Please contact the office.

COMMITTEE AND ORGANIZATION REPORTS

Scholarship Committee, Ebone Dukes, Chair (Northwest Mississippi Community College)

The committee met via Zoom video conference on the afternoon of April 5, 2023, to finalize the evaluation of the scholarship applications submitted for March 2023. Twenty-six (26) of the sixty-seven (67) undergraduate applications submitted were complete and evaluated by the committee. There were no postgraduate applications submitted during this round of scholarships. The committee awarded three (3) scholarships as follows:

Applicant	Institution	Scholarship Donor	Score	Amount Awarded
Howdershelt, Denise	Pittsburgh Institute	Kelco (\$1500)	22.00	\$1,500
Heald, Nicole	Carl Sandburg College	NFDMA (\$1500)	21.00	\$1,500
Schooley, Katelynn	Pittsburgh Institute	ABFSE Scholarship Funds (\$1500)	21.00	\$1,500

Curriculum Committee, Cody Lopasky, Chair (Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service)

The committee met October 14, 2022 via Zoom. The agenda was distributed via email reviewed and approved. Discussion included:

Review of Outline Comments

Committee members reviewed and discussed all submitted comments regarding the three (3) reviewed outlines: Merchandising, Ethics, and Business Law. Some respondents used the new comment form and others did not. Only one comment was accepted and resulted in a change – an error concerning half-couch and full-couch caskets terms in the Merchandising glossary.

Discussion of Summer 2023 Curriculum Workshop

Participants were selected for the next workshop for Summer of 2023. Regarding location, it was noted that three (3) programs had volunteered to host: Tidewater Community College, Cypress College, and Lake Washington. Robb Smith gave info and explained that the ABFSE office would work with the three colleges to determine the best fit based on the dates and available space. The dates were tentatively set for June 2nd and 3rd.

Evaluation Form Discussion

The committee then discussed the three (3) outlines up for review in 2023. The official schedule has FTC, Chemistry, and FS Psych & Counseling up for review. However, it was noted that it may be wise to re-review Embalming since a new text is now available. There has also been interest in merging Chemistry into Embalming as was done with merging Accounting into SBM. With FTC, it was noted that this outline has been previously bumped due to inaction on the part of FTC in revising the Funeral Rule. It was voted that a survey should be sent out to the whole of the ABFSE to see where the majority stand on these outlines. The committee will hold a special meeting on 11/18 to discuss the survey results and finalize the plan/outlines for the summer 2023 workshop. The basics of the survey to be sent are as follows:

- 1 Although recently reviewed, do you believe that the Embalming outline should be re-reviewed now that a new edition of the textbook has been published?
- 2 Do you believe that the Chemistry outline should be merged into the Embalming outline - as was done with the Accounting outline being merged into Small Business Management?
- 3 Do you believe that the FTC outline review should be postponed until the FTC Funeral Rule has been evaluated/revised by the federal government? (NOTE: This delay has been done previously)
- 4 If the FTC outline review is be postponed, then what outline do you feel should be reviewed in its place? (the other Bus. Management and Professional outlines will be listed as possible options)

FTC Discussion

Last, the committee discussed a notion of moving FTC from its current curricular category of Business, Management, and Professional to Legal, Regulatory, and Ethical. A vote in favor

was passed, and the Committee will be officially recommending this change to the ABFSE Executive Committee so that this change may be a part of the review of standards.

SPECIAL MEETING ADDENDUM

The committee held a special meeting (virtually) on 11/18/2022 to finish the business of October. The items of note from the special meeting are:

- Lake Washington was selected to host the Summer 2023 workshop
- The dates were solidified as June 2nd and 3rd
- The survey results were reviewed, and based on those, the following actions were taken by the committee:
 - FTC would be replaced by Embalming in the Summer 2023 workshop
 - No action would be taken to merge Chemistry into Embalming at this point

Committee on Accreditation, Leili McMurrough, Chair (Worsham College)

The COA met on Tuesday, April 11, 2023 and Wednesday, April 12, 2023 in Atlanta, GA.

- Eight (8) programs went before the Committee.
- Three (3) programs were taken off probation.
- Five (5) programs were accredited for seven (7) years.
- Two (2) programs were accredited for three (3) years.
- One (1) program was put on probation.
- One (1) program had its distance education substantive change approved.
- One (1) program had its distance education substantive change approved for a focus visit.
- The Committee reviewed seven (7) programs' assessment plans.
- The Committee elected a new member to represent NFD & MA.
note: program names are not announced at the Annual Meeting until official notice of decisions is shared with college administration back home.

