

Funeral Service Education

Overview

ARC's Funeral Service Education program prepares students for entry-level employment in the funeral service industry; provides a strong theory-based curriculum and related clinical experience reflective of the current industry standard; and maintains or exceeds the standards put forth by the accrediting board. ARC is one of only two community colleges in the state of California to offer a Funeral Service Education program.

Courses are designed to meet the prerequisite for licensure and employment in the funeral service industry as funeral directors and embalmers through courses in biology, chemistry, funeral service management, embalming, restorative art, funeral service fundamentals, counseling, accounting, and funeral service law and ethics. Coursework is conducted on the ARC campus, while the clinical component will be offered off campus at local funeral industry sites.

ARC's program is accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education ([ABFSE \(http://www.abfse.org/\)](http://www.abfse.org/)), 992 Mantua Pike, Suite 108, Woodbury Heights, NJ 08097 (816) 233-3747.

Roadmaps

Road maps lay out all of the courses you need to take for a given degree or certificate.

[Get a Road map! Explore Ways to Complete These Programs \(/academics/arc-program-road-maps\)](#)

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Associate Degree

A.S. in Funeral Service Education

This degree prepares students for entry-level positions in funeral service. It is designed to meet the prerequisites for licensure and employment in the field of funeral service as funeral directors or embalmers.

The central objective of an ABFSE-accredited program must be to educate students in every phase of funeral service so that program graduates are prepared for entry-level employment in funeral service. In support of this objective, a program must adopt at least the following Program Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of an accredited program, students will be able to:

- 1.) Explain the importance of funeral service professionals in developing relationships with the families and communities they serve.
- 2.) Identify standards of ethical conduct in funeral service practice.
- 3.) Interpret how federal, state, and local laws apply to funeral service in order to ensure compliance.
- 4.) Apply principles of public health and safety in the handling and preparation of human remains.
- 5.) Demonstrate technical skills in embalming and restorative art that are necessary for the preparation and handling of human remains.
- 6.) Demonstrate skills required for conducting arrangement conferences, visitations, services, and ceremonies.
- 7.) Describe the requirements and procedures for burial, cremation, and other accepted forms of final disposition of human remains.
- 8.) Describe methods to address the grief-related needs of the bereaved.
- 9.) Explain management skills associated with operating a funeral establishment.
- 10.) Demonstrate verbal and written communication skills and research skills needed for funeral service practice.

The Funeral Service Education Program at American River College is accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE) 992 Mantua Pike, Suite 108, Woodbury Heights, NJ 08097 (816) 233-3747. Web: www.abfse.org

NOTE: All courses, including general education, 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).

National Board Examination scores, graduation rates, and employment rates for this and other ABFSE-accredited programs are available at www.abfse.org. To request a printed copy of this program's scores and rates, go to Health and Education 770 or by email at rosev@arc.losrios.edu or by telephone at (916) 484-8145.

Catalog Date: January 1, 2021

Degree Requirements

COURSE CODE	COURSE TITLE	UNITS
ACCT 101	Fundamentals of College Accounting	3
BIOL 102	Essentials of Human Anatomy and Physiology (4)	4
or BIOL 103	Human Anatomy for Funeral Services (4)	
BIOL 130	Microbiology for Funeral Service	3
BUS 340	Business Law	3
CHEM 130	Chemistry for Funeral Service	4
ENGWR 300	College Composition (3)	3
or ENGWR 480	Honors College Composition (3)	
FSE 297	Internship in Funeral Service Education	5
FSE 300	Introduction to Funeral Service	2
FSE 310	Funeral Directing I	3
FSE 312	Funeral Directing II	3
FSE 320	Funeral Service Law and Ethics	3
FSE 330	Merchandising in the Funeral Service Industry	3

COURSE CODE	COURSE TITLE	UNITS
FSE 335	Funeral Service Management	3
FSE 340	Pathology for Funeral Service	2
FSE 350	Restorative Art	3.5
FSE 360	Embalming I	4
FSE 365	Embalming II	2
FSE 370	Funeral Service Counseling	3
MATH 110	Elementary Geometry (5)	5
or MATH 120	Intermediate Algebra (5)	
PSYC 390	Psychology of Death and Dying	3
SPEECH 301	Public Speaking (3)	3
or SPEECH 331	Group Discussion (3)	
Total Units:		67.5

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.

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 or BIOL 103, BUS 310 or ENGWR 300 or ENGWR 480 or ESLW 340, FSE 300, MATH 110 or 120 or higher 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. Deadline to submit the application is by the second Friday in November.
- 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 among eligible applicants 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 be required to reapply.

