

SPOTLIGHT ON:

FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION

The Funeral Industry, as always, is ever changing. In days past, educational and licensing requirements across the United States have been lax overall and left up to each state's governing body to determine the requirements within their state. Although each state continues to remain in charge of determining requirements, those requirements are becoming more stringent each year that funeral professionals remain in practice due to advances in death care technology, governing regulations, and the expansion of the funeral directors/professionals' duties. Consumers rising expectations have also played a major role in shaping the future of the funeral industry.

A funeral directors' duties once consisted of only a few tasks (many, many years ago). However, current funeral directors and professionals are much more than that –

they are managers, legal officers, CEO's, CFO's, and COO's and many are often their own customer service reps, answering their own phones, and handling their clients' needs from beginning to end. Because their duties have expanded, so has the need for continuing education. "Continuing education gives professionals the opportunity to take a deep dive into new products and services they may not have considered before.", said Stacey Cessna of WebCE. A funeral procession that once consisted of service A, now consists of Service A, B, and C, as well as a host of grief and sympathy products. Continuing education paves the path to future success by ensuring that the needs and expectations of current and prospective clients have been and will be met. Jill Karn of Pierce Mortuary Colleges mentioned that "progressive funeral homes value the internal development of their future leaders and look for

institutional knowledge to be passed on to others” which further justifies the necessity of continuing education in the funeral industry moving through 2020 and into 2021.

Changes in educational and continuing education requirements have contributed to the expansion of the funeral industry by altering the way that initial education, licensure, and continuing education have been offered compared to more traditional methods of learning and licensure from the past. “Virtual delivery of education over multiple forms of platforms and media, accessed on demand or in real-time e-learning, has dramatically altered the landscape of education”, said Jill Karn, of Pierce Mortuary Colleges. These technological innovations and improved methods of delivery of digital content has positively impacted the funeral industry by allowing those who previously didn’t have the chance to earn a traditional campus based education the ability to earn an “online” or “hybrid” (mix of online and on-campus classes) degree that would allow them to become licensed and practice in their own state all the while enjoying the comforts of remotely learning/working.

Because there are no uniform licensing standards or a federally governed regulatory body for the funeral industry, licensing requirements vary from state to state. One state may be satisfied with a High School Diploma, or equivalent, plus an apprenticeship, while others may require a bachelor’s degree in Funeral Service in order to be licensed. It is important for prospective students of the industry and current professionals within the industry to understand the licensing requirements for their own state as well as any states they may be interested in directing in, and then make an informed decision on where to obtain their education or continuing education credits/requirements moving forward. According to Jack Lechner of CCMS, “The best way for a death care professional to stay abreast is to belong to a professional association, attend regulatory board meetings, and at least reading the published minutes of your State’s Regulatory Board.” Those best practices will ensure that professionals adhere to their states licensing requirements by staying on top of required continuing education credits and will assist in choosing an institution for continuing education. Choosing an education provider is a decision that must be made after careful consideration of what is right for the individual, not which has the lowest cost, or which is the most conveniently located.

Continue reading to learn more from current industry educational professionals from renowned educational institutions within the US on what they feel has changed in terms of licensing and educational requirements within the industry as well as their opinions on the impacts of these changes. **FBA**



WebCE® offers a large selection of online funeral continuing education courses for funeral professionals nationwide where CE is required. Our online funeral continuing education courses include the most up-to-date information, and provide funeral professionals with the knowledge they need to be successful. Funeral professionals also have the opportunity to save time and money with our dual-credit courses. These courses are designed for those who have licenses in multiple states, or those who also hold an insurance license for selling pre-need programs.

WebCE’s funeral continuing education course are completely online. You can take our courses anywhere at any time. WebCE’s courses have been approved by the state boards and the Academy of Professional Funeral Service Practitioners (APFSP) for Certified Funeral Service Practitioners (CFSP).

What is your institution’ mission statement?

WebCE offers courses written by industry experts. We pride ourselves in providing courses that go beyond the basics of the funeral industry. From creating courses on topics our customers want to providing exceptional customer service, we put our customers first at every level of our business.

Special offers can be found on our social media pages and our website special offers page to have access to coupons posted monthly. We’re active on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Instagram.