National Board Exam Liaison Committee, Tim Krause, Chair (Carl Sandburg College)

The Chair was unable to attend the meeting. Jzyk Ennis presented the report on his behalf.

The committee met on Thursday, April 6, 2023. There was no old business.

New Business – Textbook Survey – Dalene Paull mentioned that there is some uncertainty about who should produce the survey (ABFSE or ICFSEB). ICFSEB will launch the survey on 4/18/23 and have it completed by 5/6/23 to see if any new books need to be purchased.

Jzyk asked how the Conference is using the book survey? Dalene responded that the current textbook survey would be used to continue to develop new questions on the NBE.

Dalene briefly shared how a test question is developed.

Tim reviewed comments and questions submitted by programs prior to the meeting:

- Could a student be allowed to have more than one effort on the exam to be considered a passing student? – This would be more of a COA decision, the Conference only considers first time takers.

- What is considered minimum competency? – a that person that possesses enough knowledge to protect the general public.
- When is a test question on the NBE considered retired? – if the content is no longer applicable; if something is removed from the curriculum; if it is a poor performer (too difficult / too easy); the question would be retired.

Dalene shared some statistics for the past few years in light of the pandemic:

2021 – half way through covid – Arts Average was 68 and the Science Average was 53
 2022 – mostly all through covid – Arts Average was 60 and the Science Average was 55
 2023 – where we are currently after the first quarter – Arts Average is 74 and Science Average is 64

What is the average score of takers who pass and fail the exam - Dalene was going to share that information with Tim.

Passing rates for the past three years average in the high 70's

Failure rates for the past three (3) years were seventy two (72) for the Arts and seventy one (71) for the Sciences. The fail rate was consistently the same all three (3) years.

Robb commented on the difference between actual percentage scores and scaled scores and reminded everyone that there will be a professional development session at the ABFSE meeting dealing with the function of the ICFSEB and an update of the COA Review of Standards.

College & University Council, Cody Lopasky, Chair (Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service)

A zoom meeting was held March 17, 2023. 32 of 58 programs were in attendance at the start. Brief committee reports were given.

Discussion – Notices of Motion for the ABFSE Annual Meeting

- Curriculum outlines up for approval: Ethics and Business Law had no discussion, but there was contention about the added info on “Pet Funerals” from the Merchandising outline. It was decided that the outline can either be voted down and sent back to the committee or approved with an amendment saying to approve all BUT the work added to that particular section.
- Adding a DEI statement to all outlines: After much discussion, it was decided that it would be voted on (at ABFSE) with the addition of an amendment changing the proposed verbiage.
- Changing the language used to define “educator” for the purpose of committee membership: Much discussion of this occurred. It was decided that this could pass at the annual ABFSE meeting with a reworking of the proposed language. A ZOOM poll was taken and 75% of participants agreed to recommend the changed verbiage to the following:

For purposes of committee membership, an “Educator” is defined as an individual employed by an ABFSE accredited program or sponsoring institution, who is a graduate of an ABFSE accredited program and whose duties are to provide direct instruction as a qualified faculty member and/or program administrator, to funeral service education/mortuary science students enrolled in that accredited program/institution.

- Discussion of ABFSE participation at ICFSEB annual meetings
Nine (9) programs attended
Several educators took part in presentations/panels.
- Textbook discussion was had using draft list from task force. The end result is a feeling that ABFSE should lead the textbook survey and not the Conference.
- Review of Standards and Curriculum workshop announcements were made.
- Voting – nominating committee put forth the following candidates:
 - ABFSE officers (to be voted on at ABFSE annual meeting)
 - President – Joe Finocchairo
 - Vice-President – Cody Lopasky
 - Secretary/Treasurer – Tony Moore
 - CUC (voted and approved at CUC meeting)
 - Chair – Jolena Grande
 - Secretary – Johnathan Acosta

Program Committee, Rebecca Gardner, Chair (Northeast Texas Community College)

Met April 12, 2023. Items discussed:

This meeting had 8 individuals in attendance. Getting the 2023 meeting started, the program committee discussed ways to improve 2024 in regards to pre-meeting communication and signage for registration and meeting rooms.

The committee discussed types of professional development that they would like to see via virtual professional development sessions and at the 2024 ABFSE Annual Meeting.

