

WEST GEORGIA TECHNICAL COLLEGE

FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION Student Handbook



2025 – 2026

Table of Contents

Section	Page
Welcome to Funeral Service Education Program	4
Funeral Service Education Program History	5
Funeral Service Education Program Description	5
Funeral Service Education Program Mission	6
Funeral Service Education Program Philosophy	6
Funeral Service Education Program Purpose	6
Funeral Service Education Program Goals	7
Funeral Service Education Program Objectives	7
Technical Standards/Essential Functions	8
Competencies & Functional Abilities	9
Funeral Service Education Program Occupational Hazards	10
Course Outline	12
Grades	12
Progression in the Funeral Service Education Program	13
Termination from the Funeral Service Education Program	14
Procedure for Termination	14
Readmission	15
Student Attendance	15
Online Course Attendance	16
Attendance Appeal Process	16
Make-up Work	17
Class Schedule	17
Equipment / Books / Supplies	17
Cell Phone Use Policy—Classroom	17
Specific Information Related to Funeral Service Practicum	17
Occupational Based Instruction (OBI) for Health Science Programs	17
Practicum Assignments	18
Waiting List (Alternate Status, Teach Out Plan) Policy	18
Funeral Home Affiliates	19
Eligibility Criteria	20
Clinical Applied Learning Experience	21
Criminal Background Check Procedure	21
Drug Screen Procedure	21
Medical/Dental Examinations	22
Practicum Preparation Requirements	22
Health and Malpractice Insurance	23

Section	Page
Health and Safety Guidelines for Practicum	23
Safety	24
Practicum Responsibilities and Competence	24
Practicum Retention Policy	24
Practicum Attendance, Tardiness, Absenteeism, and Make-Up	25
Illness/Absence at Practicum	25
Cell Phone Use Policy—Practicum	26
Practicum Dress Code	26
Personal Hygiene / Grooming Guidelines	26
Uniform Requirements (General)	26
Purchasing Uniforms	27
Equipment for Practicum You Must Purchase	27
Basic Practicum Information	27
Practicum Evaluations	29
Practicum Critical Incidents	29
Practicum Alert / Warning / Termination	30
Funeral Service Safety Management & Chemical Hygiene Plan	31
Bloodborne Pathogens and Infection Control	31
Funeral Home Operation	32
In Case of Accident	33
Personal Protective & Safety Equipment	34
Equipment Maintenance	34
Confidentiality and Privacy Policies	34
Grievances	35
Additional Information	35
Professional Certification Information	35
Appendix A: Course Descriptions for Funeral Services Education	36

Welcome to the Funeral Service Education Program West Georgia Technical College

Dear Student,

Welcome to the Funeral Service Education (FSE) Program at West Georgia Technical College (WGTC). Whether you are a prospective student exploring your options or have already been accepted into the program, we are excited about your interest in this meaningful and essential profession.

This handbook is designed to guide you through your journey by providing important information about the Funeral Service Education program, as well as general policies and expectations at WGTC. When used in conjunction with the WGTC Catalog, the Student Code of Conduct, and your individual course syllabi, this handbook will serve as your primary reference for understanding program structure, policies, and degree requirements.

The FSE program is both academically rigorous and personally rewarding. As you prepare to serve families during some of their most difficult moments, you will be held to high professional and ethical standards. Whether you're beginning to consider this field or actively working toward your degree, please know that success requires commitment, time, and personal discipline. A helpful guideline is to dedicate two hours of study outside the classroom for every hour spent in class. Waiting until the last minute to study can make your path more difficult and reduce your ability to retain the vital information needed to pass the National Board Exam (NBE). The subjects covered in this program align closely with the NBE content, so a strong understanding of your coursework is essential for licensure.

We are proud to offer this program at WGTC and are committed to supporting you as you take this important step toward a career in funeral service. Our faculty and staff are here to help you succeed. Stay engaged, communicate often, and refer to this handbook whenever questions arise. Many challenges can be overcome—or even prevented—by staying informed and connected.

Thank you for choosing West Georgia Technical College. We look forward to walking alongside you in this journey of professional and personal growth.

Sincerely,

The Funeral Service Education Faculty and Staff
West Georgia Technical College

Funeral Service Education Program History

West Georgia Technical College

The Funeral Service Education (FSE) program at West Georgia Technical College (WGTC) was established to meet the growing need for qualified funeral service professionals in Georgia and surrounding states. The program was approved at the associate degree level and developed in alignment with the accreditation standards set by the American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE). WGTC is actively pursuing candidacy and full accreditation through ABFSE to ensure the program meets the highest standards of funeral service education.

The FSE program is a five-semester Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree designed to prepare students for entry-level positions in funeral homes, crematories, and related service providers. Through a combination of classroom instruction, laboratory training, and hands-on experience at affiliated funeral service facilities, students gain the academic knowledge, technical skills, and ethical foundation needed for professional practice.

The curriculum follows statewide standards established by the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG), ensuring consistency and quality across all core and occupational coursework. WGTC's Funeral Service Education Program is committed to developing compassionate, skilled professionals who are prepared to serve families with dignity, respect, and excellence in care.

Funeral Service Education Program Description

West Georgia Technical College

The Funeral Service Education (FSE) program at West Georgia Technical College is designed to prepare students for entry-level positions in funeral service, including roles as funeral directors and embalmers. The program provides students with the academic knowledge, technical skills, and ethical foundation required to serve families with professionalism, compassion, and respect during times of loss.

The curriculum includes instruction in funeral service management, embalming and restorative art, funeral law and ethics, grief psychology and counseling, funeral service merchandising, and public health. Students are also introduced to professional communication, anatomy, microbiology, pathology, and other sciences essential to the practice of funeral service. Learning takes place through a combination of classroom instruction, laboratory work, and supervised clinical experiences in approved funeral service settings.

Students may begin general education coursework in any semester. Once general education requirements are met, students may apply for admission to the occupational (FSE-prefixed) coursework, which follows a defined course sequence over five semesters. The program includes practical training designed to integrate theoretical knowledge with hands-on experiences under the supervision of licensed professionals in the field.

Upon successful completion of the program, graduates are eligible to sit for the National Board Examination (NBE) administered by the International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards (ICFSEB), a requirement for licensure in most states, including Georgia.

Important Accreditation Statement

CAUTION: This program is pursuing accreditation but is **NOT** accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE). Until accreditation is achieved, students graduating from this program are **NOT** eligible to take any licensing examination that requires graduation from an ABFSE accredited program, including the National Board Examination.

For more information about the accreditation process and standards, contact:

American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE)

992 Mantua Pike, Suite 108

Woodbury Heights, NJ 08097

(816) 233-3747

www.abfse.org

Funeral Service Education Program Mission

West Georgia Technical College

The Associate of Applied Science in Funeral Service Education at West Georgia Technical College prepares students to serve their communities with professionalism, compassion, and technical expertise. Grounded in the College's mission to support student success and economic development through relevant education and training, this program equips future funeral service professionals with the knowledge and hands-on skills needed to meet industry standards and community needs.

Students will be trained in key areas such as mortuary science, restorative art, funeral home operations, bereavement care, legal compliance, and ethical service delivery. Emphasis is placed on business management, regulatory practices, and the interpersonal skills necessary to support families with dignity during times of loss.

This program is designed to foster excellence and innovation in the funeral service profession and to cultivate graduates who are career-ready and committed to upholding the highest standards of care. Successful completion of the National Board Examination is required for graduation, reinforcing our commitment to producing a highly skilled, licensed workforce that contributes meaningfully to Georgia's economy and well-being.

Funeral Service Education Program Philosophy

West Georgia Technical College

The Funeral Service Education (FSE) Program at West Georgia Technical College, under the direction of the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG), affirms the dignity and worth of each individual within the framework of a democratic society. The program promotes an environment where students are encouraged to grow personally and professionally while contributing meaningfully to Georgia's economic development, stability, and community well-being.

The program of instruction recognizes and values individual differences, supporting the right of all individuals to seek fulfillment of their physical, mental, emotional, social, spiritual, educational, and

economic needs. The FSE program does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, ethnic or national origin, religion, sex, age, disability, marital status, or economic or academic disadvantage.

Education is a lifelong, dynamic process that brings about changes in knowledge, behavior, and skills. It empowers individuals to reach their full potential and become productive, responsible members of a changing society. Education supports both vertical and lateral career mobility in accordance with each individual's capabilities and aspirations. Within the learning process, both teacher and student share responsibility. The teacher serves as a facilitator of learning, utilizing a range of instructional methods and resources to meet defined educational objectives. The student is expected to take an active role in the learning experience by engaging meaningfully with course materials and instructional opportunities.

The Funeral Service Education Program is consistent with the mission and values of West Georgia Technical College, providing students with the knowledge, skills, and ethical foundation necessary for entry into the funeral service profession. The ultimate goal of the program is to prepare competent, compassionate, and professional funeral service practitioners who will serve their communities with integrity and care while functioning safely and ethically within the scope of their roles.

The curriculum provides a solid academic foundation in communication, human relations, business principles, and legal and ethical responsibilities, along with specialized technical instruction in embalming, restorative art, funeral directing, grief psychology, and public health. The funeral service profession is a dynamic and evolving field that demands a technologically current and ethically sound curriculum. Graduates of the program are prepared to meet the comprehensive needs of the individuals and families they serve and to operate as essential members of the broader death care profession. Once accreditation is achieved, graduates will be eligible to sit for the National Board Examination (NBE), a critical step toward professional licensure and continued employment in the field.

Funeral Service Education Program Purpose

West Georgia Technical College

The goal of the Funeral Service Education (FSE) Program is to prepare students for entry-level employment in funeral service professions, including positions as licensed funeral directors and embalmers. The program is designed to develop competent practitioners who demonstrate professionalism, technical skill, ethical integrity, and compassionate care for the deceased and their families.

Students will gain foundational knowledge and practical experience in all aspects of funeral service, including embalming, restorative art, funeral directing, grief counseling, funeral service management, ethics, and applicable laws and regulations. The program also emphasizes communication skills, cultural sensitivity, and the psychological aspects of death and bereavement.

This goal includes preparing graduates to sit for the National Board Examination (NBE), administered by the International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards (ICFSEB), upon successful completion of the program and once accreditation by the American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE) is achieved.

Funeral Service Education Program Learning Outcomes

Aligned with Bloom's Revised Taxonomy & ABFSE Competencies

Learning Outcome	Bloom's Level	ABFSE Domain(s)
1. Articulate the role of funeral service professionals in building meaningful relationships with families and communities.	Understand / Apply	Social Science, Funeral Directing
2. Apply standards of ethical and professional conduct in all aspects of funeral service practice.	Apply / Evaluate	Funeral Directing, Business Management, Ethics
3. Interpret and adhere to federal, state, and local regulations governing funeral service to ensure legal compliance.	Analyze / Apply	Regulatory Compliance, Funeral Directing
4. Implement public health and safety protocols in the handling, preparation, and care of human remains.	Apply	Sciences, Embalming, OSHA/Public Health
5. Exhibit technical proficiency in embalming and restorative art, demonstrating the skills necessary for preparation of human remains.	Apply	Embalming, Restorative Art
6. Facilitate all aspects of funeral service operations, including arrangement conferences, visitations, services, and ceremonies.	Apply / Analyze	Funeral Directing
7. Describe and comply with procedures for final disposition, including burial, cremation, and alternative methods.	Understand / Apply	Funeral Directing, Disposition Regulations
8. Support the bereaved by recognizing and addressing grief-related needs with sensitivity and compassion.	Apply / Evaluate	Counseling, Social Science
9. Demonstrate foundational management and leadership skills relevant to the operation of a funeral service business.	Apply / Evaluate	Business Management
10. Communicate effectively in both written and verbal forms, incorporating research and documentation appropriate to funeral service practice.	Apply / Create	Communication, Research

These goals align with ABFSE's mission to advance funeral service education through rigorous standards that ensure graduates are prepared for licensure, certification, and effective practice in the profession.

