

Funeral Service Advisory Board Minutes - 3-12-08

I. Introductions & Members Present

Jay Baines, Jimmy D. Boldien, Jr., Homer Cobb, Tom Demuth, Richard Dugger, II, Brigitte Dyer, Chris Ferguson, John Fritch, Keri Haines (Student Member), Jerry Don Henry, Vernon Hoehn, Todd Kernke, Sherri Quiles, Todd Shifflett (Student Member), Janice Wilkinson, Traci Williams.

II. Employer Survey - If you receive one, please send the completed surveys back to the department.

III. State of the Department - 2008

A. 94 declared funeral service majors (one year ago, this number totaled 87)
(7 % increase from one year ago)

B. National Board Exam (NBE) Results:

Year	# Taking Exam	# Passing Exam	% Passing
2007	21	16	76.2 %
2006	35	24	69 %
2005	30	21	70 %
2004 *	17	13	76 %
2003	11	8	80 %
2002	6	6	100 %
2001	11	10	91 %

* Beginning in 2004, all students are required to take the national board exam before graduation.

In 2007, we report a **76.2 percent** pass rate on our website. (The same that is reported on the ABFSE website)
The ABFSE prefers that the pass rate calculation is based upon first time test takers passing both the arts and science section of the exam.

Petition - A petition has been filed to eliminate one failed test taker because of an ABFSE rule that allows schools to adjust rates if a test taker has graduated from an accredited program prior to Jan. 1, 2004 and takes the NBE for the first time after that date. If the petition is accepted, the UCO pass rate for 2007 will increase to 80 %.

National Board Exam Requirement - Before any student graduates, he/she must take the national board exam, as required by ABFSE since January of 2004

- a. Students may take the exam up to 45 days prior to graduation.
- b. No requirement to pass, only a requirement to take the exam.
- c. Students that do not take the exam by the end of the semester will receive a grade of incomplete (I), and have one year to finish the work. Failure to do so results in a course grade of "F."

C. Curriculum Changes

1. Practicum - Since Fall 2007, all courses, except Board Review, are a prerequisite for Practicum.
 - a. Reasons:
 - (1). Sequencing - We want to insure that Practicum is a true capstone course and is the last course taken by the student before graduation.
 - (2). Further, we want to insure that all courses have been completed before students take the national board examination.
 - (3). We strive to eliminate the competition for time that a students devotes to the study of other funeral service courses.

Example: Embalming or Anatomy can be time consuming courses. We want students to focus on the work in funeral homes as they gain experience in funeral directing and embalming.
2. Board Review - Since Fall 2007, Board Review is a required course
 - a. Two credit hour course. (Formerly, a one credit hour course)
 - b. It is a co-requisite to the Practicum course.
 - c. Students will be required to take the national board examination as a course requirement. We will eventually shift that requirement away from the Practicum course.

D. Practicum Update

1. Bill Lewis continues as the adjunct instructor.
2. All preceptor training will be repeated each year beginning in January.
3. Students are now working 16 hours per week (fall & spring) and 24 hours per week (summer) in Oklahoma City metropolitan funeral homes.
 - a. Embalming - 10 case reports; 8 weeks (spring and fall) or 4 weeks (summer) at Bill Eisenhower NE. Students will be split into two groups, the first group serves and completes the embalming portion of practicum during first half of semester. The second group serves and completes the same during the last half of the semester.
 - b. Funeral Directing - 10 case reports - again, served during first half or second half of the semester at a metro funeral home selected by students.
4. Classroom instructional sessions have been eliminated from practicum. Students will meet on campus only three times to receive course information and turn in case reports.
5. Malpractice Insurance - University pays the premium for student malpractice insurance - no cost to students. (Started summer of 2008).

E. Online Course Offerings

1. Current Offerings -
 - a. Online - 100% Distance Education
 - (1). 2 sections of Psychology of Grief
 - (2). Embalming Chemistry
 - (3). Counseling in Funeral Service
 - (4). Board Review
 - b. Hybrid Courses
 - (1). Management I & II
 - (2). Embalming
 - (3). History of Funeral Directing

2. **Long Range Plans**
 - (1). Continue with current offering of online courses.
 - (2). Add History of Funeral Directing to 100 % online list - Fall 2008
 - (3). We are attempting to be responsive to needs of urban and rural funeral service by continuing on campus classroom instruction and more distance learning.
 - (4). Each faculty member is free to convert his/her courses to hybrid or 100 % online. Those that want to continue live delivery of instructional content on campus may continue to do so. University support is offered to course designers and educators the Center for Professional and Distance Education.

3. Summer Schedule - Yes, we are trying to expand our summer offering. Board Review will be offered.

F. Faculty Updates:

**All serving the Dept. College and University (committees). All are involved in preparation of accreditation self study.

1. Angela Knight was hired as full-time tenure track position. She replaces Dr. Curl. She teaches four section of Psychology of Grief. Her research interests include:
 - * Using technology in Transformational Bereavement Learning - Using online "My Space" to enhance student learning.
 - * Psychological implications of grief counseling - emphasis on funeral home aftercare programs
2. Karen Starkey - key administrator of our office.
3. Gary Sokoll
 - * Serving as chair.
 - * Involved in preparation of ABFSE accreditation self study.
4. Chris Burkey
 - * Involved in preparation & teaching of courses, including Restorative Art.
 - * Developing a new online version of History of Funeral Directing.
 - * Continues his work on the distance learning initiatives through the Center for Professional and Distance Education
5. Joe Grzybowski
 - * Active as member of the Oklahoma State Anatomical Board
 - * Continues research on population dynamics of birds, recently some activity on

rodents.

- * Developing and conducting research investigating impacts of wind turbines on birds and bats.
 - * Assists various students and colleagues on use of analytical tools and research design.
 - * Does service-level work for Boy Scout groups, including various community service projects, and merit badges like Environmental Science, and Forestry.
6. Larry Morgan - continues as instructor of Stat. Law and M. Jurisprudence
 7. Bill Lewis - Continues as instructor of Practicum. During the past year has made several improvements to the course.
 8. Ken Curl - emeritus faculty; teaching one evening section of Psych of Grief & enjoying retirement.

I. Sigma Phi Sigma

1. Two student representatives of this advisory board serve as Sigma Phi Sigma Officers: Keri Haines, President, Todd Shifflett, Vice President.
2. Service Projects: Volunteers - Habitat for Humanity, Boxer Day, Carter Hospice "Senior Prom," Clean-up of Ninnekah Cemetery (now in planning stage)
3. Fund Raising: Sale of Hoodies
4. Educational Activities
 - (1). Fall 2007 tour of Pierce Chemicals in Dallas, Texas
 - (2). Planning a Spring trip to the funeral service museum in Houston
 - (3). Guest Speaker - Adam Colvin - Carter Health Care/Hospice
5. Social Events
 - (1). "Movie nights" on the UCO campus

J. Accreditation - American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE)

Accreditation visit in September or October of 2008. Currently, the department is writing the self study to be submitted to the ABFSE by late July. Accreditation occurs once every seven years.

K. Topics of discussion suggested by Advisory Board Members

1. Funeral Service Ethics
2. Work expectations in the funeral home v. classroom work ethic.
3. Status of Funeral Director Only Program - Vote to approve accreditation at ABFSE 2008 Convention, March 26-29.
4. No current threats of any Oklahoma colleges starting a funeral service program.