Such professional development opportunities discussed include:

- Education relevant training
- Curriculum Development
- Time Management
- Online Learning
- Test taking skills
- Critical Thinking
- Helping students understanding facts
- Self-care
- Work/life balance.

Additionally, an idea was discussed regarding an ABFSE commercial for students regarding what it is to be a student of an accredited program. The commercial could be placed on the ABFSE website and available for all programs to use.

Lastly, future sites for the annual meeting were discussed. The following cities were suggested:

- Newport Beach, California
- Sacramento, California
- Minneapolis, Minnesota
- New Orleans, Louisiana
- Seattle, Washington

Constitution & By Laws Committee, Leili McMurrrough, Chair (Worsham College)

The Constitution and By-laws Committee met on February 23, 2023.

The committee discussed the following topics:

- Review guidelines for conducting electronic meetings
- Review qualifications for COA members and officers
- Review of current guest policy
- Review qualifications of committee members

Recommendations from the committee are as follows:

- Add ABFSE graduate in criteria for qualifications for COA members and officers
- Conduct committee meetings well before the annual meeting so if there are issues that need to be referred to the committee there is time for the committee to offer guidance or propose new language.
- Give opportunities for motions to be presented and discussed more than 30 days in advance so if edits are necessary it can be voted on at the annual meeting.

Accreditation Liaison Committee Report, Michael LuBrant, Chair (University of MN)

The Committee on Accreditation Liaison Committee held two meetings in April, 2023.

The first meeting was held on Thursday, April 6th via Zoom. In attendance were all Committee members with the exception of Dr. Mark Evely, who had another commitment. ABFSE Officers, Executive Director Robb Smith, and COA Chair Leili McMurrrough were present. During the meeting, the following was discussed:

- Questions and Comments solicited from ABFSE members by Michael LuBrant via a Google Survey were presented to the Committee and COA Chair Ms. McMurrrough. Ms. McMurrrough said that she would discuss the Member questions with the COA when they meet in Atlanta. Michael LuBrant explained that member questions about the National Board Exam (NBE) were directed to Mr. Tim Krause, chair of the NBE Liaison Committee.
- The Committee discussed ideas for soliciting feedback from ABFSE members to support the upcoming Review of Standards. Michael LuBrant offered to create surveys to solicit feedback from membership. Most of the meeting time was spent discussing survey ideas and ways of soliciting member feedback about the Standards. It was agreed that a discussion of how to approach survey development would be presented at the ABFSE Annual Meeting in Atlanta.

The second Committee Meeting was held in-person on Wednesday, April 12th, from 1:00PM to 2:00PM during the ABFSE Annual Meeting at the Sheraton Hotel I, Atlanta (Room Georgia 3). During this meeting, the following was discussed:

- A plan was discussed for creating and administering surveys to ABFSE members for the goal of soliciting feedback related to the review of Standards.
 - The Committee and guests made suggestions for which Standards to review as part of each survey; pros and cons of survey methods were discussed;
- Guests in attendance asked questions about the Standards and how the process of review would take place.
- Committee members discussed the importance of developing policy within the Standards that allows for greater flexibility in using NBE results in the context of Standard 10: Program Planning and Evaluation / Assessment.
 - In support of this goal, attendees discussed how ABFSE-member surveys should solicit ideas on how to use NBE data in ways that may be more flexible and expansive than the procedures currently presented in Standard 10.
- Michael LuBrant reviewed with attendees a plan for moving forward, based on feedback and discussion at the meeting. This information was presented to members of the COA at 2:00 PM immediately following this meeting, and was met with approval and encouragement from the COA membership.

NFDA Report, Randall P. Anderson, NFDA Board of Directors

Arranger Training for Students

Each year since 2017, the Funeral Service Foundation has fully funded Arranger Training for students to be conducted at four ABFSE schools. For 2023, the four schools are:

- Mercer County Community College
- Jefferson State Community College
- Ogeechee Technical College
- Tidewater Community College

Other ABFSE accredited schools may host the four-hour Arranger Training for their students at a cost of \$95 per student. Training can be conducted in person or virtually.

Student Membership

NFDA currently has more than 1,000 student members and has conducted student arranger training at 31 schools.