Evaluate all aspects of a continuing education provider. Ideally, you want a partner in education meaning they provide you with the courses, support, and additional resources like blogs to keep you up-to-date on industry trends and accurate and up-to-date state requirements.

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PIERCE COLLEGES

The *Wilbert* Group

Pierce Mortuary Colleges strive to create the best and most advanced environment for all students, graduates, partnerships and funeral directors. At each of our campuses we host on-campus employer visits throughout the year with companies looking to hire graduates. Even before our students graduate, employers are encouraged to use these events to interview, make contacts with potential hires, and to begin their hiring search. We offer career placement assistance and personalized career plans for students from day one and our job placement rates are excellent. Another important service that we offer to funeral directors is continuing education/CEUs. We offer online courses as well as provide on-campus continuing education events throughout the year so that your employees have the tools and licensing requirements they need to thrive in a constantly evolving workplace.

For individuals seeking to explore interests, develop skills and enhance their careers, all our colleges offer an accredited associate program, certificate programs, and a variety of courses.

The Online Bachelor of Science degree in Funeral Service Management has course offerings in funeral service-related topics. The bachelor degree would allow ABFSE funeral service associate degree graduates, who have passed both National Board Exams (NBE) or is a licensed Funeral Director/Embalmer, to enroll in the program.

The Funeral Director's Program is designed to meet specific state or professional needs. It is not accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education since it does not include instruction in embalming and related science courses and the general education courses. Students graduating from this program are not eligible to take the National Board Examination or any state board examination for which graduation from an ABFSE accredited program is required.

Pierce Mortuary Colleges' reputation is second to none and prospective employers and funeral service business leaders hold high regard for Pierce Mortuary Colleges and its graduates. Pierce Mortuary Colleges is a group of private colleges teaching funeral service education and include:

Dallas Institute of Funeral Service, Dallas, TX
Gupton-Jones College of Funeral Service, Decatur, GA
Mid-America College of Funeral Service, Jeffersonville, IN

Pierce Mortuary Colleges strive to make education affordable and accessible. Compared to other funeral service programs across the United States, Pierce Mortuary Colleges offer more scholarships overall rather than to just higher ranked students. Individual programs on our campus give individual scholarships as well.

www.pierce.edu
(888) 547-9600



The Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science is an institution which endeavors to develop professionals who can function with distinction within their chosen profession and within the community of life. We strive to provide the best education possible. CCMS offers continuing education throughout the year to licensed death care professionals and funeral homes. Continuing education include Ethic, Pre-Need, Cremation Law, Crematory Operator Certification Program, Certified Celebrant Training, CEU's for Hospice Workers (counselors and social workers). We also provide programs to funeral homes to provide to the hospice workers in their area.

CCMS provides most of our CEU offerings in person here at the CCMS Campus. We occasionally offer online training programs and are currently building that site. CCMS will also come to our location to provide informative CEU programs for your staff or community.

The College is dedicated to providing a sound education and learning environment for its students to help them prepare for a successful career in funeral service. Central to the College philosophy is the firm belief that by example and excellence in teaching, supplemented by the opportunity for extensive practical experience, the College can develop professionals who will be technically competent, ethical and responsive to the needs of others. Inherent in this philosophy is the college's recognition of its obligation to the student, the profession, and the community.

CCMS is regionally and professionally accredited. Regional accreditation comes from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), one of the six regional accreditation organizations in the US. This means that a student's credits earned at CCMS are recognized all across the United States. CCMS is also professionally accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE) so students who graduate from CCMS can be released to take the National Board Exam (NBE). We are authorized to confer an Associate of Applied Science and Bachelor of Mortuary Science degrees. The addition of the Educational Cremation Center will position CCMS to provide the most complete death care education available in the US. Graduates also earn Certified Celebrate status, Crematory Operator Certification, Cremation Arranger training, and Disaster Mortuary Management training. We conduct over 500 embalmings per year in our seven-station embalming lab on campus.

Graduates from our program are eligible to earn a Master's Degree in Thanatology from Marian University at a 20% discount.

A student who matriculates with 60 credit hours will be able to finish the BMS requirements for graduation in only 16 months. CCMS is also authorized to accept federal student aid.

www.ccms.edu
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