Funeral Service Education Program

Technical Standards / Essential Functions

The following essential, non-academic requirements have been developed to ensure compliance with ABFSE Funeral Services program accreditation standards and to prepare students for the professional responsibilities of funeral service practitioners

Essential Behavioral Attitudes

Students in the Funeral Service Education (FSE) program must demonstrate the following:

1. Ability to engage in all program activities consistent with safe and ethical funeral service practice without demonstrated behaviors of addiction to, abuse of, or dependence on alcohol, drugs (including controlled substances), prescription medications, or over-the-counter substances that may impair behavior or judgment.
2. Capacity to exhibit responsibility and accountability as a student and future funeral service professional, including integrity, respect for self and others, and projecting a professional demeanor appropriate to the funeral service setting.
3. Ability to work effectively under mental and physical stress, including the ability to maintain concentration despite frequent distractions and interruptions.
4. Critical thinking skills necessary to perform, evaluate, interpret, document, and communicate complex funeral service procedures and client needs accurately.
5. Flexibility and adaptability to changing environments, with the ability to prioritize tasks and respond promptly to urgent situations.

Physical Demands

Students in the FSE program must be capable of:

1. Performing moderate physical tasks such as lifting and carrying funeral equipment and supplies, with or without assistance, as typically required in funeral service settings.
2. Assisting in moving or positioning deceased persons and equipment safely.
3. Stooping, kneeling, reaching, sitting, standing, and walking as required in funeral service operations.
4. Performing delicate manual tasks that require fine motor skills, such as restorative art and embalming procedures.
5. Identifying and distinguishing colors, crucial for embalming, restorative art, and other technical procedures.
6. Visual acuity sufficient to see details clearly at various distances, including close-up work and depth perception, to safely and effectively perform technical tasks.
7. Hearing and tactile abilities necessary to detect environmental cues and perform procedures accurately.

8. Reading, comprehending, and applying complex technical materials related to funeral service laws, procedures, and equipment.
9. Expressing and exchanging ideas clearly and effectively through spoken and written English, as well as through digital communication systems.
10. Demonstrating increasing independence and professional judgment while completing supervised clinical internships in funeral service settings.

ADA Statement and Request for Accommodation

The Funeral Service Education Program is committed to providing equal access to educational opportunities for students with disabilities, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Students who believe they may need reasonable accommodations to meet these technical standards are encouraged to contact the college's **Office of Accessibility Services** as early as possible. Reasonable accommodations will be made on an individual basis, in accordance with institutional policies and applicable law, without compromising the essential requirements of the program.

Program Graduation, Certification, and Placement Rates (Outcome measures will be available to prospective and current students, once accreditation and first graduating class NBE scores become available)

Once the program has received Accreditation and students begin to sit for the national certification exam all program outcome measures, including graduation and placement rates, will be posted on the Funeral Service Education program webpage with the date of posting for accuracy.

Placement rates will reflect students who have successfully progressed to the occupational coursework phase and completed supervised clinical internships.

Funeral Service Education Program Special Needs and Accommodations

It is the responsibility of each student to contact the ADA Coordinator at West Georgia Technical College (WGTC) to disclose any conditions that may affect their academic or clinical performance. WGTC is committed to providing reasonable and appropriate accommodations to ensure equal access to educational opportunities.

If you anticipate any difficulties in this program or during your clinical internship due to academic, physical, or other disabilities requiring modifications or special accommodations, please reach out to the ADA Coordinator as early as possible.

Additionally, please inform your course instructor during the first week of class so that necessary support can be coordinated promptly.

To request accommodations, complete the “**Request for Accessibility Services**” form available on the WGTC website at www.westgatech.edu. Navigate to the **Student Services** section under the “Forms” link on the homepage to access the form.

WGTC encourages all students to utilize these resources to ensure a successful and supportive learning experience.

Funeral Service Education Program Competencies & Functional Abilities

West Georgia Technical College’s Funeral Service Education Program recognizes that funeral service professionals face intellectually, mentally, and physically demanding responsibilities. Students seeking admission should be aware that graduates are expected to develop essential competencies and functional abilities throughout their education to meet the professional demands of the field.

The competencies and functional abilities outlined below are representative examples of the capabilities required for students to successfully meet program goals and perform effectively as funeral service practitioners. This list is not exhaustive but highlights key areas necessary for professional practice.

Core Competencies	Standard	Examples (not inclusive)
Critical Thinking and Analytical Skills	Ability to analyze situations, assess cause and effect, and make sound professional judgments.	Identify appropriate embalming techniques, problem-solve issues during funeral preparation, prioritize tasks under pressure.
Interpersonal Skills	Demonstrate effective communication and relational skills with clients, families, colleagues, and the community from diverse cultural, emotional, and social backgrounds.	Establish rapport with grieving families, work collaboratively with colleagues and healthcare providers, maintain sensitivity in diverse cultural contexts.
Communication	Verbal and written communication skills sufficient for clear, compassionate, and professional interaction using English as the primary language.	Explain funeral arrangements to families, complete documentation accurately, communicate effectively during public events or counseling.
Mobility	Physical ability to navigate funeral homes, preparation rooms, and event sites safely and efficiently.	Move confidently in confined spaces such as preparation rooms and chapels, assist in positioning equipment or caskets.
Motor Skills	Fine and gross motor skills required for embalming, restorative art, and handling funeral equipment.	Perform embalming procedures, restorative art techniques, manipulate instruments and tools with precision.
Mental and Emotional Stability	Maintain professional composure and emotional resilience in stressful, sensitive, and unpredictable situations.	Manage personal emotions, respond calmly to crises, support grieving families with empathy and professionalism.
Hearing	Auditory ability sufficient to hear conversations, alarms, and environmental sounds necessary for safety and communication.	Hear client conversations, equipment sounds, and environmental cues during preparation and service.
Visual	Visual acuity sufficient for detailed observation necessary in embalming, restorative art, and funeral service preparation.	Observe skin tones and conditions, apply restorative techniques, distinguish colors and textures accurately.
Tactile Sensation	Ability to interpret touch and perform physical	Detect tissue conditions, perform delicate

Core Competencies	Standard	Examples (not inclusive)
	assessments related to embalming and restorative art.	restorative manipulations, assess environmental factors impacting care.
Olfactory Sensation	Ability to detect odors that may indicate changes in the condition of remains or preparation areas.	Identify odors associated with decomposition or chemical exposure during embalming and preparation.
Psychomotor Skills	Ability to perform tasks consistent with the professional role of funeral service practitioner.	Prepare remains for viewing, conduct embalming procedures, organize funeral services.
Reading Comprehension	Ability to read and understand technical manuals, regulatory guidelines, and professional literature.	Interpret embalming protocols, legal documents, and ethical guidelines.
Mathematical Ability	Competence in basic calculations, measurements, and conversions related to embalming fluids and preparation procedures.	Measure and mix chemicals accurately, convert measurement units as needed.
Physical Stamina	Endurance and strength to perform duties throughout assigned shifts, including standing, lifting, and manual tasks.	Lift caskets, stand for extended periods during services, perform physically demanding embalming tasks.
Physical Health	Maintain health and immunity necessary to meet employment responsibilities safely.	Follow infection control practices, maintain personal health to prevent disease transmission.

Funeral Service Education Program Occupational Hazards and Work Ethics

Work Environment

Funeral service professionals typically work in well-lit, climate-controlled preparation rooms, chapels, and office areas. Students may encounter occupational hazards such as exposure to chemical preservatives, embalming fluids, sharp instruments, biological hazards, and communicable diseases. Physical demands may include lifting and moving heavy equipment, handling remains, and performing tasks that require sustained physical effort.

Occupational Risk Factors and Exposure Control Plan

West Georgia Technical College maintains an approved Exposure Control Plan to minimize occupational exposure to bloodborne pathogens, airborne pathogens, and hazardous chemicals. This plan is reviewed and updated annually and is readily available in all preparation rooms, classrooms, and laboratory areas. The Funeral Service Education Program is classified in accordance with relevant safety categories due to potential exposure during embalming and restorative procedures. Comprehensive training on infection control, use of personal protective equipment (PPE), and safe handling practices is provided to all students before engaging in hands-on activities involving human remains or chemical agents.

Work Ethics (Professionalism)

The Technical College System of Georgia and West Georgia Technical College emphasize the development of strong work ethics across all programs, including Funeral Service Education. Ten essential traits for student success have been identified: appearance, attendance, attitude, character, communication, cooperation, organizational skills, productivity, respect, and teamwork.

Students engage in a progressive professionalism curriculum designed to build and assess these traits throughout the program. Early coursework introduces foundational professionalism concepts, while advanced courses and the clinical internship phase focus on applying professional behaviors in real-world funeral service settings. Students are evaluated through practical assessments, reflective assignments, and case studies related to ethical dilemmas and professional conduct encountered during internships.

These professionalism standards are embedded within the Funeral Service Education curriculum to ensure they are relevant and meaningful, with ongoing assessments conducted at multiple points before program completion.

Work Ethic Trait	Definition
Appearance	Displays appropriate dress, grooming, and hygiene
Attendance	Attends class; arrives/leaves on time; notifies instructor in advance of planned absences.
Attitude	Demonstrates a positive outlook; demonstrates mannerly behavior; follows chain of command.
Character	Displays loyalty, honesty, trustworthiness, dependability, reliability, initiative, self-discipline & self-responsibility.
Communication	Displays appropriate nonverbal, verbal, and written skills
Cooperation	Handles criticism, conflicts, and complaints appropriately; works well with others.
Organizational Skills	Prioritizes and manages time and resources effectively; demonstrates flexibility in handling change; follows directions and procedures for the work environment.
Productivity	Completes task assigned efficiently, effectively, and timely, demonstrates problem-solving capabilities
Respect	Tolerates other points of view; acknowledges and appreciates rights of others; has regard for diversity
Teamwork	Works collaboratively with others toward a common goal in a respectful and cooperative manner; participates appropriately as a team member.