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 Information

The student is eligible to take the National Board Exam and state board examination to become a licensed funeral director in California. The student also meets the criteria to take the state embalmer's examination. As an accredited mortuary college, our program goals and objectives are as follows: ·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

Funeral Service Education (FSE) Courses

FSE 295 Independent Studies in Funeral Service Education

Units: 1 - 3
Prerequisite: None.
Catalog Date: January 1, 2021

FSE 297 Internship in Funeral Service Education

Units: 5
Hours: 18 hours LEC; 216 hours LAB
Prerequisite: BUS 340, FSE 350, and FSE 360 with grades of "C" or better
Corequisite: FSE 365 and 370
Enrollment Limitation: Students must show proof they have completed all general education and competency requirements for graduation.
Catalog Date: January 1, 2021

This course provides an opportunity to apply classroom instruction in funeral service education to real-world practice in the community. Interns participate in an off-site lab experience program and approved off-campus preceptor sites. A portion of this course may be offered in a TBA component of 27-54 hours which may include embalming, preparation, or documentation.

Student Learning Outcomes

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

- correctly embalm a dead human body
- arrange and direct funeral services
- properly perform transfer of remains
- prepare pertinent documents including death certificates, disposition permits, newspaper notices, government benefits forms
- demonstrate health and safety measures in the preparation room
- identify and wear business attire relevant for the funeral home setting
- demonstrate professionalism in a funeral home setting

FSE 299 Experimental Offering in Funeral Service Education

Units: 0.5 - 4
Prerequisite: None.
Catalog Date: January 1, 2021

FSE 300 Introduction to Funeral Service

Units: 2
Hours: 36 hours LEC
Prerequisite: None.
Advisory: ENGWR 300, ENGWR 480, or ESLW 340
Transferable: CSU
Catalog Date: January 1, 2021

This course is a survey of the history of the funeral service industry and a comprehensive overview of the field of funeral service. It emphasizes the role and skills of the funeral service practitioner. This course provides insight into the funeral service industry and the career opportunities available. Field trips or phone interviews may be required.

Student Learning Outcomes

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

- differentiate between historical funeral practices and contemporary funeral service
- explain the development of the funeral service profession
- describe inter-professional relationships and responsibilities in funeral service
- evaluate the basic role of the funeral service practitioner in society
- compose a list of various career opportunities related to funeral service

FSE 310 Funeral Directing I

Units: 3
Hours: 36 hours LEC; 54 hours LAB
Prerequisite: FSE 300 with a grade of "C" or better
Corequisite: CHEM 130 and FSE 320
Enrollment Limitation: Acceptance into the Funeral Service Education Program.
Transferable: CSU
Catalog Date: January 1, 2021

This course introduces the general practices of funeral directing. It focuses on 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. A portion of this course may be offered in a TBA component of 27-54 hours which may include embalming, preparation, or documentation.

Student Learning Outcomes

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

- describe the application and purpose of sociology in funeral service
- explain the role of the funeral director in adapting funeral services to a culturally diverse population
- recognize the family governing systems found in American society
- compare the different types of family structure
- investigate the changing social factors that affect American funeral rites and the families that are being served
- prioritize the responsibilities of the funeral director
- calculate the time frames in which the services of a funeral director are typically provided (i.e. pre-need, at-need, and post arrangement follow-up)
- demonstrate proper telephone etiquette and protocol
- appraise and demonstrate the correct procedures and equipment needed for human body transportation in home, institutional, and field locations
- apply communication skills necessary to meet with a family in the arrangement conference
- collect the data necessary to complete a death certificate, disposition permit, social security forms and veterans benefit forms
- distinguish between pre-planned and pre-funded funerals
- identify federal, state, and local regulations used for disposition of human bodies and specific forms
- integrate vocabulary associated with funeral service into day-to-day practices in the funeral home

FSE 312 Funeral Directing II

Units:	3
Hours:	36 hours LEC; 54 hours LAB
Prerequisite:	FSE 310 and 320 with grades of "C" or better
Corequisite:	BIOL 130 and FSE 330
Enrollment Limitation:	Student must be enrolled in the Funeral Service Education program to enroll in this course
Transferable:	CSU
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

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. It also includes procedures for fraternal, military, and celebrity funerals. A portion of this course may be offered in a TBA component of 27-54 hours which may include embalming, preparation, or documentation.