The Director.edu –

Look for the Spring issue of NFDA's quarterly electronic publication exclusively for funeral service students to be emailed to all program directors in late April. *Please forward this publication to your students!*

Selected Findings: 2023 NFDA Member Needs Study

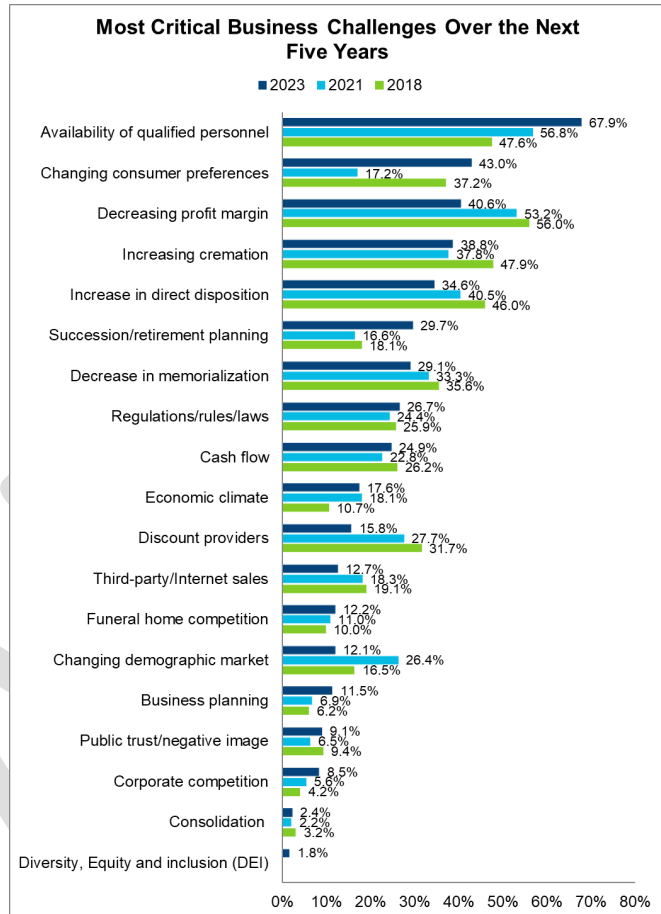
Greatest Business Challenges

Funeral directors feel their greatest business challenges over the next five years will be:

- Availability of qualified personnel (up 20.3% to 67.9% since 2018)
- Changing consumer preferences (43.0%)

- Decreasing profit margins (down 15.4% to 40.6%)
- Increasing cremation rates (38.8%)
- Increase in direct disposition (down to 34.6% from 46% in 2018)

These have been among the top concerns among members over the last three survey waves. See graph for more detail.



Selected Findings: 2023 NFDA Consumer Awareness Survey

The complete Consumer Survey results will be published in the August issue of The Director magazine

New Level Up Learning Webinar Series

Free to NFDA members (including student members) and includes CE credit. Don't miss this opportunity to elevate your learning on a wide range of topics. Visit nfda.org/webinars view the schedule of webinars for the year.

Take 5 Microlearning Series on Self-care

Take 5 Self-care Series is a free resource developed by NFDA to help funeral professionals and students identify and address the stress in their lives.

Available online 24/7, **Take 5** offers 5-minute activities designed to give you information and practices to better care for yourself, your client families, and your loved ones.

The series is comprised of four short modules that explore:

- Funeral Service and Stress
- Gauging Your Burnout Level
- Self-care Fundamentals

- The Path Forward: A Self-care Manifesto

Content is based on Alan Wolfelt's booklet, *Caring for Families, and Caring for Yourself: A Guide for Funeral Service Professionals*, published by the Funeral Service Foundation.

Please share this resource with your students! Visit nfdafoundation.org/take5

Journey to Serve:

- *Journey To Serve* is a joint project of the Funeral Service Foundation and the ICCFA Educational Foundation that launched in April of 2021.
- Aimed at recruiting military veterans into careers in funeral service (all aspects of the profession)
- A 5-minute video is now available that describes the program and how to use it – consider showing to your admissions teams to give an overview of the resources – linked here: <https://vimeo.com/631339753>
- Remember – **all of the resources are FREE** – provided by the profession's largest foundations – and can be adapted for use by funeral service programs for recruiting veterans.

Foundation Scholarships:

- 4 new academic scholarships are available for veterans applying to your programs, along with the Foundation's usual offering of dozens of academic scholarships (valued at \$2,500 and \$5,000)
- The Foundation's academic scholarships applications are accepted two times per year: February 15 – April 16 and September 15 – November 1. Visit funeralservicefoundation.org to apply.

