

Area: Health & Education
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Degree: A.S. - Funeral Service Education

Funeral Service Education Degree

The Funeral Service Education program is a two-year associate of science degree that prepares students for entry-level positions in funeral service. The program is designed to meet the prerequisites for licensure and employment in the field of funeral service as funeral directors or embalmers.

The Funeral Service Education Program at American River College is accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE) 3432 Ashland Avenue, Suite U, St. Joseph, Missouri 64506 (816) 233-3747. Web: www.abfse.org

NOTE: All courses require a grade of "C" or better and the National Board Examination must be completed before graduation.

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).

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this program, the student will be able to:

- Choose the correct techniques for each embalming case.
- Analyze information given by the family to complete the necessary paperwork for the state of California and other government agencies.
- Recommend options for the appropriate disposition of the decedent's remains.
- Contact the appropriate clergy, agencies and organizations for the disposition of the remains.
- Evaluate and prioritize the funeral choices of the family in a timely manner.
- Create a funeral service for the family.
- Participate as a volunteer in a community service activity.

Career Opportunities

The student is eligible to take the state board examination to become a licensed funeral director in California. The student also meets the criteria to take the state embalmer's examination.

Program Goals and Objectives

- To prepare students to be members of a human services profession
- To prepare students to be members of the community in which they serve
- To be participants in the relationship between bereaved families and those engaged in the funeral service profession
- To offer professional knowledge of and compliance with federal, state provincial/territorial, and local regulatory guidelines

- To be sensitive to the responsibility for public health, safety and welfare in caring for human remains
- 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 for the profession as defined by the American Board of Funeral Service Education, Inc.
- To educate students concerning the responsibilities of the funeral services 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 student and faculty research in the field of funeral service
- To equip students with information related to the social, legal, psychological, religious and public health issues that are associated with death
- To offer students a comprehensive curriculum that will challenge their academic abilities that are consistent with the curriculum required by the American Board of Funeral Service Education, Inc.
- To prepare students for success on the National Board Examination, as well as, state examinations

Enrollment Eligibility

To be eligible for enrollment in the program, the student must meet the following criteria:

- Graduation from an accredited high school (graduates from outside the United States must have transcripts evaluated by an approved independent agency), or successful completion of General Educational Development (GED) Test or California High School Proficiency Examination (CHSPE).
- BIOL 102, ENGWR 300 and FSE 100 with a grade of "C" or better.
- Minimum cumulative college GPA of 2.0.
- A Curriculum Planning Summary Sheet completed by an ARC counselor and dated within the semester the enrollment packet is submitted.
- A completed pre-enrollment application.

Enrollment Process

Eligible students are selected for the program according to the following steps:

- Pre-enrollment applications to the program may be obtained from the Health and Education Division Office, the Coordinator of the Funeral Service Education program, or at www.arc.losrios.edu/fse. The Funeral Service Education program currently accepts students once per year for the Spring semester which begins in January. Applications for the Spring semester are available by September 15th and the deadline to submit the application is by the second Friday in December.

- Only students who meet the pre-enrollment requirements and follow the pre-enrollment procedures will be considered for the program.
- Selection is based on a random selection process should the number of applicants exceed available space in the program.
- Students admitted to the Funeral Service Education program are required to have a physical examination, laboratory and licensing agencies inoculations, drug screen, and background check by the completion of the first semester of the program. Students are responsible for any costs incurred related to meeting the health requirements.
- If a minimum number of qualified applicants are not received, enrollment will be delayed until the following semester, at which time, applicants will need to reapply.

Requirements for Degree		60.5 Units
Pre-FSE Semester		
FSE 100	Introduction to Funeral Service	2
BIOL 102	Introduction to Concepts of Human Anatomy and Physiology	4
ENGWR 300	College Composition	3
1st Semester		
FSE 110	Funeral Directing I	2
FSE 160	Funeral Service Law and Ethics	3
BUS 340	Business Law	3
CHEM 130	Chemistry for Funeral Services	4
SPEECH 301	Public Speaking (3)	3
or SPEECH 331	Group Discussion (3)	3
2nd Semester		
FSE 111	Funeral Directing II	2
FSE 140	Pathology	2
FSE 155	Merchandising in the Funeral Service Industry	3
BIOL 130	Microbiology for Funeral Services	3
ACCT 101	Fundamentals of College Accounting	3
3rd Semester		
FSE 120	Embalming I	3
FSE 130	Restorative Art	3.5
FSE 150	Funeral Service Management	3
CISC 300	Computer Familiarization	1
4th Semester		
FSE 121	Embalming II	2
FSE 170	Funeral Services Counseling	3
FSE 297	Internship in Funeral Service Education	5
PSYC 390	Psychology of Death and Dying	3

Associate Degree Requirements: The Funeral Service Education Associate in Science (A.S.) Degree may be obtained by completion of the required program, plus general education requirements, plus sufficient electives to meet a 60-unit total. See ARC graduation requirements.

FSE 100 Introduction to Funeral Service 2 Units

Corequisite: ENGWR 300
Hours: 36 hours LEC

This course is a survey of the history of the funeral service industry. A comprehensive overview of the field of funeral service is covered. Emphasis is on the role and skills of the funeral service practitioner. The course provides insight into the funeral service industry and the career opportunities available. Field trips are required.