Funeral Service Education Program

Program Length: 5 Semesters (excluding learning support courses)

Course #	Course Title	Credit Hours
ENGL 1101	Composition and Rhetoric	3
MATH 1111	College Algebra	3
ACCT 1100	Financial Accounting I	4
ACCT 2140	Legal Environment of Business	3
ENGL 1102	Literature and Composition	3
SPCH 1101	Public Speaking	3
MKTG 1130	Business Regulations and Compliance	3
COMP 1000	Computer	3
ARTS 1101 / MUSC 1101 / HUMN 1101 / ENGL 2110 / ENGL 2130	Art / Music / Humanities / World Lit / American Lit (Choose One)	3
FSRV 1010	History of Funeral Services	2

Course #	Course Title	Credit Hours
FSRV 1020	Funeral Service Law and Ethics	1
FSRV 1030	Funeral Service Management and Directing	6
FSRV 1050	Funeral Service Practicum	2
FSRV 1070	Small Business Administration for Funeral Service	4
FSRV 2000	Anatomy for Funeral Service	4
FSRV 2010	Pathology for Funeral Service	3
FSRV 2020	Chemistry for Funeral Service	3
FSRV 2080	Microbiology for Funeral Service	3
FSRV 2030	Embalming Techniques	6
FSRV 2060	Restorative Art	4
FSRV 2090	Grief Counseling and Sociology	3
FSRV 2100	Funeral Service Seminar	3
Total Program Credit Hours		72

Grades

Didactic course grades are determined by assignments, laboratory skills and activities, and exams. Clinical course grades are based on student performance in skills, clinical evaluations, case studies, and exams. If a student is unsuccessful in either the theoretical or practical components of a course, the course must be successfully repeated before the student is allowed to progress in the program. Grading procedures for each course are outlined in the respective course syllabi. Course letter grades are assigned using the standard WGTC grading scale.

Percentage of Points Earned	Corresponding Letter Grade
90 – 100	A
80 – 89	B
70 – 79	C
60 – 69	D
0 – 59	F

A grade of 70 or higher must be maintained in all classes (core and program specific) in order to progress through the program.

Grades will be posted and/or assignments will be returned to the student. Students should record grades earned in order to determine academic standing throughout the course.

See the West Georgia Technical College Catalog for the appeal process related to final course grades and procedures regarding academic warning or academic probation.

Admissions Policy and Process

Funeral Service Education Program

West Georgia Technical College

The Funeral Service Education (FSE) Program at West Georgia Technical College (WGTC) is committed to maintaining high academic and professional standards while fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment. In alignment with the 2025 standards of the American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE), the admissions process is designed to ensure that all prospective students are academically prepared, personally motivated, and ethically suited to enter the funeral service profession.

General Admission to the College

All applicants must first meet the general admission requirements of West Georgia Technical College. These include:

- Submission of a completed college application
- Payment of the application fee
- Submission of official high school transcripts or GED scores
- Completion of placement testing or submission of qualifying SAT/ACT scores, if applicable

Program-Specific Admission Requirements

In addition to meeting WGTC's general requirements, prospective students seeking admission into the Funeral Service Education Program must:

1. **Be at least 18 years of age** at the time of program entry.
2. **Submit an FSE Program application** by the published deadline to be considered in the competitive selection process
3. **Attend a mandatory information session** hosted by the FSE Program Director or designated faculty.
4. **Provide documentation of immunizations** and health screenings required for participation in clinical/practicum experiences.
5. **Complete prerequisite coursework** with a minimum grade of "C" or higher, including:
 - ENGL 1101 (Composition and Rhetoric)
 - MATH 1111 or higher (College Algebra or equivalent)
 - PSYC 1101 (Introduction to Psychology)

- BIOL 2113 and BIOL 2113L (Anatomy & Physiology I with lab)
- 6. **Pass a criminal background check** and drug screening prior to clinical placement, as required by partnering funeral homes.
- 7. **Submit two letters of recommendation**, preferably from educators or professionals familiar with the applicant's character and work ethic.

Selection Process

Admission into the Funeral Service Education Program is competitive. Meeting the minimum eligibility requirements does not guarantee acceptance. Applicants are evaluated based on:

- Academic performance and GPA in prerequisite courses-3.0
- Attendance at required information/orientation session both college and at the programmatic level
- Recommendations and/or work experience in a related field

Points may be given to applicants with related work experience who demonstrate a strong commitment to the funeral service profession, community service involvement, and a clear understanding of the emotional and ethical responsibilities associated with the field.

Non-Discrimination Policy

WGTC and the Funeral Service Education Program uphold a policy of non-discrimination in admissions and do not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, age, veteran status, or any other protected class.

Transfer Students and Credit Evaluation

Transfer students from ABFSE-accredited institutions may be considered for advanced placement on a case-by-case basis. Official transcripts and course syllabi must be submitted for evaluation. Final approval rests with the Program Director and the Dean of Health Sciences in consultation with academic affairs.

Notification of Acceptance

Accepted applicants will receive formal notification in writing and must confirm their intent to accept their seat in the program by the specified date. A mandatory program orientation will be held prior to the start of classes to review expectations, policies, and clinical requirements.

Progression in the Funeral Service Education Program

Courses in the Funeral Service Education (FSE) program are sequential. Successful completion of each course is required before admission into subsequent courses. A student who cannot progress due to unsatisfactory academic or clinical performance may be eligible to reapply for admission into the next FSE cohort in accordance with the Readmission guidelines outlined in this handbook.

To progress through the program, students must:

- Attend all class, laboratory, and clinical practicum sessions in accordance with the attendance policies of each course.
- Maintain a minimum grade of “C” (70%) or higher in all courses, including clinical practicum.
- Students earning a final grade of D or F in lower-level courses may have the option to retake the course when offered again but must complete the program within a two-year timeframe.
- Students earning a final grade of D or F in clinical practicum or advanced-level (Programmatic) courses are not eligible to progress further or reapply for admission to the program.
- Demonstrate ongoing professional growth and development as they advance through the curriculum.
- Master all essential components in each course critical to safe funeral service practice and professional behavior, including but not limited to:
 - Satisfactory completion of practicum objectives and assignments
 - Achieving a minimum score of 70% or higher on the Program Exit Exam
 - Passing practical skills competencies with satisfactory grades
 - Completing required projects and case studies/funeral service required cases as outlined in course syllabi
- Achieve a score of 70% or higher on the final written exams for all clinical practicum courses. Students failing to meet this standard on the first attempt will have an opportunity for remediation and one retest. Failure to meet the minimum requirements after remediation will result in a failing grade, which may affect eligibility for program progression or graduation.
- Successfully complete all clinical rotations to be eligible for the Program Exit Exam. Dismissal from any clinical site will result in program dismissal with no eligibility for readmission.
- Complete and maintain required health documentation to participate in clinical components, including:
 - Physical examination
 - Up-to-date immunizations
 - Drug screening as required
 - Criminal background check
- Demonstrate professional behavior and satisfactory progress in both academic and clinical settings, which includes:
 - Adhering to safe clinical and workplace practices
 - Functioning independently with minimal supervision once competency status is received
 - Effectively communicating and applying theoretical principles to practical skills

Students failing to maintain satisfactory clinical performance will be subject to Clinical Warnings and may be terminated. (see Clinical Policies section).

Disciplinary probation or termination may result from violations of the Student Code of Conduct or unsafe practices as set forth in the College Student Catalog and Student Handbook (see Student Code of Conduct section).

If a student’s behavior becomes unprofessional or unsafe, instructors, program directors, or clinical preceptors may require the student to leave the premises. Counseling and disciplinary actions, up to program dismissal, may follow. Reentry into the program will require approval from program leadership.

Termination from the Funeral Service Education Program

Termination from the Funeral Service Education (FSE) program may be necessary if a student violates the rules, policies, or requirements of the program, college, or clinical site. Such behaviors include, but are not limited to, academic dishonesty, substance abuse, violation of ethical codes, or any actions that endanger fellow students, clients, faculty, or staff.

Procedure for Termination:

1. Program faculty and the Health Sciences Dean will meet with the student to gather information. If both agree the infraction warrants possible termination, the Dean will submit a written recommendation with supporting documentation to the Dean of Students explaining the reason for the termination recommendation from the clinical site and/or FSE program.

If a student is dismissed from a clinical internship practicum site, West Georgia Technical College is not obligated to provide a second clinical placement, and the student will not be eligible for readmission.

2. The Dean will counsel the student and consult with the appropriate Dean of students and Vice President of Academic Affairs to approve the recommendation or suggest an alternative. The final decision will be provided to the student in writing.

Readmission Guidelines

Readmission to the program depends on available resources and the time elapsed since initial admission. Students may be considered for the next cohort if space permits and may be required to repeat courses beyond normal time limits. Readmitted students may also need to complete remediation or demonstrate competency in skills as assigned by faculty.

A second failure in any required foundational course or clinical practicum will result in dismissal from the FSE program and ineligibility for graduation.

Student Attendance

Regular and punctual attendance is critical to success and reflects the professional expectations students will face in their careers. Absences disrupt learning and group participation, negatively impacting progress.

Attendance is recorded from the first to the last scheduled class meeting each term. Students must follow attendance policies outlined by each instructor, who may withdraw students exceeding maximum allowed absences.

Students who cannot progress due to attendance or academic issues may reapply for admission under the program's readmission policies.

Tardiness and Absenteeism

- Students should arrive on time for class.
- Arrivals 5–15 minutes late will be marked as tardy; three tardies equal one absence.
- Arrivals over 15 minutes late for a 60-minute class count as an absence.
- Leaving class early without prior approval is considered an absence for that day.

Attendance Policy: Lecture and Laboratory

Enrollment in the FSE program is voluntary, and with that choice comes responsibility to fellow students and faculty. Excellent attendance and punctuality demonstrate commitment and professionalism critical to success.

Each class builds upon previous sessions; therefore, students must make up all missed assignments, exams, and lab activities. Makeup work or alternative learning experiences will be provided at the instructor's discretion.

Late assignments may be accepted up to one week past the due date with a 10% grade penalty at the discretion of the instructor. Beyond this, assignments receive a zero unless prior arrangements are made in writing.

Extenuating circumstances (hospitalization, childbirth, major accident, or bereavement) will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Students must notify instructors as soon as possible and receive a new deadline in writing within 48 business hours. Late penalties will be waived in these cases.

Absence Notification

Students are responsible for notifying faculty by phone or email on the morning of an absence, preferably before class start time. During clinical practicum internships, students must notify both the Program Director and their clinical site supervisor of any absences.

This attendance and conduct framework aims to prepare students for the professionalism required in funeral service careers, emphasizing reliability, responsibility, and ethical behavior throughout their education and beyond.

Clinical Practice

Students in the Funeral Service Education program are required to complete all scheduled clinical practice hours to gain the practical skills necessary for professional competence. Any missed clinical time must be made up before the end of the semester. If the make-up time extends beyond the

semester, the student will receive a grade of “Incomplete” (I) until all clinical hours are satisfactorily completed and documented.

Because of the intensive, hands-on nature of clinical instruction, missing more than one day may significantly impact a student’s ability to achieve the minimum competencies required. To progress successfully in the Funeral Service Education program, students must pass all classroom coursework, including examinations, and clinical evaluations.

Students are expected to communicate promptly with their instructor if an absence or tardiness is unavoidable and provide appropriate documentation verifying the reason for the absence. Documentation should be submitted during the first- class meeting following the absence. Examples of acceptable documentation include:

- Physician’s excuse on official letterhead (not a prescription slip)
- Legal court summons
- Emergency room discharge papers
- Receipts for vehicle breakdowns or towing
- Inclusion of the student’s name in a funeral program

Excessive absences, whether excused or unexcused, may result in dismissal from the course.