NBE Scholarships funded by the Funeral Service Foundation

The Foundation is funding 30 NBE scholarships in 2023. Scholarships are administered by The Conference. These 30 scholarships are *in addition to* the 10 NBE scholarships funded by The Conference.

NFDA Funeral Career Center

NFDA's career center is a hub for employers and job seekers to post jobs, find resources, engage with funeral directors and ultimately find qualified employees or placement that works for both sides.

Of particular interest to students and recent grads is the Job Seeker Database that provides:

- Unlimited access to a dashboard to upload your resume and cover letter for free
- Career resources such as resume writing help, professional development, and tips for interviewing
- Job alerts to inform you of available jobs in your area

Please share this career resource with your students!

NFD & MA Report, George Durham, Jr., President

In August 2022 NFDMA met in New Orleans, Louisiana. The Annual Conference included thirteen (13) continuing education hours. We have a different generation providing funeral services. In October 2022 the Board of Directors met in Atlanta, Georgia. Last February we held the 40 and under Funeral Directors Summit where over 200 individuals were present. Last evening you had a very extensive overview of our NBE Review Course. Our annual convention will be held in Atlanta beginning July 29, 2023. Thank you for a seat at the table.

CANA Report, Jennifer Werthman, Education Director

CANA Membership

Accredited programs of the American Board of Funeral Service Education are personally invited to join CANA and extend the benefits of membership to their faculty and students for standard membership dues rate of \$495. This new expansion included the existing school members who gained new benefits of CANA Membership.

With CANA membership, each school:

- Receives one print copy of *The Cremationist* and other publications and access to digital archived issues on our website.
- Students, faculty, and staff receive access to CANA member benefits via cremationassociation.org.
- Students, faculty, and staff receive student rate for COCP of \$195 – in person or online. Students, faculty, and staff will also receive the member rate on any CANA Education Online courses.
 - Schools may negotiate with CANA to host a COCP at a lower rate.
 - Schools may negotiate with CANA to enroll groups in CANA Education Online at a lower rate.
- Support your research and the work of students with the most accurate collection of disposition data in the industry.
 - Access includes archived data and reports.
 - Exclusively for schools, CANA can provide raw data on request for use by researchers.
 - CANA membership gives opportunities to meet and talk with the best working in the industry. Expand professional network with CANA's leadership community.

Current School Members:

- Chandler-Gilbert Community College Mortuary Science Program – Mesa, Arizona
- Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science – Cincinnati, Ohio
- Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service – Houston, Texas
- Cypress College – Cypress, California
- FINE Mortuary College LLC – Norwood, Massachusetts
- Goodwin University – East Hartford, Connecticut
- Hudson Valley Community College – Troy, New York
- Kansas City Kansas Community College – Kansas City, Kansas
- Lake Washington Institute of Technology – Kirkland, Washington
- Northeast Texas Community College – Mt. Pleasant, Texas
- Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science – Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
- Southern Illinois University – Carbondale, Illinois
- University Of Minnesota Program of Mortuary Science – Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Worsham College of Mortuary Science – Wheeling, Illinois

Total Scholar Members (students and faculty with digital access only): 1000

CANA also offers Student Memberships at the annual dues rate of \$35 for a maximum of two years. Students can be part- or full-time and must be enrolled in a recognized program and can be held for a maximum of two years. Student members receive all of the benefits of membership but are not listed in the CANA Membership roster or website, cannot vote on association business or hold an office in the association, and are not permitted to use the CANA logo on business cards or any promotional material.

Typically, students inquire if their school is a member and whether they are therefore applicable to receive a complimentary membership. Students of school members who join receive the additional benefit of a printed copy of *The Cremationist*.

Current Student Members: 37, from the following schools

- American Academy McAllister Institute of Funeral Services
- American River College
- Arapahoe Community College
- Chandler Gilbert Community College
- Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service
- Cypress College
- Dallas Institute of Funeral Service
- Delgado Community College
- Des Moines Area Community College
- Fayetteville Technical Community College
- FINE Mortuary College
- Florida State College of Jacksonville
- John Tyler Community College
- Miami Dade College
- Mid-America College of Funeral Service
- Mt. Hood Community College
- St. Petersburg College

CANA staff have been invited to participate in the orientation events for University of Minnesota, Goodwin University, Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science, and Worsham College to introduce incoming students to the profession and share the resources available to them during their studies and throughout their career. Please contact Barbara Kemmis, Executive Director, Barbara@CremationAssociation.org, if you are interested in having CANA speak to your students.