FSE 110 Funeral Directing I 2 Units

Corequisite: BUS 340, CHEM 130, ENGWR 300, and FSE 160
Enrollment Limitation: Acceptance into the Funeral Service Education Program
Hours: 36 hours LEC

This course is designed to introduce the general practices of funeral directing. It introduces the sociological phenomena that affect all the elements of funeral service including cultural differences, family structures, and factors of change that relate to funeralization. It also includes notification of death, transfer and disposition of bodies, arrangement conferences, pre-planned funerals and post-arrangement follow-up. Field trips may be required.

FSE 111 Funeral Directing II 2 Units

Prerequisite: FSE 110 with a grade of "C" or better
Corequisite: BIOL 130, FSE 140, and FSE 155
Hours: 36 hours LEC

This course introduces the basic philosophies of a cross-section of religious and ethnic funeral practices and the role of the funeral practitioner in directing each type. Also included are procedures for fraternal, military, and celebrity funerals. Field trips may be required.

FSE 120 Embalming I 3 Units

Prerequisite: BIOL 130 and FSE 140 with grades of "C" or better
Corequisite: FSE 130 and 150
Hours: 54 hours LEC

This course is an introduction to the phenomenon of death in the human body. It includes the processes of preservation, restoration, and sanitation in treating the dead human body. Field trips may be required.

FSE 121 Embalming II 2 Units

Prerequisite: FSE 120 and 130 with a grade of "C" or better.
Hours: 36 hours LEC

This course is a continuation of Embalming I. It is the study of vascular anatomy, case analysis, the selection and injection of embalming fluids, and treatment of specific conditions requiring special attention.

FSE 130 Restorative Art 3.5 Units

Prerequisite: FSE 140 with a grade of "C" or better.
Corequisite: FSE 120.
Hours: 54 hours LEC; 27 hours LAB

This course introduces the techniques of creating an acceptable physical appearance of the deceased for the benefit of the survivors. Included are the study of facial features, cosmetics, and restorative treatment for a variety of situations faced by the practitioner.

FSE 140 Pathology for Funeral Service 2 Units

Prerequisite: CHEM 130 with a grade of "C" or better
Corequisite: BIOL 130, FSE 111, and FSE 155
Hours: 36 hours LEC

This course offers a study of pathological disease conditions and how they affect various parts of the body. Particular conditions that relate to or affect the embalming or restorative art process are emphasized.

FSE 150 Funeral Service Management 3 Units

Prerequisite: Accounting 101 or 301 and FSE 111 with grades of "C" or better

Corequisite: FSE 120 and 130

Hours: 54 hours LEC

This course introduces the basic principles of management as they apply to the practice of the funeral profession. The role and function of an effective manager are explored. Emphasis is placed on the management functions of planning, organizing, motivating, directing, and controlling. Specific areas of funeral service practice and managerial guidelines for those areas are covered. Additionally, theory as it relates to funeral service practice is addressed. Field trips may be required.

FSE 155 Merchandising in the Funeral Service Industry 3 Units

Prerequisite: FSE 110 with a grade of "C" or better

Corequisite: BIOL 130, FSE 111, and FSE 140

Hours: 54 hours LEC

This course introduces merchandising as it applies to the funeral service profession. The curriculum is divided into two main sections. The first covers construction and features of caskets, outer burial containers, and other funeral-related products. The second section examines methods of pricing, display, presentation, and control of funeral merchandise. Field trips may be required.

FSE 160 Funeral Service Law and Ethics 3 Units

Corequisite: BUS 340, CHEM 130, ENGWR 300, and FSE 110

Enrollment Limitation: Acceptance into the Funeral Service Education Program.

Hours: 54 hours LEC

This course introduces law and the judicial system as they pertain to the funeral industry. Topics include: sources of law, the legal status of the dead human body, the duty of burial, rights to control funeral arrangements and final disposition, liability for funeral expenses, torts involving the dead human body and the funeral director, wills, estates, probate, cemeteries, crematories, and state and federal laws and regulations. Personal and professional ethics that guide decisions and actions in the proper treatment of the dead are also included.

FSE 170 Funeral Services Counseling 3 Units

Prerequisite: FSE 111 with a grade of "C" or better

Corequisite: FSE 121, FSE 297, and PSYC 390

Hours: 54 hours LEC

This course examines communication skills and the role of the funeral director as facilitator, counselor, and caregiver. Included are specific communications and counseling techniques as they are applied in funeral service practice. Field trips may be required.

FSE 297 Internship in Funeral Service Education 5 Units

Corequisite: FSE 121, FSE 170, and PSYC 390.

Hours: 18 hours LEC; 216 hours LAB

This course provides an opportunity to apply classroom instruction in funeral service education to real-world practice in the community. Interns participate in a onsite lab experience program at an approved off-campus preceptor site.

FSE 1000 California Embalmer's Examination Review .5 Units

Advisory: FSE 120.

Hours: 9 hours LEC

This course reviews embalming, restorative art, embalming chemistry, pathology, microbiology, safety, and California laws pertaining to the profession of embalming. The course identifies areas to study while preparing for the California Embalmer's Examination. Credit/No Credit only.