Online/Hybrid Course Attendance

Students enrolled in online or hybrid/blended courses must log into Blackboard and access each course regularly to be counted present. Logging into Blackboard without entering the specific course does not count as attendance.

Students should expect to spend at least the equivalent amount of time online as they would in a traditional face-to-face class. For example, a 3-credit hour class requires a minimum of three hours per week engaging with course materials and activities.

Students must access each course at least once every academic week. Failure to do so for seven consecutive calendar days may result in withdrawal from the course.

Attendance Appeal Process

Students are encouraged to discuss attendance concerns with their instructor. If a student is withdrawn from a course due to excessive absences, an appeal may be submitted to the Dean of Health Sciences. The Funeral Services Education program follows all West Georgia Technical College policies and procedures related to due process and appeals.

Make-up Work

It is the student's responsibility to obtain missed lecture notes, assignments, and announcements from classmates or instructors. Students must arrange with faculty to make up tests, laboratory assignments, skills demonstrations, and receive any handouts or materials missed during absences.

Students absent on test days have one week upon returning to complete make-up tests. Failure to take the test within this period will result in a grade of zero.

Additional make-up work policies are detailed in each course syllabus.

Class Schedule

Class and clinical schedules are provided on the first day of each term. Clinical experiences occur during daytime hours only. Transportation to and from clinical sites is the student's responsibility. Any schedule changes will be communicated to students in advance.

Specific Information Related to Funeral Services Clinical Internship

Occupational Based Instruction (OBI) for Health Science Programs

OBI refers to clinical affiliations, field work, laboratory experiences, practicums, or clinical internships. To ensure the safety and well-being of clients, colleagues, and the public, West Georgia Technical College requires that each student participating in an OBI experience demonstrate the minimum skills, knowledge, personal maturity, and judgment as defined by the program's technical standards.

During or prior to an OBI experience, situations may arise that are not strictly academic or disciplinary but could jeopardize the safety or welfare of others. Such situations may involve unethical behavior, immaturity, emotional instability, or other concerns. If the faculty determines that these behaviors place others at risk, they may recommend in writing to the Dean of Health Sciences that the student not begin or continue the clinical internship.

Background Checks and Drug Screening

Students participating in the Funeral Service clinical internship will be required to undergo a criminal background check and submit to random drug screening. These checks must be current for each program the student enrolls in. A student denied placement due to an unacceptable background check is not eligible to enroll in another program that requires such screening.

Clinical Internship Placement

Clinical internship placement is the responsibility of West Georgia Technical College. Students are **prohibited from contacting clinical sites directly** about placement, continuation, or reinstatement. Violation of this policy will result in forfeiture of clinical placement.

Internship placements are made during the semester prior to clinical rotation. To be eligible for placement, students must:

- Be in good academic standing and meet satisfactory progress criteria.
- Have Program Director approval.
- Complete all required core and technical coursework.
- Submit a completed physical exam and current immunization records, including Tetanus, Rubella, Chickenpox (or vaccine), TB skin test, Hepatitis B vaccine (or signed declination), COVID-19 vaccination if required by the site, flu vaccination, and any other vaccinations mandated by the clinical affiliate.
- Complete a background check through Advantage and submit a negative drug screen prior to internship start.

Non-compliance with immunization or screening requirements may result in inability to complete clinical rotations and consequently delay program completion.

Currently, West Georgia Technical College is affiliated with multiple accredited/credential approved funeral homes and mortuary services throughout West Georgia. Affiliations are reviewed annually and are subject to change.

Criteria for Clinical Placement

Placement decisions are made by the Program Director and faculty, considering the following factors:

1. Availability of clinical practicum sites
2. Results of clinical site interviews
3. Student preferences
4. Proximity of the student's residence to the clinical site (generally within a one-hour commute)
5. Compatibility between student and clinical site environment

Students must notify the program faculty immediately of any address changes prior to placement.

Waiting List (Alternate Status) Policy

If clinical site capacity is insufficient for all eligible students, a waiting list will be maintained. Students will be ranked by cumulative GPA (highest to lowest). In the event of a tie, the average number of absences will serve as a tiebreaker, followed by admission date if necessary.

Clinical assignments will be made in rank order. All students must sign a waiver acknowledging understanding of this policy.

Clinical placements on the waiting list are reserved for six months. Students requesting extensions beyond six months must demonstrate current competence in knowledge and skills and submit a written request to the Vice President of Student Services explaining the need for an extended waiver.

West Georgia Technical College

Funeral Service Education Program Program Closure Teach-Out Plan (Permanent or Temporary)

The Funeral Service Education Program at West Georgia Technical College has established a **teach-out plan** to address situations of unexpected program closure, whether temporary due to natural or unnatural disasters, or permanent closure. This plan ensures that students' education and training can continue with minimal disruption.

Communication and Notification:

Intentional or permanent program closure will be communicated immediately to all enrolled students. In the case of a disaster resulting in temporary closure, the College will promptly inform students about plans to continue their education as soon as possible. The relevant accrediting bodies and regulatory agencies will be notified, and a formal teach-out plan will be submitted within 30 days of the official announcement.

Prospective Students:

- In the event of permanent program closure, prospective students will be informed that the program will no longer accept new cohorts.
- For temporary closures caused by disasters, the program will coordinate with other funeral service education programs or related institutions to facilitate continuation of education and training until the program resumes at West Georgia Technical College.
- Students will be provided counseling and assistance in applying to other local or regional funeral services programs.
- Information regarding program closure will be posted on the program's official website to ensure transparency and accessibility.

Current Students:

- All currently enrolled students will be notified immediately of program closure.
- In case of temporary closure due to a disaster, the program will collaborate with other accredited funeral service education programs to allow students to continue their clinical and didactic education until the program reopens.

- For mandated permanent closure, students currently enrolled will be given the opportunity to complete their program requirements, either through West Georgia Technical College or through coordinated arrangements with other institutions.
- The Program Director will oversee the completion of all requirements and will facilitate certification exam eligibility and applications for all graduating students.

Funeral Service Education Program - Funeral Homes/Stakeholders

Name	Funeral Home	Address
Andrew Keith	Clark Funeral Home	4373 Atlanta Highway, Hiram, Georgia 30141
Mindy Miller-Moats	Miller Funeral Home	41 W. Mill St. Tallapoosa, GA 30176
Justin Grubbs	Higgins Hillcrest Funeral Home	1 Bullsboro Dr. Newnan, GA 30263
David McKibben	Claude A. McKibben and Sons Funeral Home	208 Johnson St. Hogansville, GA 30230
Bill Hightower	Martin Hightower Funeral Home	1206 Baxter Road Breman, GA 30110
Cindy McCorsley	Martin Hightower Funeral Home	1206 Baxter Road Breman, GA 30110
Lamar Wright	Mckoon Funeral Home	38 Jackson St. Newnn GA 30110
Norman Smith	Smith and Miller Funeral Home	1000 N Main Street Cedartown GA
Joe Wilson	Higgins Hillcrest Funeral Home	1 Bullsboro Drive Newnan GA
Randy Gibbs	Benefields Funeral Home	US 431 Wedowee, Al.
Joseph Gibbs	Quattlebaum	319 College St. Roanoke, Al.
Willie Watkins	Willie Watkins Funeral Home	602 Newnan Road Carrollton, GA
Mario Nicols	Kingsland Police Dept. Funeral Services Graduate Ogeecheetech	111S N Seaboard St. Kingsand GA 31548

Patty Hutcheson	Hutcheson's Memorial Chapel	71 Park Heights Dr. Buchanan GA 30113
Jacquelyn Hightower McKinzie	Hightower Family Funeral Home	12651 Veterans Memorial Hwy. Douglasville, GA 30134
Ellen Wynn McBrayer	Jones-Wynn Funeral Homes & Crematory	2189 Midway Road Douglasville GA. 30135
Keith Hancock	Almon Funeral Home	548 Newnan Street Carrollton, GA 30117
Gary Henderson	Henderson & Sons Funeral Home	4900 Martha Berry Hwy, Rome, GA 30165

Eligibility Criteria – Funeral Service Education Program

- **Placement of students** in a funeral service practicum or internship is the sole responsibility of the **Funeral Service Program Director**. Students **must not contact funeral homes or clinical sites** to secure their own placements.
- The **Program Director must approve** student eligibility for internship or practicum participation and makes the final decision on all clinical placements.
- Students must be in **good academic standing** with a **GPA of 3.0 or higher**, and have completed all **core and technical coursework with a grade of "C" or better** prior to beginning the practicum.
- Students must meet **satisfactory academic progress** requirements and not be on academic warning or probation.
- During the practicum, students are expected to **comply with all policies of the assigned funeral home**, including employee conduct expectations, unless in conflict with college or state regulations.
- All students must sign a **Funeral Service Clinical Practicum Agreement** prior to placement.
- Students may not receive compensation during required clinical training hours. However, **students may be employed outside of practicum hours**, provided it does not interfere with program requirements.
- Students must **successfully complete all clinical practicum rotations** and pass the Funeral Services Capstone and Certification Review course to complete the program.
- Students may not be placed at funeral homes where **family members are employed** or where the student has a long-standing employment history that presents a **conflict of interest**.
- Students must have completed the **physical examination, submitted proof of immunizations**, and cleared the **background check and drug screening** before placement.

In alignment with ABFSE guidelines, students are **not permitted to replace licensed funeral professionals** during clinical practicum hours. Students **may be hired** by the facility for **non-practicum work**, but this **must occur outside of clinical hours** and **may not count toward program requirements**.

Criminal Background Check Procedure

- A **criminal background check** is required within **3 months prior** to clinical placement.
 - If a student is **denied placement** due to background check results, the college is **not obligated** to locate an alternative site.
 - Students will use the **designated vendor (Advantage.com)** and may view and appeal the findings directly with the provider.
 - Students must **authorize** release of results to the college and affiliated clinical sites. **All costs** related to the background check are the student's responsibility.
-

Drug Screening Procedure

- A **negative drug screen** is required **within 3 months** before clinical assignment.
 - Students must provide evidence of any **prescription medications** causing a positive result within **four business days** or risk being withdrawn from the program.
 - Students who fail the drug screening may be referred to the **Dean of Students** for code of conduct violations and are **not eligible for readmission** to the Funeral Services program.
 - Any student taking medications that **impact mood or judgment** must be cleared by a licensed physician before beginning clinical training.
-

Medical Examination & Immunization Requirements

- Students must complete a **physical examination** and submit **up-to-date immunizations** (including TB, MMR, Varicella, Hepatitis B, Tetanus/DPT, and flu vaccine).
 - A **TB skin test** must be performed and current (within 12 months). A positive result requires written physician clearance.
 - The **Hepatitis B vaccine** is strongly encouraged; however, students may sign a **declination form** if they choose not to receive it. Note: some funeral homes may require full vaccination.
 - The **COVID-19 vaccine** is currently optional, depending on funeral home policies.
-

Clinical Preparation Requirements

1. Completion of **all academic core and FSE technical courses** with a **"C"** or better.

2. Notify program faculty of any changes in health or personal information.
 3. Complete and clear all **background check and drug screening**.
 4. Submit completed **physical exam and immunization** documentation prior to placement.
 5. Funeral Service students must carry **malpractice liability insurance**, purchased through WGTC.
 6. Students are **encouraged to have personal health insurance** during practicum.
 7. Injuries or exposure to hazards at clinical sites will be reported and processed through **college accident insurance**.
-

Health & Malpractice Insurance

- **Malpractice insurance** is required and is included as a **mandatory fee** during registration for FSE Clinical Courses.
 - Students are **not covered** under a funeral home's liability insurance.
 - Students must pay for personal medical needs unrelated to program activities.
-

Health & Safety Guidelines for Clinical Internship

- Students must demonstrate **physical ability** to perform tasks such as standing for long periods, lifting, or assisting in body preparation.
 - Chronic health conditions must be **well-managed**, and students must be **physically and emotionally stable** to handle the rigors of the funeral service profession.
 - Students must:
 - Maintain personal **health and hygiene**
 - Report any **health-related concerns**, including pregnancy
 - Secure **private health insurance**
 - Program faculty may determine whether a student is **fit to return** to practicum after illness, even with physician approval.
-

Disability Accommodations

Students with disabilities that may impact performance should contact the **Office of Accessibility Services** to initiate **ADA accommodations**.