CANA Publications

Published quarterly, CANA's widely-read magazine, *The Cremationist*, delivers business-oriented information including timely articles, regular columns and news from CANA Headquarters. As part of their member package, the publication is sent to all CANA members — print copies to more than 3,500 cemeterians, funeral directors, and cremationists and digital copies to over 700 more.

Launched in July 2017, *The Cremation Logs* blog is a publicly-available resource for anyone in the profession to benefit from shared expertise, resources, and current trends. Over the last year, CANA's blog had more than 55,000 site visits.

Please contact Brie Bingham, Membership & Marketing Manager, Brie@CremationAssociation.org, for more information on submitting content for the blog or magazine.

CANA Education

Online

Approved by nineteen of the twenty-one states that require certification, CANA's Online Crematory Operations Certification Program has been widely used by independent students and schools across the country. Seven schools have integrated the online course into their program, and it is now required for all students. One additional school is integrating the curriculum into their program beginning summer 2023. Several other schools encourage students to complete certification during a designated class of their curriculum, often the cremation course, if offered.

In 2022, the CANA Crematory Operations Certification Program™ (CANA COCP™) updated to feature best practices in all forms of cremation, including alkaline hydrolysis. Popular activities such as the *Plan Your Day* exercise have been newly revised, there is an all-new animation to demonstrate the cremation process, and the COCP Manual has been updated, keeping CANA's curriculum at the cutting edge of crematory operation best practices.

In-person

In 2023, CANA will hold training in Wheeling, Illinois; Washington, DC; Clearwater, Florida; Albany, New York; and Houston, Texas with live, in-person Crematory Operators Certification Programs for people in all stages of their career.

CANA will welcome the profession to the 105th Cremation Innovation Convention at the Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. on August 9-11.

CANA has certified 419 students since August 1 through both online and in-person courses.

Faculty

Additionally, CANA has created a resource section on our website specifically for faculty of the schools to supplement their cremation curriculum. Items available include cremation statistics, video animations, and a list of teaching activities that could be incorporated to help teach cremation in the curriculum.

Contact Jennifer, Education Director, jennifer@cremationassociation.org, for more information on teaching tools and education.

MOTION: David Penepent (SUNY Canton), (second) Howard Beckham (FL State College at Jacksonville) to accept the Executive Director Report, President Report, Immediate Past President Report, Financial Report and all Committee Reports as presented.

VOTE: Passed unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – JOLENA GRANDE

Strategic Plan: The goals and objectives, our mission, our vision and our values; all of these have been updated in our strategic plan. It will be a continuing work in progress to build out our strategic goals and objectives, to assess a timeline, responsible party and budget allocations and ultimately assess the completion of what it is we endeavor to do.

NEW BUSINESS – JOLENA GRANDE

Notices of Motion and Curriculum Outlines were distributed via email thirty (30) days prior to the Annual Meeting and copies were available for discussion at the College and University Council meeting.

Approval of Curriculum Outlines

Business Law Curriculum Outline

MOTION: Kevin Davis (St. Petersburg College), (second) Leili McMurrough (Worsham College) that the Business Law Outline and Glossary, with the revisions as shown and any subsequent technical corrections, be approved for use in the classroom by the ABFSE.

VOTE: Passed unanimously

Ethics Curriculum Outline

MOTION: Cody Lopasky (Commonwealth Inst. of Funeral Service), (second) Venus Smith (Jefferson State Community College) that the Ethics Outline and Glossary, with the revisions as shown and any subsequent technical corrections, be approved for use in the classroom by the ABFSE.

VOTE: Passed unanimously

Funeral Merchandising Curriculum Outline

MOTION: David Penepent (SUNY-Canton), (second) Dan Shea (Cape Cod Community College) that the Funeral Merchandising Outline and Glossary, with the revisions as shown and any subsequent technical corrections, be approved for use in the classroom by the ABFSE.

VOTE: Yes-7; No-36; Absention-0. Motion failed.

MOTION: Kevin Davis (St. Petersburg College), (second) David Penepent (SUNY-Canton) to approve the Funeral Merchandising Outline sans Roman Numeral IX and without the associated glossary terms with Roman Numeral IX.