Student Learning Outcomes

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

- compare and contrast a cross-section of American religious customs
- identify characteristics of adaptive and humanistic ceremonies
- distinguish characteristics of funeral preferences of different ethnic groups
- arrange fraternal and military funeral services
- describe procedures for celebrity funerals
- apply vocabulary used in funeral service
- set up and conduct various funeral services
- compare and contrast the disposition options of human remains

FSE 320 Funeral Service Law and Ethics

Units:	3
Hours:	54 hours LEC
Prerequisite:	None.
Corequisite:	CHEM 130 and FSE 310
Enrollment Limitation:	Acceptance into the Funeral Service Education Program.
Transferable:	CSU
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

This course introduces law and the judicial system as they pertain to the funeral industry. Topics include sources of law, the legal status of a 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.

Student Learning Outcomes

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

- distinguish among a tort, crime, and breach of contract pertaining to the funeral business
- confirm the characteristics of a valid and enforceable funeral contract, negotiable instruments, bailment, and agency relationships
- explain the Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) regarding the sale of goods (i.e. caskets, outer burial containers)
- compare the basic forms of funeral business organizations
- evaluate the legal relationships, rights, duties, and liabilities among the funeral director, the dead body, and the consumer
- explain laws and regulations pertaining to funeral service
- assess legal issues in funeral service in order to avoid liability
- complete the documents that are required in the funeral service process
- predict situations when professional services are required for death planning and estate administration
- critique ethics relating to funeral service
- explain the difference between legal and ethical issues within the funeral business
- recommend a standard of ethical behavior with examples of personal and professional conduct
- integrate vocabulary terms associated with ethical issues and practices in the funeral service industry

FSE 330 Merchandising in the Funeral Service Industry

Units:	3
Hours:	54 hours LEC
Prerequisite:	FSE 310 and 320 with grades of "C" or better
Corequisite:	BIOL 130 and FSE 312
Enrollment Limitation:	Acceptance into the Funeral Service Education Program.
Transferable:	CSU
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

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 in person or via video may be required.

Student Learning Outcomes

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

- apply knowledge of merchandising to communicate with colleagues, sales representatives, and the public
- describe the component parts of funeral merchandise, including materials used, styles, finishes, dimension, and functions of products
- assess new products and potential innovations for their appropriateness for actual practice
- compare and contrast historical pricing methods
- calculate prices for professional service and merchandise
- evaluate the services and merchandise provided by the funeral director
- prepare to plan and present product information to the public
- assess the various methods of merchandise display

- identify the components of funeral merchandise

FSE 335 Funeral Service Management

Units:	3
Hours:	54 hours LEC
Prerequisite:	None.
Enrollment Limitation:	Acceptance into the Funeral Service Education Program.
Transferable:	CSU
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

This course introduces the basic principles of management as they apply to the practice of the funeral profession. It explores the role and function of an effective manager, emphasizing the functions of planning, organizing, motivating, directing, and controlling. Specific areas of funeral service practice and managerial guidelines for those areas are covered. Topics also include management theory as it relates to funeral service practice. Field trips may be required.

Student Learning Outcomes

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

- identify the goals and objectives of funeral service management
- describe management functions as they relate to funeral service practice
- recommend contemporary concepts of funeral service management as they relate to client families and community, staff members, and professional associates
- differentiate the five areas of management and discuss the significant aspects of each
- prepare a set of operational procedures specific to funeral service
- create a set of procedures related to disaster management
- analyze future trends in the funeral service business and in funeral service practice
- define and discuss the role of funeral service businesses in the economy
- assess the risks involved with operating a small funeral service business
- identify ways in which odds for success in small funeral service businesses can be improved
- evaluate human resource requirements for success in funeral service businesses
- explain the factors involved in buying a funeral service business
- explain how credit and collections programs are managed in funeral service businesses
- assess methods of estimating capital needs and types of financing available for funeral service businesses
- describe areas of risk management areas in funeral service and types of insurance
- design a set of marketing tools for a funeral service business
- identify and use the components of computer hardware and software
- use and assess funeral management software

FSE 340 Pathology for Funeral Service

Units:	2
Hours:	36 hours LEC
Prerequisite:	CHEM 130 with a grade of "C" or better
Enrollment Limitation:	Acceptance into the Funeral Service Education program.
Transferable:	CSU
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

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

Student Learning Outcomes

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

- identify and prioritize pathological conditions that require special procedures in the transfer, handling, preparation, and disposition of dead human bodies
- identify and prioritize etiological factors that require special procedures in the transfer, handling, preparation, and disposition of dead human bodies
- describe diseases and related terminology and how they affect systems of the human body
- choose the correct terminology when communicating with members of the medical community, allied professionals, and survivors
- explain the benefits derived from postmortem examination