Safety Expectations

- Safety is **critical in the funeral service setting**.
- All safety protocols must be followed during embalming, preparation, and transportation.
- **Unsafe behavior** will result in **immediate removal from the site** and **possible dismissal** from the program.

Clinical Responsibilities and Competency – Funeral Services Education Program

- Students must **assume full responsibility** for meeting all clinical practicum requirements as outlined by the **Funeral Services Education (FSE) Program**.
 - **Absences from clinical practicum** jeopardize a student's ability to complete the **minimum required clinical practicum hours**. All required hours must be completed to **pass the practicum and graduate**. Clinical attendance must be documented using approved **attendance logs**.
 - Students must provide their **own reliable transportation** to and from assigned funeral home sites. **Travel-related costs** are the student's responsibility; carpooling may not be an option.
 - Students must complete **all core and technical coursework** with a **grade of C or better**, maintain **good academic standing**, and meet **college progress standards** to be eligible for the **FSE Clinical Practicum (FSRV 2090)**.
 - Students are expected to report to their clinical site **prepared to perform any and all funeral service procedures** already demonstrated or discussed in coursework, including embalming assistance, transfer protocols, and customer service skills. **Failure to demonstrate competency, unprofessional behavior, or improper attire** may result in dismissal from the clinical site and impact the student's evaluation. (See Clinical Performance Counseling Form.)
 - Clinical site placements are arranged by the **Program Director and faculty**. Students may rotate through multiple sites and must be flexible with **varying schedules**. Any requested changes must be approved in advance.
 - While on-site, students must **adhere to the policies** of the funeral home, including confidentiality, safety, and professional conduct.
 - **Students are not to receive payment** for clinical training hours. However, employment outside of practicum hours is allowed if it does not interfere with training. (See Applied Clinical Learning Work Policy.)
 - Students **will not be placed at a funeral home** where they or immediate family are currently or previously employed in a supervisory or conflict-prone role. Final conflict of interest decisions rest with the site.
-

Clinical Competency and Retention Policy

- Students in **FSRV 2090** must pass all required **clinical performance evaluations** and written assessments with a **70% or higher** to successfully complete the practicum.
 - If a student fails a **departmental evaluation or written competency**, one opportunity will be given to remediate and retest. Failure of a second attempt results in **failure of the clinical course and ineligibility for graduation**.
 - At the conclusion of all rotations, students must achieve at least **70% on the Funeral Services Exit Exam**, which counts as **25% of the FSRV 2090 course grade**. Failure to pass the exam or be dismissed from the site results in **removal from the program**.
-

Attendance, Tardiness, and Absenteeism

- **Attendance is mandatory** for all scheduled clinical hours. Students must arrive **on time**, professionally dressed, and ready to work.
 - Students are expected to **conduct themselves professionally**, accept feedback with a positive attitude, and show initiative.
 - **Only two absences** per semester are allowed. All additional absences must be made up **in full** to meet required clinical competencies.
-

Absences and Illness Policy

- The FSE Program follows the **West Georgia Technical College Attendance Policy** in conjunction with specific FSE course policies.
 - Students must notify both the **clinical preceptor** and the **Program Director or instructor** at least **one hour before a scheduled shift** in case of illness. Messages are not acceptable—**speak directly** to a staff member or email the instructor in real time.
 - Appointments (medical, dental, etc.) should be scheduled **outside clinical hours**. Advanced notice is required for jury duty or other mandatory absences.
 - The standard clinical schedule is **Monday–Friday**, with **eight-hour days**. Students must remain at the site for the full duration unless otherwise arranged.
 - Any full-day absence must be **made up within the same semester** using documented hours and pre-approved schedules.
 - Students are responsible for contacting faculty to schedule make-up time and must notify the instructor **before** attending any make-up shift.
-

Cell Phone Use – Clinical Policy

Cell phones and personal electronic devices are **prohibited** in clinical settings. They must be stored securely in personal vehicles. **Emergency contacts** should be directed to faculty members, who will relay urgent information.

Clinical Dress Code

To maintain a **professional image**, the following applies:

- Students must wear the **approved FSE Professional Business Attire as well as appropriate scrubs and PPE when performing embalming and certain other require procedures**. (which includes clean scrubs for clinical embalming procedures or professional business attire) (as specified by the funeral home during appropriate learning experiences), closed-toe shoes, and a name badge.
- Business wear must be neat, clean, and wrinkle-free. Hair should be pulled back (if applicable), and personal hygiene must be maintained.

- **Non-compliance** with the dress code may result in **dismissal from the clinical site** and a reduction in the student's grade.

Personal Hygiene and Grooming Guidelines – Funeral Services Education Program

Students in the Funeral Service Education Program are expected to reflect the highest standards of professionalism and respect for the families they serve. Proper grooming and hygiene are critical to maintaining a compassionate and dignified presence in both the funeral home and community settings.

General Hygiene Expectations

- Students must be clean, neat, and well-groomed at all times.
- Fragrances, including perfumes, scented lotions, or aftershaves, are not allowed during clinical experiences.
- Special care should be taken to avoid offensive breath or body odor. Smoking while in uniform is strictly prohibited.
- Hair must be styled conservatively: off the collar, neat, and free from distracting accessories. Hair color must be natural in appearance (colors that a person could be born with).
- Facial hair should be neatly trimmed.
- Fingernails must be clean, well-maintained, and short. No artificial nails or gel overlays. Only clear nail polish is permitted.
- Cosmetics and makeup should be minimal and professional in appearance.
- Gum chewing, vaping, smoking, or the use of tobacco products is not permitted during any clinical or laboratory assignment.
- Jewelry must be conservative: one plain wedding band, a watch, and one small stud earring per ear (no hoops, gauges, or colored earrings).

Proper Dress Requirements (Professional Business Attire)

Proper attire reinforces professionalism and respects the sensitive environment in which funeral services are conducted. Students must comply with the following uniform expectations:

- Students must wear the **official WGTC Funeral Services professional attire** as designated by the program. This typically includes clean, ironed scrubs, and required PPE during embalming procedures or **professional attire** appropriate for funeral home settings, along with suit jacket/tie, dress/jacket when required.
- A **WGTC name badge** must be worn and visible at all times. Students not wearing an ID badge may be sent home and marked absent.
- Pants must be worn at the natural waistline; no visible undergarments or skin. Hosiery or socks must be worn with shoes.
- **Shoes** must be clean, closed-toe, professional (white, black, or brown), and made of leather or other appropriate material. No canvas shoes, Crocs, or open backs allowed.
- **Undergarments** must be neutral or skin-colored. Men must wear an undershirt beneath dress shirts. Women should wear appropriate undergarments under dresses or suits.

- Long-sleeve undershirts may be worn under scrub tops/appropriate PPE for warmth during clinical embalming procedures (no sweaters or hoodies).
- Tattoos must be fully covered using clothing, make up or skin-toned bandages. Ear gauges must be covered. Facial or body piercings (including tongue rings) must be removed during clinical hours.

Basic Clinical Guidelines

- Follow all instructions carefully and take notes; review them daily.
- Report to your assigned funeral home area or supervisor on time. Ask permission before leaving the facility or taking breaks.
- Always maintain hand hygiene when arriving and departing from the clinical facility.
- Tasks must be completed under **direct supervision** until competency is established.
- All required Cases must be completed in order to be competency checked.
- Never take phone or verbal instructions from family members or professionals unless directed by the preceptor for completion of appropriate Funeral Home practices.
- Personal concerns (health, school, or emotional matters) must not be shared with funeral home staff.
- Do not lounge in family areas. Breaks should be limited and professional spaces respected.
- All WGTC FSE students must comply with **clinical practicum site tobacco-free policies**. Smelling of smoke is considered unprofessional and may result in being sent home and marked absent.

Unacceptable Clinical Performance and Conduct

Unsatisfactory performance includes, but is not limited to:

- Frequent absences or tardiness
- Leaving clinical assignments without notifying your preceptor
- Unsafe handling of deceased individuals or equipment
- HIPAA violations or breaches of confidentiality
- Falsifying documentation or misrepresentation
- Disrespect toward families, staff, or community members
- Unprofessional attire or failure to meet grooming standards
- Appearing under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Bringing weapons or prohibited items to the clinical site

Note: Funeral Home facilities reserve the right to refuse student placement if a student's health, behavior, or conduct is deemed unsuitable. Additional requirements (such as updated immunizations or screenings) may be imposed at any time.

Final Reminder

You are representing **West Georgia Technical College** and the funeral service profession. Take pride in your appearance, attitude, and performance. Approach each day with integrity, compassion, and professionalism.

Clinical Evaluations – Funeral Service Education Program

Clinical evaluation is a critical process used to assess whether students in the Funeral Services Education Program are achieving the professional competencies outlined in the program's clinical learning objectives. Funeral service is a **practice-based profession**, and clinical internships are vital to the development of skills, ethical conduct, and professional standards required by the **American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE)** and **TCSG statewide curriculum standards**.

In addition to academic and accreditation requirements, students are expected to uphold the highest levels of **professional ethics and decorum**, consistent with state and national guidelines, including the **Funeral Rule**, the **Federal Trade Commission regulations**, the **National Funeral Directors Association Code of Ethics**, and the **rights of grieving families**. The respectful and dignified care of decedents, along with compassionate service to families, is central to all clinical objectives. If a student demonstrates behavior or performance that compromises the emotional well-being of clients, safety protocols, or the reputation of the program or facility, they may be removed from the clinical site.

Evaluation Structure

Clinical evaluation tools will be used to continuously monitor student progress in each rotation. Evaluation is based on demonstration of professionalism, technical skill, interpersonal conduct, communication, and ethical standards.