VOTE: Passed unanimously.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy Statement

In response to questions regarding textbooks used by accredited programs, ABFSE COA recommends the addition of the following policy statement to all ABFSE curriculum outlines:

Content of ABFSE curriculum outlines was drawn from the listed References.

ABFSE does not require or recommend the use of any particular textbook. Each accredited program should select the textbooks best suited for use in their instructional programs.

Some texts may utilize terminology that is not representative of the diversity, equity and inclusion expectations of ABFSE. Instructors utilizing the textbooks should address the issue.

MOTION: Dominic Holsome (Dallas Institute), (second) Joseph ‘Frank’ Walton (Tidewater Community College) that the Policy Statement as shown above be approved and added to all ABFSE curriculum outlines.

VOTE: Yes-7; No-31; Absention-0. Motion neither passes nor fails.

MOTION: Mark Evely (Wayne State), (second) Kevin Davis (St. Petersburg College) to refer this to the Executive Committee for amendment.

VOTE: Passed unanimously.

Committee Membership

In response to questions regarding qualifications to serve on ABFSE committees, the ABFSE officers and Constitution and By-Laws Committee recommend the addition of the following statement to Article VI of the ABFSE By-Laws:

For purposes of committee membership, an “educator” is defined as an individual employed by an American Board of Funeral Service Education accredited program/institution, whose primary duties are to provide direct instruction as a qualified faculty member and/or program administration to funeral service education/mortuary science students enrolled in that accredited program/institution.

ABFSE Accreditation Standard 6.1 describes the qualifications for qualified faculty members.

This statement is to be inserted after line 13 in the current Article VI of the By-Laws. Upon approval, Article VI would read as follows:

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

For purposes of committee membership, an “educator” is defined as an individual employed by an American Board of Funeral Service Education accredited program/institution, whose primary duties are to provide direct instruction as a qualified faculty member and/or program administration to funeral service education/mortuary science students enrolled in that accredited program/institution.

ABFSE Accreditation Standard 6.1 describes the qualifications for qualified faculty members.

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

MOTION: Kevin Davis (St. Petersburg College), (second) David Coughran (St. Louis Community College) that the Statement as shown above will be added to Article VI of the ABFSE By-Laws upon approval by a two-thirds vote of those members in attendance at the April 2023 Annual Meeting of the ABFSE in accordance with Article X of the ABFSE By-Laws.

Vote: Yes–18; No–7. Motion neither passes nor fails.

MOTION: Mark Evely (Wayne State), (second) David Penepent (SUNY-Canton) to refer this particular Notice of Motion to Constitution and By Laws Committee for amendment.

VOTE: Passed unanimously.

Election of 2023 – 2025 Officers:

The slate of officers as presented by the College and University Council are as follows:

President	Joseph Finocchiaro, Miami Dade College
Vice President	Cody Lopasky, Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service
Secretary / Treasurer	Tony Moore, Northampton Community College
Immediate Past-President	Jolena Grande, Cypress College

No further nominations were named from the floor.

MOTION: Howard Beckham (FL State College Jacksonville), (second) Rebecca Gardner (North East Texas Community College) to close nominations.

VOTE: Passed unanimously.

MOTION: David Penepent (SUNY-Canton), (second) Jeffrey Zealley (Salt Lake Community College) to accept the current proposed slate of officers presented by the College and University Council.

VOTE: Passed unanimously.

The newly elected officers were recognized by the membership with applause. The Oath of Office will be given during the Recognition & Awards Luncheon.

Strategic Plan

MOTION: David Penepent (SUNY-Canton), (second) Tionya Spriggs (Malcolm X College) to accept the proposed Strategic Plan 2023 to 2026.

VOTE: Passed unanimously.

CLOSING COMMENTS – JOLENA GRANDE

This has been a whirlwind of a week with all the work accomplished. As my final address as active president and moving into the role of past president, I started this with an ambition to increase the number of people involved and the diversity of those who serve on our committees. Accolades to all of us for doing the work we do, day in and day out. We are here and yet our programs are at home. Someone is there covering in our stead so that we may be here to make improvements to our programs when we return. Thank you all so much for being here and hope to see you in Boston.

ADJOURN

MOTION: Jeffrey Zealley (Salt Lake Community College), (second) Matt Kendall (Carl Sandburg College) to adjourn the meeting.

VOTE: Passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 11:28 AM (ET).

DRAFT