FSE 350 Restorative Art

Units:	3.5
Hours:	54 hours LEC; 27 hours LAB
Prerequisite:	None.
Corequisite:	FSE 360
Enrollment Limitation:	Acceptance into the Funeral Service Education program.
Transferable:	CSU
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

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

Student Learning Outcomes

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

- describe procedures to obtain written permission to perform any restorative procedure
- relate specified types of restoration to the correct embalming procedure
- name and locate the major bony structures of the skull and the major muscles of the face

- explain how bone structures and muscles influence surface form and expression
- compare and contrast the different forms of the head and face from direct and profile views
- describe and explain facial proportions and relate them to natural form of the facial features and facial restoration
- identify and describe the various cosmetic, restorative treatments, materials, and equipment
- select the correct colorants to achieve a natural appearance under various conditions
- demonstrate basic hair styling
- classify and explain the principles of color theory to natural appearance
- classify and explain the principles of pigmentary mixtures, and relate the principles of pigmentary mixtures to cosmetic compounds
- demonstrate cosmetic application on a model
- identify and describe the natural and acquired facial markings on the face and neck
- demonstrate wax or clay modeling of facial features

FSE 360 Embalming I

Units:	4
Hours:	54 hours LEC; 54 hours LAB
Prerequisite:	CHEM 130 with a grade of "C" or better
Corequisite:	FSE 350
Enrollment Limitation:	Acceptance into the Funeral Service Education program.
Transferable:	CSU
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

This course introduces 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. A portion of this course may be offered in a TBA component of 27-54 hours which may include embalming, preparation, or documentation.

Student Learning Outcomes

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

- define the concepts of sanitation, disinfection, temporary preservation, and restoration pertaining to embalming
- identify personal and environmental protective measures used in embalming
- explain the proper disposal of blood, body fluids, and contaminated materials
- compare the use of embalming instruments, equipment, and sundries
- describe embalming techniques and procedures
- list those conditions whereby notification of death to public officials is required
- demonstrate the handling, treatment, and disposition of the dead human body
- explain how the disposition of the dead human body meets the needs of the survivors

FSE 365 Embalming II

Units:	2
Hours:	36 hours LEC
Prerequisite:	FSE 350 and 360 with grades of "C" or better
Corequisite:	FSE 297 and 370
Transferable:	CSU
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

This course is a continuation of FSE 360. It is the study of vascular anatomy, case analysis, the selection and injection of embalming fluids, and treatment of specific conditions requiring special attention.

Student Learning Outcomes

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

- compare the different embalming processes related to different causes of death
- use funeral service terminology to communicate with members of the allied health professions and the public
- describe the correct procedures for raising and incising vessels
- identify and demonstrate with a suture kit, the various sutures used in closing incisions
- analyze and document embalming techniques and procedures with written reports
- compare embalming treatments cases involving infectious disease, trauma, and pathological conditions
- relate embalming procedures to disaster situations
- choose the proper chemicals for use in creating an embalming solution
- describe the proper procedures for embalming an autopsied case

FSE 370 Funeral Service Counseling

Units:	3
Hours:	54 hours LEC
Prerequisite:	FSE 335, 350, and 360 with grades of "C" or better
Corequisite:	FSE 297 and 365
Enrollment Limitation:	Student must be enrolled in the Funeral Service Education program to enroll in this course.
Transferable:	CSU
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

This course examines communication skills and the role of the funeral director as facilitator, counselor, and caregiver. Topics include specific communication and counseling techniques as they are applied in funeral service practice as well as normal and abnormal grief reactions, children and death, crisis intervention counseling, and dealing with stress and burnout. Field trips may be required.

Student Learning Outcomes

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

- list the elements of verbal and non-verbal communication used in funeral service
- demonstrate the importance of listening skills within the funeral profession
- explain the significance of group dynamics in the funeral process
- discuss the values and purposes of the funeral rite for survivors
- describe the typical reaction and responses during the emotion of grief
- compare the theories of grief
- explain issues relating to children and death
- analyze how grief affects the functioning of the family
- distinguish the difference between grief counseling and grief therapy
- manage the limitations of the funeral director in grief counseling and grief therapy
- describe the types and styles of counseling
- prioritize the major goals of counseling as well as the functions of the counselor
- practice the basic skills and techniques utilized in counseling and their application to funeral service
- compose a list of the pre-need, at-need, and post-funeral counseling opportunities in the community
- appraise resources for coping with loss
- analyze how grief affects the funeral director
- choose when to make referrals to the appropriate community resources

Faculty

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