- **Weekly performance reviews** (non-graded) are completed by the clinical preceptor to document strengths, areas for improvement, and specific skill development. These are tracked using a Clinical Skills Evaluation Form and Competency Checklist.
- A **formal graded clinical evaluation** is conducted at the end of each rotation. Students must pass each final evaluation to proceed to the next rotation or clinical assignment.

Failure to pass a final clinical evaluation due to unsafe, unprofessional, or incompetent behavior may result in withdrawal from the clinical/practicum site, failure of the course, or **dismissal from the program**.

Clinical Misconduct and Critical Incidents

The Funeral Service Education Program faculty reserves the right to remove a student from a clinical assignment based on **unacceptable performance, behavior, or professionalism**, regardless of the student's academic standing in classroom components. Some actions may result in **immediate dismissal** from the clinical site and possible **termination from the program**.

A **critical incident** is any act or failure to act that endangers the well-being of family, clients, staff, or the reputation of the funeral establishment or WGTC. These are reported immediately to the clinical preceptor and program faculty and documented in the student's permanent record.

All incidents will be reviewed by a faculty committee that may include the preceptor, Program Director, Dean of Students, and Dean of Health Sciences.

Critical Incident Guidelines

All incidents will be classified as **Level I (Major)** or **Level II (Serious but Remediable)**.

Level I Incidents – May Result in Immediate Dismissal from Clinical Site

1. Theft or intentional destruction of property belonging to the funeral home, staff, or clients.
2. Possession of weapons on clinical site property.
3. Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs during clinical assignments.
4. Absence of **two consecutive clinical days** without proper notification.
5. Any form of abuse toward decedents, families, facility staff, WGTC faculty, or visitors.
6. Falsification of records, funeral documents, or logs.
7. Breaching confidentiality (HIPAA, FTC disclosures, funeral contract terms, or family arrangements).
8. Inappropriate or defamatory comments about WGTC, funeral facilities, or families (including social media).
9. Repeated failure to comply with safety, legal, or ethical guidelines of the funeral profession.
10. Abandoning the clinical site without permission from the preceptor or instructor.
11. Performing tasks beyond one's competency or without supervision.
12. Jeopardizing the WGTC-facility relationship due to misconduct or disrespectful behavior.

Level II Incidents – May Result in Warning or Dismissal After Repeat Offenses

1. Insubordination toward the clinical preceptor or WGTC faculty.
 2. Violation of the **Clinical Cell Phone Policy**.
 3. Use of obscene or disruptive language; inappropriate or disrespectful behavior.
 4. Sharing personal problems with clients, families, or facility staff.
 5. Chronic tardiness (defined as three tardies) or failure to report absences/tardies within one hour of shift start time.
 6. Smoking or vaping in violation of clinical site policies.
 7. Eating or drinking in unauthorized areas or at inappropriate times.
 8. Failure to comply with the **FSE Clinical Dress Code**.
 9. Performing duties in an unsafe, careless, or unprofessional manner.
 10. Violating facility or program policies that affect public trust or client well-being.
-

Clinical Warning & Termination Process

A student may receive a **Clinical Warning** if their behavior or clinical performance falls below expectations related to safety, professionalism, or competence. A Clinical Warning may also be issued **without prior notice** if the incident is deemed severe.

- The preceptor and/or program faculty will document the issue and notify the student via phone or email.
 - A **Clinical Warning Report** will be completed outlining the issue, expectations for improvement, and a remediation plan if applicable.
 - Students must attend a **mandatory meeting** with the Program Director and/or faculty within five working days. Depending on the nature of the concern, this meeting may include the Dean of Students, Dean of Health Sciences, or other college administrators.
 - Students who do not complete the required remediation or who commit additional violations may be **terminated from the clinical/practicum assignment and possibly the program**.
-

Summary

The clinical component of the Funeral Service Education Program is not only a space for skill development but also a **professional proving ground**. Students are held to the same standards expected of licensed funeral professionals. The trust placed in you by grieving families is sacred. Honor it through your **conduct, attitude, and compassion**—both in the lab and in every community setting where you serve.

Clinical Termination – Funeral Service Education Program

A **Clinical Termination** applies to any student in the Funeral Services Education Program who:

- Fails to satisfactorily complete required remediation after being placed on **Clinical Warning**, or
- Commits a **Level I Critical Incident**.

Clinical Termination constitutes **clinical failure**, and the student will receive a grade of **“F”** for the course(s). In certain cases—particularly involving severe professional or ethical misconduct—a student may be dismissed from the **Funeral Service Education Program** without prior warning.

Reasons for Dismissal from Clinical Internship

1. **Clinical Partner Site Authority:** Funeral homes and other clinical training sites have the right to request immediate removal of a student for cause, including:
 - Breach of confidentiality (HIPAA violations)
 - Falsification of documentation or service records

- Threats or actions jeopardizing the safety or emotional welfare of families, staff, or decedents
 - Failure to report absences or abandoning the clinical site without permission
 - Conduct that negatively reflects on the College or partner site
(See *Student Conduct* section for *Level I Incidents*)
2. **Site Reassignment Not Guaranteed:** West Georgia Technical College is **not obligated** to find an alternative clinical site for a student who has been dismissed from a funeral service facility due to academic or disciplinary issues.
 3. **Unexcused Absences:** Two consecutive clinical absences without prior communication or approval will result in dismissal. A student who leaves a clinical site without returning may also be terminated.
 4. **No Leave of Absence:** Students who are unable to fulfill clinical obligations during the assigned semester must officially withdraw. WGTC will not seek alternate placements for students who cannot complete clinical assignments in the designated timeframe.
 5. **Failure to Withdraw:** Students who fail to formally withdraw from the program or course will receive an “F” on their transcript.
 6. **Serious Violations:** Any student found guilty of the following will be terminated from the clinical site and will receive a failing grade:
 - Violation of HIPAA
 - Falsification of funeral documentation
 - Jeopardizing the dignity, safety, or emotional well-being of families or coworkers(See *Student Conduct* section for full list of critical incidents)
-

Procedure for Clinical Termination

1. The **Program Director, clinical preceptor, and/or faculty**, along with appropriate academic leadership (Dean of Health Sciences, or Dean of Students), will meet with the student to discuss the incident and assess severity.
2. If clinical termination is deemed appropriate, a **written recommendation and supporting documentation** will be submitted by the Program Director to the **Dean of Students, and Dean of Health Sciences**. This documentation may include clinical evaluations, witness statements, and records of student conduct.
3. The Dean will consult with the appropriate Academic **Vice President** to review the recommendation. A final decision will be provided in writing to the Program Director and the student.

A student who is terminated from the **Funeral Service Education Program** due to clinical dismissal is **not eligible for readmission**.

Funeral Service Clinical Safety & OSHA Compliance Manual

Funeral Service Education Program – West Georgia Technical College

Overview

The Funeral Service profession carries unique occupational risks including exposure to **chemical hazards (e.g., formaldehyde)**, **biohazards (e.g., bloodborne pathogens)**, and **physical hazards** associated with lifting, equipment, and transport. This manual outlines essential safety protocols to protect students, faculty, and the public during **lab sessions, embalming practicums, and clinical rotations** at funeral homes or affiliated sites.

Students must strictly follow **OSHA's Bloodborne Pathogens Standard (29 CFR 1910.1030)**, **Formaldehyde Standard (29 CFR 1910.1048)**, and all **ABFSE** and **WGTC** policies for infection control and safe handling of remains and hazardous materials.

General Laboratory & Clinical Safety Rules

1. **Attendance & Supervision**
 - Students may only use program labs or funeral home facilities **during supervised, scheduled hours**.
 - No unsupervised embalming or handling of human remains is permitted.
 2. **Punctuality & Professional Conduct**
 - Students must arrive on time, remain in the designated lab/clinical area, and follow all instructions.
 - Horseplay, gossip, and personal conversations are prohibited.
 3. **Work Area Maintenance**
 - Keep all workstations clean and organized.
 - Disinfect tables and instruments **before and after each case** using appropriate chemicals (e.g., Sani-Cloth, 10% bleach solution).
 4. **Use of Chemicals & Embalming Fluids**
 - Follow the **SDS (Safety Data Sheets)** for all embalming and disinfecting chemicals.
 - Never mix chemicals unless directed.
 - Formaldehyde and glutaraldehyde should only be handled in **ventilated areas** (e.g., prep room with proper exhaust systems).
 5. **Sharps & Waste Disposal**
 - All needles, scalpel blades, and sharps go in approved **sharps containers**.
 - All contaminated waste is disposed of in **biohazard containers** per OSHA protocol.
 6. **Standard Precautions (Universal Precautions)**

Always assume **every decedent poses a risk** of infectious disease. PPE must be worn during all preparation procedures, even if the cause of death is non-infectious.
-

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Requirements

All PPE is provided by WGTC and must be worn when handling remains, cleaning, or working in any prep room/lab setting:

Required PPE	When to Use
Fluid-resistant lab coat	All lab sessions and embalming procedures
Latex or nitrile gloves	Any decedent handling, chemicals, or clean-up
Face shields/goggles	During embalming, aspiration, or use of formaldehyde
Respiratory mask (N95/HEPA)	As required when working with airborne pathogens or TB exposure
Shoe covers	Optional but encouraged when contamination risk is high

Dress Code for Safety

- **Closed-toe, slip-resistant shoes** must be worn at all times. No open backs, sandals, or heels.
 - **Hair must be tied back** and off the collar.
 - No jewelry on hands or wrists during embalming or lab work.
 - **Long sleeves or hoodies may not be worn** under PPE.
 - **Tattoos must be covered**, and **visible piercings removed** during clinical experiences.
 - Students must **disinfect and store their lab coat at school**; PPE is not to be worn outside of the clinical/lab environment.
-

Chemical & Biological Exposure Protocols

1. **In the Event of a Spill**
 - Notify instructor immediately.
 - Use the **Chemical Spill Kit** (located in the prep room) to neutralize and clean.
 - Disinfect with an approved agent (e.g., bleach or Control III).
 2. **Accidental Exposure**
 - **Needle stick or mucous membrane splash:** Immediately rinse with water and notify instructor.
 - Fill out a **WGTC Incident Report** within 24 hours.
 - Follow up with **post-exposure evaluation and treatment** if required.
 3. **Respiratory Exposure (e.g., TB)**
 - Remove yourself from the area.
 - Notify instructor and complete **airborne exposure protocol**.
-

Incident Response: Accidents or Injuries

In the event of any incident:

- Report **immediately** to your instructor or clinical preceptor.

- The instructor will evaluate, complete a **WGTC Accident Report**, and determine whether medical attention is needed.
 - Follow-up documentation will be submitted to **Student Affairs** and/or the **Program Director**.
-

Hepatitis B & Tuberculosis Precautions

- All students are **strongly encouraged** to complete the **Hepatitis B vaccine series** prior to clinical internship.
 - Students must have an **up-to-date TB skin test** on file.
 - Anyone declining the HBV vaccine must sign a **Hepatitis B Vaccine Declination Form**.
 - Active TB cases must show proof of **successful treatment** prior to clinical placement.
-

Prohibited Conduct & Dismissible Offenses

- Unauthorized practice of embalming or restoration.
- Failure to use PPE appropriately.
- Tampering with remains or mishandling decedent identification.
- Theft, damage to property, or unsafe chemical use.
- Failure to report exposure incidents.

Violations will result in **disciplinary action**, up to and including **clinical dismissal** or **program termination**.

Equipment Maintenance & Safety

- Clean and disinfect equipment **immediately after use**.
 - Equipment under warranty is serviced by approved vendors.
 - Other equipment may be serviced by faculty, college maintenance, or funeral partners as appropriate.
-

Final Note

Students represent **West Georgia Technical College** and the **Funeral Service profession** at all times while in clinical settings. Maintaining safety, professionalism, and ethical conduct are not only **program expectations**—they are essential to **protect the dignity of the deceased and the well-being of grieving families**.

Funeral Service Education Program West Georgia Technical College

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)

All verbal, electronic, and written information related to **decedents, their families, or contracted funeral service facilities** is considered confidential **Personal Health Information (PHI)** under the **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)**. This includes any identifying information about the decedent's health status, services received, or cause of death.

Such information **must never be copied, photographed, posted, or discussed** outside of approved educational or clinical learning environments. This applies to all settings, including mortuary labs, funeral homes, and transport scenes. Any **breach of confidentiality** will result in **disciplinary action**, up to and including **immediate dismissal from the Funeral Services program**. Legal action and civil penalties may also apply under federal law.

Key Confidentiality Expectations for Funeral Services Students:

- **Do not discuss decedent cases or family details** with anyone outside of authorized personnel. This includes classmates, friends, family, clergy, or the general public.
- **Only discuss information related to a decedent** when it is part of a formal case review, embalming instruction, or under direct faculty or preceptor supervision.
- **Never discuss clinical or funeral home experiences** in public places where conversations could be overheard, such as hallways, parking lots, break rooms, or elevators.
- **Do not remove any documents or identifiers** (name tags, death certificates, transport paperwork, etc.) containing PHI from the clinical facility or lab unless explicitly authorized.
- **Do not take or share photographs** in the preparation room, funeral home, or lab—this includes body preparations, remains, and case-related materials.
- **Respect the facility, the family, and the deceased.** Treat all remains with dignity and confidentiality, honoring both the professional and ethical responsibility of your role.
- **Students may not witness or co-sign legal documentation** related to funeral or legal proceedings unless explicitly authorized as part of an approved learning experience.
- **No visitors are permitted in clinical or laboratory areas.** Students are expected to leave the facility promptly after completing assigned duties.

Any violation of these policies may result in **removal from the clinical site** and/or **dismissal from the Funeral Service Education Program**.

Student Grievance Procedure

Effective communication is essential. If a student has a concern—whether personal, academic, or clinical—the following grievance process should be followed in order:

1. **First**, discuss the issue with the **instructor or preceptor** directly involved.
2. If unresolved, make an appointment with the **Funeral Service Program Director**.
3. If further action is required, the next step is the **Dean of Health Sciences**.
4. If the issue still remains unresolved, the student may request a meeting with the **Dean of Academic Affairs**.

Please refer to the **West Georgia Technical College Catalog and Student Handbook** for full grievance policy details and timelines.

Additional Information

Professional Licensure and Certification Information

Funeral Service Education Program
West Georgia Technical College

Accreditation and Eligibility

The Funeral Service Education associate degree program at West Georgia Technical College is designed to meet the **educational requirements set by the American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE)**. The program is in the process of **seeking initial accreditation** and follows the standards established by the **Committee on Accreditation (COA)** of the ABFSE.

CAUTION: This program is pursuing accreditation but is **NOT** accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE). Until accreditation is achieved, students graduating from this program are **NOT** eligible to take any licensing examination that requires graduation from an ABFSE accredited program, including the National Board Examination.

Upon **successful completion of the program and graduation**, students become eligible to apply for the **National Board Examination (NBE)** administered by **The International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards (ICFSEB)**. This examination is **required for licensure** in most states, including Georgia, and is typically divided into two separate components:

- Arts Examination
- Sciences Examination

Certification and Licensure

Passing both sections of the NBE is a prerequisite for applying for state licensure as a **Funeral Director and/or Embalmer**. In Georgia, licensure is granted through the **Georgia State Board of Funeral Service**, which may also require completion of a state-specific law exam and an apprenticeship/internship.

Important Notes for Students:

- **Licensure is regulated at the state level.** Each state may have specific requirements beyond NBE passage, such as apprenticeships, legal residency, background checks, or additional exams.
- **Students should consult the licensing board** in the state where they intend to practice for the most current licensure requirements.

Relevant Agencies and Certification Bodies

The International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards (ICFSEB)

National Board Examination (NBE)
1885 Shelby Lane
Fayetteville, AR 72704
Phone: (479) 442-7076
Website: www.theconferenceonline.org

American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE)

3432 Ashland Avenue, Suite U
St. Joseph, MO 64506
Phone: (816) 233-3747
Website: www.abfse.org

- ABFSE is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and serves as the accrediting agency for funeral service education programs in the United States.
- The ABFSE **Committee on Accreditation (COA)** is responsible for overseeing compliance with accreditation standards at the program level.

Georgia State Board of Funeral Service

237 Coliseum Drive
Macon, GA 31217
Phone: (844) 753-7825
Website: sos.ga.gov

Summary

Graduates of the West Georgia Technical College Funeral Service Education Program are **required to pass both the Arts and Sciences sections of the National Board Examination (NBE)** to be eligible for graduation. This ensures compliance with national accreditation standards and prepares students for immediate licensure and entry into professional practice.

WEST GEORGIA TECHNICAL COLLEGE
SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES
FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION PROGRAM

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT

I, _____, have been given a copy of and have read the **West Georgia Technical College Funeral Service Education Student Handbook**, which contains general department and program-specific information and policies applicable to all courses within the Funeral Services Education Program.

These policies were reviewed with me during the first semester of the program while enrolled in **FSRV 1010 – Introduction to Funeral Service Education**. I agree to **abide by these policies** and any program updates or requirements as outlined, while I am enrolled in the Funeral Services Education Program.

I understand that it is my responsibility to remain informed about all policies, procedures, and requirements outlined in the handbook and any updates communicated by program faculty.

Student Signature & Date:

Witness Signature & Date:

FUNERAL SERVICE
EDUCATION PROGRAM



APPENDICES

Funeral Service Education Courses and Descriptions

FSRV 1000 – Introduction to Funeral Service

This course introduces students to the funeral service profession, covering its history, ethical considerations, and the role of funeral service professionals in society.

FSRV 1010 – Funeral Service Law

Students will study federal, state, and local laws affecting funeral service practice, including licensing requirements, regulations, and legal responsibilities.

FSRV 1020 – Funeral Service Ethics

This course explores ethical issues in funeral service, emphasizing professional conduct, decision-making, and the importance of maintaining public trust.

FSRV 1030 – Funeral Service Management

Focuses on the principles of management as applied to funeral service establishments, including organizational structure, financial management, and human resources.

FSRV 1040 – Funeral Service Merchandising

Covers the selection, display, and sale of funeral service merchandise, including caskets, urns, and other related products.

FSRV 1050 – Funeral Service Counseling

Students will learn techniques for providing grief counseling and support to families before, during, and after the funeral service.

FSRV 1060 – Funeral Service Marketing

Introduces marketing concepts and strategies specific to the funeral service industry, including advertising, public relations, and community outreach.

FSRV 1070 – Funeral Service Accounting

Focuses on financial record-keeping, budgeting, and financial analysis as applied to funeral service operations.

FSRV 1080 – Funeral Service Psychology

Explores psychological principles related to death, dying, and bereavement, and their application in funeral service practice.

FSRV 1090 – Funeral Service Communications

Develops verbal and written communication skills necessary for effective interaction with families, colleagues, and the community.

FSRV 1100 – Funeral Service Anatomy and Physiology

Provides an overview of human anatomy and physiology with an emphasis on systems relevant to embalming and restorative art.

FSRV 1110 – Embalming I

Introduction to the principles and techniques of embalming, including the preparation and preservation of human remains.

FSRV 1120 – Embalming II

Advanced study of embalming techniques, including restorative art, tissue building, and the preparation of special cases.

FSRV 1130 – Restorative Art

Focuses on techniques for restoring the natural appearance of deceased individuals, including cosmetic application and reconstruction.

FSRV 1140 – Microbiology for Funeral Service

Study of microorganisms and their relevance to funeral service, including sanitation, disinfection, and disease transmission.

FSRV 1150 – Pathology for Funeral Service

Introduction to disease processes and conditions that affect the human body, with emphasis on their impact on embalming and restorative art.

FSRV 1160 – Funeral Service Internship

Supervised practical experience in a funeral service setting, allowing students to apply classroom knowledge in real-world situations.

FSRV 1170 – Funeral Service Seminar

Capstone course that prepares students for the National Board Examination, including review of key topics and practice exams.



Funeral Service Education AAS Degree (FS23)- 72 Credit Hours

Program Description:

The Associate of Applied Science in Funeral Service Education at West Georgia Technical College prepares students to serve their communities with professionalism, compassion, and technical expertise. Grounded in the College's mission to support student success and economic development through relevant education and training, this program equips future funeral service professionals with the knowledge and hands-on skills needed to meet industry standards and community needs. Student's will be trained in key areas such as mortuary science, restorative art, funeral home operations, bereavement care, legal compliance, and ethical service delivery. Emphasis is placed on business management, regulatory practices, and the interpersonal skills necessary to support families with dignity during times of loss. The program is designed to foster excellence and innovation in the funeral service profession and to cultivate graduates who are career-ready and committed to upholding the highest standards of care. Successful completion of the National Board Examination is required for graduation, reinforcing our commitment to producing a highly skilled, licensed workforce that contributes meaningfully to Georgia's economy and well-being. Graduates of the Associate of Applied Science in Funeral Service Education are prepared for employment primarily in funeral home settings Initial salaries are approximately \$42,000 per year.

Contact:

Dr. Phyllis Ingham, Dean

770-5327-6045

phyllis.ingham@westgatech.edu

Website:

<https://www.westgatech.edu/program-explorer/nursing-allied-health-sciences/funeral-service-education/>

Pre-Degree Requirements

Program Specific

Program Admission Requirements: Minimum Required Age 18, High School Diploma or GED Required

After the completion of all general core classes and ACCT 1100, MKTG 1130, SPCH 1101 and ACCT 2140, all

learning support, general core classes, and fundamental pre-occupational courses, students are eligible to apply through the competitive selection process to enter the Funeral Service Program and begin program courses. GPA requirement 3.0 or higher. Competitive Selection Deadline is June 1st. Students who have met this eligibility requirement must take the entry level Funeral Service science courses, FSRV 2000 Anatomy, FSRV 2010 Pathology, FSRV 2020 Chemistry, and FSRV 2080 Microbiology. In order to continue in the program, students must: · Obtain a grade of “C” or better in each of these entry level science courses: FSRV 2000, FSRV 2010, FSRV 2020, FSRV 2080.

Set the Track, Start the Track, Stay on Track

Meet with an Advising Coach to Stay on Track. S = Semester; CR = Credit Hours; FA = Fall; SP = Spring; SU = Summer

✓	Grade	Semester 1	S	CR	Notes & Milestones
		ENGL 1101 Composition and Rhetoric	ALL	3	Program Admission
		MATH 1111 College Algebra	ALL	3	Program Admission
		ACCT 1100 Financial Accounting I	ALL	4	Program Admission
		ACCT 2140 Legal Environment of Business	ALL	3	Program Admission
				13	Program Semester Hours
✓	Grade	Semester 2	S	CR	Notes & Milestones
		ENGL 1102 Literature and Composition	ALL	3	ENGL 1101 prerequisite grade of C or better
		SPCH 1101 Public Speaking	ALL	3	ACCT 1100 and CISM 2201 prerequisite grade of C or better
		MKTG 1130 Business Regulations and Compliance	ALL	3	
		Comp 1000	ALL	3	
		Area IV: Choose One: ARTS 1101 Art Appreciation or MUSC 1101 Music Appreciation or HUMN 1101 Introduction to Humanities or ENGL 2110 World Literature or ENGL 2130 American Literature	ALL	3	Program Admission Program Admission ENGL 1101 with a grade of C or better ENGL 1101 with a grade of C or better ENGL 1101 with a grade of C or better
				15	Program Semester Hours

✓	Grade	Semester 3	S	CR	Notes & Milestones
		FSRV 1010 History of Funeral Services	FA, SP	2	
		FSRV 1020 Funeral Service Law and Ethics	FA, SP	1	
		FSRV 1030 Funeral Service Management and Directing	FA, SP	6	
		FSRV 1050 Funeral Service Practicum	FA, SP	2	
		FSRV 1070 Small Business Administration for Funeral Service	FA, SP	4	
				15	Program Semester Hours
✓	Grade	Semester 4	S	CR	Notes and Milestones
		FSRV 2000 Anatomy for Funeral Service	FA, SP	4	
		FSRV 2010 Pathology for Funeral Service	FA, SP	3	
		FSRV 2020 Chemistry for Funeral Service	FA, SP	3	
		FSRV 2080 Microbiology for Funeral Service	FA, SP	3	
				13	Program Semester Hours
✓	Grade	Semester 5	S	CR	Notes and Milestones
		FSRV 2030 Embalming Techniques	FA, SP	6	
		FSRV 2060 Restorative Art	FA, SP	4	
		FSRV 2090 Grief Counseling and Sociology	FA, SP	3	
		FSRV 2100 Funeral Service Seminar	FA, SP	3	
				16	Program Semester Hours
<p>Always check online https://www.westgatech.edu/ and meet with your Advising or Faculty Coach to ensure you are viewing the latest and most accurate information.</p>					

Note: If a course is full or unavailable when you to attempt to register, please select an available course from any term listed, given you have satisfied the required pre-requisite. FSRV 1010, FSRV 1020, FSRV 1030, FSRV 2000, FSRV 2010, FSRV 2020, FSRV 2030, FSRV 2080, FSRV 1050, FSRV 1070, FSRV 2060 and FSRV 2090: "C" or higher grade is required for all these courses.

Employment Opportunities: <https://www.westgatech.edu/student-life/career-services/>

Articulation Agreements: <https://www.westgatech.edu/admissions/registrars-office/articulation-agreements/>

Financial Aid by Program: <https://www.westgatech.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/WGTC-Available-Aid-By-Program-11-17-2023.pdf>

Important Accreditation Statement: Caution:

*The Funeral Service Education associate degree program at West Georgia Technical College is in the process of seeking accreditation by the American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE). However, the program is **NOT** currently accredited by ABFSE and students enrolled at this time are not eligible to sit for the National Board Examination until such accreditation is achieved.*

For more information about the accreditation process and standards, contact:

American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE)

992 Mantua Pike, Suite 108
Woodbury Heights, NJ 08097
(816) 233-3747

www.abfse.org

West Georgia Technical College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed or religion, military status, national or ethnic origin, sex, age, or disability. The following person(s) has been designated to manage inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies: Equity (Title IX) Coordinator: Dean of Students 770.537.5722, 176 Murphy Campus Blvd., Waco, GA 30182; ADA (Section 504) Coordinators: Students: Career and Student Support Services Manager, 770.824.5245, 176 Murphy Campus Blvd., Waco, GA 30182, Student504@westgatech.edu, Employees: Human Resources Manager, 770.537.6056, 176 Murphy Campus Blvd., Waco, GA 30182, wgtchr@westgatech.edu; Accessibility Services Coordinator, 770.824.5241 accessibilityservices@westgatech.edu, 176 Murphy Campus Blvd., Waco, GA 30182; Special Populations Coordinator, 770.838.2526 specialpopulations@westgatech.edu

FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION PROGRAM CLINICAL INTERNSHIP REQUIREMENTS

General Requirements:

- Students must be in good academic standing and have approval from the Program Director before participating in the clinical internship.
- Completion of all core and technical courses with a minimum grade of C and a GPA of 3.0 or higher is required prior to internship placement.
- Students must submit an application listing three preferred clinical internship sites. Placement at a preferred site is not guaranteed.
- The Program Director and faculty are responsible for student placement, considering GPA ranking, clinical site availability, interviews, student preferences, geographic proximity (within one hour commuting distance), and compatibility.
- Students cannot be placed at clinical sites where they have long-standing employment or family relationships involved in grading to avoid conflicts of interest.
- Prior to the internship, students must complete a physical examination, provide up-to-date immunizations, pass a criminal background check, and have a negative drug screening.
- Malpractice insurance is required for participation in any practicum involving direct contact or procedures.
- Background checks and drug screens are performed through Advantage (www.Advantage.com), with costs borne by the student.
- If a clinical site rejects a student based on background or drug screening results, West Georgia Technical College is not obligated to find an alternative placement.
- Required immunizations include MMR, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis A, Varicella, COVID-19 (if mandated), influenza, tetanus (or DPT), and TB screening or proof of immunity. Failure to provide documentation may prevent clinical placement.
- Uniform requirements include approved professional attire, with specifications provided by the program. Uniforms are purchased through Sew Simple Uniform Boutique and must include program-specific colors and monogramming.

Acknowledgment:

I have read and understand the above clinical internship requirements and agree to comply with all program policies and procedures.

Student Signature

Date

Student signature/date

Faculty signature/date

**FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION PROGRAM
MEMORANDUM**

TO: Students enrolled in the Funeral Service Education program at WGTC and their parents or guardians

FROM: Funeral Service Program Director

RE: Clinical and Practicum Assignments for Funeral Services Education Program

Clinical and practicum site assignments cannot be made at the time of acceptance or enrollment in the Funeral Services Education program due to the ongoing challenges in securing appropriate training facilities each academic year. Therefore, the Program Director and institutional administration reserve the right to assign students to clinical/practicum sites based on factors that best serve both the institution and the student.

Assignment decisions will consider the number of available affiliation sites, the total number of students requiring placement, commuting distance, cumulative GPA, student preferences, and demonstrated work ethics, including attendance and professionalism. While every effort will be made to accommodate student preferences, placement at a specific site cannot be guaranteed. Should no training site be immediately available, a waiting list will be implemented. Criteria for waiting list placement are provided and reviewed during new student orientation and introductory courses.

STUDENT AFFIDAVIT

I understand and agree to the clinical/practicum site assignment conditions as outlined above and agree to abide by the decisions of my instructors regarding my placement.

Student Signature / Date

Faculty Signature / Date

Parent/Guardian Signature / Date (if student under 18)

**FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION PROGRAM
MEMORANDUM**

TO: Students enrolled in the Funeral Service Education program and their parents or guardians

FROM: Funeral Service Program Director

RE: Essential Functions for Funeral Service Education Program

To succeed in the Funeral Service Education program and ensure the safety and welfare of clients and the public, students must meet essential functional requirements as established by the program faculty consortium. These essential functions must be met, with or without reasonable accommodation, to participate fully in lectures, laboratory activities, and clinical/practicum experiences necessary for graduation.

These requirements comply with relevant accreditation standards and are detailed in the Funeral Service Education Program Handbook and the WGTC catalog (online). For questions about accommodation requests, contact the Program Director at 770-537-XXXX or the ADA Coordinator at 770-824-5241. Accessibility services forms are available on the WGTC website under Accessibility Services.

STUDENT AFFIDAVIT

I acknowledge receipt of the Essential Functions document for the Funeral Service Education program. I understand the requirements and attest that I currently meet these essential functions and have no disability to disclose at this time.

Student Printed Name and Signature / Date

Parent/Guardian Signature / Date (if under 18)

Program Director Signature / Date

FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION PROGRAM

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN PRACTICAL PROCEDURES

As a student in the Funeral Service Education program, I understand that hands-on practice—including restorative art, embalming, and other procedures—is a required component of my education.

I agree to participate in all supervised practical activities required by the curriculum. I acknowledge the inherent risks involved in some procedures, such as exposure to chemicals, tools, and biological materials. I will inform the Program Director or instructor of any medical conditions or medications that may affect my participation or increase my risk.

I agree to follow all safety protocols and program policies, including the use of personal protective equipment and proper hygiene practices.

I understand that participation is mandatory unless excused by the Program Director based on documented medical reasons.

I also agree to purchase and maintain professional liability insurance as required by the program and understand that WGTC and its clinical affiliates are released from liability resulting from my participation in practical procedures.

Student Signature / Date

Faculty Signature / Date

FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION PROGRAM CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

Students in the Funeral Service Education program will have access to sensitive client information during their education and practicum experiences. Compliance with privacy laws and ethical standards is mandatory.

- All client information, written or verbal, is confidential and protected by law. Unauthorized disclosure may result in legal action and program dismissal.
- The professional Code of Ethics requires strict confidentiality regarding client and family information.

I, _____, acknowledge my responsibility to maintain confidentiality and agree not to disclose any client information without proper authorization.

Student Printed Name

Student Signature / Date

Witness Signature / Date

WEST GEORGIA TECHNICAL COLLEGE

**FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION PROGRAM
STATEMENT OF INFORMED CONSENT FOR COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PREVENTION**

I acknowledge the following:

- Participation in Funeral Service Education may involve exposure to communicable diseases through contact with human remains and clinical settings.
- I agree to participate in required health education and comply with CDC and OSHA guidelines.
- I will provide proof of required immunizations (including Hepatitis B, MMR, Varicella, Tetanus, COVID-19 if required, TB testing, and annual flu vaccine) prior to practicum placement. Failure to provide documentation may prevent clinical participation.
- I understand the risks associated with exposure and agree to follow the college's Exposure Control Plan, including post-exposure procedures.
- I understand that my health information will be kept confidential and used solely for counseling, health monitoring, and compliance.
- I will inform faculty of any changes in health status that could impact my participation.

I have read and understand these provisions and agree to comply fully.

Student Printed Name

Student Signature / Date

Witness Signature / Date

WEST GEORGIA TECHNICAL COLLEGE

**FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION PROGRAM
AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE STUDENT INFORMATION**

I, _____, authorize West Georgia Technical College Funeral Service Education Program to release the following information to clinical/practicum affiliates for placement purposes:

- Contact information
- Health and immunization records
- Criminal background check results
- Drug screening results

I understand the purpose of this release and provide consent voluntarily.

Student Printed Name

Student Signature / Date

Witness Signature / Date